

Southwest Transportation Planning Region Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 10, 2023, at 9:00 am

A. Introductions

Elected Representatives		Guests			
x	Kevin Bruce	Archuleta County	Kevin Pogue	Archuleta County	
	Ronnie Maez	Archuleta County Alt.	x	Jamie Grim	CDOT
x	Brian Peckins	City of Cortez	x	Jennifer Allison	CDOT
x	Kevin Kissler	City of Cortez Alt.	x	Julie Constan	CDOT
x	Sarah Hill	City of Durango		Kevin Curry	CDOT
	Allison Baker	City of Durango Alt.	x	Tim Funk	CDOT
	Steve Garchar	Dolores County	x	TJ Burr	CDOT
	Linda Yellowman	Dolores County Alt.	x	Tony Cady	CDOT
x	Clyde Church	La Plata County	x	Melissa Lewis	CDOT
	Chuck Stevens	La Plata County Alt.		Drew Sanders	City of Cortez
x	Jim Candelaria	Montezuma County	x	Scott Baker	City of Cortez
	Kent Lindsay	Montezuma County Alt.	x	Naomi Dobbs	Congresswoman Boebert's Office
	Pete Maisel	San Juan County		Alisa Schultz	Dolores County
	Willy Tookey	San Juan County Alt.		Margaret Daves	Dolores County
	Mary Eagle	Southern Ute Indian Tribe	x	Laura Lewis Marchino	Region 9 EDD
	Roman Seibel	So. Ute Indian Tribe Alt.	x	Shak Powers	Region 9 EDD
x	Katie Sickles	Town of Bayfield		John Whitney	Senator Bennet's Office
	Nicole Killian	Town of Bayfield Alt.	x	Helen Katich	Senator Hickenlooper's Office
x	Ken Charles	Town of Dolores		Barbara McLachlan	Co. House of Representatives
	Leigh Reeves	Town of Dolores Alt.		Patrick Davis	SW Center for Independence
x	Mark Garcia	Town of Ignacio		Gloria Kaasch-Buerger	Town of Silverton
	Jeremy Mickey	Town of Ignacio Alt.	x	Herman Stockinger	CDOT
x	Heather Alvarez	Town of Mancos Alt.	x	Mike McVaugh	HDR
	Richard Tokar	Town of Mancos	x	Phil Van Hake	CDOT
x	Greg Schulte	Town of Pagosa Springs			
	Matt DeGuisse	Town of Pagosa Springs			
	Lucy Mulvihill	Town of Silverton			
	Todd Bove	Town of Silverton Alt.			

Sarah Hill called the meeting to order at 9:04 am.

B. Consent Agenda

1. Previous Meeting Minutes' approval

Motion from Clyde Church to approve the minutes as presented.

Second: Jim Candelaria; Motion passed unanimously.

2. Financial Report approval

Motion from Heather Alvarez to approve the financial report as presented.

Second: Greg Schulte; Motion passed unanimously.

C. Reports

1. TPR Study Update – Herman Stockinger

Herman reported to the group that HB 1101 required a study of the transportation regions which CDOT hadn't looked at for a long time. There are 10 rural TPRs and maps are on the CDOT website. A survey is underway to gather input with questions based on whether the respondent is a general citizen or actively engaged with the TPR. The group was encouraged to fill out the survey by August 31st. An advisory committee was put together. It is not representative of all the TPRs but meant to provide general advice. Takeaways include:

- Looking at the IGAs and bylaws for the TPRs. Not every TPR has them. SWTPR has a good set of IGAs and bylaws.
- TPRs are public bodies so CDOT is asking questions about membership, meetings, voting, website – just looking at best practices.
- TPR boundaries were created 30 years ago.
- In looking at the TPR and CDOT region maps, crash numbers, commuters etc. were looked at.
- Region geographies are based on the movement of goods, natural geography, and transit corridors. Herman cited some great data available on the CDOT website and in the presentation including commuter origin and destination of travelers.
- CDOT will sit down with TPRs first before any recommendations are made. Draft recommendations will be released in early Oct.

