

SOUTHWEST COLORADO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REGION

Regular Meeting

Thursday, August 11, 2022, 9:00 a.m.

Colorado Department of Transportation 20581
US-160 W, Durango, CO

Hybrid video and in-person

TPR Members Present

Sarah Hill, City of Durango – Chair
Clyde Church, La Plata
Rich Landreth, Cortez (remote)
Mary Evening Star Eagle, Southern Ute (remote)
Katie Sickles, Bayfield (remote)
Steve Garchar, Dolores
Laura Vanoni, Archuleta County Transit
Mark Garcia, Transportation Commissioner
Jim Candelaria, Montezuma and Vice Chair
Andrea Phillips, Pagosa Springs (remote)
Ronnie Maez, Archuleta (remote)
Doug MacDonald S. Ute Tribal Planning (remote)

Guests

Julie Constan, CDOT
Herman Stockinger, CDOT Deputy Executive Director
Scott Baker, Cortez
Helen Katich, Senator Hickenlooper’s office (remote)
Shak Powers, Region 9 EDD
Laura Lewis Marchino, Region 9 EDD
Jamie Grim, Legislative Liaison, CDOT
Kevin Curry, CDOT Engineer (remote)
Annelise Van Vonno, CDOT (remote)
Jay Rhodes, Roadrunner Transit
John Trentini, Colorado State Patrol (remote)
Lisa Schwantes, CDOT
TJ Burr, CDOT (remote)

The meeting was called to order at 9:02am by Sarah Hill, Chair.

- I. **Introductions** – Everyone at the meeting introduced themselves.

- II. **Consent Agenda**
 1. June 2022 Meeting Minutes – The minutes were distributed in the packet. **Steve Garchar made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Clyde Church seconded, and the motion passed**

with all in favor.

III. Amendment to the Agenda

Due to Jessica Laitsch taking a new position, there were no financials presented. Laura also requested an amendment to the agenda to discuss mileage reimbursement. **Jim Candelaria made the motion and Steve Garchar seconded to add the mileage reimbursement to the agenda under discussion items. The motion passed with all in favor.**

IV. Reports

1. **STAC Update**—Sarah reported that she attended the July STAC meeting but that neither she nor Jim were available for the August meeting. She asked that the minutes of the August meeting be distributed to the group. In July, the STAC discussed a 10-year plan update to accommodate the new revenue sources. They received an overview of the National Electric Vehicle program with the goal that all of Coloradoans be within 100 miles of a charging station. The I270 project was also reviewed.
2. **Transportation Commissioner Report** – Mark Garcia reported that the Transportation Commission met in person. They held a 2023 budget workshop and then their regular meeting. They learned more about the Greenhouse gas compliance rule that will be addressed later in the meeting. There was also a Transit Roadshow that Amber Blake (previously with the City of Durango) coordinated that provided updates from three different transit providers. There was also discussion around environmental justice and equity. Jim asked more about that. Mark said that transportation projects tend to impact more low-income areas and that mitigation techniques need to be in place. Herman said CDOT is pretty good with mitigation, but they need to create a branch in the Engineer’s division do a more formal review of activities.
3. **Congressional updates-** Jamie mentioned the Senate Inflation Reduction Act that will address three areas including climate change, lower prescription drug costs and tax reform if approved. Helen also reported that Colorado will see \$46 Million through the RAISE grant and will include entities in Grand Junction, Rifle, Glenwood Springs, Alamosa and Pueblo. She discussed the Infrastructure and Jobs Act which will continue to bring money into the state and region. Laura mentioned that the State will be providing some funding to regions to help area governments that lack capacity to access funds and Colorado has put aside \$80M in match for communities that lack match to even apply for funds. Helen expects the Inflation Reduction Act to pass and said it will be the “largest climate and energy investment in the history of the world”. She mentioned various tax credits and rebates. Clyde asked about funds to assess road connecting to public lands.

