

## MINUTES

### PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

MARCH 24, 2022

A meeting of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments was held on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at the Pueblo Department of Public Health and Environment, 101 West 9<sup>th</sup> Street, 3rd Floor, Conference Room C. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Larry Atencio, PACOG Chairman, at 12:15 p.m.

Chairman Atencio informed the members that a revised agenda was sent prior to the meeting, which added on Consent Item No. 3.

#### ROLL CALL

Those members present were:

Larry Atencio  
Mike Cafasso  
Barbara Clementi  
Chris DeLuca  
Harry Hochstetler

Epimenio Griego  
Ed Gutierrez  
Vicente Martinez Ortega  
Garrison Ortiz  
Chris Wiseman

Those members absent were:

Dennis Flores  
Heather Graham  
Regina Maestri

Sarah Martinez  
Doug Proal  
Lori Winner

Also present were:

John Adams  
Sabina Genesisio  
Nick Gradisar  
Carmen Howard

Dan Kogovsek  
David Russell  
Louella Salazar

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS (Citizen Comments)

There were no public comments.

#### CONSENT ITEMS:

Ms. Carmen Howard, PACOG Manager, reported there were three items listed on the agenda under the Consent Items. She summarized the Consent Items for PACOG.

Chairman Atencio asked if there were any other additions or amendments to the Consent Items or if any of the members or audience would like an item removed or discussed that was on the Consent agenda. There were no other additions or amendments.

It was moved by Chris Wiseman, seconded by Barbara Clementi, and passed unanimously to approve the three Consent Items listed below:

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- Minutes of February 24, 2022 Meeting;
- A Resolution Amending the Pueblo Area Council of Governments' (PACOG) FY 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Amend \$103,000 into FY 2022 for the Upgrading of Transit Cameras and Directing the Urban Transportation Planning Division to Execute Said Amendments; and
- A Resolution Approving an Exemption from Audit for Fiscal Year 2021 for the Pueblo Area Council of Governments, State of Colorado.

### **REGULAR ITEMS:**

#### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

(A) Lunch Appreciation

Chairman Atencio thanked the Pueblo Board of Water Works for providing lunch for today's meeting.

#### **MANAGER'S REPORT**

There was no report.

#### **ARKANSAS RIVER TRAIL MASTER PLAN**

Mr. Mike Ricottone, 1A Project Manager, reported in 2017-2018, Pueblo County and CDOT got together and decided to update the 1998 Pueblo River Trails Extension Master Plan. He stated there have been no changes to the 1998 Plan, which was basically due to public outreach. There are six potential projects, but only one is feasible at this time. The funding that was allocated in 2016 to 1A projects has not been granted yet but it has been allocated. He proceeded with the PowerPoint presentation. He stated the 1998 Plan was accepted by PACOG. Other existing source documents with respect to the update include the 2002 Pueblo County Comprehensive Plan and 2005 PACOG Long Range Transportation Plan. He stated four public open house meetings were conducted at North Mesa Elementary School. The prioritized trail connections include: (1) Arkansas River Trail Extension (off-street trail), (2) Aspen Street/Circle Connection (on-street bike lanes), (3) Salt Creek Trail (off-street trail), (4) Bessemer Ditch Trail (off-street trail), (5) County Farm Road (on-street bike lanes), and (6) Everett Road (on-street bike "sharrows").

Mr. Ricottone reported the Aspen Street/Circle Connection has been widened almost to the fullest extent. In order to provide trails, it needs to be widened again, noting it is close to its capacity on widening. There is also the option of the sharrows, but it is probably not the best idea. It was put in place to be given consideration for future CDOT expansions, etc. He continued that Salt Creek is unique because it has land either owned by EVRAZ or under EPA guidance. This is doable if there is a partnership with EVRAZ, noting it could be a future project because some of the land they would be going across is under EPA guidance at the current time. Once this is cleared, it would give the opportunity to go up to the school. The next is the Bessemer Ditch trail. He stated this is a good option because it incorporates the Bessemer Ditch. By reaching out to the Bessemer Ditch Irrigating Company, they wanted us to assist with their stormwater problems, which would dramatically increase the cost for a trail to go across the land. Mr. Wiseman asked if the Plan was run past the Bessemer Ditch Irrigating Company. Mr. Ricottone replied the Ditch Company was contacted during this study, noting they were willing to work with them, but there was a lot of cost associated with working with them. He felt at this time that it was not worthy of the effort. He

