

MINUTES

PUEBLO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

JULY 23, 2015

A meeting of the Pueblo Area Council of Governments was held on Thursday, July 23, 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
Michael Colucci
John Cordova
Terry Hart
Judy Leonard
Ted Lopez

Roger Lowe
Buffie McFadyen
Tony Montoya
Steve Nawrocki
Bob Schilling

Those members absent were:

Dennis Flores
Nick Gradisar
Eva Montoya

Chris Nicoll
Sal Pace

Also present were:

Joan Armstrong
Sam Azad
Peter Blood

Dan Kogovsek
Scott Hobson
Louella Salazar

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 Roger Lowe, seconded by Buffie McFadyen, and passed unanimously to approve the two Consent Items listed below:

- Minutes of May 28, 2015 meeting; and
- Treasurer's Report (Receive and file May and June 2015 Financial Reports).

REGULAR ITEMS:

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

(A) Lunch Appreciation

Chairman Hart thanked the Pueblo Board of County Commissioners for providing lunch for today's meeting.

MANAGER'S REPORT

(A) EPAC Minutes/Statement/Report

Ms. Armstrong reported the PACOG packet included the draft EPAC minutes, with attachments, from the June 4, 2015 EPAC meeting.

Chairman Hart stated the minutes indicate that EPAC has been having a conversation about a proposed amendment to the City's recycling ordinance. He stated the minutes also reflect the possibility of EPAC making a presentation to PACOG at its next meeting to obtain advice.

PROPOSAL TO RENAME DILLON FLYOVER

Dr. Margaret Redmond, Chair of the Board of Directors for the New MLK Historical Center and Museum, asked PACOG consider naming the Dillon Drive flyover after the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She stated as Pueblo continues to be a beacon of light to other communities, particularly up I-25 and how to do activism and how to work together, that having the flyover named after Dr. King would people on notice as they come into the City that this is a place where all humans are valued. The Martin Luther King Historical Center and Museum was the result of community concern about the loss of the Lincoln Historic Home. She stated naming the flyover after Dr. King will speak volumes to the community. She stated as executive director of the Human Resources Commission they work diligently to live out the model of community which Dr. King talked about. She felt this would be wonderful asset for Pueblo, as well as the nation.

Chairman Hart asked PACOG staff what would be the process for considering the naming, noting is it a City, PACOG, or State function. Mr. Scott Hobson, Assistant City Manager-Community Development Department, replied it would be a function of the City Council. At this time, it is identified as an existing roadway that has a name, so it would be a name change once it is completed. Mr. Colucci asked if the request was to change the name of the roadway or the bridge itself. Dr. Redmond replied it would be the bridge itself. Mr. Hobson stated that would have to be clarified with any proposal or recommendation to City Council.

It was moved by Tony Montoya and seconded by Roger Lowe that PACOG lend its support by recommending to the City of Pueblo that it consider naming the bridge after Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Discussion occurred. Mr. Nawrocki asked if he was voting for Dr. Redmond to come before City Council with this. Chairman Hart replied yes. Mr. Nawrocki felt it was a little premature, noting that the City should be making this determination. He felt there should

be a dialog by the City Council on this proposal. Councilman Cordova agreed with PACOG's recommendation. Councilman Brown stated he was fine with it.

After discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSIONER/CDOT REGION 2 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Karen Rowe, CDOT Region 2 Director, reported the new Region 2 CDOT headquarters will be remaining in Pueblo, and they are moving forward with this. They have looked at a few locations, noting they could not disclose them at this time. CDOT's real estate brokers are working with the locals to determine what type of infrastructure improvements and other benefits can be provided for those sites. A request for proposal (RFP) is out for a design-build contractor team to build the headquarters. The Colorado Transportation Commission approved money for staff to hire the design/build contractor team and they will be going through a selection process. They should have the team selected by early September and under contract by October. By that time, a site should be determined. Once the architect works with CDOT and comes with a layout on the building and design plans, a guarantee maximum price for construction will be provided. At that point, CDOT staff will go to the Transportation Commission and ask to fund the Region 2 headquarters site. The schedule is to start construction in the summer of 2016 and finish by summer of 2017.

