

**Minutes of the  
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**May 12, 2016**

**8:30 a.m.**

**Community Room of the Municipal Justice Center, 200 South Main Street**

**Agenda Items Marked with \* indicate additional materials included in packet**

**1. Call Meeting to Order**

*Chairman: Scott Hobson*

*Time of Call: 8:39 a.m.*

*MPO Members Present: Scott Hobson, John Adams, Hannah Haurert*

*TAC Members Present: Don Bruestle, Joan Armstrong, Michael Snow, Wendy Pettit*

*CAC Members Present: Kristin Castor, Salvatore Piscitelli*

*Others Present: Chris Sena, Suzanne O'Neill, Mike Timlin*

**2. Introductions and Public Comments (non-agenda items only).**

*John Adams was introduced; it is his first day starting as the new Transportation Program Manager.*

**3. Approval of Minutes of the regular meeting held on April 14, 2016**

*Motion to Approve: Don Bruestle*

*Second: Salvatore Piscitelli*

*Unanimous*

**4. CDOT Region II TIP/STIP Regular Agenda Item(s)**

*There were no Policy Notifications for May.*

**5. CDOT Region II TIP/STIP Administrative Notification**

*CDOT Region II has Notification of One (1) Administrative Amendments of Roll Forward Project Funding to the PACOG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in the MPO/TPR area. Additional Information is Available in the Attached Letter and Spreadsheet.*

Project Name: US 50 Wills to McCulloch

STIP Number: SR27002.019

Project Location and Description: **US 50 Wills to McCulloch**

Federal Program Funds: \$

State Matching Funds: **\$ 1,200,000**

Local Matching Funds: \$

Other Project Funds: \$

**TOTAL PROJECT FUND AMENDMENT: \$1,200,000**

**6. CDOT Updates**

*There were no updates for May.*

**7. 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan Update\***

- **Appendix D: Coordinated Human Services**

*Scott Hobson said that in the packet, there are revisions done to Appendix D, which is the*

*Human Service Transportation Plan. The only other amendment adjustment to the plan is the priority bike/pedestrian project that was reviewed previously. Those have been added to the long range plan, Appendix D is now included as part of the plan. With the completion of Appendix D, that finalizes the long range transportation plan. Notification of hearing has been posted and will be at the PACOG Board meeting, which is on May 28<sup>th</sup>, it is recommended that the plan will be adopted at this meeting.*

*There are a lot of demographics in the packet. The main thing is that the growth in Pueblo West, in 2000 the population was around 12,000 people and it is now over 30,000. We are identifying the growth in the Pueblo West Area. The section also include large employment areas that might be identified for Transit service. Some of the internal areas with the City are linked in with the Transit System. There are other areas that need to be looked at for improvements in service for Transit related to transportation to and from jobs. It also talks about changes in elderly pop and identifies a large area with disabled individuals. Kristin said that the northern area is surprising to her, as well as the southside and eastside. Scott said when you look at the census box, the northeast section is larger and is misleading because the population is driven by the students at the University. Scott said that northeast of I-25 area, the vehicle and income are also driven by the numbers of the University. Kristen Castor said that there is also a heavy percentage of people with disabilities and that is not very intuitive. She also mentions that housing is the number one need in that area but there is not that much available if you are talking about percentage of disabled. Scott said that should be something we should look into on where in that census block that the households that have a disabled population. Kristin said that low income and accessible housing in Belmont should go up further and it is wider than that. She said there are people who can't get out of a nursing home because there isn't any apartments to move them to. Scott said if you look at Eastwood Heights' population, it is highest amount of population along the Cesar Chavez (State Hwy 47) area, and that the census information is driven by the residents of Eastwood Heights. Kristin said that makes sense to her because that is where you would look for affordable housing.*

*Scott Hobson said that we revised the 2035 Amended Long Range Plan and it is essentially has most of the same information but it has been updated with the 2010 census data and any other information that we could bring up to speed. This will be incorporated into the plan and then presented to PACOG on May 28<sup>th</sup>, and hopefully be adopted.*

