



Planning Connections - December 2016

CDOT planning news you can use.

APA Conference Highlights Shared During Brown Bag Lunch



Kathleen Collins, right, and Mike King get set up for a brown bag lunch presentation. Grace Kellner, Multimodal Planning Branch intern, left, looks on. (Photo by Gail Hoffman)

Designing communities for health, disaster preparedness, and diverging diamonds. These were only a few of the topics presented at the Oct. 23-26 Colorado American Planning Association (APA) 2016 Conference at the Cheyenne Mountain Resort in Colorado Springs.

Of the 11 sessions she attended, Kathleen Collins of the Multimodal Planning Branch's Statewide Planning Section shared the slides from the three sessions with a small group gathered for a brown bag lunch on Dec. 6.

- Community Design for Health - Mark Fenton of Tufts University noted that less than 20 percent of Americans get the recommended daily physical activity of 30 minutes for adults and 60 minutes for children. He attributed that lack to the way communities are designed to encourage automobile use and discourage alternate modes such as biking and walking. Solutions include land use, a bike/trail network, safety and access, and site design, with resulting economic and health benefits.
- Disaster Preparedness - Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments in Colorado Springs gave a talk on how the MPO's travel demand model was used to prepare for disasters and helped informed Colorado Springs' ability to evacuate people during the Waldo Canyon fire in June 2012 when the modeled worst-case scenario became reality. Identifying critical links in the transportation network helped develop a Network Robustness Index (NRI), which is expressed in the additional vehicle hours of travel for

traffic disruptions. The NRI serves as a criterion for prioritizing transportation system investments.

- Multimodal Diverging Diamonds - Diverging diamond interchanges have reduced serious accidents and increased traffic flow in other parts of the country. Colorado's first multimodal diverging diamond interchange at McCaslin Boulevard and U.S. 36 near Superior cost less to build and is safer than the traditional design. The multimodal elements at the interchange allow pedestrians and bicycles on the diamond. Diverging diamond intersections stop traffic in the middle of an interchange, when the direction of traffic shifts to the other side. Safety is improved by reducing traffic conflict points (26 down to 14 for the U.S. 36 interchange) and eliminating wrong-way entry to ramps, as well as reducing costs. For the U.S. 36 interchange, the cost was \$14 million, compared to \$22 million for a traditional interchange.



APA Conference
Overview Slide Show

To view the slides, see the attached.

Local 2016 Transportation Ballot Issues: More Win, Fewer Fail

Local ballot issues to raise money for transportation sometimes are successful in Colorado. If the results of the Nov. 8 election are any guide, sales tax measures do well, property tax measures poorly, and bond issues are split.

According to information compiled by the CDOT Office of Policy & Government Relations for the Transportation Commission, 56 percent (or 14) of the 25 transportation ballot issues the office tracked won and 44 percent (or 11) lost. This was the breakdown:

| <i>Colorado 2016 Local Ballot Transportation Questions</i> | | |
|--|---------------|-------------|
| <i>Type of Tax</i> | <i>Pass</i> | <i>Fail</i> |
| Sales Tax - New | 4 | 2 |
| Sales Tax - Extend | 1 | 0 |
| Property Tax | 1 (extend) | 6 |
| Bond | 3 | 3 |
| Marijuana Excise Tax | 1 | 0 |
| Advisory (funds directed to transportation) | 4 | 0 |

San Juan County, of which Silverton is the county seat, will be using a 3 percent marijuana excise tax for a variety of government functions, including road and bridge construction. Uses of some of the other issues included:

- Transit - **Boulder County** and **Telluride/San Miguel County** voters agreed to fund transit. Boulder County's vote will extend one-half (0.125 percent) of the county's existing 0.25 percent sales and use tax for open space for another 15 years for sustainability programs like water conservation, recycling and composting services, energy efficiency and renewable energy services, public transit and other purposes. Telluride/San Miguel County decided in two advisory measures to form a San Miguel

Regional Authority for Transportation (SMART) and to pay for operating expenses from a 0.25 percent sales tax and 0.75 mill levy.

- Bike/Pedestrian - **Grand and Pitkin counties** passed measures intended to maintain or improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities, Grand County by a three-year multipurpose 0.3 percent sales tax, including maintaining hiking and biking trails, and Pitkin County by an extension of the existing 3.75 mill levy for 20 years to support the county open space and trails program.
- Roads/Bike/Pedestrian - **Glenwood Springs, Grand Lake, and Wheat Ridge** voters approved measures that will fund roads and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Glenwood Springs will issue bonds for capital projects to improve safety and traffic congestion, construct a river walk, and beautify streets and Grand Lake will issue bonds for street improvements. Wheat Ridge voters agreed to a 12-year sales tax for various public investments, including transportation projects.
- Roads - **Canon City, Telluride, Salida, Pueblo County, and Dillon** voters all passed issues to raise money for roads. Canon City increased the sales tax by 1 percent for 10 years for street-related improvements. Telluride increased debt through a bond to finance construction of parking improvements and Salida agreed to dedicate 32 percent of sales tax revenue to the Streets Fund for street construction, operations, maintenance, and repair. On an advisory issue, Pueblo County decided to retain dollars from expiring corporate tax incentive agreements for countywide transportation, park and community capital improvements. In another advisory measure, Dillon voters agreed that revenues from a 0.5 percent sales tax may be spent on both road maintenance and construction and removed the Dec. 31, 2033 sales tax expiration date.