Ms. Rowe reported Bustang had its ribbon cutting on July 13th in Colorado Springs. There are seven trips per day from Colorado Springs to Denver. There are six trips per day from Fort Collins to Denver, and one trip per day from Glenwood Springs to Denver. There are stops in different places. In Colorado Springs, it stops at three places during the commuting hours in the morning (i.e., Nevada, Tejon, Woodman, and then Monument). It stops Colorado Springs Downtown transit center at 10:00 a.m. and, at 3:00 p.m., going to Denver and returning. The CDOT division of Transit and Rail has said that if it is successful within the next year of getting good bus ridership from Colorado Springs to Denver then their vision is to extend it to Pueblo. In the northern part of the State, they would extend it to Greeley and in the western part of the State it would be extended to Grand Junction. CDOT is looking at its role in the multi-modal transportation effort, noting this is one of the ways they can help by connecting the transit agencies with each other. Sites have been looked at if CDOT should decide to extend Bustang into Pueblo.

Ms. Kristen Castor stated she wanted to confirm if the Bustang is handicap accessible. Ms. Rowe replied yes.

Ms. Rowe reported there has been no selection to replace Mr. Les Gruen, the Region 9 (Colorado Springs) Transportation Commissioner. There were three Transportation Commissioners who left, they are: Mr. Doug Aden, District 7 (Grand Junction), Ms. Heather Berry, District 4 (Denver), and Mr. Gruen.

Ms. McFadyen thanked CDOT staff for their efforts on this morning's meeting on an economic impact study on Highway 50, noting there was good representation from the different communities along Highway 50. She stated one of the most striking statistics that Mr. Scott Hobson gave the group is that I-80 and I-70 (east-west interchanges) are 100 miles apart, and the next closest east-west interchange is in Albuquerque, which is

435 miles away. There is optimism in going forward with a regional approach, noting it would be popular.

Mr. Brown thanked CDOT for providing additional drainage on East 4th Street and Santa Fe Avenue.

Ms. Rowe stated the Ilex groundbreaking was a great success. She stated the executive director of CDOT was here. She stated he is looking at ways on how to fund transportation. She stated the U.S. 50 economic study is great, but until we get more money to actually build something that it is going to be limited.

Mr. Aaron Greco, Local Government Liaison with CDOT, stated he works in the policy office in Denver and is assigned to Region 2 and will be working with all of us. He stated he took a leave of absence and is back now. He stated they have been having a lot of discussions regarding the need for new revenue to the system. The new CDOT executive director has been challenging everyone to have this conversation with their constituents in different communities. He stated he is making it a personal challenge when he speaks to different groups that he does this. He stated at the last legislative session there was discussion regarding the possibility of a bonding mechanism that would bring capacity projects. The policy office is looking at potential revenue streams and they are looking at leadership from the local level and State-wide level for folks to step up. He stated transportation is the number one issue in our State, noting it is hurting our economic development, mobility, and safety. Most people agree that it is a core issue of government, and it is something our State, counties, and municipalities should be taking care of. He reiterated they see a lot of data come through their office and polling from different parts of the State, and people are talking about transportation more and more.

Chairman Hart stated Mr. Bill Thiebaut, the Region 2 Transportation Commissioner, issued the following comments in his email:

- At its June meeting, the Transportation Commission passed a resolution approving funds for CDOT to select and contract with a design/build team to design a new Region 2 Headquarters. Once the design is completed, a guaranteed maximum price will be established by the firm. Thereafter, the Transportation Commission may approve construction funds.
- CDOT's Region 2 working team and contracted real estate broker are considering potential sites in the Pueblo area. CDOT staff can inform you of the status of that aspect of the new Region 2 Headquarters.
- Additionally, there are preliminary indications that State revenue forecasts anticipate that transfers for transportation and capital construction will be made to their full required levels in FY 2015-16 rather than a reduced level as previously forecast. What this means for transportation projects around the State are uncertain, but will be taken up by the Commission in the future.

