

MINUTES

PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

MAY 28, 2015

A meeting of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments was held on Thursday, May 28, 2015, at the Pueblo County Department of Emergency Management, 101 West 10th Street, 1st Floor Conference Room. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Terry Hart, Chairman, at 12:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Those members present were:

Ed Brown
John Cordova
Dennis Flores
Nick Gradisar
Terry Hart
Judy Leonard

Ted Lopez
Roger Lowe
Tony Montoya
Steve Nawrocki
Bob Schilling

Those members absent were:

Michael Colucci
Buffie McFadyen
Eva Montoya

Chris Nicoll
Sal Pace

Also present were:

Joan Armstrong
Sam Azad
Scott Hobson

Louella Salazar
Greg Styduhar

CONSENT ITEMS:

Ms. Joan Armstrong, PACOG Manager, reported there were two items listed on the agenda under the Consent Items. She summarized the two Consent Items for PACOG.

Chairman Hart asked if there were any other additions or amendments to the Consent Items or if any of the members or audience would like any of the items removed or discussed that are on the Consent agenda.

It was moved by John Cordova, seconded by Tony Montoya, and passed unanimously to approve the two Consent Items listed below:

- Minutes of April 23, 2015 Meeting; and
- Treasurer's Report (Receive and file March and April 2015 Financial Reports).

REGULAR ITEMS:

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

(A) Introduction of New Pueblo West Metropolitan District Member

Chairman Hart welcomed Ms. Judy Leonard, who will be representing the Pueblo West Metropolitan District.

(B) Certificate of Appreciation to Lewis Quigley, Outgoing Pueblo West Metropolitan District Member

Chairman Hart presented a certificate of appreciation to Mr. Lewis Quigley, the outgoing Pueblo West Metropolitan District representative.

Mr. Quigley stated PACOG is the most important group in the Pueblo region. He acknowledged Ms. Salazar for her dedication and services to PACOG. He stated it was a privilege being on PACOG and working with the members.

(C) Lunch Appreciation

Chairman Hart thanked the Salt Creek Sanitation District for providing lunch for today's meeting.

(D) PACOG Budget Committee Report

Chairman Hart reported the Budget Committee is in a research process trying to understand how other COGs are structured from a governing perspective, voting perspective, and dues/fees paying perspective. What their goal is to put together a draft proposal and circulate it to all the members to get feedback. The Budget Committee will then prepare a draft of the members' feedback for PACOG's review.

MANAGER'S REPORT

There was no Manager's Report.

SOUTHWEST CHIEF UPDATE

Chairman Hart stated Mr. Sal Pace, County Commissioner, could not attend today. He stated if any of the members have any questions concerning the Southwest Chief to contact Mr. Pace.

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER/CDOT REGION 2 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Ajin Hu, South Program Engineer for the Colorado Department of Transportation, reported the groundbreaking for the I-25/Ilex project is July 1, 2015. Additionally, there will be an overlay done on State Highway 47. The work on the Bonforte Bridge will be postponed until next year due to Xcel Energy having to relocate a high pressure pipeline, which was supposed to be done on May 4th, but it didn't happen. CDOT will not be able

to finish the bridge before the next semester for CSU-Pueblo. CDOT spoke with the university and it was decided that the bridge work would be done next year.

Chairman Hart asked the groundbreaking would be taking place where the old Cliff Brice station was located. Ms. Hu replied she did not know, but Mr. Joe DeHeart should be contacting everyone.

Mr. Montoya asked if a decision had been made when the work would be done on the Bonforte Bridge. Ms. Hu replied it would be done during the summer. The bridge will be closed to traffic during this time. The work will be done around the school schedule.

Chairman Hart read into the record Mr. Bill Thiebaut, the Region 2 Transportation Commissioner's comments:

- The Transportation Commission resolved to commit \$1 million to the City of La Junta for its TIGER VII Southwest Chief application as matching funds;
- Considered financing options for the relocation of the administration and maintenance facilities of the Region 2 headquarters. A special executive session will be held June 12 to discuss this in more detail.
- Acting as the Bridge Enterprise Board, the Transportation Commission added to its FY 2015 Bridge Enterprise budget: \$425,000 for design of the bridge at SH96 over Rush Creek in Pueblo County.