For more information, see the attached CDOT Office of Policy & Government Relations documents included in the November Transportation Commission packet:



2016 Election
Memo.pdf



Attachment C Local
Transp Questions.pdf

Flume Pullout Dedicated on Trail of the Ancients Byway

The McElmo Flume project off U.S. 160 east of Cortez on the Trail of the Ancients Byways was dedicated on Dec. 5, representing the end of a three-year local effort to stabilize the wooden flume and create a highway pullout, parking lot, and paved trail leading to an educational overlook.

According to an article in the *Durango Herald* newspaper, a total of \$375,000 in state historical and federal highway grants and \$100,000 in local fundraising made the flume restoration project possible. Now on the National Register of Historic Places, the flume was built in 1890 over arroyos and was part of a canal system that delivered water to the Montezuma Valley from the Dolores River through a mile-long tunnel built in 1886. The McElmo Flume was one of 33 on the Highline Canal that delivered water to southern Montezuma Valley farms and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. The McElmo Flume remained in operation until 1991, which it was replaced by an inverted siphon that runs under the highway and delivers water to Ute Mountain Ute farms as part of the Dolores Project.

Restoration of the flume was a collaborative effort among the Trail of the Ancients Byway, Cortez Historic Preservation Board, Montezuma County, Montezuma Valley Irrigation Co., Ballantine Family Fund, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Colorado State Historical Fund, CDOT, Federal Highway Administration, Mesa Verde Country, Montezuma County Historical Society, Southwestern Water Conservation District, and Southwest Basin Roundtable.



Susan Thomas, director of the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway, speaks to the group that assembled Dec. 5 for the dedication of improvements to the McElmo Flume. (Photo by Beverly Cunningham)

Updates in Brief

National 25th Anniversary: Lenore Bates, CDOT coordinator of the Byways Program, attended the 25th anniversary of the National Scenic Byways in Washington D.C. on Dec. 6. The event was hosted by Scenic America, the National Scenic Byway Foundation, and the Journey through Hallowed Ground Partnership. The National Scenic Byways Program was created in 1991 under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act to provide federal funding for maintenance and improvement projects on federally-designated National Scenic Byways. The United States currently has 150 designated National Scenic Byways (NSB) and American Roads (AAR) in 46 states. Colorado has 26 of the byways, including 11 with national designation. Due to the popularity of the program, a push to restore federal funding for the program is expected to take place during drafting of the next federal transportation authorization bill. For more information on the Colorado program, see this [link](#).

Safe Routes to Schools Applications: The Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Advisory Committee is currently reviewing the 22 applications that arrived by the Dec. 2 deadline for Safe Routes to Schools grant funding. The advisory committee will make a recommendation to the Transportation Commission in March on the best projects to fund. Regional planners and local agency coordinators are also taking a look at their CDOT Region infrastructure applications and providing feedback to the advisory committee on the strengths and weaknesses of the applications and applicants. The requests exceeded available funding by \$1.32 million and came from across the state. Fourteen are for infrastructure projects and eight for non-infrastructure (education and encouragement).

Program Evaluated: The Safe Routes to Schools program has selected the consultant firm of SHG Advisors to evaluate the existing program and, with input from CDOT and non-CDOT stakeholders, develop a strategic plan that ensures stability for the program and successfully enables more children from kindergarten through 8th grade to walk and bike safely to and from school. By the end of June, a final report is anticipated, which will include a review of the existing Colorado SRTS program, identify needs, facilitate development of program goals and objectives, and create an implementation plan that best uses limited resources.

Winter Biking: CDOT's first Winter Bike to Work Day at the Denver headquarters will be Jan. 25, the same day that the Denver Regional Council of Governments will host it in the Denver metro area. While CDOT won't be offering breakfast, the Bicycle/Pedestrian/Byways section has purchased a limited number of winter bicycle socks with financial help from Kaiser Permanente. People who register and log their miles will receive a pair on a first come, first served basis.

Transportation Commission and STAC

- A [summary](#) of the Transportation Commission's Dec. 8 meeting is posted on the STAC webpage.
- Notes from the Dec. 2 STAC meeting will be available in the STAC packet for the January 27 meeting, which should be sent via e-mail on Jan. 20. The notes also should be located on the [STAC webpage](#).

If you have suggestions for topics or updates to submit, please send to gail.hoffman@state.co.us. Copies of past issues of Planning Connections are available [here](#) under Planning Process.