MPO STAFF REPORT:

(A) Letter from Governor Hickenlooper approving PACOG 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Scott Hobson, MPO Administrator, reported staff received a letter from Governor Hickenlooper accepting PACOG's 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.

(B) West Pueblo Connector Project Update

Mr. Hobson presented a PowerPoint presentation on the West Pueblo Connector Project. In 2008, Pueblo County did some feasibility on the West Pueblo Connector, as well as some survey work. The West Pueblo Connector would provide an alternate route to the south of U.S. 50 between Pueblo West and the City of Pueblo and its downtown area. In 2008-2009, CDOT had a consulting firm, who worked with other local governments and agencies, develop a U.S. 50 West PEL Study Corridor. This study looked at the U.S. 50 corridor, seven interchanges along U.S. 50 from Wills Boulevard in Pueblo out to Swallows Road to the west. It also looked at alternative local routes that could be developed, which could potentially move traffic from U.S. 50 during peak periods. The West Pueblo Connector, in the study, was compared to Denver's Speer Boulevard because it traverses from one community to another community. It involved the extension of Joe Martinez Boulevard in Pueblo West from Purcell Boulevard and Pueblo Boulevard (State Highway 45) through the Honor Farm Park, which most of the property (85%-90%) is owned by the City of Pueblo. The route would then follow along 24th Street between Pueblo Boulevard and Tuxedo Boulevard, and then link from Tuxedo to 8th Street in downtown Pueblo, with a major significant bridge crossing the railroad yards.

Mr. Hobson showed a map of the general alignment of what would be the Joe Martinez extension of the project, noting it follows through the Honor Farm property connecting to Pueblo Boulevard. The City has adopted a master plan for the Honor Farm that identifies the location of this road. The City has also granted a conservation easement to the State of Colorado to purchase the Honor Farm property. The conservation easement allows for two public roadway connections through the Honor Farm. It was envisioned in the master plan that Joe Martinez would be one of those connections, and potentially an extension of Spaulding Boulevard would be the other.

Mr. Hobson stated the next part of the segment is from Pueblo Boulevard into downtown. It follows 24th Street to Tuxedo and crossing of the railroad tracks to get into downtown. In the long-term, there is a connection that would link to "D" Street by Union Avenue, but for this current study it would be better to link from Tuxedo to 8th Street/4th Street area in downtown.

Mr. Hobson stated as part of the PEL study the consultant not only looked at the future traffic on U.S. 50, but also identified potential local improvement projects that could reduce speed/traffic on U.S. 50. Five different projects were identified. The Pueblo Boulevard extension to the north is identified as a local improvement within the PEL study. CDOT and PACOG are looking at maybe that could be addressed in the future, not as just a local improvement, but potentially an extension to State Highway 45. There are funds initially in our Long Range Transportation Plan to begin looking at studying the

extension of State Highway 45 to the north. It includes Spaulding, the Joe Martinez West Pueblo Connector, and some other connections between the railroad west of Wills and Pueblo Boulevard. Mr. Don Bruestle asked where the northern terminus was on this map. Mr. Hobson replied in the plan there are actually two phases. The first phase would be a linkage to Platteville (Drew Dix) which would link to the Eden interchange on I-25. The Eden interchange is part of a split diamond where Dillon flyover is the south segment and Eden interchange is the north segment of the split diamond interchange. The later phases would connect State Highway 45 at Exit 108 on I-25. This would provide a more direct connection to Pueblo Boulevard.