## **8. Rural Regional Statewide Bus Network Plan\***

*Scott Hobson said that the presentation was at the staff meeting in March. Mike Timlin said that CDOT receives and manages \$32m/year for the transit infrastructure, and this is not for highways, this program fund is just for transit. \$1.6m federal money goes for the admin inner city bus network in the state. The FASTER operating money is new to the project. CDOT receives \$15m/yr to distribute for transit related projects in which \$10m is for state wide projects and \$5m is for regional projects. Michael Snow said not to be confused with FAST ACT. Mike said that some of the money is from highway user tax fund and the primary money comes from car registration. Last year it approved \$1m for operate grants. The first year they were awarded \$550k through projects and \$450k was put back into the capitol pot for other FASTER projects. This year they hope to spend the whole \$1m for operative projects. The FASTER provides a fixed \$3m/year for the Bustang. Mike said that the Division of Transit Rails mission is to operate and build transit around the state. They coordinated with local transit services and manage the limited dollar to maximize the opportunities for the state.*

*There were two studies that were instrumental in the developing of the Rural Region Plan. The first plan was Colorado's first Statewide Transit Plan. This plan was developed by MPO and TPR*

*staff around the state to identify projects that increased mobility, and to decrease time and vehicle emissions. The other study, which was completed in 2014, was Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan. This plan identified statewide goals for development, stations and connectivity needs of the Rural Regional Network, identifies policy, performance, and financing issues. It also defines preferred networks for intercity and regional bus networks.*

*Bustang is currently running in Colorado Springs and in the future will connect to Pueblo. Kristin Castor asked how far off is that. Mike Timlin said that he is not sure because there has to be infrastructure improvements. CDOT will get \$200m from the general fund, 10% of that will go towards purchasing buses and the park and ride. Mike said that they developed a mission for the Rural Regional is to develop statewide network of private and public services that addresses regional and intercity needs, existing and new services, offers convenient regional mobility between urban and rural areas, and connections to the national and international locations on the Service Transportation Network. This is based on what was learned on the two studies that were done as previously mentioned.*

*In 2004, the intercity bus companies like Greyhound began shedding over 2,500 rural stops nationwide affecting 8.4 million rural residents in an effort to cut losses; states west of the Mississippi River were affected the most. Colorado was practically gutted as the result. To ease the impact under SAFETEA\_LU, FTA implemented a pilot program that allowed ICB Companies (Greyhound) to provide unsubsidized capital or operating miles as "in-kind" match toward the local match to entice operators to reinstate the lost rural service, this is now known as FAST ACT. FAST ACT continues the Federal policy of requiring 15% of FTA 5311 program dollars go to support intercity bus services for rural areas. In 2016, \$1.65m is available for Colorado annually.*

*There are quite a few challenges in Colorado; long distances, inconvenient schedules for the traveling public, lack of common or well aligned brand, Cost of Capital is often "operationalized" (making services more expensive) and the lack of connectivity between rural parts of the state and activity centers. For instance, the people in Southeastern Colorado (Lamar, Las Animas) that need to travel to Pueblo to see their doctors have to spend two nights here with the current bus schedule. They come in around 2:45pm one afternoon, see their doctor the following day and then head back the next morning. Mike Timlin said that this is unacceptable. Kristin Castor said that people have lost their lives because they couldn't make it to the hospital for their cancer treatment. Mike said that it is a very serious problem and are looking at the Washington State model. They identified and prioritized the routes with Statewide RTPD and MPO assistance. They purchased their own fleet so it is State owned. They allocated 5311 (f) funds through a competitive bid process rather than a grant selection process to fund services on routes that the department identified through its' planning processes. It does meet all conditions of meaningful ICB connections and has broad FTA support. Mike said he plans to mimic that system in which it is funded by Civic Bill 228 dollars that will buy the fleet. Competitive bids will be for the small motor coaches (35 feet in length) with luggage underneath and restroom equipped. He said that they all will have lifts because it is required by law. With mimicking this system, it will create more competitive environment to get the best performance out of limited dollars, cost savings will go to expand the network over time, and it will address multiple markets and needs that aren't met today. This will also help enhance connectivity to the intercity bus network and address regional travel needs for day trips to regional center. To create the most effective network, it will need to consider both markets: Intercity Bus and regional services that services Pueblo and surrounding communities. We need to understand the scheduling and operating constraints between Greyhound and Bustang, proposed CO Rural Regional statewide services and locally regional services. We need to maximize local funding and Greyhound "in-kind" match. Mike said that we need to closely work with Greyhound.*