Comments:

- Some boundaries are due to mountain passes and maps don't show that.
- How often are boundaries looked at? – There is a cursory review required to look at when there is an update to the statewide plan....so every 5 years.
- The new transportation plan update begins next summer.
- What does the legislation require?
- Discussed regions aligned with Councils of Governments. Many COGs oversee transportation planning in addition to a lot of other programs.
- La Plata and Montrose County are the population centers in CDOT Region 5 (Engineering region) – no recommendations for changes.

2. STAC Update—Jim Candelaria

No one was able to attend in July but in August Jim Candelaria and Mary Eagle (S. Ute Tribe) attended in person. Tim Funk and Herman were also there.

Jim provided an overview of the August meeting which revolved around the formula for Regional Priority Project (RPP) funding, the most discretionary funding source for regions.

- Had a professional facilitator who kept the meeting focused and on track, even though the discussion lasted over 2 hours.

- Questions about what data should be used for population numbers. CDOT used the 2020 census. Why don't we use the State Demography data? The group voted on 2020 data.
- Discussion about how CDOT arrived at the current formula.
- STAC agreed that the RPP pot of funding needed to be doubled to 100 million. RPP- only pot of money to solve problems. Everyone is looking at how much money they get.
- Herman commented that lane miles reported to the federal government do not include acceleration or deceleration lanes and ramps. DRCOG was in favor of adding this to the lane mile calculation which would give their region more money.
- STAC members took 3 votes...on three recommendations and came back to the 2019 distribution percentage. Only the weight of 15% of vehicle miles traveled stayed the same across the three options. the SWTPR RPP amount went up to 8% from 7.04% and will get another \$500,000 once approved by Transportation Commission

Comments:

The 2019 recommendation was previously not approved by the Transportation Commission. What can we expect moving forward?

- The Transportation Commission has mostly urban-based commissioners. There will be 3-6 new commissioners and a different discussion will likely occur. Typically, the Commissioners are influenced by the interests of their region.
- The RPP formula proposal will go to the Commission in early 2024.
- Jim will be driving his car in the future as the air travel was difficult with cancellations.
- TPR reps are communicating very well. Jim and Sarah did their homework and voted in the best interest of TPR. It was great to have the extra vote of the S. Ute Representative.

3. Transportation Commissioner Report – Mark Garcia

It was a quiet meeting in July. There is turnover of Transportation Commissioners, and the group is waiting on the Governor's appointments. Mark is continuing to work with the Broadband subcommittee. looking at fiber fees in the ROW. He mentioned that outreach to the TPRs has been great and the variety of maps extremely helpful. There is still grant funding available around clean transit enterprise. Enterprise funds from SB260 are rolling into a 10-year plan. The Transportation Commission will determine how much is available.

4. Legislative Updates

Helen Katich with Senator Hickenlooper's Office provided an update.

- Several regional projects are in the Federal spending bill draft. All projects have been contacted. Included projects total \$80M which reflects a much smaller number of projects than last year. Our area projects include Police and emergency -Cortez; Corbett Creek- Ouray; social service and housing projects – Ignacio. The complete list is on Hickenlooper's website.
- Go to the Senate Appropriations committee website to see everything that has been included in the spending bills.
- Working on several letters of support for CDOT...can ask if interested in those grant programs.

- Senator Hickenlooper's Office hired a replacement for Helen who will start in September. Lisa Pool, who has experience in public lands and is knowledgeable about the area, Helen believes will be a good fit. Helen is transitioning to Washington DC.
- Any idea if congressionally directed spending will happen again? Helen said the amounts over the last three years have been declining from \$100M, \$120M, \$80M and DC is appearing to seek a balance. Senator Hickenlooper continues to advocate that this funding for community projects is really urgent.

Naomi Dobbs with Congresswomen Boebert's Office was unable to attend.

D. CDOT Reports

1. Construction Update

Tim Funk provided the report for Kevin Curry who was attending the Gunnison Valley TPR meeting.

