

**MINUTES  
SOUTHEAST TPR  
SECED OFFICE  
LAMAR, COLORADO  
OCTOBER 23, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by Chair, Stephanie Gonzales at 9:02 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**TPR Members / Guests (In Person or Online):**

County/Municipal members attending in person or online:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spike Ausmus (Baca Cty)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rick Butler (Baca Cty)           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shiloh Freed (Baca Cty)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charles Shupe (City of Las Animas)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Kim MacDonnell (Bent Cty)                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Jean Sykes (Bent Cty)                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blaine Arbuthnot (Crowley Cty)       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roy Elliott (Crowley Cty)-ONLINE | <input type="checkbox"/> Terry McMillan (Crowley Cty)           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Lening (Kiowa Cty)   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Donald Oswald (Kiowa Cty)        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Butch Robertson (Kiowa Cty) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Danelle Berg (Otero Cty)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Brad Davidson (City of La Junta)            | <input type="checkbox"/> Tim Knabenshue (Otero Cty)             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ron Cook (Prowers Cty)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Kirk Crespín (City of Lamar)                | <input type="checkbox"/> Tom Grasmick (Prowers Cty)             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lex Nichols (Otero Cty)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Pamela Denahy (Otero Cty)                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Rob Oquist (Otero Cty)-ONLINE          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cindy McCloud (KCEDF)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Cheryl Sanchez (PEP & BCEDC)                | <input type="checkbox"/> Tallie Harmon (PEP)                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Sanchez (SECHD)     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dawn Block (La Junta Transit)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Christine Coffield                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marilyn Stuart (PATS)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Rebecca Gallegos (Inspiration Field)        | <input type="checkbox"/> Phil Hemphill (Bent County)            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duane Gurule (Rocky Ford) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stacey Milenski (Rocky Ford)     |   |

**Staff (In person):**

- ☒ Stephanie Gonzales (TPR Chair)      ☐ Robin Daigle (SETran Dispatcher)      ☒ Charity Markus (Mobility Mgr.)

**CDOT / TC / Guests (In Person or Online):**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kathleen Collins (CDOT HQ Statewide Planning)    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geoffrey Guthrie (CDOT Region 2-Transit Liaison) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shane Ferguson (Region 2 Director)-ONLINE                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Sparks (CDOT South Program Engineer)    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lindsey Jaquez (CDOT)                            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lachelle Davis (CDOT LA-Region 2) - ONLINE       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Matt Jagow (CDOT Region 2)                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emily Barden (CDOT)-ONLINE                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neil Mauch (CDOT Maintenance-Lamar)              | <input type="checkbox"/> Mike Asbury (La Junta)                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jeff VanMatre (CDOT R2 Maint)                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Rob Frei (CDOT R2)  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Darius Pazbak(CDOT)                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aaron Willis (CDOT)                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jason Nelson (CDOT)                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Skinner (CDOT Transit Liaison)             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Terry Hart (TC District 10)-ONLINE               | <input type="checkbox"/> Jamie Grim (CDOT OPGR)                                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Crystal Armendariz (Local Govt CDOT HQ)-ONLINE   | <input type="checkbox"/> Justin Snyder (CDOT HQ)                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robin Bardmesser (CDOT HQ)                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Kacey Dykes (CDOT)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ajin Hu (FHWA),   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ann Rajewski (CASTA)-ONLINE                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Todd Ausbun (Utilities & Railroad Coordinator)   | <input type="checkbox"/> Jan Rowe (CDOT)   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Duffy                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> George Gromke (CDOT)-ONLINE                                 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joe Kiely (Ports to Plains Alliance)-ONLINE      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marsh Nelson (CDOT)                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig Blewitt-Stantec Consulting Services-ONLINE |  |

**ADMINISTRATIVE – MINUTES**

The minutes of April 24, 2024 and July 24, 2024 were presented for review and approval. Steve Sanchez made the motion to approve. Marilyn Stuart seconded, Motion passed.

### **RCC/LCC Report – Charity Markus**

The regional coordinating council meeting minutes were presented to the members not for approval but as an informational measure to let the members know of the activities of the Regional Coordinating Council in the last quarter.