V. Decision/Discussion Items

1. Received **SWTPR rural planning grant** totaling \$22,100—Laura reported that the new TPR administration contract was received and effective July 1st. It is currently under the SWCCOG, but Region 9 is looking to see if it can be transferred to their name for ease of transition. Region 9 is bringing the SWCCOG under its umbrella and with Jessica’s transition, Shak will be covering these meetings.

2. **Mileage reimbursement** –Laura mentioned that when Region 9 oversaw the SWTPR, the grant would reimburse mileage for those representatives that had to come into Durango for meetings in addition to travel to STAC meetings. She felt the budget was there. Sarah said that STAC only meets in person twice a year. **Jim Candelaria made the motion and Clyde Church seconded to begin reimbursing mileage for TPR meetings. The motion passed with all in favor.**

3. **State Patrol** - John Trentini with the CSP was invited to answer questions about speeding and asked about targeted enforcement over the summer. He mentioned that there are extra patrols through Labor Day and there are some ads from a speeding campaign that appear to be working. He said that the trends are consistent with last year and they are seeing a reduction in fatal crashes but driving under the influence, including drugs, continues to be a big problem. Steve asked about freight traffic monitoring as there have been many truck accidents in bad weather and speeding through Dove Creek. There are cameras in ports and more might be done with information in truck port areas. There is only one level one truck inspector right now. The CSP is down 5 troopers. There are currently 18 that work in 3 teams. He said that they cover 7 counties, and it can be 2 years to get a new trooper. Clyde asked if they lose employees to other agencies out of state. John said not so much out of state but there are several hardship transfers out of our region due to the cost of living. State Patrol officers must live in Colorado and have guidelines of how far they need to be from the office. Clyde mentioned that the County now allows law enforcement to live out of state and with a lower cost of living in NM, which is working. They can also take the vehicles home. Julie noted that CDOT employees are now allowed to live out of state.

4. **Greenhouse Gas Presentation** – Herman Stockinger, CDOT’s Deputy Executive Director provided a PowerPoint on the new greenhouse requirements for non MPO areas. The regulations right now look to impact 7 projects that are defined as regionally significant. They include Floyd Hill (by Denver), and one in the SWTPR –Elmore’s east. 1 mile of center lane capacity is considered significant. The steps to determine greenhouse gas emissions include looking at the existing 10-year plan, plugging in the regionally significant projects and what has changed. Then mitigation or other measures must be identified to get to the GHG reduction level needed. He felt that we were going to be ok for right now. The regulations are difficult but not impossible. They will be presenting to the Transportation Commission to show they met their goal which is a 7.4% reduction by 2025. There is a model that they will run again with the updated 10-year plan. The model takes into account remote work, broadband and e-bike usage. Their goal with rural transit to reach preCOVID levels with ridership and they expect ridership to increase. The model also looks at land use which is the built environment that changes density. It does make a difference if we have denser populations. Items like multi-family housing units can be a positive for the environment as well as housing. There are also efforts to replace diesel with electric buses. Herman said 75% of the goal we can get to with assumptions and the other 25% with mitigation. 2025-2030 compliance will determine compliance for 2040-2050. Jim mentioned that he attended a NACO conference in Colorado and that electric busses struggle in elevation and it is hard to back into chargers. He also asked what landfills are doing with batteries. Shak said the batteries are hazardous waste and the closest place to take them is Grand Junction, but they only take items from Mesa County. Need to look at unintended consequences. Herman mentioned the Colorado Energy Office should be looking at this. Mark Garcia felt there was some activity in the private sector. Clyde said he

found 5 startup companies around recycling batteries. Scott asked how they got their working from home numbers. How do they know? There was a discussion around different data and sources.

