

**Southwest Colorado Regional Transportation
Planning Commission
Thursday, February 10, 2022 - 9:00 a.m.
Video/Phone Conference**

TPR Members in Attendance:

Katie Sickles – Town of Bayfield
Fred Brooks – Town of Mancos
Steve Garchar – Dolores County
Julie Bingham – Dolores County
Martin Schmidt – Town of Pagosa Springs
Sarah Hill – City of Durango
Mark Garcia – Transportation Commissioner, Town of Ignacio
Clyde Church – La Plata County
Laura Vanoni – Archuleta County
Ronnie Maez – Archuleta County
Andrea Phillips – Town of Pagosa Springs
Jim Candelaria – Montezuma County
Rich Landreth – City of Cortez

Others in Attendance:

Mike McVaugh – HGR engineering
Laura Lewis Marchino – Region 9
Patrick Davis – Southwest Rides
Jennifer Allison - Colorado Department of Transportation
Kevin Curry - Colorado Department of Transportation
Tony Cady - Colorado Department of Transportation
Julie Constan - Colorado Department of Transportation
Jamie Grim - Colorado Department of Transportation
Matt Muraro - Colorado Department of Transportation
Annelies Van Vonno - Colorado Department of Transportation
Audrey Dakan - Colorado Department of Transportation
George Gromke - Colorado Department of Transportation
John Whitney - Senator Bennet's Office
Jessica Laitsch – Southwest Colorado Council of Governments

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m.

I. Introductions

II. Consent Agenda:

December 2021 Meeting Minutes
Financial Report: July 2021 – December 2021

Martin Schmidt motioned to approve the December minutes, Steve Garchar seconded, unanimously approved.

There were no comments on the financial report.

III. Reports

1. January 2022 STAC Update – Sarah Hill

Sarah reported that there had been discussion on the 10-year plan and fiscal constraints, they will be voting on items at the next STAC meeting. There was discussion about certain interstates qualifying for rural paving. Clyde expressed concern that this may increase competition. Sarah replied there is a geographic equity formula that may be readdressed. Julie added that subsequent discussions have resulted in a shift of thinking regarding transit and interstate as rural paving.

2. Transportation Commissioner Report – Mark Garcia

Mark reported the 10-year plan funding is an item for discussion at the next meeting. At the meeting they discussed projects, received an update on the MMOF distribution formula, and received an update from the freight committee. He reported that he met with Julie and Bob Fifer to discuss CDOT's role in broadband to rural areas of the state. Steve mentioned he has been told that CDOT's requirements are cost prohibitive for use of right-of-way, he asked if this could be addressed. Mark will look into this. Jim reiterated that it will be important to look at making ROW less cost prohibitive. Julie will set up a meeting to discuss this, one aspect is that CDOT does have to comply with certain regulations related to compensation.

3. Congressional Updates

Jamie reported the Congress is working on a continuing resolution to extend the FY21 budget to avoid schedule conflicts. Updates related to IIJA are being released, she will send out FTA and FHWA resources. She added that the White House released a comprehensive grant guide book. CDOT will be preparing proposals for RAISE; she requested a heads up if anyone is planning to apply for a RAISE grant.

John reported the Appropriations Committee seems to have reached a deal, so the Congressionally Directed Funding may be able to move forward. John will put together various resources to send out to the group. He added that there will be a significant amount of funding in the near future, so encouraged the group to look at regional grant writing capacity and how it may be able to meet these needs, particularly the smaller agencies. Sarah mentioned that CDOT will be looking at developing resources to help with grant submissions; additionally, the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies provides transit grant writing support. Clyde asked if there is a breakdown of federal vs state. John replied that it depends on the types of funds. Jamie added that CDOT is preparing to send regular updates and suggested looking at the federal resource guide. John reiterated that they will be trying to keep everyone as updated as possible. He added that the Senator's Office is happy to consider letters of support for federal grants. Laura mentioned that Region 9 has hired a community grant writer. Sarah asked about the Congressionally Funded projects. John replied there has been some progress, so it is possible. He added that they intend to reopen the application process with refined direction on types of projects.

4. SWCCOG Staffing Updates – Jessica Laitsch

Jessica described the SWCCOG's staffing changes and coordination with Region 9.

IV. Election of Officers – Jessica Laitsch

Jessica described the purpose of the request.

Jim Candelaria nominated Sarah Hill as Chair, Sarah accepted, Mark Garcia seconded, Steve Garchar motioned for nominations to cease, Clyde Church seconded, unanimously approved.

Sarah Hill nominated Jim Candelaria as Vice Chair, Steve Garchar seconded, Jim accepted, unanimously approved.