continued that he spoke with the County's Road and Bridge Department regarding County Farm Road. This road will need to be widened and gutters and sidewalks will need to be installed as it becomes more urban. When this occurs, this is the time that this will need to be done in conjunction with the Road and Bridge Department. It is a doable project. The Pleasant View Middle School and Everett Road project will be done by Road and Bridge with additional 1A funding. He stated \$3 million has been spent of 1A on improving the lanes in the County. He stated Road and Bridge has done the engineering on this project, but the 25' widening and 5' sidewalks still need to be done. Dialog with homeowners needs to be done because they will be losing some of their property. There will be benefits such as getting sidewalks. It would be nice for children in the area to walk to their schools. He stated this has not been eliminated. The main thing on this project is schools. The North Mesa and Everett Road project is being looked at in conjunction with this. There were a few homeowners in the area who weren't interested and were happy with the status quo. It needs to be communicated what the overall benefit is to them and the community and realizing that the improvements to their properties will not be paid by them. He stated this is doable job. He stated it has been received by the community, but it is not popular. He stated there is more that can be done without having to go to the private sector. He stated the bridge on this project could be a single bridge, noting it would slow down the traffic.

Mr. Ricottone showed a graphic depicting the different trails. He stated the idea is to start at the trailhead. There is two-way traffic, and barriers would need to be done. The existing trailhead is off La Crosse Street. The County maintains the parking lot and dumps the trash. The City is responsible for the trail. The trail goes to Runyon, the Arkansas River trail, and Fountain Creek, noting it is a good starting point. Going south on La Crosse Street, there is bridge which goes over the Arkansas River/Fountain Creek confluence. CDOT would have to turn over the bridge to the City, so the County would be working with the City to create a safe bike path on one side to go across the bridge (probably the west side). In conjunction with that, more widening and narrowing would have to be done on one side. This would benefit the City, County, and community because they would be improving half the roadway. There is a possibility of widening the intersection on the bridge, which would help slow the traffic down and move it over one way or the other. This would also lower the capacity of the bridge. At the current time, the bridge is a "D" rated bridge and needs upgrading. The single lane might bring the bridge rating down, which would create an opportunity for improvements. Continuing south, you go by American Iron towards Salt Creek. On the other side of the bridge (Highway 50), the road changes to Roselawn Road. He stated on-road improvements would need to happen on Roselawn Road. The County oversees maintenance of it, so it can use its money to improve the road, noting this would benefit the County and community. Continuing, you come to Cooper Place, noting this is part of the 1A Project. This is the entrance to Pueblo County property, which is the County recreation center or old Boys' Ranch. He stated at the end of this is Aspen Street, noting it has its own turn lane, but there is a lot of traffic. They are looking at not only bringing it to the new recreation center where people can ride their bikes, but to a place where this could be a kick-off project. He stated after PACOG accepts this Plan that it should stay in place for 20 years.

Ms. Clementi asked who is planning the buildings at the community center. Mr. Wiseman replied this is a County facility. The Board of County Commissioners have recently approved the plan for the community center, noting CSU-Extension and 4H would be using it. Mr. Ortiz added this is a 1A Project, There is approximately \$14 million in plans, most of which are construction ready. The construction for 90% of those projects is contingent upon the second round of financing and it is being adjudicated right now.

Chairman Atencio asked if action is required on the item. Mr. Ricottone responded he needs PACOG approval so that the master plan can be sent to Ms. Carmen Howard to enter into the Planning Department's system where it would be managed. Mr. Kogovsek felt a motion would be appropriate.

It was moved by Mike Cafasso, seconded by Epimenio Griego, and passed unanimously to accept the Plan as presented.

#### TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER/CDOT REGION 2 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Rich Zamora, CDOT Region 2 Director, reported there was a lot of conversation at the State Transportation Commission on how to implement the greenhouse gas emissions policy. CDOT has two mechanisms by which to do things--one is a policy directive which is controlled by the Transportation Commission and the other is STAC, which is implemented by staff and signed on by the Executive Director. As originally envisioned, CDOT was going to have an overarching policy which the Commission could implement all the different elements, such as mitigation. Based upon a conversation at STAC, there was a lot of concern about whether this should be at the STAC level or the policy level with the Transportation Commission. During discussion, the Transportation Commission indicated that they are going to implement policy, noting it would be under their purview. The Transportation Commission will have a lot of involvement, wherein everyone would have the opportunity to reach out to them. It is anticipated a draft will be done sometime in April, with a possible adoption by the Transportation Commission in May.

Mr. Zamora stated some of the transit numbers are still in flux regarding the 10-Year Plan update. There was discussion at STAC about how to fund it. It has been decided that 10% would be taken off the revenue on the Plan and apply it towards transit. The question is what is covered by the 10%. There was a need given on the operational cost for Bustang and the desire to do some expanded service. There was discussion on using a portion of the 10% for this. This is a significant impact to transit. This would only allow 40% for other transit projects. Based upon a conversation at STAC, another option was given where more FTA funding would be utilized, as well as MMOF funding. The outcome from this would be a lot less impact on the 10% transit funding and in terms of what is available for local agencies. He felt this is the way the Transportation Commission is leaning, but there has been no formal position. He was hoping to get these numbers next week so they could finish up.

#### STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STAC) UPDATE

Mr. Chris Wiseman, PACOG's STAC representative, reported there was a lot of pushback at the STAC meeting on how taking 10% off transit funds would affect rural areas.

Mr. Wiseman stated STAC received a report on how the State Legislature is reviewing a bill on alternative transportation options for State employees.

Mr. Wiseman stated STAC also received a report on increasing the number of wildlife crossings.

Mr. Wiseman stated the Joint Budget Committee is still working on the long bill. CDOT has requests for revitalizing Main Street funds, transportation funds, and mitigation funds.

Mr. Wiseman stated CDOT is looking at an alternative route for I-70 because of all the trouble they had with shutdowns in Glenwood Canyon. CDOT is working with two counties to use a back road

on Cottonwood Pass. It would be used as an alternative when CDOT has issues on Glenwood Canyon. This alternative would allow smaller vehicles. The two counties involved didn't want it to become a State highway but wanted to control the road.

#### STATUS ON SOUTHWEST CHIEF PASSENGER RAIL

Chairman Atencio reported that Mr. Dennis Flores, PACOG's representative to the Southwest Chief Passenger Rail Commission, sent an email letting the members know that his first meeting is March 25, 2022. He will provide a report at the next PACOG meeting.

#### DISCUSSION ON FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION RELATED PROJECTS

Mr. Wiseman stated a document was provided in the members' packets on the Colorado Legislative Council Staff report regarding Regional Transportation Authorities (RTAs), which was done in 2017. He stated he reached out to two individuals to see if they would come to PACOG and make a presentation. He stated they indicated they would do it once the Legislative Session is over. He stated the document lays out the funding mechanism for RTAs (e.g., sales or use tax), noting he hasn't seen any counties who have done this. An annual motor vehicle registration fee could be included on vehicles that are registered in the particular RTA. RTAs can go beyond one county and go into multiple areas. A mill levy can be done. The San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation does a mill levy, as well as a .25% sales tax and a .75% mills property tax. He stated he was trying to put together what is generated in all the different RTAs and provide this at the next PACOG meeting. Sometime in June, he will bring someone from one of these RTAs, possibly the Pikes Peak RTA or South Platte RTA, to the meeting and answer questions on how they allocate their funds. Also, in the handout, there was information on how the funds can and cannot be used.

Chairman Atencio asked Mr. Zamora if he had any additional information. Mr. Zamora replied if PACOG should need any help to please feel free to reach out to him. Mr. Wiseman asked if the transportation work that is being done between Colorado Springs and Castle Rock on I-25 was partly done because of the Pikes Peak RTA. Mr. Zamora stated that the GAP project had a variety of funding sources. Contributions included grant money, funding from the Pikes Peak RTA, and El Paso County funding. Chairman Atencio asked if all the funding is done by ballot initiative. Mr. Zamora replied all are ballot initiatives (even the motor vehicle registration fee). Mr. Wiseman stated all require voter approval. He stated Pueblo could look at going in with other counties who are in a similar situation. He stated some of the RTAs listed in the handout comprise multiple counties or municipalities.

#### MPO STAFF REPORT

##### A) Draft 10-Year Project List

Ms. Eva Cosyleon, MPO Planner, reported a survey was done on the 10-Year Project List, noting there were 31 participants. She stated there were 15 questions on the survey, which ranked the projects as either a high or low priority. The staff wanted to know if this was in line with what was currently on the 10-Year Plan or what has changed. A lot of the projects were what is on the current list. The only difference was the Highway 47 and Highway 96 interchange, which was a newly identified project. It was a high priority, but the problem is the project cost is estimated at \$30 million. For that project to be on the priority list, the \$30 million would either have to be subtracted from other projects on the list. She stated discussions were held with the Transportation Advisory

Committee (TAC) on whether this would work or not work. The bottom line is that it cannot work because it would take funding away from other high priority projects. After some discussion, it was decided to retain this information and make a notation that once funding becomes available, PACOG and CDOT will look at this project again and evaluate it. This way it is still on the 10-Year Plan, but it will not be funded until such time as funding becomes available.