US Hwy 160 McCabe Creek

- This project is completed after three seasons.

US 172 Ignacio to Elmore's Corner

- Milling is wrapping up and there will be one mile lane closes to work on a box culvert round mile six. The project is making its way along Hwy 172

US 160 Signals at SH145 and Chestnut

- In shut down as waiting on traffic signal poles that were ordered and delayed.

Pagosa 160 projects

- Installing Hwy 160 signal poles at night so they do not impact traffic in shut down.
- There are some growing pains with the new stripping. Trying to slow people down and implement this safety improvement. It is a sun glare zone.
- Recognize they have been in Pagosa a lot with construction fatigue.
- There are traffic delays west of town

Priority Culvert replacements

Nine culverts are on the list for replacement. One has been completed between Bayfield and Pagosa Springs. Crews are now working on the top of Wolf Creek and then going to Bayfield and Southfork.

US 160 Wolf Creek West fiber

- should be wrapping up conduit installation in the next week or so.
- Caissons will be installed in Sept and then concrete.
- Overall looking at structural stuff this season and testing over winter.
- Conduit going in but not sure status of arcadian fiber

US 550 MP Bluepoint Avalanche Mitigation

CDOT is placing an ignition system on top of Red Mountain and surrounding area with the goal to not have staff trigger avalanche slides manually. Helicopters are dropping in supplies and there have been traffic delays. CDOT has done similar projects such as on Lizard Head and it has worked really well to trigger avalanches remotely.

2. Upcoming projects

SH 151 Culvert replacement

- Received an emergency declaration to fast track this project south of Chimney Rock. May have minor impacts this fall when starting, but might also try to do a full shut down for a couple of days to get it repaired as soon as possible. This will depend on who is hired as the contractor. Julie assured the group that there would be frequent communication with all that can be impacted.
- Several chip seal projects will be combined to hopefully get more bid interest.

US 160 San Juan River

- This is a bridge repair project on Ute Mt Ute land. Both the San Juan River Bridge and Bridge at Aztec Creek will be repaired. Looking to close the road for a short time in order to complete the work as quickly as possible.

US 160 Pagosa Reconstruction

- Will be reconstructing the pavement between 10th and 1st Street. Goes to bid in the spring and construction is likely in 2024.

US 160 and CR 225

- Looking at a roundabout but La Plata County requested more community input.

US 160 Mancos Pedestrian Improvements

- Working to install some ADA ramps with matching funds from Mancos, Currently in design and awaiting construction funding.

Questions

- CDOT receives about 500K in annual signal money and will try to leverage timing for the Bayfield traffic light. Asked for funds from Lauren Boebert. Engineering is complete.

E. Other Business

1. Letters of support

At the last meeting, a notice was sent out seeing in any transit projects needed letters of support. Requests were submitted by the City of Durango, SW Center for Independence, Community Connections, and critical wildlife connectivity coordinator for CDOT. Due to the timing of the TPR meeting, the letters were needed before this meeting. Letters were sent and the group was asked to ratify providing the letters of support.

Motion from Mark Garcia to ratify the letters of support as presented.

Second: Clyde Church; Motion passed unanimously.

2. Updates – Round Robin

1. Town of Pagosa Springs

Greg Schulte introduced himself as the interim Town Manager as Andrew Phillips left her position in early August. He has heard a few comments on stripping patterns on Hwy 160 around Putt Hill and is glad to see all the new pavement throughout town. There is community construction fatigue. The Town is currently resurfacing several multipurpose trails; completed

crosswalk and pavement on 1st Street and repairing lots of pavement cuts made by Black Hills. Aspen Village work is upcoming.

2. City of Cortez

- Kevin reported that they are working on a RAISE planning grant which includes some CDOT intersections and trying to bring as many federal dollars to the City as they can, and plan to apply for implementation funds. They are working on the Denny Lake Culvert and would love to piggyback to another culvert to make the money go further. Just trying to keep up on maintenance on city roads. Cortez is also experimenting to recycle millings into their chip sealing project. They are following Federal Highway guidelines and screening out the fines to get the right gradation. It could be a possible best practice and cost effective. Happy to share.
- Received a Safe Routes to Schools grant and seek to improve South 491 pedestrian crossings and evaluate the safety of the pedestrian medians. There have been some pedestrian strikes at identified crossings, and they have received some funding to get initial studies done. They would like to fund an overall safety study for all intersections.

