



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

2829 West Howard Place
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DATE: November 13, 2020
TO: Transit & Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC)
FROM: David Krutsinger, Director, Division of Transit & Rail
SUBJECT: Historic Streetcar Systems of Colorado

Purpose

This memo is to share information prepared by the Applied Research & Innovation Branch of the Division of Transportation Development (DTD) within CDOT.

Action

Information and discussion only; no action required.

Background

Transportation impacts to historic streetcar lines in Denver and other communities in Colorado are often unforeseen given that many tracks lay underneath paved streets and are not well documented. This results in frequent unanticipated discoveries during construction of publicly assisted transportation improvement projects in Colorado. A historic context was developed to provide a consistent methodology for the evaluation of historic streetcar lines. A corresponding GIS component was developed to provide reliable and consistent mapping of the former streetcar line in Colorado along with pertinent information relative to each streetcar line, including ownership, technical information, dates of operation, and current condition, if known. Mead & Hunt, Inc. and ARCH Professionals, LLC conducted historical research at local archives to examine primary documents and maps, along with previous studies and mapping efforts, to develop the statewide historic context and evaluation methodology. AECOM Technical Services Inc. served as the project manager and completed the GIS component of the project.

Details

The GIS component will allow CDOT and other interested parties to easily identify the location of potentially buried historic streetcar lines and access information on the companies associated with the lines, the technologies utilized, the years the line was in operation, and other pertinent details. For CDOT, this information will allow project planners to identify the potential location of buried lines early in the project planning and review process, eliminating last minute discoveries that are costly both financially and to project schedules. The evaluation framework will further assist efforts by CDOT and its consultants, as well as local communities, to determine whether a specific surviving remnant of a streetcar line is historically significant. CDOT historians can utilize these findings to evaluate the NRHP eligibility of streetcar lines on the front end of project planning and streamline their Section 106 review process, as the GIS component provides valuable identification information for each line, and the context completes much of the background research historians would otherwise have to complete on a project by project basis.

Attachment

1. Presentation
2. The full report is attached by means of the following link due to its size (47 MB).
<https://www.codot.gov/programs/research/pdfs/2020-research-reports/cdot-2020-11.pdf>