Mr. Cordova asked if CDOT is planning on moving its Region 2 headquarters out of Pueblo. Mr. Azad stated he has heard a rumor that CDOT is planning to move its headquarters to Colorado Springs or Fountain. He felt we need to get mobilized on this issue. Chairman Hart felt it was important for the City and County to talk to Mr. Thiebaut and get his guidance on what could be done to have the biggest impact. Mr. Nawrocki stated Mr. Thiebaut's comments do not provide specifics. Chairman Hart stated there will be an executive session on June 12th, so timing is of the essence. He stated he would get more information and get this out to everyone. Mr. Flores stated it sounded like the relocation decision has already been made, but the options on how they are going to accomplish this is what needs to be discussed. Chairman Hart replied he read it as the option may also include where, which could mean they could relocate to another location in Pueblo. Mr. Azad stated the City will work on its end to coordinate. Mr. Styduhar stated that this is being held in an executive session for discussion, so he didn't believe the relocation decision has been made. He asked Mr. Hobson if he has heard anything. Mr. Hobson responded staff has had some discussions with Ms. Karen Rowe, Region 2 Director. CDOT has secured some real estate brokerage firms to work on both the relocation of Region 1 in Denver and Region 2. Options are being developed and different properties are being looked at, which would be presented to the Colorado Transportation Commission. CDOT is looking at potential sites within Pueblo and Pueblo County, and also outside of Pueblo in El Paso County. Chairman Hart stated anytime conversations such as these occur that it is critical and sensitive and he felt we should weigh in. Mr. Cordova stated CDOT already has a large administrative building in Colorado Springs. Mr. Schilling asked if they are suggesting that PACOG send a letter. Chairman Hart stated, at this point, because of the fact of the timing, etc. he felt more comfortable with coordinating and contacting Mr. Thiebaut. He stated if there is something we can do from a PACOG perspective, then PACOG could be notified. He felt at this time the City and County need to weigh in. He asked PACOG if they felt a letter should go out. Mr. Flores felt Mr. Thiebaut should be contacted, noting

he needs to layout the groundwork. He felt we need to take direction from him. Chairman Hart added Mr. Thiebaut knows the sensitivity of it. Mr. Flores stated he would like Chairman Hart to talk to Mr. Thiebaut. Chairman Hart stated whatever he learned he would get it out to the members.

MPO STAFF REPORT:

(A) Administrative Amendment

Mr. Scott Hobson, MPO Administrator, reported there was an Administrative Amendment to the PACOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in the MPO/TPR Area. This is the addition of \$45,000 to the initial \$427,000 for the Santa Fe Streetscape Project, which is between 6th and 8th Streets. The engineer's estimate exceeded the original grant amount. These are funds which were originally part of the enhancement program that were returned and not used. These funds are now being reallocated to this project. The funds will primarily be used at the intersections of 7th and Santa Fe and 8th and Santa Fe. There was no formal action that needed to be taken by PACOG.

(B) Presentation on PACOG MPO Travel Demand Model

Mr. Scott Hobson, MPO Administrator, introduced Ms. Maureen Pas de Araujo from HDR Engineering, the MPO Travel Demand Model consultant. HDR has been working with the MPO for the last year on the Travel Demand Model (TDM) upgrade. This is the model which is used to identify impacts of future roadway improvements, the existing congestion system on the roadways, and if certain roadway improvements are initiated over the period of our Long Range Transportation Plan, which is 25 years, what would be those impacts on our transportation system based on future population growth. The TDM identifies where growth will occur and where jobs will be located within the 25-year period. He stated the same presentation was made to the Transportation Advisory Committee.

