



TLRC Roadtrip

The Colorado General Assembly's Transportation Legislative Review Committee (TLRC) toured the Southwest corner of the state at the end of September. Legislators from the Senate and House Transportation committees visited three locations in southern and southwestern Colorado to hear about transportation issues impacting these areas located in Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Regions 3 and 5. The stops included Alamosa, Durango and Montrose and each TLRC field hearing hosted local elected officials and members of the public that gave input on the needs of their area.

CDOT Executive Director, Shailen Bhatt, joined the TLRC in Alamosa and Deputy Director, Michael Lewis continued on for the hearing in Durango. Both heard stakeholders speak about the continued need to partner with the counties and municipalities on road and airport projects. Legislators also toured various infrastructure projects throughout Region 5. CDOT engineers described surface treatment projects and passing lane additions as the vans traveled along US 160 between Alamosa and Pagosa Springs. The group visited both the Durango and Montrose airports to see firsthand how vital these hubs are for the economies of the region.



TLRC members visit the Durango Airport

Southwest TPR

In a nod toward the recent legislative tour of Southwest Colorado this month's focus in our ongoing look at the Statewide plan will take a closer look at the 2040 Southwest Regional Transportation Plan.

The region consists of Archuleta, Dolores La Plata, Montezuma, and San Juan counties. The geography and climate of the region are important factors for travel. The TPR encompasses more than 6,500 square miles and the area is known for its rugged mountainous terrain, scenic beauty, diverse landscapes, and cultural resources. The population of the Southwest TPR is expected to grow approximately 2.1 percent annually through the year 2040, which is higher than the statewide annual average of 1.5 percent.

Trends in Transportation

Back in 1910, the state of Colorado adapted to the radical shift from horses to cars. Once again the transportation industry is at a crossroads. In the next two years, Tesla, Audi and Cadillac will offer vehicles to the public that can take over highway driving or manage traffic jams. Mercedes, BMW and Infinity already offer features that let the car do the driving for periods of time on straight stretches of road. Google's self-driving cars have logged thousands of miles in California, and Apple is working on the "Apple car".

Self-driving cars are only one of the radical changes that are reshaping how people think about transportation.

TLRC Tour *cont. from page 1*

In Durango legislators saw the bridge that will connect a major new development and the Durango hospital with HW 550. This vital point is where petroleum trucks, commerce and residents currently converge on a perilous stretch of road that a road straightening project will make safer. Additionally, the group saw the continuous flow intersection at HW 550 and 160 that allows tens of thousands of cars through daily with a safe, more efficient use of the right-of-ways than if CDOT had undertaken a broader, more expensive undertaking.

CDOT would like to thank the Region 5 and 3 staff that worked so hard coordinating all the small details necessary to make the TLRC trip run smoothly and without a hitch, once again showing CDOT's high level of professionalism and expertise.

Statewide Plan

People 65 years of age or older make up the fastest growing segment of the population, both in the Southwest TPR and statewide. Multimodal needs and desires of residents in the region include intercity bus service on US 160; multimodal investments, such as local public transit, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian improvements, that provide options for local travel; and on-demand van service for elderly, disabled, and other residents to access health care and social opportunities. TPR members have expressed a need for regional transit service to the city of Durango for commuting, medical, and shopping trips. On April 22, 2014, 9,764 residents in the region were called on the phone and invited to participate in a discussion with local leaders and CDOT staff, creating a valuable connection with members of the public who might otherwise be uninvolved. A total of 1,809 people participated, both listening and commenting on the topics discussed. This exercise provided an opportunity to vet the work done by CDOT and the RPC with the broader public before proceeding to finalize important components of the plan. Below are some of the outcomes of the conversation with the public.

What is the most important to you about transportation?	How should CDOT invest limited dollars?	What kinds of transportation investments can best help the economy in your area?
46% Safety	55% Maintain the existing system	48% Improving the pavement
21% Lets me live my life the the way I want	28% Safety improvements	19% Better bus or rail to support tourism

Local industries in Southwest Colorado tend to be transportation intensive, including agriculture, energy and natural resources development, and tourism. Significant truck traffic is associated with the energy and mining industries. Trucks have much greater impacts on road conditions and maintenance needs due to their significant weight. Trucks can be slow-moving up steep grades, which creates the need for passing lanes. Many people in the region are concerned about the effect of trucks on mobility and pavement quality.

For more information on this or any of the other regional plans visit: <http://coloradotransportationmatters.com/regional-transportation-plans/>