

I - 70 Mountain Corridor

Collaborative Effort Minutes May 7, 2010 Silverthorne Pavilion

Discussion Items

Welcome

Collaborative Effort (CE) co-chairs Harry Dale and Michael Penny opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and initiating a round of introductions. There have been a few changes in members; see attendance at the end of this summary. Harry stated that a key discussion for the day was how the CE wants to move forward now that the Preferred Alternative has been identified.

Update on Revised Draft PEIS

Scott McDaniel, CDOT, presented an update on the RDPEIS noting that the detailed technical material will be housed in the Technical Reports and that the Preferred Alternative provides flexibility to future decision makers. Michael re-iterated support for flexibility in the future. Scott also reviewed the schedule for completion through the Record of Decision. Harry stated that some PLT members had concern over the 45 day review period for the public and agency review of the document. While the agencies' intent is to prepare a document that can be reviewed in 45 days, he felt that the stakeholders would want more time in order to review the technical reports. The PLT will discuss the review period at the May 24th meeting.

Level of Detail at Tier 1 for the Implementation Process

Shaun Cutting, FHWA, discussed the implementation process needed at a Tier 1 level noting that projects will go through CDOT's 4P process which is federally mandated. Tier 2 NEPA documents require a reasonably foreseeable funding source in order to be initiated. The regions are committed to coordinating both with each other and the stakeholders for implementation the Preferred Alternative. Cindy Neely, Historic Georgetown, pointed out that the implementation plan does identify the high priorities from the Consensus Recommendation. The group acknowledged that identifying funding was a high priority. The conversation moved into the next agenda topic as the group began to discuss how decisions related to implementation are made.

What Happens after the Record of Decision?

Harry presented an overview of CDOT's planning process and referred to a 4 page document that had been emailed out in advance which included a diagram on how stakeholders interact with the planning process. He noted that Senate Bill 228 rescinded the Senate Bill 1 funding which had provided a dedicated funding source for strategic transportation corridors in the state, including the I-70 Mountain Corridor. With the removal of this funding source, the Corridor would be competing for funds in DROCG and the Intermountain Transportation Planning Region (TPR). Michael noted that design studies, like the Silverthorne Interchange, could be initiated to jump start the process without the need for the identification of a funding source for construction.

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Michael explained that the I-70 Coalition was likely going to ask its members to prioritize the list of projects in the Consensus Recommendation as they participate in the 4P process. Because the Corridor traverses two TPRs and one Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), CDOT is facilitating a meeting between DRCOG and the non-MPO areas to help facilitate the 4P process. In discussion about the role of the CE it was noted that there was some overlap between the constituency of the CE and the I-70 Coalition and duplication of efforts was undesirable. The group also acknowledged a need for regional planning along with local consideration of priorities. In response to a question from Eagle County Commissioner Peter Runyon, CDOT Executive Director Russ George urged the stakeholders to actively advocate for their priorities. He noted that CDOT cannot make project choices but relies on information from DRCOG and the Intermountain TPR.

Preferred Alternative

The CE reviewed a list of the early action projects and CDOT pointed out that the SCAPs are fully funded. The group returned to the fact that design studies set the stage for jumping right into a streamlined Tier 2 study. Harry/Michael noted CDOT was asked to provide an update on the status of all 32 projects listed for the Corridor for the May I-70 Coalition meeting.

Triggers

The CE reviewed proposed draft language for the RDPEIS on the triggers from the Consensus Recommendation. As indicated in the Consensus Recommendation, the CE will meet in least every two years to assess progress and system needs. The formal assessment at 2020 by the CE will address the projects are in the process, what's been accomplished, and whether the priorities still the same. The group requested that the language be edited to indicate that the 2020 assessment will be completed by the CE although CDOT may provide supporting technical data.

The CE also discussed how triggers would be implemented agreeing that any CE member could contact the co-chairs if they felt a trigger should be considered. It was noted that the amended protocols from July 2009 recognized that any member could initiate consideration of the triggers.

Role of CE in Determining Sufficiency

After a lengthy discussion, the majority of CE members agreed that additional expertise is not needed at this time with respect to whether “the solution will meet the purpose and need and all the environmental and legal requirements.” Everyone agreed on the need to maintain openness; individual members reserve the ability to work directly with their own legal advisors when the RDPEIS is released.

Next CE Meeting

The CE expects to re-convene during the summer to review the land use and RMRA studies, Division of Rail & Transit, and CDOT forecasted funding. The Coalition will

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send the priority list to the CE in the near future and this may also be an agenda topic. The CE will also be convened prior to the release of the RDPEIS in late summer/early fall 2010.