Stephanie introduced Ann Rajewski from CASTA (Colorado Association of State Transportation Agencies). Ann shared with the group that SETran had won the Small Community Transit Agency of the Year Award at the CASTA Awards Banquet. She congratulated SECED, Charity and her team for the work they have done to restart a regional service and then expand it on top of that. With that, she presented the award to the board and stressed that she was excited to continue watching the good work of transit out in an important corner of our state.

Stephanie thanked Ann and then gave the shout out to Charity and her team at the Las Animas as they are the ones who really handle the transit. They do a great job of coordinating routes, calls, and getting residents in SE Colorado where they need to be by moving them across the region across when needed.

### **CHAIR / STAC REP REPORT – INFORMATIONAL**

Terry Hart, Transportation Commissioner, gave a brief presentation to the board highlighting the budget, which he said was balanced out and finalized with the FY24 final adjustments. The FY 25 budget is in place and revenues are being monitored to make sure that they are where they should be compared to budgets and adjusted as needed to ensure that monies are spread throughout the state and the regions to accomplish the goals that we've got, particularly under things like the 10-year plan. The other work of the TC is to be involved in the statewide long-range planning processes basically role at the TC is just basically to make sure that all of the various factors and needs are contained in that, basically to review and adopt the policies and procedures for the adoption of the plan.

TC had work sessions on the 16th and then the 17th held the official board meeting. He stated they adopted a resolution on a number of budget supplements, basically to adjust some funding on the 10-year plans for both regions four and five as well as budget amendments that again, as the money is flowing in, the TC is trying to adjust for various allocations to meet the needs. In short, to make sure that funds are available to do the things needed statewide during fiscal year 25. The TC had a short meeting of the fuel impact enterprise workshop. It's designed to take care of the hazards and the pressures and the needs for those communities that are specifically involved in the fuel transportation system within our state. He stated the one that affects the Southeast is the statutory allocation that is included in the budget for Otero County impact will occur. TC had a meeting of the bridge and tunnel enterprise. Again, it was primarily dealing with the preparation of the FY26 budget and the 10-year plan projects financing package, just to make sure that funds are aligned properly to handle those 10-year plans.

TC had a good presentation by the audit review committee. He explained that there is a statutorily created independent audit committee that basically works with independent staff to review programmatic and financial issues of the entire transportation system and then report that back to the TC to make sure that any kind of issues of efficiency or problems are identified and resolved with staff at CDOT.

There was an update on the number of bills that TC believes are going to be coming from the Transportation Review Committee and the legislature (TLRC). Bills have been identified that will be introduced by various legislators, one or more of which are bills that we're tracking right out of the southeastern TPR. He reported that there was a mobility report of the Mountain Corridor. The governor and the legislature have asked the TC to look into and study and hopefully fund a conversion of a freight line that goes up to the northwestern corner of the state from a freight line, which is shutting down to a passenger rail line that would supplement the other mobility systems that we have throughout the state. There was a report on that recent activity.

TC does a challenge every year to identify various innovative things that CDOT staff are doing statewide. And then there's a competition to basically show new and innovative ideas that various groups of staff throughout the state have come up with. It's an award program and TC had presentations of those.

TC in September took a tour of the projects that are going on in the mountain communities and on the Western Slope. They went to Grand Junction and back and while headed up I-70, to their horror, they saw coming down the mountain (as they were headed up the mountain towards Eisenhower Tunnel), a semi-truck where they could see the driver was passed out. He was literally hanging over the steering wheel and the truck was banging its way down the mountain right next to the guardrail that separates the eastbound from the westbound. He described the heroic efforts of CDOT employees to follow the truck, clearing the way and assisting to get it stopped, and finally performing emergency CPR to assist the driver. Fortunately, there were no casualties and the driver survived. He commended the quality of the folks that work for the State of Colorado, particularly under CDOT. He concluded his report and then asked the members if they had any questions.

Ron Cook asked Mr. Hart the status of the bill for addition of the TPR to keep the Southeast TPR from having to be combined with the South Central TPR.