Ms. Cosyleon reported on the rankings on the draft 10-Year Plan. The rankings from highest to lowest are as follows: (1) the I-25 through Pueblo New Freeway; (2) I-25 at Exit 104-Dillon Drive Improvements; (3) I-25 Exit 108 (Purcell Boulevard), replace single box culvert under I-25 design (Years 1-4); (4) I-25 Exit 108 (Purcell Boulevard), replace single box culvert crossing under I-25 fund construction (Years 5-10); (5) State Highway 96 West of Pueblo, which includes shoulder widening, bridge rail, bike lanes, and other safety improvements; (6) State Highway 47 four-lane extension to U.S. 50; (7) Business U.S. 50 Drainage Improvements at 36<sup>th</sup> Lane; (8) State Highway 45 North Extension Study; (9) Pueblo Transit Fixed-Route/Bus Vehicle Replacement (Years 1-4 partial funding with balance to carry over into Years 5-10); and (10) Pueblo Transit Fixed-Route/Bus Vehicle Replacement carryover from Years 1-4). This will be taken to TAC, and at the next PACOG meeting staff will be requesting approval on the Plan. Mr. Adams stated this still needs to go to public participation and TAC before it comes to PACOG for final approval, noting this is not the final list.

#### B) Multimodal Transportation and Mitigation Options Fund (MMOF)

Ms. Cosyleon reported on the Call for Projects Schedule on the MMOF. TAC discussed the Notice for Call for Projects on March 11, 2022. The request for information will be done on March 25, 2022. The region received \$5.5 million. Staff sent the MMOF Call for Projects to the different jurisdictions. The Multimodal Project should meet the following MMOF goals, which promotes a complete and integrated multimodal systems that: (1) promotes aging in place more feasible, (2) provides more access and flexible public transportation to rural and disproportionate communities, (3) provides and enhances mobility for persons with disabilities, (4) provides safe routes to school for children, and (5) reduces emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases (GHG). She stated staff will be having a Q&A workshop with CDOT on April 13<sup>th</sup>, which is necessary and part of the requirements of the MMOF that all criteria be met. It is hoped that by the June 23, 2022 PACOG meeting that it could be approved. She stated there was an additional page to the handout which entailed scoring the projects.

#### C) PACOG/MPO Website Update

Ms. Cosyleon reported the PACOG website is being updated. She stated the website, which is part of the County website, has been a little difficult for the Federal partners to find their information. MPO staff took the initiative to do a standalone website. It will be tested in April and should be live by May. She thought it would be a good resource for the community and region because it will have information regarding transportation-related materials and meetings.

Ms. Salazar inquired what happens with the current PACOG website, which has other information with respect to administration of PACOG itself. Ms. Cosyleon replied there could be a link to the County website. MPO staff is trying to place anything which is 2021 or newer on the new website. Older information will have to be archived on another website. Ms. Haunert, MPO staff, stated she would speak to Ms. Salazar regarding the new PACOG website following the PACOG meeting.

D) GHG Rulemaking Update

Mr. John Adams, MPO Manager, reported this item has been discussed thoroughly.

E) TAC Update on Bylaws Discussion

Mr. Adams reported MPO staff has been looking at TAC membership. He stated between the delegation agreement and memorandum of understanding (MOU) that there are people on TAC which on it by default. There are a few members who never show up. He stated a draft letter has been sent to all the TAC members to find out if they were still interested in being members. He stated once the replies have been received, MPO staff will be coming back to PACOG to change the MOU with CDOT and the Federal government. For example, you don't need four people within the City to sit on TAC. It will come back to PACOG once staff has a good recommendation on how to change the bylaws on TAC membership.

F) Other Transportation Matters

Mr. Adams asked if PACOG would be interested in having CDOT and Michael Snow make a presentation on the MMOF Program at its next meeting. Ms. Clementi asked if this would be an overview. Mr. Adams answered it would be an overview of the MMOF policy, what the legislation says, what you can and cannot do, and what you are expected to do when you make an application. Chairman Atencio stated this would be placed on the next meeting's agenda.

Mr. Zamora stated he would like to place on the next PACOG meeting CDOT's plans for the Pinon Rest Area. He stated he would like there to be discussion.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Atencio stated that Messrs. Chris Wiseman, Terry Hart, Jeff Chostner, and he are getting together to meet with Mr. Jeff Shumaker of the Greenway Foundation to discuss river trails. Mr. Shumaker will be coming to Pueblo to look at the river trail in the Fountain Creek corridor and the confluence. The meeting is scheduled on Friday, April 15th. He stated everyone is invited to join them on this date. He stated they were looking at doing a Fountain Creek foundation. He stated if anyone was interested to contact him, noting he has a City van to drive them around. He felt this falls in with the confluence and the restoration of Fountain Creek.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no future agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further regular business before PACOG, Chairman Atencio adjourned the meeting at 1:11 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, April 28, 2022, at 12:15 p.m. (Note: The

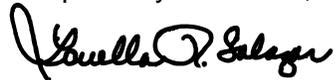
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meeting will be held at the Pueblo County Emergency Operations Center, 101 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, 1st Floor Conference Room. The meeting will also be held virtually on Zoom.)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louella R. Salazar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

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Louella R. Salazar  
PACOG Recording Secretary

LRS