Mr. Hobson stated in the PEL study they identified that the West Pueblo Connector is critical for U.S. 50 as far as if this and other improvements are completed in the timeframe of 2029 or 2035 that the congestion would be at an "F" level on U.S. 50. Alternatives need to be looked at; other than doing improvements to U.S. 50 to be able to address congestion. He stated improvements are needed most in the section from Purcell into I-25 because this is where there is the worst traffic congestion. Without local improvements, there would about 86,000 vehicles per day on U.S. 50. With local improvements, there is a potential of 24% of traffic removed from Purcell Boulevard to Pueblo Boulevard and 31% moved from Pueblo Boulevard to Wills Boulevard.

Mr. Hobson stated the potential traffic volumes if the West Pueblo Connector route would be constructed is 10,300 vehicles per day in both directions between Purcell and Pueblo Boulevard and east of Pueblo Boulevard into downtown would about double or 20,000 vehicles per day. One of the things that the study identified was that over 50% of the trips between Purcell and Pueblo Boulevard would be pulling trips that are currently using the route through the Pueblo Reservoir. He stated he sent this to Pueblo West, the County, etc. and the common theme is they think that the projection of traffic that is going through the Pueblo Reservoir is probably high. They felt there would be more traffic pulled from U.S. 50 and not going to the Pueblo Reservoir. It is staff's intention to set out new traffic counters this fall after the peak recreational season is over at the Reservoir and get specific counts on peak time morning and evening traffic volumes through the Reservoir. There may potentially be more volume from U.S. 50 to the Joe Martinez route than what was identified during the PEL study. Mr. Montoya asked if he has checked with people at the Reservoir to see how many permits have been purchased, noting the permits are needed to drive through. Mr. Hobson replied they could check to see how many State parks' permits have been purchased. He stated he would also need to check to see if they track which ones were purchased in Pueblo because their system is State-wide. Mr. Colucci questioned if there are 10,000 vehicle trips east of Pueblo Boulevard. Mr. Hobson responded yes. Mr. Colucci asked where those come from. Mr. Hobson answered it would be from Pueblo West to Pueblo Boulevard. If the road was built between Purcell and Pueblo Boulevard, you would attract 10,000 trips from Pueblo West primarily south of U.S. 50. Mr. Colucci asked about east of Pueblo Boulevard. Mr. Hobson replied it includes the trips that come from Pueblo West, but it also includes the traffic from U.S. 50 that turns south on Pueblo Boulevard and heads south and then you pick up another 10,000 primarily off of Pueblo Boulevard. He stated there is a fair amount of traffic that goes on U.S. 50 and exits to the south of Pueblo Boulevard and uses 4th Street, 11th Street, or Thatcher to get into the City. This study is saying that 10,000 vehicle trips per day of that traffic, in addition to what is coming through Pueblo West, would utilize the route into the City. Mr. Colucci stated a recent presentation which was done by Pueblo Urban Renewal Authority (PURA) showed a lower route for the connector that would take the impact off of 4th

Street. Mr. Hobson replied the full build-out of the West Pueblo Connector would include an extension adjacent to the rail yards and Midtown that would connect to 4th Street and over to "D" Street. He stated the map he is showing is slightly different from the PURA map, but it would link 18th, 11th, and 24th Streets, and they would all be able to feed into where the crossing would go over the rail yards.

Mr. Hobson stated another factor in the connector is the ability to have an alternative route to U.S. 50 during times when there are accidents and other emergency situations.

Mr. Hobson stated what has been completed since 2008 is: (1) the County Public Works Department has completed a land survey including topographic features for the specific alignment of the roadway through the Honor Farm; (2) about 85%-90% of the property that the roadway would utilize would go through property owned by the City of Pueblo; (3) preliminary estimates have been completed, but an engineering design of roadway and detail estimate of construction costs have not been completed; and (4) a financial plan to finance construction, i.e., tolling, regional transportation tax, and other funding mechanisms have not been completed. Initial estimates for tolling were done in 2008, but they were very general. He stated that staff does not have the expertise, noting it would probably have to be contracted out to a company that specifically does plans for tolling. Mr. Nawrocki stated in a sense coming through the Reservoir is a toll road, noting people are willing to pay to use it.