Ms. Maureen Pas de Araujo, HDR Engineering, presented a PowerPoint presentation. She stated the base calibration was completed within four months and then it was enhanced so that staff could use it. She stated modeling tools are divided up into three categories. The PACOG model is a macroscopic tool and focuses on regional planning, large networks, and its land use basis. At the sub-area, there are mesoscopic models which are used for quarter planning. This type of modeling was done for the U.S. 50 study and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for I-25. The model was calibrated in the base year within 2% and it will be very useful to consultant teams to do understudies and to go into the microscopic model, which is detailed and looks at signal timing, the interaction of the modes, pedestrians, etc. The PACOG model is called a four-step trip space model. The four steps are trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice, and assignment. The trip generation includes data within small traffic analysis zones within the region, socioeconomic data, population by household size and by income category, etc. Rates were developed on households that provided information on the number of work trips. The next step, trip distribution, provides information on the number of trips from one zone to another. The mode choice is how you make those trips (i.e., walk, bus, drive a car, etc.). The final step is traffic assignment to the network. This includes volume on the roadways and travel speeds. She stated the model is

broken down by time of day, noting it is important to know whether it is done in the a.m. or p.m. and what are the peak congestion hours, as well as off-peak hours.

Ms. Pas de Araujo stated traffic demand forecasting is estimating traffic volume and transit ridership. The model works with two basic pieces. Not all of the roadways are modeled within the network. The green lines are the boundaries of the traffic analysis zones. The red lines are connectors that approximate the roads that are not there (i.e., centroid connectors). Data includes network data, which includes number of lanes, free-flow speeds, capacity, and functional class. Zonal data includes socioeconomic data, such as population in households by household size and income categories, employment by category, etc. She showed a slide on the existing conditions and what routes are congested. Another slide showed identifying needs which showed how will congestion change if we do nothing. The next slide showed testing alternatives and how will planned improvements improve conditions.

Ms. Pas de Araujo continued with the signal timing and progression analysis. The traffic signal timing showed how it can be changed to improve traffic flow. The signal progression analysis showed how corridor progression can be changed to improve traffic flow. The slides were animated and showed how these work. She stated she was at a conference last week and met with the software vendors, and they do have a mesoscopic/microscopic package called trans model, noting it would interface with the PACOG model well. The software vendors will be coming to Colorado to give more training. PACOG staff may be able to be trained at the same time.

Mr. Flores asked how you study a roadway like Highway 50 where truckers and people are avoiding it because it is not a direct four-lane highway. He questioned how you would determine how the traffic patterns would change if you did have that kind of highway and how much relief it would produce to Interstate 70 in Northern Colorado because they are avoiding Highway 50. Ms. Pas de Araujo responded the State is currently in the process of developing a State-wide model. Mr. Flores stated one thing you hear all the time is that Interstate 70 is looking for relief, and he felt that the relief is utilizing Highway 50 correctly. He stated people are avoiding Highway 50 because it is not conducive to semis and other vehicles, and he felt Highway 50 could be part of the solution for Interstate 70. Ms. Pas de Araujo replied the State-wide model would show the traffic which wants to enter and leave the State and there would be a network assignment where you can look and improve Highway 50.

Mr. Flores stated he has been to several communities in Colorado where roundabouts work well. He stated certain highways in Pueblo County, such as Highway 78, a neighborhood has been totally locked in and cannot go out east, but can only go west and make a U-turn in the middle of the highway to go east. Ms. Pas de Araujo replied if there was a roundabout at that intersection it might work. Mr. Flores felt this was a perfect spot for a roundabout.

Chairman Hart felt that a roundabout would probably work at the intersection of Eagleridge on the east side of the big box stores. Ms. Pas de Araujo replied roundabouts are high capacity intersections and can replace a signalized intersection. There has to be a lot of care in the way they are designed. It would have to be designed for truckers to navigate around it, and they have to be signed correctly because they can be confusing for drivers. She stated there is a lot of research of using mini-roundabouts in the place of four-way stops.

Mr. Hobson stated at the Dillon interchange, which is under construction, that there will be roundabouts on each side of it. He stated they are doing initial roadway design at the interchange of Dillon Drive and Eagleridge, and they will look at possibly placing a roundabout in this area.