Terry updated the members reminding them that state law required CDOT to do a study of all the transportation regions across the state and then come back with any recommendations of changes and the recommendation to consolidate the southeast and the south central TPRs. The Southeast came out very strongly against that, so did South Central. The thought was that with the growth that's going on in the Intermountain TPR, that it could be split. And interestingly, the feedback that we got from Intermountain TPR was that it was not a unanimous decision on whether or not it ought to be split. At any rate, the TC earlier this year adopted many of the recommendations from CDOT but it did not adopt that one. The reason for not adopting was that TC didn't think that it was the right thing to do. TC also heard that there was a potential legislative adjustment to create a 16th TPR so that we could deal with the intermountain separately and not harm the Southeast and South Central TPRs. TC delayed any consideration and made the final decision of no further action by the TC on that recommendation. So as of right now, that recommendation is dead at the TC level. TC will wait to see what the legislature tells us to do with the introduction of that bill.

With no further questions, Stephanie and the members thanked Terry for his report and his support of the Southeast.

## **Region 2 Presentations**

(See recording beginning at 0:28:20 <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KzGNxh7dFWm0xaxUzcpHC8cULKLw067p>)

Matt Jagow, Region 2 Traffic presented information regarding CO 96 & CO 71 Intersection Improvements in Ordway. This project was added to the list and is a 10-year project that was approved in the last planning process at an estimated \$1.8 million. He reviewed crash history, talked about the traffic study, reviewed the new preliminary scope of work improvements and gave the summary of the new estimated cost of \$1.6 million which will improve safety with alternate intersection control, which improves the corner radius at both intersections, improves northbound and southbound right turns at 96B & 96C and addresses drainage at CR G. He stated this is still in the early stages. It is in the primary design, but they wanted to try to capture the opinion of the TPR, because if this was something the TPR was opposed to, they don't want to get too far with design. There were no objections from the members.

Todd Ausbun, CDOT Utility Manager in Region 2 then presented on railroad maintenance projects including one at Campo. He explained that railroad maintenance refers to the balance, the track, the crossing, anything to do to repair the track. These are not Section 130 projects and so the cost of the work is shared between the railroad and CDOT. He indicated that at Campo, under the PUC code, the local entity or CDOT bears the responsibility of half the cost to fix the railroad crossing. He reviewed the cost for this project indicating that it was estimated

to be \$187K with a shared cost to CDOT of \$105K. With this cost identified, the request to the TPR would be to move RPP funds from the savings on the CO 96/ CO 71 Intersection Ordway project to help fund this project.

Discussion followed. It was decided to present each project separately. Donald Oswald made the motion to approve the CO 96 & CO 71 Intersection Improvements scope of work at the estimated \$1.6 million. Seconded by Rick Butler. It was voted on and approved. Rick then made the motion to approve the railroad crossing repair at Campo seconded by Donald. It was voted on and approved.

Jennifer Sparks, Region 2 South Program Engineer reviewed Regional Priorities Planning (RPP) for FY 2029. Right now, CDOT Region 2 plans to reserve \$4.85 million identified for passing lanes between Las Animas and Hasty and \$350K for the US 287 safety improvements. This is purely informational at this point as in January or February, they will come back to the TPR to ask for a final blessing. The locations have not yet been determined but the plan is both east and west bound sister passing lanes, one on each side are planned. They are trying to get 12 passing lanes, six on each side. There were no questions or objections from the TPR members for these placeholders for the RPP funds for FY 2029.

Jennifer included in the packet a list of the local projects for review by members but in the interest of time, she did not review them.

Aaron Willis began the second conversation for the update to the regional transportation plan. He introduced Emily Barton, Division of Transit and Rail, Emily Silvano, CDOT and Marcia Nelson, Chief Equity officer, to help present data that will help develop the 2050 regional transportation plan. He reviewed some of the goals of the meeting with one being the concurrence or changes to any revisions of the vision, goals, focus areas, and decisions on the approach that we should use to prioritize projects for your 2050 RTP.