3. La Plata County

- Clyde reported a very active spring and summer maintenance season with lots of complaints about potholes. The County has moved around dollars to stretch money and is announcing work schedules on their website.
- Doing mill and chip seal projects. Working on CR 301, 304, 501, drainage and cleaning culverts. The construction crews working on your roads are the same people that plowed the roads in the winter.

4. Montezuma County

- Jim reported the County is doing a lot of pothole patching and chip seal projects throughout the County.
- Dolores/Norwood RD is one of the worst. Not plowed in the winter but it shows up on Google map as open and several vehicles get stuck each year. County received \$75K from Forest Service and are blading and patching as a temporary fix.
- CR N—project bridge on schedule. This is the Alkali Creek Bridge that is being funded through CDOT's off highway bridge grant.

5. Town of Bayfield

- The detour through Bayfield did not happen.
- Katie expressed concern about the shared use path and it not getting done in time to be reimbursed through the grant. She would like to ask the TPR to approve the extension. There was discussion that the project could be extended another year and CDOT will work with her. It might still come to the TPR at the next meeting.
- Ignacio—construction end in sight and looking forward to new asphalt.

6. Archuleta County

- Kevin echoed Clyde's Church's concern with signage and stripping on Putt Hill. Drivers are used to double lanes and it is pretty dangerous. Jennifer said she would confirm that there are barrels out in the areas to help with safety and also good signages.
- The fare free program this summer is seeing good response - double the ridership from last summer. Archuleta is still working through the transit facility budget to get numbers where they need to be.
- Working through tribal assistance program for CR 500.

7. Town Dolores

- Working with Montezuma County on mag chloride and dust control work. The County does and the Town pays for it. The budget will be increasing next year.
- Ken announced his retirement, and that the Town has a candidate that they will consider.

8. Region 9

- The SWCCOG received a Federal transit ICAM grant for \$350K to do a digital mobility hub pilot project to connect all regional providers. With the change of staff, this project now looks different, and we don't have the required \$80K of match. Region 9 is working with CDOT on this as it was meant to connect to the state's Connected Colorado mapping routes across the State.
- Hired a new Office Manager who will be at the next TPR meeting.
- A new MOU between governments and Region 9 will be at the next TPR meeting since the contract with CDOT has changed.
- TPR dues notices are going out. There will be no changes.

9. Durango

- Sarah reported that the safety project for College and 8th Avenue was put to bid three times with no bids received.
- There is the TAP 2016 funded Roosa project which includes pedestrian and bike facilities.
- Deciding to do the full design for their N. Main project funded by two senate bill grants to improve transit stops and sidewalks From 16th and Camino Del Rio up to Animas View Drive. The design is 30% complete.
- The Transit free fare summer was also popular in Durango. Ridership was up 34% in July compared to last year totaling 40,000 rides... Durango is having issues with receiving the 2023 operating contract for transit. They have been doing some creative budgeting to keep operating and hopefully can count as match for a different year.

10. Ute Mt Ute

- Bernadette reported that the Tribe is extremely busy. They had severe flood damage in Weber Canyon estimated at \$600K to repair and Weminuche Construction is looking at repairing three road deteriorated from flooding. They have some funding resources to look at.
- Working on Aztec Creek with CDOT for 2024.
- Attending SW Region 9 DOT to work for TTP funding for 23/24 and other transportation funding to talk about with. Ben Elmore with Weminuche is working on this.
- Conducting a traffic study around Ute Mt Casino which will include the new grocery store first phase which breaks ground in Oct. Looking at that area to see if need added lighting pedestrian crosswalks based on Traffic study.

3. Next Meeting: October 12,2023

F. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:59am