*There are a few maps in the packet to show the bus operations. In 1976, there were lines all over the place and it was easy to travel on the bus to each state line. Over time that has drastically declined. It is more conducive for people to leave Pueblo and go to Lamar than the other way around. There are locally operative Transit agencies that include NECALG, ECCOG and SCCOG but are more of a demand response service. The rest are in the mountains and some of them are 5 days a week and others are daily. A lot of the routes are west of Denver, we do have one route from Gunnison to Pueblo and then we have village tours and coordinate with Kansas DOT. Kansas DOT funds the trip east of Kansas. Utah DOT route operates through Steam Boat Springs. The one route in northeastern is Blackhills stage lines. There are two routes, one is subsidized and the other is not. Mike said that the route is now self-sustaining and will pull the subsidy shortly.*

*Mike Timlin said that once there is infrastructure in Pueblo, then Bustang will be able to expand to Pueblo, Greeley, and Grand Junction. Greyhound has enough service in Pueblo to get an "in-kind" match. Mike is looking for a schedule to make a round trip in one day. Bustang or another carrier may be used from Pueblo to Colorado Springs if money is available. Mike said we have to start somewhere and this is where we start. Don Bruestle asked if the bus routes in the mid 70's were self-supporting. Mike said that they were all unsubsidized routes and self-supporting. Don asked what the phenomenon that changed that. Mike said that in the early 1980's, all service transportation was deregulated and prior to that in 1976, the Interstate Commerce Commission (no longer exists) regulated the interstate bus companies and PUC, in the 1980's, regulated the interstate bus companies within the state. All trucks and buses were deregulated, and the end result created a war between Greyhound and Continental Trail Ways. Continental Trail Ways was absorbed by Greyhound. Scott Hobson asked if the routes in Colorado were Continental Trail Ways. Mike said that most of them were. Greyhound had very limited operations in Colorado because of the regulations. Denver/Colorado Springs/ Pueblo were the most profitable. Kristen Castor mentioned that if you didn't want to drive on the interstate then the system was very nice to use. Wendy Pettit asked if the feeder routes were cross subsidized with their charter system and mentioned after deregulation, they didn't have to do that, so some routes couldn't stand on their own but they were required to cross subsidize them to maintain. Mike said that a lot of them sub-subsidized the routes too, like Denver to Salt Lake City.*

*Other means of supporting the network is fares and ticketing. The routes need to be prioritized due to funding constraints. There is approx. \$1.65m available annually and approx. \$500k through FASTER assistance.*

*Mike said that he needs help with scheduling, should services be 3 days a week running 5 or 7 hours? Does a trip provide adequate time at regional centers, are schedules meaningful and convenient, and are we able to maintain connections with Greyhound within the desired/required window?*

*He also needs help with fares. Should there be a system that maximizes farebox recovery or maximize ridership? What type of fare medium should be employed? What role would ticket agents have? What role should equity considerations play? Should there be a threshold or cap for maximum subsidy amount? How important should connections to local transit systems be in the decisions? Mike said that Bustang is a simple system, with fares being sold online or cash in the fare box.*

*Susan O'Neill wanted to explain the big picture with the route from Lamar to Pueblo, she said that the route would leave 10 in the morning and leave Pueblo in the afternoon, giving 5 hours in Pueblo to visit. There is a current route from Trinidad to Pueblo 3 days a week, funded by Rural 53 dollars. The bus from Lamar would meet with them. There is also a bus coming in from Salida.*

