



## Statewide MPO Meeting Notes

June 24, 2016

1-2:30 p.m.

CDOT HQ Room 225

**Present:** Metropolitan Planning Organizations: Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) - Steve Cook, Doug Rex; North Front Range MPO (NFRMPO) - Becky Karasko; Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) - Craig Casper; and Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG) - John Adams. CDOT Division of Transportation Development (DTD): Debra Perkins-Smith. CDOT DTD/Multimodal Planning Branch: Jeff Sudmeier, Tim Kirby, Michael Snow, and Gail Hoffman. CDOT Regional Planner: Karen Schneiders, R4. FHWA: Bill Haas.

### Future Meetings (Informational) - MPO Staff

- The MPOs decided to have five of the monthly meetings rotate among MPOs during the warmer months, with CDOT headquarters in Denver continuing to be the location of the meetings from November through May.
- The rotating meetings will be on Tuesdays. The MPOs will assemble the meeting agendas and other meeting materials 10 days before the Tuesday meetings, or by the previous Friday, and send to Tim Kirby of DTD for distribution.
- DTD will send out the agendas after the MPO responsible for hosting and meeting logistics drafts the agendas.
- The first of the rotating meetings will be Tuesday, July 12, in Fort Collins with NFRMPO as host.

### FHWA/MPO Updates (Discussion) - FHWA and MPO Staff

- FHWA
  - The STIP approval letter from FHWA will say that the planning process is consistent with statutes and regulations.
  - Next month FHWA and FTA will put together planning findings, and will focus on the STIP.
  - Monthly STIP coordination meetings have been set up with FHWA, FTA OFMB, DTD, and the Division of Transit and Rail.
  - FHWA also is working on a conformity determination for PPACG.
  - The planning regulations are final; meeting attendees were directed to become familiar with the changes in the planning regulations since 2007 that FHWA has recently released.



23 CFR 450- New  
Regulations Revision

- DRCOG - The MPO has been using a work group to develop recommendations for new TIP project selection processes. An active transportation plan will kick off in the fall, and updates are being made to the travel model, such as fine-tuning the traffic analysis zones. Board action on revisions to Air Quality Conformity is expected on September 21 after a public hearing in August. Denver Union Station was the hot spot to be for Bike to Work Day; an estimated 32,000 bikers took part throughout the metro area.
- NFRMPO - The Regional Travel Demand Model network is being updated with posted speed limits. The FY 2020-2021 Call for Projects will be released in mid-July; projects will be selected in October and the Planning Council will approve them in December 2016. The FY2018-2021 TIP will be adopted in March 2017. Expansion of I-25 from SH392 to SH402 is being added to the travel model. The conformity determination will be done by May.
- PACOG - A Pueblo Connector Study is under way on how to connect Pueblo's downtown with other areas of the city. The long-range plan was approved May 26. A study on the functionality of public areas is expected to start in early June. The TIP has been amended for the approved Safe Routes to School projects.
- PPACG - A consultant wants to use the INRIX data for some projects for PPACG. PPACG's next long-range plan will look out to 2050. The travel model is being redone to move away from a four-step model. For that work, PPACG will use Urban SIM. The TIP for 2017-2021 is being updated and revised. The MPO plans to host a "data summit" in the next two weeks to help all entities in the PPACG area share and obtain data. The MPO also will be soliciting a request for proposals for on-call work that should be out in the fall. Craig Casper offered to present about Plan Works at a future Statewide MPO meeting.

#### Performance Measures (Informational) - Jeff Sudmeier, DTD

- In the absence of William Johnson, Jeff reported on the recent Standing Committee on Performance Measurement (SCOPM) of AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials). Jeff said the following has been a big topic at the meetings:
  - [Metropolitan Planning Organization \(MPO\) Coordination and Planning Area Reform](#) proposed rulemaking could result in MPOs that have boundaries that touch, such as NFRMPO and DRCOG, jointly developing planning products such as single metropolitan transportation plan (MTP), transportation improvement program (TIP), and performance targets. The comment period on the proposed regulations will close on Aug. 26, 2016.

#### Critical Urban Freight Corridors (Discussion) - Jeff Sudmeier, DTD

- Colorado needs to designate 80 centerline miles of critical urban freight corridors and 160 miles of critical rural freight corridors. The urgency is that any project receiving federal formula freight funds must be located on a freight corridor, either that already included as part of the National Highway Freight Network (mostly the interstates with small segments on SH 2, E-470, US 6, and US 85) or as part of the critical urban and rural freight corridors. The initial National Highway Freight Network will be designated in December 2016. It will be advantageous if Colorado critical rural and urban freight corridors are included at that time.
- These designations need not be static; they can be changed as freight projects are completed, but the segments chosen should be logical.
- The method outlined at that day's meeting of the Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) for selecting the rural critical freight corridors may not work as well for designation of the critical urban freight corridors. That method proposed at STAC began with the Colorado Freight Corridors and the freight project locations identified in the State

Highway Freight Plan and then excluded the urban areas and corridors already designated on the National Highway Freight Network. Corridors are identified before projects are selected.

- The critical freight corridors, whether urban or rural, are public roads which provide access and connection to the Primary Highway Freight Corridors and the Interstate with other important ports, public transportation facilities, or intermodal freight facilities.
- MPOs of 500,000 or more people may designate their own critical freight corridors in cooperation with the state departments of transportation. That means that DRCOG and PPACG largely control their own processes.
- Some MPOs have both urban and rural freight corridors.
- The MPOs should discuss the methodology for their planning areas. We may want to identify the most important corridors or corridor segments, rather than allocate miles by formula.
- CDOT Multimodal Planning Branch is working with the CDOT Regions on possible designations.
- For CDOT, it would be good if the critical freight corridors were designated by October, followed by submittal to the Transportation Commission in November. That way, the urban and rural freight corridors can be completed and submitted to FHWA by December.
- Comments included:
  - DRCOG - Staff will need to come up with a methodology and then take it through its committee process. The methodology should include the intermodal connectors.
  - PPACG - Staff and its boards will need to think about the best way to designate the corridors.
  - It may be important to remember what one STAC members said: that what makes a freight corridor critical is the financial needs for improvements.

#### **Consolidated Planning Grants (CPG) Contracts (Discussion) - Jeff Sudmeier**

- MPOs were reminded that the CPG contracts are part of the two-year UPWPs (Unified Planning Work Programs).
- The one-year contracts are amended in the second year of the UPWP.
- Federal reconciliation and carryover funds are amended into CPG contracts.
- The two-year span for the UPWPs are FY 2015-2016 and FY 2016-2017. Future meetings will include a discussion on CPG and UPWP processes for upcoming years.

#### **Memorandum of Understanding (MOA) Template (Discussion) - Jeff Sudmeier**

- The template has been sent out for comment, and a few of the MPOs have sent comments back.
- The expectation is that each MPO will customize the template for their own use, but each would have common elements.

#### **Other Business**

- PPACG is working on updating its functional classification of highways; the last one was done in 2003.
- Emerging communities (i.e., those developing from farming communities to bedroom communities like Bennett) need some help from CDOT to accommodate to such growth and change.