IV. CDOT Reports

1. Traffic and Safety Update – Jennifer Allison

Jennifer presented information on the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) project application process. Steve asked if Dolores County should be included in the shoulder study. Jennifer replied that only part of the list was included in the presentation. Julie added that it was looked at, but it was not identified as a top priority based upon crash data. Steve asked if they were looking at bicycle crashes. Julie replied they did.

2. Construction Update – Kevin Curry

- US 550 priority culverts – Completed.
- SH 172 at County Road 318 – Shut down for the winter.
- US 160 McCabe Creek Pagosa – Shut down for winter.
- US 550 Durango 9th to 12th – Most of the work is complete, there are some signals and pedestrian crossings. Work will begin again in the spring.
- US 160/SH 151 Wildlife Crossing Project – Shut down for the winter. They have had large wildlife using the crossing.
- US 550/160 Connection South Design – The structures are functional and they have begun work on the cut. They are working on large animal underpasses.
- US 160 Wolf Creek West Fiber – The traffic unit has identified a contractor and is working through the details.
- US 160 West of Pagosa – West of McCabe creek, planning to go to ad in a couple of weeks.
- US 550 and 30th Street – Will be added to the Durango 9th to 12th project.
- US 160 Four Corners to Aztec Creek – Scheduled for construction in spring of 2022.
- US 160 Bayfield – Yellow Jacket Cape Seal – Surface treatment currently planned for 2023, depending on costs may be delayed.
- US 172 Ignacio to Elmore's Corner – Planned for 2023.
- US 160 Mancos Pedestrian Improvements – Looking at ADA ramp improvement.
- US 160 & CR 225 94.04 Improvements – In design, tentatively scheduled for ad in 2023.
- US 160 Section 3 Priority Culverts – Scheduled for summer 2023, approximately 12 culverts have been identified.
- US 160 San Juan River Bridge Scour – They will be adding a second bridge to the project scope, planned construction in 2023.

Martin asked if the fencing for the animal overpass is complete. Kevin replied that there is a temporary barrier to prevent going over overpass which will require work. Tony added that the east and west end points are the termination points.

3. Update 10-Year Plan – Tony Cady

Annelies described the purpose for the 10-year plan update. Tony summarized the priority projects in the southwest region.

Steve asked if there are plans for the US550/160 intersection near the DoubleTree. Tony replied that they do not have plans to update that intersection, the recent changes seem to be working well.

Clyde mentioned that population has recently increased and expressed support for scenario 2. Jim expressed support for trying to leverage whatever is possible. Sarah added that all three projects ultimately need to be completed. Mark commended staff on the work.

Steve Garchar motioned for support of scenario 2, Clyde Church seconded, Laura Vanoni and Sarah Hill opposed, the motion was approved.

4. MMOF 2022 Application Process – Matt Muraro

Matt summarized the adopted MMOF allocations for the SWTPR, the guidance and application are under review. He suggested working on the application timeline for the region. Clyde asked about the level of funding in the most recent cycle. Matt replied that \$1,247,368 was awarded in the last cycle. Sarah asked about the deadline for the first year. Matt replied that funds must be obligated by December 2024, the expenditure deadline is December 2026.

VI. Other Business

1. Community Updates – Round Robin

Katie reported the Town of Bayfield is looking to move forward with an access permit for the east intersection of Bayfield Parkway/US 160, this would be a signaled intersection. They are working on several annexations on the east side of town and the Maverick is looking to move quickly.

Jim reported that Montezuma County is finalizing preliminary work for an off-highway bridge, rock demolition should begin soon. They met with Cortez City Council to discuss air service.

Mark reported the Town of Ignacio is wrapping up the Becker/Goddard intersection. He mentioned a special PBS program related to the US 160 project; a link will be sent out to the group.

Clyde reported that La Plata County changed the allocation of tax dollars to increase the share to Road and Bridge.

Steve reported that Dolores County is looking to readdress speeds at the intersection of Hwy 491 and CR 8.2. They have had wildlife strike issues which seem to be primarily freight related.

Martin reported the Town of Pagosa Springs is working on a number of projects along US 160. They are working on multiple grant applications. They are working on repaving roads to improve secondary roads.

Laura reported that Archuleta County is finalizing predesign for a bus terminal. They are working on a large number of projects and will be seeking grant funds.

Sarah reported that the City of Durango submitted a grant application to improve access on 32nd Street and CR 250, they were not successful in the last round. They have launched a downtown next steps program to look at alternatives along the main street downtown. They are moving forward with design for the Camino del Rio crossing.

The meeting ended at 11:26 a.m.