

Statewide MPO Meeting

February 26, 2016

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

CDOT HQ Room 159

DRAFT Notes

Attendees: MPOs - Doug Rex and Steve Cook, Denver Regional Council of Government (DRCOG); Todd Hollenbeck, Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (GVMPO); Craig Casper and Rachel Beck, Pikes Peak Area Council of Government (PPACG); Scott Hobson, Pueblo Area Council of Government (PACOG); and Terri Blackmore, North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO). CDOT Division of Transportation Development - Debra Perkins-Smith. CDOT Multimodal Planning Branch - Jeff Sudmeier, Michelle Scheuerman, Kathleen Collins, Gail Hoffman, Tim Kirby, Michael King, Michael Snow, Marissa Gaughan, and Jason Wallis. CDOT Transportation System Management and Operations - Lisa Streisfeld. CDOT Regions: Danny Herrmann, R1; Karen Rowe, R2; Mark Rogers, R3; Karen Schneiders, R4; and Mike Vanderhoof, R5 (via teleconference). FHWA: Aaron Bustow and Angel D. Rivera. FTA: Darin Allan. CDM Smith: Chris Nazar.

Statewide Plan Lessons Learned (Informational) - Michelle Scheuerman, DTD

- Michelle and Chris Nazar, the consultant, said they were seeking feedback from the MPOs on what went right and what needed improving during the 2040 planning process. They reminded attendees that they should have received a list of questions a few days ago to be prepared to answer during the discussion.
- Comments included those on:
 - Content and Data
 - The Executive Summary of the 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan (SWP) needed to be clearer about the distinction between the on- and off-system National Highway System and State Highway System.
 - Data sources needed to be cited more frequently throughout the document. (A CDOT Statewide Travel Model should help with data for the next plan.)
 - A bibliography on the sources cited would have been helpful.
 - The next plan should have a stronger link between the needs, the revenue gap, and what CDOT will do about it.
 - The Executive Summary is too long for public use and should use more graphics. CDOT should develop a shorter brochure version that is more public-friendly.
 - Funding discussions (like the STAC discussions about SB 228) should come right out of the SWP and Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs).
 - We need to make sure this is used by state legislators, not just their staffs.
 - The Executive Summary should hone in on what's not getting funded and what that means in terms of lives lost and hours and dollars wasted on congested roads. The SWP could start with the gaps identified in the MPO and rural TPR RTPs and build that to the state level.
 - The tie between the SWP and the RTPs and the STIP needed more explanation.

- Although it's difficult with varying schedules for development of the various CDOT plans, CDOT should try to use the most current data possible.
- Perhaps CDOT should unify the data sources used by CDOT, MPOs, and TPRs. For example, the crash data that CDOT had didn't match the crash data of PPACG.
- CDOT could do a data gap analysis much earlier to identify data needs and address them.
- The SWP should be clearer and more concise about what the state's transportation needs are.
- Don't cram graphics together on a page; that loses the attention of the readers.
- o SWP or SWP Components Usage
 - The Infographics used in the SWP have been very helpful.
 - Prezis are either loved or hated. CDOT might need another method of presenting information that is accessible to disabled persons.
 - NFRMPO and GVMPO used the Prezis to present information on their own plans.
- o SWP Development
 - The Telephone Town Hall won rave reviews; appreciation was expressed for CDOT involving the MPOs in them.
 - The environmental webinar with resource agencies was efficient and well-coordinated.
 - The statewide planning website, www.coloradotransportationmatters.com, was a useful resource.
 - Better integration is needed between the rural TPR plans and the MPO plans in the same CDOT region.
 - It might have helped if there had been a better explanation about how the perception of level of service (LOS) differs between urban and rural areas (i.e., an LOS of "D" is OK in Denver but not in Limon).
 - The timing of plan development could be improved. Legally, the MPO and rural TPRs do their plans first and then those plans are consolidated into an SWP. If the planning cycles remain the same, however, there always will be a problem with the timing of the SWP and the RTPs.
- o Suggested Changes to SWP/Planning Process
 - DRCOG - There could have been more MPO involvement on such matters as the needs and gap methodology. The Executive Summary is very clear.
 - GVMPO - When the planning process began, there seemed to be a distinct line in the sand between development of the rural TPR plans and those of the MPOs. The MPO's relationship with Region 3 was awesome. More coordination with the MPOs, such as what occurred with the surveys and Telephone Town Halls, would be welcome.
 - NFRMPO - The MPOs could have learned more about SWP development through the Transportation Advisory Council's CDOT representatives. A crowd-sourced map-based survey is really inexpensive and could have yielded useful information.
 - PACOG - We needed more coordination with CDOT and better integration with other CDOT plans. The Telephone Town Halls could be expanded next time.
 - PPACG - Why not update the SWP now since all the MPO plans are done? (CDOT staff said they would prefer to work toward the next SWP rather than improving the last one.) A quick glance through the SWP Executive Summary seems to indicate the MPOs don't exist except for white spaces on the maps. All TPR/MPO RTPs should be incorporated on the same basis or scale (i.e., congestion) and linked to expenditures.
- o Communications and Involvement
 - More updates on the 2040 planning process at MPO Transportation Advisory Councils would have kept MPO members better informed. "Don't try to do it all at STAC," said Terri Blackmore of NFRMPO.

- It's hard to find the right balance between state-of-the-art methods (Telephone Town Halls and statewide planning website) and face-to-face methods, such as reports given at MPO meetings. CDOT should keep communications both simple and state of the art.
- CDOT should help the public understand which plans matter to them - the SWP or the RTPs - for project selection.
- MPO and CDOT performance measures are supposed to be aligned.

FAST Act Freight Program Implementation (Jason Wallis, DTD)

- Jason explained that FAST Act provides for a 41,518-mile Primary Freight Network, as well as Critical Rural Freight Networks, Critical Urban Freight Corridors, and any portion of the Interstate system not included in the Primary Freight Network. (I-25 and I-70 are part of the Primary Freight Network, while I-76 is not.)
- Under FAST, Colorado can have no more than 75 miles of Critical Urban Freight Corridors. A possible strategy in selecting the miles for the Critical Urban Freight Corridors for the MPOs of more than 200,000 people is to select areas where improvements for highway freight are needed.
- By Dec. 5, 2017, freight projects within urban areas must be located within the Critical Urban Freight Corridors to be eligible for FAST Act formula funds. (FASTLANE applications that will be solicited soon do not have to meet this requirement.)
- MPOs with populations of more than 200,000 select the Critical Urban Freight Corridors, not the state departments of transportation. However, it's important for CDOT and the MPOs to work together.
- Before the Critical Urban Freight Corridors are selected, FHWA needs to issue guidance. Therefore, selection of the Critical Urban Freight Corridors is at least a month or two away.

Other Business:

- Vehicle miles traveled nationwide broke any records. Low gas prices might be the main reason.

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

Other Business

- Due to technical difficulties, Steve Markovetz was unable to deliver his planned presentation on defederalization remotely. He will be invited to the next Statewide MPO meeting.
- NFRMPO asked if a Front Range travel survey involving CDOT, NFRMPO, DRCOG, PACOG, and PPACG could be conducted for the 2045 plan.