Mr. Hobson stated the general cost of this would be from Purcell Boulevard to Pueblo Boulevard would be \$14.6 million, 18th Street to Atlanta Avenue would be \$2.4 million, Atlanta Avenue to the railroad crossing would be \$1.3 million, the railroad yard crossing bridge crossing would be \$22.3 million, the railroad crossing to 8th Street would be \$1.6 million, and from 8th Street to Blake Street would be \$2.2 million for a total of \$44.2 million. The area from Purcell Boulevard to Pueblo Boulevard encompasses approximately 3 miles of roadway and would be designed and built as a four-lane arterial roadway with shoulders wide enough where if a vehicle had problems that they would have room to get off the road and onto the shoulder. The total length of the entire roadway is 26,450 linear feet. He stated over 50% of the project would be on how to get across the railroad. As part of the project, the intersection of Pueblo Boulevard and 24th Street will require modifications, noting there will be a northbound left turn lane, southbound right turn lanes, southbound acceleration and deceleration lanes and widening and other modifications to match east and west four-lane alignment. Staff has not had any discussions with CDOT to see if this is an improvement that they would assist in funding.

Mr. Hobson stated one of the things they looked at in the Travel Demand Model was if the segment between Purcell and Pueblo Boulevard was constructed there would be impacts to Joe Martinez west into Pueblo West. Staff has not identified what level of improvement, but they have identified you will have more traffic and congestion between McCulloch and Purcell on Joe Martinez. In an overall project, you may need to look at what improvements might need to be done to Joe Martinez internally within Pueblo West.

Mr. Hobson stated in 2009, Pueblo County staff did a rough conceptual look at the tolling concept for just the Joe Martinez segment between Purcell and Pueblo Boulevard. They estimated a range of 3,224 to 7,812 vehicle trips per day. The more recent estimate

done by the U.S. 50 PEL study is 10,300 vehicle trips per day. The County did some general costing out on what tolls would be. This still needs to be looked at more.

Mr. Hobson stated the options for construction include the following: (1) regional transportation sales tax that could fund local transportation projects similar to what is being done in El Paso County, (2) toll for use of all or portions of the roadway (funds used to pay construction bonds and possibly cover operation costs), and (3) a combination of funding options. This could include a toll which would cover part of the cost or cover the maintenance and not necessarily the capital construction and then another funding source such as an RTA that would fund the capital piece of it.

Ms. McFadyen asked what the timeframe to work with the railroad is. Mr. Hobson replied anytime you are dealing with a railroad, it is a fairly long process. He felt it would be a minimum of a five-year process. Ms. McFadyen stated if this is a project we all want to go forward on if it would be wise to start working with the railroad now, because eventually we will need this corridor. Mr. Hobson felt it would be wise to do this now. He stated part of the PACOG transportation work program is to complete a study that analyzes the West Pueblo Connector, primarily the section that is within the City. The County has done a survey drawing dimensions of the road through the Honor Farm. We need to focus more on the segment from Tuxedo to 18th Street across the rail yard. Staff is in the process of developing a request for proposal for the study to be completed. It is anticipated in the next 60-70 days we are going to be rewarded a consultant to help us do it. As part of the scope of work for the study, we need to begin communication with the railroad and find out what it thinks about this and what would be the design parameters we would have to address if there is any kind of plan to build a bridge over the rail yard. Chairman Hart asked if there is any potential for grant funding for any of these elements such as the expense for the railroad crossing. He stated one of the purposes of this connector is to take pressure off of U.S. 50, and questioned if there is any potential for resources to help the community in the funding of this project. Mr. Hobson answered when staff reviewed the different funding sources through pass-through money through CDOT, at this point they haven't found a specific source that they would qualify for funding. He felt as part of this process, they need to look at other potential sources that could help fund this project. Chairman Hart felt it would be helpful to explore it. Mr. Montoya stated in Denver they had concerns about trains and vehicle accidents, and wondered if we could look at the safety side of it as a key factor. Mr. Hobson stated they may as part of this view the at-grade crossings and whether there could be modifications or changes where the bridge across the railroad yards would be much safer than keeping at-grade crossings. Mr. Schilling asked if any of this would be done during our lifetimes. Mr. Hobson replied there have been other projects completed in Pueblo that have cost a similar amount of money as this project, and the community has been able to find the funds to do them within a 15-20 year period. Mr. Azad felt this project would be an ideal project to look at as a P3 project, especially if you add the element of tolling. He felt it could be done within our lifetimes if we look outside of the box and look at funding it by other means. Chairman Hart felt we need to be creative because it is an important project for us. He stated we may look into phasing the project and felt it was doable. Mr. Hobson replied staff will keep PACOG updated as they go through the West Pueblo Connector study, noting it is a key part of the MPO work program.

