



## Statewide MPO Meeting Notes - DRAFT Thursday, October 14, 2021

8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

### VIRTUAL MEETING

#### Present:

- **Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs):** Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)- Todd Cottrell, Alvan Bidal-Sanchez; Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Region (GVMPO): Dana Brosig; North Front Range MPO (NFRMPO) – Alex Gordon and AnnaRose Cunningham; Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG): John Liosatos, and Will Mast; and Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACOG): John Adams and Eva Cosyleon
- **CDOT Regions:** Region 1 – Jordan Rudel, Danny Herrmann, and Bridget Hart; Region 2 – Wendy Pettit and Geoff Guthrie, and Region 4 – Josie Hadley
- **CDOT Division of Transportation Development (DTD):** Aaron Willis, Jamie Collins, Kathleen Collins, Carrie Tremblatt, Nathan Vander Broek
- **CDOT Division of Transit & Rail (DTR):** Amber Blake, Julia Wcislo, David Singer
- **CDOT Performance and Asset Management Branch:** Darius Pakbaz
- **CDOT Traffic Safety & Engineering:** Jacob Kershner
- **CDOT Division of Accounting and Finance:** Cheryl Knibbe, Eric Ehrbar, Paige Castaneda
- **CDOT Office of Policy and Government Relations:** Jamie Grim
- **CDOT Traffic Safety and Engineering Services:** Jacob Kershner
- **Colorado Division FHWA:** Aaron Bustow, Bill Haas,
- **Region 8 FTA:** Emma Belmont
- **WSP:** Myron Hora

#### **FY 21 Revenue Reconciliation** – Cheryl Knibbe, CDOT Budget Analyst III

The annual revenue reconciliation process was explained. At the end of each fiscal year, the CDOT Office of Financial Management and Budget (OFMB) is responsible for reconciling the revenue forecast to the actual revenues that CDOT receives in the fiscal year. With COVID, the FY21 revenues were very volatile, especially the motor fuel tax and the vehicle registrations. The revenues reconciled include HUTF, FHWA apportionments, federal and state grant revenues, miscellaneous revenues, and enterprise revenues. According to Knibbe's report, the total federal FHWA shortfall was almost \$26.3 million. Cheryl also presented a table showing the various pools of funds and their reduction. This includes the Region pools as well as the MPO pools. This table provided a snapshot of the revenue reconciliation's effect on various programs. The plan is for the OFMB to send out this spreadsheet, along with the adjoining report in the next few weeks.



Wendy Pettit, CDOT Region 2 Planner, asked for clarification on how to cover any project budgeting issues, given that many FY22 projects have already been authorized and are under construction. Paige Castaneda of CDOT OFMB, said that if Regions or MPOs are short in their FY22 pool, they will likely need to take funds from FY23 or FY24 or look at reprioritizing projects. Jamie Collins, CDOT STIP Manager added that the budget shortfall might mean that projects get delayed or that projects that haven't started yet may need to be dropped.

**Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Visioning Project Update** – Jamie Collins, CDOT STIP Manager and Myron Hora, WSP

CDOT has hired WSP to conduct a Visioning Project for the STIP. The effort is meant to look at what the Department needs from the STIP overall and determine how best to improve the STIP process and product going forward. The project will go through March 2022 and include the following tasks:

- Identify STIP Requirements and Needs (10/31)
- Document Existing Process (11/30)
- Capture Jamie Collins' knowledge (11/30)
- Process Improvement Exercise (January 2022)
- Final Memorandum (March 2022)

The ultimate goal is to identify ways to streamline the current STIP process and develop recommendations for the CDOT STIP of the future. Myron then led the group in a discussion on the STIP. Questions included:

- Are the current STIP processes and outputs meeting your needs?
- What are the biggest pain-points of the STIP and budget Process?
- If there was one step in the STIP, TIP, and budget process that you could change, what would it be and why?
- If the STIP had to be built from the ground up, what would it look like? What would you include, remove, or change?

Some of the issues raised during the discussion included:

- The need for a universal project naming and project ID convention for both TIP and STIP projects.
- The need for having better organization or separate sections for TIP and State projects to make it easier to locate them in the document
- Having access to real time STIP tables
- Better communication around when STIP updates and changes are happening
- Difficulties in tracking projects as they change and move from planning to engineering stages
- Difficulties arising when the year that projects are identified in the STIP and delivered are different, necessitating roll-forwards that create additional administrative work
- Information on who controls or completes tasks for different project types, who STIPs a project and when it gets done
- The need for TIPs to identify the "color of money"
- Desire for the STIP to be a plan of projects expected to begin during a specific fiscal year instead of just a list of how we allocated dollars
- Desire to simplify the STIP

Any additional comments on the STIP process should be sent to Jamie Collins no later than October 31.