5. **Letters of Support for 5310:** Several requests for letters of support were submitted to the TPR. Community Connections, City of Durango, Region 9, and Archuleta County information was emailed prior to the meeting. **Clyde Church made the motion and Jim Candelaria seconded to approve letters of support from the SWTPR be submitted. The motion passed with all in favor. Laura will send out the letters.**

VI. CDOT Reports

1. **Construction Update** – Kevin provided a construction update that will be included in the minutes packet and was sent out. Project highlights include:

Completed Projects:

- Durango 9th to 12th on Hwy 550 through Durango
- SH 172 and CR 318 outside of Ignacio will be completed in July.
- Wildlife crossing project on Hwy 160 completed with a grand Opening including the S. Ute Indian Tribe. Kevin hopes to have photos of animal usage in upcoming meetings.

Current Projects:

US 160 Wolf Creek West Fiber- 22107

Budget: \$12 million

This project will take place on US 160 Wolf Creek Pass from approximate MP 153- 168, within Archuleta and Mineral Counties. Conduit, fiber optic cables and manholes will be installed on the western side of Wolf Creek Pass, from the summit down to Pagosa Springs. The project will also install ITS devices such as variable speed limits tied to friction sensors, a downhill truck warning system for the west side of the pass, and additional cameras. Work restarted on May 21, 2022, and has an estimated completion date in fall 2022.

US 160 Four Corners to Aztec Creek- 22193

Budget: \$26 million (plus ~\$3M NMDOT)

This surface treatment project is located on US 160 from MP 0- 8, in Montezuma County. Planned work includes a full depth reclamation, widening to accommodate a northbound passing lane from milepost 5.5 – 6.5 and a southbound passing lane from milepost 3.5 – 4.5. It will also include 6-foot shoulders for the length of the project in Colorado. Culvert extensions, bridge repair and guardrail installation are also required. NMDOT has partnered with CDOT to pave their portion of US160. Construction began on April 18, 2022, and has an estimated completion date of December 2022.

US 160 McCabe Creek Pagosa - 19263

Budget: \$7.35 million

This project is located on US 160 at approximate MP 143, near downtown Pagosa Springs in Archuleta County. This project will involve replacing aged metal culverts with new precast concrete box culverts. Additionally, riprap lined drainage improvements will establish a new downstream channel, allowing for better drainage along the road. Other work will include updating the guardrail and bridge rail, erosion control, sidewalk work, and fencing along the corridor. Work began on this two-season project on August 2, 2021 and is expected to be completed by January 2023.

US 550/160 Connection South Design- Build- 22420

Budget: \$99.6 million (estimated total cost)

The connection will realign US 550 directly into the existing US 160 interchange, eliminating the steep and windy grade of the current US 550 Farmington Hill and improving roadway geometry. The project will include wildlife highway mitigation features which will reduce animal-vehicle collisions. Both bridges are now constructed. Current work includes finishing monuments and bridge curbs, paving preparation, the continuation of installing deer fencing and small mammal crossings and Phase 3 of powerline relocation. Construction began in August 2020 and now has an estimated completion date in fall 2023

US 160 West of Pagosa MP 135- 144 ST- 23505

Budget: \$7 million

This surface treatment project is located on US 160 in the Town of Pagosa Springs, approximate MP 135 to 144. Work will include a 1" surface treatment leveling course and a 1.5" SMA overlay as well as a 2.5" mill and fill at intersection locations with curb and gutter construction. This project will be re-advertised this fall with construction expected to begin in the spring of 2023.

US 172 Ignacio to Elmore's Corner- 24092

Budget: \$11.5 million

This project will be located on SH 172 at approximate MP 8.3 to 24.5, from Ignacio to the Elmore's Corner intersection of SH 172 and US 160. The work will include a 16.2-mile surface treatment along with ADA ramp improvements in the Town of Ignacio. This project is scheduled for Ad in December 2022 and construction tentative for spring 2023.