(C) Review of Potential Projects for Regional Transportation Authority Plan

Mr. Hobson reported at the May PACOG meeting there was a request to put together a list of projects for a Regional Transportation Authority plan. PACOG Transportation staff is consulting with City, County, Pueblo West, and other entities to develop a project list. Staff requests this item be continued until the August meeting.

(D) PACOG Regional Transportation Plan Public Meeting Schedule

Mr. Hobson reported there will open house meetings held to receive public input and feedback on the proposed PACOG 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan starting Monday, July 27, 2015, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Brett Kelly Meeting Room A of the Rawlings Public Library. Other meetings will be held in the month of August; these dates/times/locations are as follows: August 3, 2015 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., at the Pueblo Transit Center; August 17th from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., at the Greenhorn Valley Library; and August 26, 2015 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., at the Pueblo West Library. Presentation boards will identify the future roadway network, what is in the four-year TIP, what is in the 10-year capital plan, existing transit systems, and get suggestion for other potential improvements to transit. Maps will be shown on the existing trail systems and what is being proposed by the different entities.

(E) Urban Planning Work Program for FY2016 and FY2017 Schedule for Adoption

Mr. Hobson reported at the next PACOG meeting the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) will be presented, which is for two years or FY 2016-2017. Staff has generally followed the format that PACOG has used for the previous ten years, noting this is going to change. Due to the regulations in MAP 21, performance measures that they are now putting into the LRTP, staff will be doing modifications to that Plan to bring it up to speed with the MAP 21 regulations. CDOT will be helping staff in putting it together. Staff wants the Plan to be easier for the public to read. It will also be easier to put together reports to get to CDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on how we are spending the money and how we are using the staff.

(F) PACOG Planning Review Report - Federal Highway Administration, Region 8
Federal Transit Administration, and Colorado Department of Transportation

Mr. Hobson reported during the last six months PACOG staff has been meeting monthly with the FHWA and CDOT to complete a planning review of the PACOG Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The purpose of the review is to determine the extent of consistency with Federal and State transportation planning requirements, recognition of noteworthy practices, and identification areas for improvement, and how assistance and guidance can be provided, where appropriate, by the review agencies. They are in the process of finalizing the report on the Pueblo MPO in August and it should be scheduled for review by PACOG in September or October. The report will have recommendations on what PACOG might want to focus on. He stated the UPWP has to be approved in August, but it can be amended if necessary.

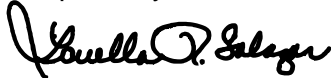
FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no future agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further regular business before PACOG, John Cordova moved, seconded by Roger Lowe, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 1:17 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday, August 27, 2015, at the Pueblo County Department of Emergency Management, 101 West 10th Street, 1st Floor Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,



Louella R. Salazar
PACOG Recording Secretary

LRS