He explained that the TC adopted the policy directive 14, which is the guiding principles for the development of the plan. Those center around three overarching themes. The first is advancing transportation safety. The second is fixing our roads, and then the last one is sustainably increasing transportation choice. These are the three guiding principles that will be used as we develop the 10-year plan, and then how they apply to the regional transportation plan. He indicated that when they talk about funding, they're using the PD-14 or the policy Multi-directive 14, those three goals and regional needs in order to help CDOT as a department to identify what's going to go into the 10-year plan. He stated there are other funding opportunities, and those can be used to help advance some of the things that are a TPR priority at times, but maybe not in the 10-year plan. He wanted to make sure everyone was aware that they are making that distinction.

Darius Pakbaz, CDOT also mentioned that there is the greenhouse gas pollution reduction planning standard, which has been in place since the last time although it is a little bit different from last time. And all of our transportation plans, including the MPOs, including the 10-year plan, have to have a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. He stressed to the members to keep that in mind when selecting projects in order to help, the TPR should think about some of the multimodal elements that can help.

Gabby Gamily, traffic and safety planner at CDOT headquarters with the traffic and safety engineering branch, spoke to the group. She stated that she was one of the project team members for the strategic highway safety plan that is to be adopted in April of 2025. A series of 10 workshops have been held across the five regions of Colorado. She highlighted the challenges and went over the key takeaways from those meetings. One was how prevalent distracted and impaired driving is in the region. Another was infrastructure and design gaps specifically for multimodal infrastructure needs, including lighting, shoulders, signage and improving rural roadways for less road runoffs as well as wildlife fencing. Discussion about enforcement of policy gaps specifically regarding the desire to explore automated enforcement as a method of supporting our law enforcement. Every single region, every single workshop talked a lot about the need to improve affordable and accessible driver's education

programs. Also heard was the need for increased funding for safety improvements and specifically looking at those FHWA proven safety countermeasures, but also those data-driven solutions to identify where the most bankrupt buck is. There was also a need for grant navigation support. This wasn't talked about as heavily in Region 2 discussions, but a lot of groups did talk about comprehensive educational campaigns. So that would be PSAs, working with youth, and again, involving the driver's education, but more specifically looking towards that safety culture continuous education outside of a traditional classroom setting. And then finally, expansion of partnerships.

Aaron then went over discussion items from the last meeting. It had to do with the difference between domestic versus wild animal crashes data. After a deeper dive, it was determined that deer was the most prevalent animal in the state where there were vehicle deer conflicts and accidents. Deer tend to go to the water source and then the question becomes how to deal with the problem. Is it fencing? Is it wildlife crossings? Is it expanded culverts? It's determining ways for animals to go above or below.

Domestic animals could be everything from dogs to cows but includes horses, cats, coyotes, sheep, and jackrabbits. Discussion in the room determined that there are many more than what are actually reported for both wild and domestic animals.

Aaron also discussed the concern that the group had concerning population and their views that the population decreases were not true depiction of the region. The data analysis team looked at school enrollments as an alternative to see if there were any increases to student enrollment. 3 of the 6 counties showed increases while the other three showed decreases.

The next steps were discussed for the update to the project list for the region. It was determined that the CDOT team would put the current list in a format that Stephanie could share to the TPR members. The team would update those priorities that have been completed or are in the process of being completed and make comments to those remaining projects to identify the viability of completing or funding those projects. The TPR members will need to rank the projects to determine whether each remaining project should remain on the list and then make suggestions for adding new priorities and then determine how they meet PD14 objectives.

The intention would be to try to have the review by the members by December too allow the CDOT team to have the list ready for discussion at the January meeting. Stephanie will share the project list via a google drive and members can add comments on that sheet.

### **Next Meeting**

The next quarterly meeting will be held January 22, 2025 at 9:00 a.m., however, at the November meeting, discussion will be held about the priority list. It will be a full slate of meetings for the day with SETPR at 9:00 a.m., SECRHA at 1:30, SECOG at 2:00 p.m. and SECED at 2:30 p.m.

With no other business coming before the group, Donald made the motion to adjourn. Rick seconded. Motion passed at 11:55 a.m.

**\*\*Next meeting will be Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. – Noon via Zoom and In-Person\*\***