



**Statewide MPO**  
**Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2016**  
**9:30 a.m.**  
**Denver Regional Council of Governments**  
**1290 Broadway**  
**Denver**  
**Monarch Pass Board Room**

**Present:** MPOs: Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) - Doug Rex, Ashley Summers, Justin Martinez, Robert Spotts, Steve Cook, Todd Cottrell, and Jacob Riger; Grand Valley MPO (GVMPO) - Todd Hollenbeck (via phone); North Front Range MPO (NFRMPO) - Becky Karasko; Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments - Craig Casper; and Pueblo Area Council of Governments - Scott Hobson (phone). CDOT Regions: JoAnn Mattson and Danny Herrmann, R1; Karen Schneiders (phone), R4; and Wendy Pettit (phone), R2. CDOT Division of Transportation Development (DTD): Debra Perkins-Smith. CDOT Multimodal Branch: Jeff Sudmeier, Michael Snow, and Gail Hoffman. CDOT Division of Transportation System Management and Operations (TSM&O): Lisa Streisfeld. Federal Highway Administration: William Haas and Aaron Bustow.

**1. Briefing on DRCOG's Collaborative Data Partnership (DRCOG) - Ashley Summers and Justin Martinez**

- DRCOG and 21 of its member entities collaborated to pay for aerial photographs of the region. Now DRCOG is using a vendor that is able to turn those aerial photographs into "planimetric" images: permanent stationary features that are visible from the air, such as sidewalks, paved trails, parking lots, and driveways.
- The result is more than what would be visible using GoogleEarth because the tool quantifies the infrastructure.
- Applications to date of the tool include:
  - Regional Transportation District: Assist in developing phone apps that tell pedestrians where to find the nearest transit stop.
  - National Energy Renewable Lab: Develop large-scale energy simulations.
  - Denver Water: Help determine what areas need better storm drainage due to impervious surfaces.
- The sidewalk information shows where sidewalk ramps are located, but not whether the sidewalk ramps are compliant with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.
- DRCOG used 2014 aerial imagery for the first project and plans to use 2016 aerial imagery for the next update. So far, 25 of DRCOG's member entities are considering joining this newest effort.
- Another data collaboration effort involves UrbanSim, which DRCOG is using for land use purposes. Land use is a function of households, employment, and population.
- As one of its controls, UrbanSim uses available information on open space and zoning regulations to determine how much each county in the DRCOG region can grow.

- One of the advantages of UrbanSim is that it facilitates ongoing communication with DRCOG's member entities on updates. DRCOG keeps a running list on needed updates for periodic runs of the model.
- DRCOG runs UrbanSim with the MPO travel model. The combination of both can help planners determine how many parking spaces are needed in particular locations, for example.
- UrbanSim has the ability to show in three dimensions jobs in a land-use map, which gives a graphic illustration of job concentrations.
- The Metro Vision plan which the DRCOG board is about to adopt has a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction goal of 10 percent per capita. UrbanSim can be used for scenario planning to show the impact of certain policy goals on VMT reduction.
- UrbanSim also is much faster than DRCOG's previous land use model. Where once it takes a week to run, it now takes just a few hours.

## 2. Briefing on the 2015 Annual Report on Roadway Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region (DRCOG) - Steve Cook

- Copies of the *2015 Annual Report on Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region*, dated October 2016, were distributed.
- The report shows that since 2006:
  - Traffic congestion is slightly worse overall for the region, primarily because of population growth.
  - More transit options are available to help people avoid driving in severe congestion.
  - Interest in and opportunities for walking and bicycling to destinations are growing.
  - Drivers have more access to real-time information on traffic conditions, major incidents, and travel options to avoid driving alone.
- The Denver region's VMT increased by 4 percent between 2014 and 2015, the highest annual percentage growth since the late 1990s. The region also appears to have had the largest raw value growth in daily VMT ever (an increase of 3 million vehicles per day). In comparison, VMT growth during the eight years from 2006 through 2014 was about 3.8 million.
- Many factors caused the growth in VMT, including:
  - Booming economy throughout the region
  - Increase in the number of personal trips to jobs, entertainment, and shopping
  - Increase in commercial vehicle and service trips
  - Decrease in the price of fuel beginning in late 2014 and remaining low through 2015
- The Metro Vision goal of reducing VMT growth 10 percent translates to reducing VMT growth by 23 VMT per capita.
- In 2015, for the first time, the average fuel efficiency of vehicles went down.
- Measured in the report is VMT from any motor vehicle on the highways. Light-rail isn't counted.
- CDOT owns and operates 12-15 continuous traffic counters whose results were used along with local and FHWA sources to derive the VMT growth estimate shown in the report.
- The average Denver metro area resident spends 37 hours a year on congested highways.