US 160 Bayfield to Yellow Jacket Capeseal- 23782

Budget: \$3.5mill

This project will be located on US 160, at approximate MP 102.7 to 117, in-between Bayfield and Piedra. This section of highway will receive an engineered capeseal surface treatment. Construction planned for spring 2024.

US 160 & CR 225 MP 94.04 Improvements- 23001

Budget: \$6.8mill

This project will be located on US 160 at the intersection of CR 225, at approximate MP 94.05, east of Durango. An intersection study was performed here to evaluate safer, alternative options for the design of this intersection. The results of this study are being analyzed and the project is in the Design phase. The Ad date is tentative for January 2023.

US 160 Section 3 Priority Culverts- 23191

Budget: \$1.9mill

This project will be located on US 160, starting in Montezuma County, at approximate MP 47, and continuing East to several locations up to a culvert on Wolf Creek Pass. A number of Priority culverts will be repaired or replaced. Construction scheduled for spring 2023.

US 160 San Juan River Bridge Scour- 20685

Budget: \$2 million

This project is located on US 160 at the Colorado/ New Mexico state line, approximate MP 0. The project will provide scour protection for the bridge which will help contain the increase in runoff. Improvements to a second bridge at Aztec Creek have also been added to the project scope. Construction tentatively anticipated for January 2024.

US 160D Mancos Pedestrian Improvements- 24618

Budget: \$720k

CDOT is planning on the construction of ADA ramp improvements along US 160D in the Town of Mancos. The design is expected to be complete and shelved in 2023, awaiting construction funding.

US 160 Signals at SH 145 & Chestnut Street- 24772

Budget: \$200k Design

This project is located on US 160 in the City of Cortez, in Montezuma County. The project will consist of signal improvements at the intersection of US 160 and SH 145, as well as the intersection of US 160 and Chestnut Street. Work will include the replacement of old existing traffic signals, poles and electronics. Construction anticipated for spring 2023.

US 160 Mancos Hill to Durango Chipseal- 24954

Budget: \$3mill

This project is located on US 160 from the Town of Mancos, Eastbound to Durango in Montezuma and La Plata Counties, approximate MP 61- 81. Work will include a chipseal, fog coat, the addition of rumble strips and new pavement markings. Construction tentatively anticipated for spring 2024.

US 160 Pagosa Reconstruct- 21919

Budget: \$15mill

This project is located on US 160 through the Town of Pagosa Springs, approximate MP 142-144, in Archuleta County. The current scope includes improvements to US 160 Between 10th and 1st Streets. An overlay and restriping is planned from 10th Street to the west side of 8th Street with concrete reconstruction continuing from west of 8th Street to the east side of 3rd Street. Additional work will include ADA upgrades to curb ramps and sidewalks at select intersections throughout the project limits and drainage improvements. Construction tentatively planned for spring 2024.

VII. Other Business

1. Round Robin Updates

Montezuma - Jim reported that the Hwy160 by the NM State line was in bad condition, and he is glad it is being worked on.

La Plata – Clyde said that the rains have impacted County roads and that there is chip sealing scheduled on CR 516, 214 and 243 and two gravel roads washed out. CR 141 -Wildcat was recoded. They are working with the S. Ute Tribe and having road discussions as there is a lot of commonality and cross usage.

Dolores – Steve said that Emery is building fiber to the home with completion expected in 2023. The Dollar Store in Dove Creek is requiring a new lane and is on an emergency generator until they get their permits to run electrical under the highway. Steve asked Julie if the delay is a CDOT or Dollar Store issue. Julie said that the permits unit is short staffed as is access and special use.

Roadrunner Transit – Jay discussed the Centura grant of \$100K that will allow them to expand service starting Sept. 1st. They said that they hope to cover Wildcat Canyon and Mayday and applied for County funding to go as far as Forest Lakes. Clyde connected him with Ted Holteen, the La Plata County PIO. They have no plans to go north of Durango, but they need more

vehicles now that their website is up, and they are proving transit to Arboles. Started Bustang service from Bayfield June first and they are seeing a consistent 25 to 40 riders a day on Durango to Grand Junction route. There is no funding to go to NM, but they would like to include Aztec to get employees for the Tribe and it is part of the S. Ute Tribes' five-year plan. Overall, fixed route has seen a decline in ridership, but demand response is up.