*The long term plan is one of those routes going to Colorado Springs. From a policy stand point, we don't want people to stay 2 nights in Pueblo. She asked how important it is that a bus to Colorado Springs is through Bustang or Rural Regional, with 3 or 5 days a week service. Kristen Castor said that it should run at least 5 days a week, this will appeal to population with jobs. Susan O'Neill was wondering if it would arrive at 10 in the morning, would it affect the businesses. Kristin said that she wasn't sure but wants it to be more of a regular service. With the partial services, it kind of keeps people in that transportation dependent mode. Susan said that radiation is 5 days a week. Kristin said that SRDA runs between Pueblo and Colorado City and they needed to find a local driver to head in on Wednesday. They also do local services during the week. She said that this might be a good model to use. Kristin said that the thing wrong with Pueblo Transit is that they have limited resources and spreads it out over the whole City of Pueblo. That is not going to be conducive with meeting up with others. Mike said he will need to talk to Brenda about Pueblo Transit connection to Bustang. He said that he would want a parking facility off of Hwy 50 West or in Pueblo West but have Bustang leave the Transit building. Scott Hobson mentioned that SRDA is a local van service that is based out of Colorado City. He said that it would be good to have Trinidad/Walsenberg connect to that service. Susan said that the bus comes from Trinidad and stops at Walsenberg but does not stop in Colorado City. Wendy Pettit said that a stop at the rest area could be used as a HUB. Wendy was concerned with Rambling Express. Mike said that their primary customers is folks going down to gamble at Cripple Creek. Wendy said if there was a way to get people to the bus from Lamar, they might do more activities. Mike said that they have worked with Rambling Express. He said that people use Rambling Express to commute to Colorado Springs. Scott said that the casinos subsidize them. Mike said that the bids are going to be open to private and non-profits. Susan said it would be highly desirable to have a bus and a driver in Lamar and a backup. Mike said that the next steps are receiving input from everyone, seek Transportation Commission approval, and to develop a bus specification. In 2017, the main step is to procure the fleet of OTR small coaches with SB-228 funds and develop service contracts and in 2018, implement the Rural Regional Network.*

*Susan O'Neill asked if Colorado Springs should be included in the route. Kristin Castor said that there is a need for that here in Pueblo. Susan said that there is a lot of people traveling to and from Pueblo to Colorado Springs for work. She said that they usually end up at the south end of Colorado Springs because they are so diverse in that city. Kristin asked if Colorado Springs has a local shuttle. Susan said that it is probably possible but with a later trip back to Pueblo. Scott Hobson said that the timing is off with everything and does not fit with them. The logistics is overwhelming.*

## **9. West Pueblo Connector Update\***

*Scott Hobson said in your packet, there is a memo, comments from the consultant and a map that identifies the draft alignments review. West Pueblo connection across to the railroad tracks into town. There are 3 draft alignment; 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> St alternate, 15<sup>th</sup> St alternate, and 11<sup>th</sup> St alternate. Scott said that the 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> St takes advantage of exiting 18<sup>th</sup> St bridge and looks at potential doing a bridge across to 17<sup>th</sup> St, the span of bridge would be much shorter to cross. The cost is more economical than 11<sup>th</sup> St. Wendy Pettit said that would greatly depend on how much ROW the Railroad has. The length is more significant for 11<sup>th</sup> St alternative. Each one of these alternatives gives pros and cons. Scott said that all of these are going to be pursued. If there is a potential alignment they have missed, they can go take a look at that. The 15<sup>th</sup> St alternative seems the most challenging because it intersects the State Hospital. Don Bruestle asked if Scott can share the comments from Pepper. Scott said that her comments were that 17<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> St alternative do not take advantage to a direct connectivity to downtown. Don asked if they were also looking at B St extension. Scott said that 4<sup>th</sup> St bridge would accommodate West Pueblo Connector to D St which would connect over Union Pacific yard to I-25 at Ilex St. The 11<sup>th</sup> St follows more closely to the Long Transportation Plan. Kristin Castor is looking at the 11<sup>th</sup>*

alternative to get downtown. Wendy Pettit said that you can buy the houses at the 17<sup>th</sup> St location before clearance from the railroad. She is also concerned about contamination issues. She would agree that the 11<sup>th</sup> St is the lesser of all evils. Michael Snow asked what the advantages between 17<sup>th</sup> St and 15<sup>th</sup> St alternatives are. Scott said that the span of the bridges would be 30%-40% less. Scott would like to get comments back for the alternatives before the public meetings. There are four different alignment coming off of 11<sup>th</sup> St. Wendy asked why there are so many. Scott said that there is a railroad spur in between them. They bypass the railroad and the southern one connects below the railroad. Michael is concerned about bypassing the rail on the southside the alignment. Scott said that there is a spur and it is in the middle of the 11<sup>th</sup> St alternatives. Scott said that he would like a 12<sup>th</sup> St or 13<sup>th</sup> St alignment to come across by the railroad yard and stay parallel. Don Bruestle would like to know how much accusation would there be. Scott said there would be some along with the parking lot. Don asked if acquiring mental health property is more complicated than acquiring railroad property. Wendy said that you can't acquire rail road property because they abandon it and just give it to you. Don said that the 17<sup>th</sup> St and 18<sup>th</sup> St do not look practical. Kristin said that the 11<sup>th</sup> St looks more appealing. Scott said that they would want to connect to Francisco St but that is a residential neighborhood and they have been resistant in the past. Don said they could use the 11<sup>th</sup> St alternative in order to improve the storm water drainage problems and sewer. Peppers Sauce Bottom is a concerned area for flooding. The only way to drain that water is to pump it out. Scott said there could be storm water improvements in that area with this project. The rail road serves as a barrier between the Wildhorse Creek and Arkansas River. There are potential to improve that area. Scott said that a lot of selenium is going into the water treatment and is from the old pipes. He said that once it goes into public review, the consultant will come back and give updates to TAC.