- a. **Discussion of INRIX use by MPOs - present and future**
  - o DRCOG - DRCOG is using INRIX data for many example purposes, such as model validation of speed/delay curve formulas, travel speeds, and travel time variation. INRIX caps showing speeds 10-15 mph over the speed limit, causing inaccurate speed data for uncongested corridor segments.
  - o PPACG - The MPO anticipates using the INRIX data as part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) currently and for the Capital Improvement Program in five years. It also would be helpful if information could be obtained from INRIX on how long it takes to clear the highways following a crash or any other incident that slows traffic.
  - o NFRMPO - NFRMPO used INRIX information for the 2016 Congestion Management Program Annual Report and plans to use the INRIX data for its upcoming freight plan.
  - o Debra Perkins-Smith - CDOT would like to use INRIX data more analytically to identify problem areas and possible solutions.
  - o CDOT TSM&O -INRIX data works well with a slightly different standard, one that measures minutes of travel. The current methods of Level of Service A, B, C, and D show only a "snapshot" in time. INRIX data can show what the peak hours are on different corridors, and consequently, where to locate Courtesy Patrols.
  
3. **Possible revisions to Metropolitan Planning Agreement (MPA) template (CDOT) - Marissa Gaughan**
  - The changes in red text in the document entitled Attachment C were agreed to during a discussion prompted by some draft FHWA "certification findings" for DRCOG.
  - Staff will refine and distribute for review prior to the next SWMPO meeting.
  
4. **Revenue Forecasts and Program Distribution - continued discussion on timeline and methodology (CDOT) - Jeff Sudmeier**
  - Andrew Wheeler of the Office of Financial Management and Budget (OFMB) has been doing the revenue projections, but he's leaving CDOT for another opportunity.
  - The former forecasts were based on gas tax projections. This cycle CDOT may need to consider how to incorporate possible other sources or a replacement for the gas tax. CDOT also may want to consider doing high and low scenarios.
  - We will likely begin revenue projection discussions in early 2017. At the December meeting we'll have OFMB present on the revenue model and will continue the discussion.
  - MPOs would like to make sure assumptions for revenue projections and program distribution are consistent with the MPO assumptions used for scenario planning.
  - One FHWA website on financial planning and fiscal constraint for transportation plans and programs might be helpful: [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/guidfinconstr\\_qa.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/guidfinconstr_qa.cfm)
  
5. **Accelerated Innovation Deployment (AID) Demonstration - Lisa Streisfeld**
  - Lisa said she is the CDOT contact for this federal program, which provides funding to encourage implementation and adoption of innovation in highway transportation.
  - The four-year program provides \$10 million a year, and the funding can be used for any phase of a project, from planning to implementation.

## 6. MPO Updates - All MPO Representatives

- DRCOG - Metro Vision, the long-range plan for the entire region, is out for public review now. A public hearing on the document will be on November 16<sup>th</sup>. The 2040 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan will be released for public review in early 2017. The Public Involvement Plan is being updated, and a report on environmental justice within the Denver metro area is being compiled. Additionally, DRCOG is also preparing a Title VI Plan. DRCOG is also finalizing a major update to its Transportation Planning in the Denver Region document.
- NFRMPO - An amendment to the 2040 RTP is out for public comment until December 18. The amendment includes I-25 and the Greeley-Evans Transit Transfer Center. The plan amendment passed the conformity determination and will go to the Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC) in November. NFRMPO will ask the AQCC to set a public hearing in December. NFRMPO Planning Council's approval of the plan amendment is anticipated in January 2017.
- PPACG - PPACG's ozone levels are still OK, although the MPO has noted a gradual increase. Policies for Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development are under consideration. On Nov. 9, the board will be reviewing the latest budget, including how the Consolidated Planning Grant will be used.
- PACOG - PACOG is about halfway through the transit functionality study. The study has two alternatives. A connectivity study about linking the railyards with downtown Pueblo has two alternatives that are being examined, and the study is expected to be completed in February or March 2017. PACOG also is updating its public involvement plan for board adoption.

## 7. CDOT Updates - Jeff Sudmeier

- Priorities for SB 228 and National Highway Freight Program are being discussed with the Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) and the Transportation Commission. The SB 228 funds are looking less certain due to a commitment on North I-25 and fewer revenues than predicted.
- FASTLANE grant applications will be discussed with the Transportation Commission next week. (The FASTLANE program is to fund projects of national or regional significance, including intermodal projects. Large projects are eligible for an award minimum of \$25 million and small projects for an award minimum of \$5 million.)
- The Freight Advisory Council and the Steering Committee are meeting together later today. Topics of discussion include development of the *Multimodal Freight Plan* and the National Highway Freight Program.

## 8. FHWA/FTA Updates

- FHWA has released a map of the approved Alternative Fuel Corridors. Only 10 states applied for such designation. Colorado's corridors are I-70, I-76, and I-25. Discussions are taking place on what the signage should be and how the different types of fueling stations available on the corridors should be differentiated (i.e., CNG, electric, and propane).
- MPO representation would be helpful for a CDOT de-federalization pilot to work out the details of how federal money for identified local agency projects could be exchanged for state money so that the projects can proceed more quickly. Projects that use only state money also can be delayed for various reasons.
- For one project in Region 4, more flexible Surface Transportation Program - Metro funding is being considered instead of state funds. A question about where the consequent savings should go should be referred to Steve Markovetz or Cathy Cole.

- Denver received an Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment (ATCMD) grant for its Smart Cities proposal.
- One source of information on federal revenues is:  
[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/guidfinconstr\\_qa.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/guidfinconstr_qa.cfm)

**Next Two SWMPO Meetings:**

- Friday, Dec. 2, following STAC meeting: CDOT
- Tuesday, Jan. 10: FHWA offices in Lakewood