Jay reported that the free fare August has resulted in 40% higher ridership rates. They don't really make money on fares and have additional COVID funding. Free fares feel like the direction to go moving forward. They are increasing driver wages (Ignacio and the supply of drivers is good).

There were questions about commercial driver's training and Laura Lewis Marchino will ask Heather Otter in her office to provide an update at the next meeting as they are working on this.

Archuleta Transit -Laura reported their bus facility is in the design stage so a perfect time to get electric chargers and start looking at electric buses. They got money for two. They are wanting to continue to increase service. They offer every other Thursday trips from Pagosa to Durango and would like to go weekly. They also do every other week to Arboles. Archuleta Transit is looking at micro transit off Hwy 160 as their focus doing demand response to the bus stops on 160. They are looking to develop a park n ride at the Aspen Springs Subdivision (economically disadvantaged area that already has an informal ride share). CDOT has a staging property that they are looking to convert to a water fill station, park n ride and put in a carrier neutral location for broadband on those eleven acres.

They are working with the S. Ute Tribe on CR 500 as there are probably 60 culverts that have problems causing water and rock fall and reducing their ability to use for transit which would save so much time. Laura said there "is a whole list of things they want to do "and are working on a multimodal plan to identify all those items from reroutes to bikeshare etc.

Pagosa Springs -Andrea updated the group that paving Cloman Road is underway and there is work looking at CR 982 to Navajo State park for engineering. They are looking at funds for the Pedestrian bridge on 1st Street and Town to Lakes Bridge has some TAP funding. Working with CDOT on 84 and 160 intersections.

S. Ute – Doug appreciates the collaboration with La Plata, Archuleta and Roadrunner Transit to serve tribal members and they have a new long-range place to accomplish. Tribal Council has been funding a Tribal campus road plan and they are working on that year by year. They are repaving and reconstruction the road in the largest tribal subdivision, about 6 miles of road. Doug said he is a frequent rider of Roadrunner, and it is a great program. Their road maintenance plan is up and running. Mary Evening Star Eagle introduced herself to the group.

Bayfield - Katie said that they were awarded funds for their pedestrian crossing over Hwy 160 and working on an east intersection traffic light.

Cortez- Rich reported the S. Sligo project is completed with included improvements in the transit stop. They are working on our annual chip seal and patching of city roads and working with CDOT on various intersection issues. Scott bakes mentioned talking with the City Manager and will follow up with Julie about getting projects added to the list.

Durango – Sarah said that the fare free transit has been very successful. They only get \$90K a year in fares in a \$2.5 million dollar budget so would like to do a free service moving forward. They are updating their multi-modal plan and the RFP closes this week. They are also working on a parking plan study and encouraging multi modal options. The public wants a parking garage but there is a 70% vacancy at the Transit parking, so it is more a matter of needing to educate the community. There is a planned road diet project from 8th to College and down College Dr. (I shaped) to have a center lane construction. The Camino Crossing at 12th Street underpass is on hold as the City works with the Fire Department on their future location plans. The Roosa connect is 90% designed but shelved due to politics. They received TAP money in 2016.

Ignacio – Mark mentioned that handicap ramp and sidewalk improvements happening in town. With his Transportation Commissioner hat, Mark is looking at policy around the Executive Order for greenhouse gas emission control and appreciated the feedback. He mentioned concern with CDOT's role in broadband and will continue to work on that. He thanked Lisa Schwantes for all the work with the wildlife crossing dedication and photos.

VIII. Adjourn

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 11:26am.

Next regular meeting will be Thursday, October 11, 2022.