## **10. Staff Reports:**

- **Pueblo Area Wide Transit Feasibility Study**

Scott Hobson said that there are four proposals and a 5 member group to evaluate them. It took a while to get the scores but they have been turned into purchasing. He said that the 3 highest scores will be interviewed next week. Hopefully in June there will be a consultant on board.

- **Bike/Pedestrian Counters**

Hannah Haurert said that we are basically doing a test run with the counters along the Riverwalk, to see how they work. There are no bikes aloud down there. They have been out 2 weeks now. They have to be manually downloaded to the website. Scott Hobson asked how many there are. Hannah said that they are two counters and eventually will move them onto the trails. She would need to talk to Pepper Whittlef and Steven Meiers on the next location. Don Bruestle asked if it's a machine. Hannah said that it uses infrared to count. Scott said that those were funded by Kaiser Permanente grant. They can be used by any identities. Kristin Castor asked if those were located on the Nature Center Trail or the one downtown. Hannah said they are located at HARP (Riverwalk). Scott said that the Nature Center has the highest counts then City Park in 1991. About 2/3 use was at the Nature Center, City Park, and Runyon. Scott said that the trails that have been washed out are going to be reimbursed by FIMA.

- **Safe Routes to Schools – North Mesa Elementary Project\***

Scott Hobson said that there has been two application filed for the Pueblo County Area and the North Mesa Project was selected. A \$200k grant going towards the \$250k project. Scott said that these are the State funds. Don Bruestle asked about the location, the length and distance along with physical improvements. Scott said along Gale Rd from 30<sup>th</sup> Ln to 29<sup>th</sup> ½ Ln and one block on 29<sup>th</sup> St for a bike trail. Don asked about the small ROW. Scott said that they would need to acquire it to expand the path along Gale. It goes onto Windrow Rd to connect to North

Mesa. Scott said that they were more than likely have it for the initial start. There are talks about another project from Hwy 50 to Gale Rd along 29<sup>th</sup> Ln. The traffic coming to and from schools are from dropping off kids. Don asked if this is to make the roads safer for kids using a bicycle. Joan Armstrong said that the school said that they will not transport kids within a mile of the school. Scott said that one positive thing about this project is getting Shad Glen, principal from South Mesa, involved and to improve that school area. South Mesa will have less difficult because of the Bessemer Ditch. South Rd and County Farm Rd already has existing shoulders, at least 6 feet on each side. North Mesa has very little ROW. The main safety issue is all of the driveways that intersect the trail. Scott said that there are 16 crossing driveways and quite a few ditch laterals. Scott said that there is a program at North Mesa to help get people to exercise, every Wednesday they do a few loops around the school. Don said that the only problem with getting other principals involved is that they change every 6 months. And that would lead to needing a new spokesperson. Scott said that the grants have a better turn around now than they did before. They should see results while the kids are still in elementary school.

- **2017 CDOT Consolidated Planning Grant – Scope of Work (June Meeting)**

Scott Hobson said the challenge is to get it done by June and approved by September. Michael Snow said that we actually have until July for that, as long as the UPWP is adopted by July. Scott said if we have an adopted UPWP, we want to modify that. He said that we will more than likely do a June meeting and take July off. Wendy Pettit said that we will need a July meeting. Michael said that there will be changes in the UPWP that will affect TAC. Wendy said that we will need a July meeting for the roll forwards but may not need one in August. Scott was wanting to wait. Wendy said that we will not know about the roll forwards until after June 24<sup>th</sup>. She said they already adopted the TIP. What is happening is now is that the money can no longer sit, it has to be rolled forward. She does not know which needs to be rolled forward until after the June meeting.

## **11. Items from TAC members or scheduling of future agenda items.**

## **12. Adjournment**

Chairman Scott Hobson adjourned the meeting at 10:26 am.