**Legislative Update** –Jamie Grimm, CDOT Office of Policy and Government Relations  
Jamie Grimm gave an update on the three things happening in US Congress right now:



1. Raising the Debt Ceiling. The debt ceiling has been raised through about December, but Congress will need to revisit the issue then. Republicans are threatening to torpedo this effort and allow the US to default, and insisting the Democrats do this on their own through the reconciliation process.
2. Infrastructure Bill. It has been passed by the Senate and is currently stalled in the House of Representatives. Moderates in the House are fighting to pass this.
3. The \$3.5 Trillion Reconciliation Bill. Progressives in the House are refusing to vote on the Infrastructure Bill unless they also pass this bill. The Speaker of the House has acknowledged the number on this bill will probably have to come down because two moderate Democrats in the Senate who are refusing to vote on this bill at \$3.5 T and want something in the \$1.5-\$2.2 T range. Both moderates and progressives are very frustrated with this situation.

The House has passed a continuing resolution to keep the government open and funded until December. This included the FAST act reauthorization. Preliminary numbers for the infrastructure bill are somewhat misleading as they include our typical standard funding, and this is not all new funding being proposed.

**Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) Update** – David Singer, CDOT Passenger Rail Program Manager  
David Singer gave a quick update on FRPR. The FRPR vision is to provide a new transportation option between Pueblo and Ft. Collins. The project is a partnership between the Southwest Chief and Passenger Rail Commission (MPOs, Amtrak, RTD, BNSF, Union Pacific) and CDOT. The project will create a backbone for transit options and connections going east and west all along the Front Range.

The framework for developing passenger rail system includes the three buckets of Policy, Program, and Project. SB21-238 created a Rail District going from the north to south state lines along the Front Range. The Rail District will start appointing members and the first board meeting will be in May 2022. The new Rail District will work to advance the vision of FRPR. There are four broad categories of needs for corridor development going forward:

- Operational Feasibility – ridership, travel time, performance
- Contextual – acceptable impacts to natural, cultural, and community resources
- Financial Feasibility – cost to build, operate, and maintain?
- Political & Public Interest – is there local support? Ballot question?

Upcoming work includes an alternatives analysis, preliminary service development planning, pre-National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) activities, and stakeholder engagement activities. Much of this work is being done in-house by CDOT, but consultants are needed as well. A key partnership going forward will be Amtrak, who continues to lobby Congress for funding for expanded passenger rail service. We are on the short list for new passenger rail service. Rail Commission members are already investing in planning, modeling, and other preparatory studies for passenger rail. The Regional Transportation District (RTD) is using their funds to advance a starter service for Northwest commuter rail, which would overlap with one of the FRPR alignments. BNSF Railway is requesting a single operating plan of RTD and FRPR for their shared track.

Current work for 2022-23 includes alternatives analysis, preliminary Service Development Plan (SDP), financial plan, operations plan, funding plan, station area plan, pre-NEPA package, and phasing plan. However, after that, there is still significant amounts of unfunded work to do for this corridor development.



## **National Performance Measures Target Setting Update – Darius Pakbaz, CDOT Performance and Asset Management Branch**

Darius provided a brief overview of our annual performance review for Performance Measure (PM) 2 and PM3 measures for Infrastructure Conditions and System Reliability. We are currently in year 3 of 4 of the performance period. Next year, we will be evaluated on our targets and set the new targets for the next performance period.

- In interstate pavement ratings, our percent Good has remained consistent, but the percent poor has increased. This is concerning because if the percent poor reaches 5%, there will be financial penalties applied. We are currently below that threshold, but it is something to be aware of.
- For non-interstate NHS pavement, there hasn't been much change at the statewide level. For the NHS Bridge Deck Area Rating, the percent of Good continues to decline. We are below the target of 44%. The percent poor is above the 5% target, but this may change when the I-70 viaduct, which is being taken down, is removed from the list.
- Level of Travel Time Reliability saw a huge jump in performance in 2020 due to the effects of the pandemic and is above the target both for interstates and non-interstates. There's also been a slight increase in Truck Travel Time Reliability, but this is still below the statewide target.
- CMAQ emission benefits are on target for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) except for PM10.

Performance Management will provide the MPOs with the following data: a 2020 National Performance Measure (NPM) MPO Scorecard, MPO Data Sheets, GIS geo-coded file for both Pavement and Bridge, and System reliability data. New statewide targets will be set by October 1, 2022 and MPOs will have to either support CDOT targets or submit their own targets for PM2 and PM3 by March 30, 2023.

John Liosatos requested a class on Performance Measures 101 for new MPO staff members. Darius Pakbaz responded that they would try to get that on the calendar soon.

### **Other Business**

- The next SWMPO Meeting postponed until Thursday, December 9 at 8:30 am due to the day before STAC in November being Veterans' Day and a holiday.

