



# Planning Connections - May-June 2017

*CDOT planning news you can use.*



## Scenario Planning Peer Exchange to Assist CDOT with 2045 Plans

CDOT and its MPO planning partners intend to conduct scenario planning as a part of the upcoming statewide and regional long-range transportation planning process. A peer exchange on June 8 at CDOT headquarters involved a day-long workshop with panelists from five departments of transportation or MPOs. The purpose and goal of the peer exchange was to understand how scenario planning has been applied in other states, garner best practices, and learn from the successes of and challenges faced by the peer DOTs/MPOs.

*Breakout Session – Members of a breakout group discuss scenario planning approaches. Standing is Bill Haas of FHWA.*

Five representatives from these agencies ranging in size and geographic location presented at the peer exchange:

- Minnesota DOT
- Michigan DOT
- Atlanta Regional Council
- Missoula MPO
- Wasatch Front Range Council (Utah)

The presentations outlined each agency's approach and priorities when developing the respective scenarios. Their presentations sparked questions and discussion that prepared attendees for the afternoon breakout working sessions.

Approximately 50 participants from various planning agencies and CDOT departments attended the peer exchange. Each attendee received a packet, filled with the presentations, context information, and the day's agenda. A video recording of the presentations and breakout group report back is available digitally. In the breakout groups, attendees worked together to collaboratively formulate a Scenario Planning Framework for Colorado. The discussion encouraged participants to think through the scenario planning process, and the frameworks developed serve as a starting point for CDOT and the Colorado MPOs to customize their own scenario planning approaches.

After a productive day, CDOT employees and representatives of the participating agencies were aware of the shared future concerns and uncertainty for a growing and changing Colorado. Several of the breakout groups that shared their Scenario Planning Framework after the working session focused on a scenario concerning how much funding is available or how funding is being spent. From this initial discussion, CDOT Multimodal Planning Branch will take all the comments, ideas, and scenarios to continue to develop a framework for the upcoming statewide plan update. CDOT also will focus particularly on the desired goals and outcomes from a scenario planning exercise and fuse them to aid in effective decision making.

## C-470 Expansion Project Reaches Financial Close Milestones



*C-470 - The High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) achieved two major milestones on the C-470 expansion project. C-470 makes up part of a western ring around the Denver metro area. (Photo by Shahn Sederberg, CDOT)*

The High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) achieved two major milestones on the C-470 expansion project, which had its financial close on June 14. HPTE successfully closed on:

- \$161.7 million in revenue bonds for the project, the first bonds ever issued directly by HPTE.

- A \$106.9 million federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan supporting the project.

C-470, the southwestern portion of the Denver metro area's beltway, is one of the most congested corridors in the nation. The expansion project will add new Express Lanes and improve general purposes lanes between I-25 and Wadsworth, and be completed in mid- to late-2019. Combined, issuance of the bonds and receipt of the federal loan provides more than two-thirds of the funding needed for this important project.

"We are excited to have sold the bonds at extremely favorable rates and terms, which shows the strength of this project," said HPTE Director David Spector. "The demand far exceeded the supply, lowering true interest costs and resulting in more than \$30 million in savings for the state of Colorado over the life of the bonds. HPTE was created to finance projects like this, and we're proud to help deliver projects like this that otherwise would not have enough funding."

The \$106.9 million TIFIA loan, provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Build America Bureau, also provides these attractive interest rates and repayment terms for the project, among others: HPTE has 35 years after the project is open to repay the loan; interest payments do not begin until five years after the project is open; the loan is subordinate to the bonds; and HPTE can prepay the loan at any time without a penalty.

## Updates in Brief

- **Biking with Strava:** CDOT will be among the first departments of transportation in the country to compare the Strava Metro data with its own bike count data. CDOT will receive the statewide data from Strava in quarterly increments. Strava began as a fitness tracking tool, and Strava Metro recently began selling the data collected to states and cities. Florida, Oregon, Vermont, and Utah also have purchased Strava data compiled from cell phones, but not all of them also have bike permanent and temporary counters.
- **Public Survey about Plans:** CDOT has surveyed the public about attitudes about CDOT, transportation, and transportation funding, but never about what the public would like to see in a transportation plan. Such a survey is being contemplated this fall to help inform development of the 2045 plans.
- **Freight Roundabout Charrette:** A design charrette about roundabouts and chaired by CDOT Deputy Director Mike Lewis took place on June 19. The charrette brought together CDOT engineers with representatives of the freight industry to examine the impact of roundabouts on freight movement. Some changes may be coming as a result of the charrette.
- **State Highway Freight Plan Amendment Submitted:** An amendment to the 2015 *State Highway Freight Plan* was submitted to Federal Highway Administration Colorado Division Office for review on June 15. The amendment is intended to bring the Plan into compliance with the federal transportation authorization bill, the 2015 FAST Act, which passed after the highway freight plan was completed. After CDOT addressed a few comments from division FHWA staff, the amendment was sent to FHWA headquarters for review.
- **Research Library:** A research library made up of links to Transportation Research Board articles, webinar announcements, studies, and publications, as well as to other sources of information, can be found on SharePoint. The SharePoint [site](#) has folders on a variety of topics, ranging from access management to workforce issues. Within each folder, items are generally arranged with the most recent at the top. The same item may be found in more than one folder. For example, an item about managing transit assets would be in both the transit and asset management folders.

## Transportation Commission and STAC

- [Summaries](#) of the Transportation Commission's May 17-18 and June 14-15 meetings are posted on the STAC webpage.
- Notes from the May 19 STAC meeting are available [here](#). Notes from the June 23 meeting will be included in the packet for the July 28 meeting.

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