Mr. Hobson stated HDR Engineering is helping the staff generate the vision list of projects which will be in the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan. They have gone through and identified each of the segments of each of those projects, and have priced those out at \$1.6 billion, noting the money is not available for all the projects. Staff and the consultants are going back and looking at what might be the criteria used to scale back the number of projects in the 2040 plan that can fit within the 25-year funding projections. Staff will be going back at a macro level and look at how those projects would impact the capacity of roadways, the amount of time it takes on those roadways, and then go back and evaluate which projects would have more impact and bang for the buck. He stated these projects will be included in the Long Range Transportation Plan. He stated the TDM will be used as a significant tool.

Mr. Brown asked if the Joe Martinez Boulevard extension to 24th Street is included. Mr. Hobson replied it is in the vision plan. Mr. Brown asked how many miles it is. Mr. Hobson replied three miles. Chairman Hart asked if there was a cost estimate. Mr. Hobson responded they could get a cost estimate, as well as get a list of the other projects and their estimated costs. Staff is working with HDR on the criteria to narrow the list of projects down and show the benefits of the different projects. Mr. Brown asked how far it is on the chart for it to go into downtown. Mr. Hobson replied the vision plan has it from Joe Martinez to Purcell to Pueblo Boulevard to 24th Street to Tuxedo to 18th then cross the railroad to the south of the State Hospital. There are two options. One option would be to connect to 8th Street and the second option would be into the Midtown under the 4th Street Bridge to 4th-D Street. The second option includes lots and railroad acquisition. He stated the connection to 8th Street would be more challenging, but it would be a much easier project to accomplish.

Mr. Nawrocki stated he has noticed more people going down one-way streets in the wrong direction in the City center area. He was concerned and would like for this to be addressed. He wondered if it would be possible to create more density for the streets to be more user-friendly. He stated he would like this to be looked at in the future. Mr. Hobson stated he would talk to Ms. Pepper Whittlef from the City Transportation Department about this. He stated it is a challenge with the different one-way streets, and they would look at potentially eliminating some of the one-way streets.

Mr. Flores asked why a toll road approach could not be used at Joe Martinez Boulevard. Mr. Hobson answered this has been an option. He felt it could be considered as an option in the future because not only Pueblo but all of the areas around the State are looking at other ways to try to fund highway projects. Gas tax and sales tax are not necessarily going to cut it and be able to afford to get projects done in a timely manner. Tolls are being looked at and should be considered. Mr. Flores asked why we have to wait on it and why we couldn't move forward on it. Mr. Hobson replied that the alignment on the segment from Purcell to Pueblo Boulevard has been identified and surveyed, noting this is probably the easiest segment to move forward with. The segment from Pueblo Boulevard to town has more issues. He felt it is certainly something that could become a priority and we could move forward. Mr. Cordova asked why this project isn't

moved to a higher priority. He felt it could be an economic stimulus for Pueblo Boulevard and 24th Street, and more businesses would probably go in the area, as well as Purcell and Joe Martinez. Mr. Hobson responded the Joe Martinez connection was included the PEL Study. There was an analysis done if that roadway was developed how much traffic would be pulled from Highway 50. There is a substantial benefit. There is even more benefit for having the section from Pueblo Boulevard into downtown and would have a greater impact. He felt there was justification, noting it is more of a funding issue.

Ms. Kristen Castor, secretary of the ADA Committee, stated there is another way to fund those segments. She stated the committee is trying to get their officials in line to get a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to address several problems. She stated Colorado Springs and the surrounding communities put together a list of projects and they prioritized those projects and then they raised the sales tax. The projects were completed in order. It was successful in that everyone got what they wanted. The RTA always has a list of projects to go to when the first list is done. The list would probably include the road from Pueblo West into Pueblo because it is a tax increase and Pueblo West has a tax base. It would also possibly include roadway repairs, sidewalks, and transit. She stated if we have a really good transit system in Pueblo we could feed into the Riverwalk, alleviate traffic downtown, etc. She stated the reason she was at this meeting was Mr. Pace was supposed to give a presentation on the Southwest Chief, and he is on record that he would like a RTA for it. She stated she didn't know if we have room for everyone who wants a piece of the funding, but she would like to put forth the idea and get some movement going and come up with a list of priorities. We could come up with a survey and see if the citizens agree and then put it to the vote. She stated she has spoken with people who would be willing to work on the outreach and explaining to the public why they should vote on it. She felt it would take a concerted effort on the City and County to get it done because it would be a tax increase.

