

I-25 Funding Committee Meeting Notes

October 11, 2019

12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Candlelight Dinner Playhouse

4747 Marketplace Dr, Johnstown, CO 80534

1. Introductions

Bill Becker	Ann Hutchison	Kim Redd
Medora Bornhoft	Mark Jackson	Sandra Solin
Kathleen Bracke	Becky Karasko	Kristen Stephens
Dave Clark	Barbara Koelzer	Corey Stewart
Chad Crager	Suzette Mallette	
Jamie Grim	Heather Paddock	

2. Southwest Chief & Front Range Passenger Rail Commission – Becky Karasko

The Commission met this morning in Loveland and discussed CRISI grants, survey results, and potential governance structures. The commission has narrowed the list of potential governance structures down to four, including Public Rail Authority, Front Range Passenger Rail Authority, Rail Transportation Enterprise, and expanding current SWC&FRPR Commission authority. A significant disadvantage to the Rail Transportation Enterprise option is the 10 percent limit on revenues from outside sources, which would limit potential federal funding for the project.

Clark noted the Metroquest survey identified very high support for Front Range passenger rail but did not identify costs. A second survey was conducted identifying a cost of \$5B, but that cost is for a system that stops frequently and would take twice as long as travelling by passenger vehicle. The cost for high speed rail is \$15B, which has not been included in the surveys. Karasko noted the second survey, which was conducted by Magellan Strategies and RBI, is more reliable since it used random sampling whereas the Metroquest survey did not. The second survey found 61 percent of respondents supported passenger rail at a cost of \$5B. Clark stated commission members should be open to modes other than rail.

3. North I-25 Updates – Heather Paddock

Corey Stewart is the new project director for I-25 Segments 7 & 8. Stewart is replacing Scott Rees who is retiring.

This afternoon CDOT is meeting with Governor Polis at SH402 since he is unable to attend the groundbreaking on October 18.

There will be night closures at Prospect for setting girders and pouring concrete.

An Independent Cost Estimate (ICE) is being developed as well as an overall summary schedule. Schedules will be coordinated so that traffic impacts do not occur on contiguous segments simultaneously.

The ultimate configuration for the US34 and I-25 interchange includes three levels. The interim configuration will replace US34 with wider spacing for I-25 and accommodate the ultimate design.

Mallette asked if any of the design for I-25 is contingent on the WCR 9.5 project approval. Paddock stated it is not. WCR 9.5 will be phased as development occurs. The frontage road will be disconnected between SH56 and SH60 although every property will retain access. The 3+1 configuration will either use the frontage road ROW if WCR 9.5 exists or a wall will be built to preserve access.

The Segment 6 project is short \$20M. The original estimate was \$290M but was scaled to \$250M without reducing any scoping elements for the BUILD application, and the cost estimate is now around \$300M. If additional funding is not secured some scoping elements may need to be cut. The first construction package is the SH56 southbound on ramp which is at 60 percent design. The corridor is currently at 30 percent design.

There is a dead-end railroad line that crosses underneath I-25 between SH56 and SH60. To meet the standard, I-25 would have to be raised 11 feet in that area; however, CDOT identified a way to meet the standard with four-foot elevation.

The Johnson's Corner interchange will eventually be a full diamond but will not be reconfigured as part of the current project.

The cost estimate for Segment 5 is \$300M. No funding is secured and the project will not receive any SB267 funds since the Commission has already committed \$310M to Segments 7 & 8. Mallette noted of the \$1.5B SB1 and SB267 funding, \$310M is committed to I-25, \$122M to other projects, and \$100M to projects in rural areas, leaving around \$1B in funding to be allocated.

Paddock stated the new elements for Segments 7 & 8 will be bid using the same general contractor for schedule and design. This approach allows competition while bringing the cost down to \$250M from \$310M.

4. Local and State Funding – Sandra Solin

The Northern Colorado Legislative Alliance (NCLA) and Fix North I-25 Business Alliance met last month to identify priorities for the legislative session. The goal is a statewide solution. The legislature provided \$300M from the General Fund last year for transportation and the groups will advocate for continuing that amount annually.

A new polling effort will start this month to gauge support for taxes versus fees. Solin will be meeting with the Speaker of the House in early November. Solin stated the alliances will not pursue a sales tax due to the impacts on local governments.

The committee discussed the Empower MPO proposal that arose from Denver. It would allow MPOs to have taxing authority, providing a more streamlined variant of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) concept.

Becker noted the Larimer County ballot measure for transportation would provide \$10M to I-25 if passed.

5. 2019 Committee Work Plan Updates – Barbara Koelzer

Koelzer described the draft I-25 Viable Funding Options brochure which was provided as a handout. The brochure was updated to include the latest information on possible funding sources as well as financing sources such as TIFIA and a funding history for the I-25 corridor. The brochure serves as a reference for funding opportunities. Bornhoft will email the document to the committee.

Clark asked the committee members to review the document prior to the next meeting, during which the committee will identify the most viable sources to focus future efforts.

6. Federal Funding Updates – Congressional Staff

Redd stated Secretary Chao announced a new initiative named Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES). The initiative will collect data on the needs and benefits of transportation projects in rural areas and assist rural communities in applying for DOT discretionary grants.

7. Next Steps

The SH402 Grand Opening is on October 18.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 8 from 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm.

Due to conflicts with the 2020 meeting schedule for the Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC), the schedule for I-25 Funding meetings will change for 2020. The January 2020 I-25 Funding Committee meeting will be held on the 3rd Friday of the month and the committee will determine if the meetings should continue on that schedule.