Chairman Hart stated Mr. Hobson indicated that the 24th Street extension would take pressure off of Highway 50. He asked if there is any potential for State funding. Mr. Hobson replied they would have to go through the process to determine if off-system improvements would be more valuable to the U.S. 50 corridor rather than additional on-system improvements, noting they would have to show justification. He stated when the TDM was run and they only did the improvements on U.S. 50 and the additional lanes, what happened was the congestion level didn't really decrease all that much. What happens in the TDM is as you added the lanes the people who were not choosing to drive on Highway 50 begin to want to drive on it. There was some improvement on congestion, but the third lane is filled up once it is built. Technically, Joe Martinez is an off-system and not a part of the State or Federal highway systems so you would have to provide a reason why it would more prudent to invest in off-system than to invest money in on-system, which could be a challenge.

Mr. Cordova asked if CDOT wasn't committed to doing the Pueblo Boulevard and 24th Street portion. Mr. Hobson felt that was correct, noting CDOT did commit to doing the drainage culvert at 24th Street and Pueblo Boulevard. The drainage culverts would have to be expanded to do any major improvements in the area. Those were originally a part of the Pueblo Boulevard and State Highway 45 project. Mr. Cordova felt it should be a toll road, noting only the people who are going to use it will actually pay for it. He felt it would increase the number of people using it.

Chairman Hart asked if PACOG would like to place this on the next agenda under Future Agenda Items. Staff could provide PACOG with the history, challenges, priorities, etc. PACOG could discuss what they feel is a priority. He stated he would also like to have the RTA funding options be discussed. Mr. Nawrocki felt it makes sense. He stated at the current time that SRDA is the only public transportation to Pueblo West, noting the demand is growing.

Mr. Flores stated the reason that the Pikes Peak RTA was successful was because it identified specifically what was going to be done with the money, and it also had a sunset date. He felt Pueblo could be successful in using the same model and creating a sunset so that the public knows it is a temporary task, and if the citizens want to continue with it then it would be placed back on the ballot. He felt we need to talk about it now rather than later.

Chairman Hart stated he felt like PACOG would like to have two topics on the agenda at the next meeting: (1) further development of the 24th Street extension (Joe Martinez extension), and (2) a dialogue/discussion on the RTA.

Mr. Hobson stated typically PACOG usually does not meet in June. He stated it would help staff if this could be scheduled at the July PACOG meeting.

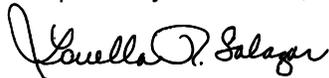
FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Chairman Hart asked if there were any other topics which they would like discussed at the next meeting other than the two topics: (1) further development of 24th Street extension (Joe Martinez extension), and (2) a dialogue/discussion on the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). He stated if the PACOG members should want any other items discussed at the next meeting to please let staff know.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further regular business before PACOG, John Cordova moved, seconded by Dennis Flores, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 1:27 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, June 25, 2015, at the Pueblo County Department of Emergency Management, 101 West 10th Street, 1st Floor Conference Room. (Note: There is a possibility that this meeting will not occur depending whether there will be items which require action. If this meeting does not occur, then the next meeting is scheduled for July 23, 2015.)

Respectfully submitted,



Louella R. Salazar
PACOG Recording Secretary

LRS

JOINT CITY COUNCIL AND BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Following the regular PACOG meeting, there was a joint meeting held between the Pueblo City Council and Board of County Commissioners to appoint a Joint City/County member to the Community Services Advisory Commission. Mr. Abel Gebre Laeke was selected. His appointment needs to be ratified by the City Council and Board of County Commissioners at their respective meetings. Additionally, a Joint City/County appointment was made to the Pueblo City-County Health Department Board of Health. Ms. Eileen Dennis was selected. Her appointment needs to be ratified by the City Council and Board of County Commissioners at their respective meetings.