



TRANSPORTATION NEWSLETTER

DATE: FEBRUARY 2019

Vince Rogalski, Chairman

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Statewide Plan Committee – Statewide Plan Formula Programs (Debra Perkins-Smith)

Committee Members: TC Members: Karen Stuart, Chair; Jesus Pulido, Ed Peterson, Sidny Zink, Rocky Scott, and Steven Hofmeister; and STAC Chair, Vince Rogalski – were provided an opportunity to comment on the SWP Commission meeting notes from January 2019. Commissioner Gifford commented that Commissioner Pulido is the new member of the SWP Committee and not herself, as is indicated in the notes. Notes will be revised to make this correction.

Attendees: All 11 TC members, and STAC Chair

Purpose: The purpose of this workshop was to provide the Statewide Plan Committee of Commission with information for discussion on the Statewide Plan (SWP) Formula Programs.

Action: Develop 2045 SWP formula recommendations for the full Transportation Commission to consider at the February Regular TC meeting.

Agenda

Program Distribution Overview

Commissioners last month recommended for TC approval all formulas except those for FASTER Safety and Regional Priority Program (RPP).

FASTER Safety Formula

Following PD 1504.1, which describes how CDOT staff should analyze crash data for development of regional planning budgets every four years, CDOT staff recommended these percentages for each region using 2012-2016 on- and off-system crash data. The allocations by Region are:

Region 1 – 37.3% (previously 33%)

Region 2 – 19.8% (previously 21.3%)

Region 3 – 11.4% (previously 14.1%)

Region 4 – 23.9% (previously 23.6%)

Region 5 – 7.6% (previously 8%)

Discussion:

- After some discussion, commissioners approved the distribution methodology based on total crash weight according to National Safety Council estimates of average economic cost per death, injury, and other crash data. They indicated a willingness to re-examine PD 1504.1 later.
- Points made during the discussion included:
 - Commissioner Pulido said he learned recently that 90 percent of crashes are due to driver behavior, not infrastructure problems, and asked how CDOT addresses that. He said that \$12 million a year spent on safety education may be insufficient to address this problem.
 - Commissioner Thiebaut said he is not a member of the SWP Committee, but he wanted to point out that FASTER Safety funds may be spent with more flexibility than the federal Transportation Highway Safety Improvement Program funds
 - Mike McVaugh, Region 5 Regional Transportation Director, explained that CDOT is trying to take a more pro-active approach to infrastructure safety issues, such as repair and replacement of guardrails across the state. He noted that an increase in crash rates are occurring in the urban areas compared to rural areas, and that this is a shift from the recent past. The new percentage allocations proposed for the FASTER Safety funding formula reflect that trend.
 - Commissioner Connell said that if crashes go down in one Region, that Region receives less money in future years. Herman Stockinger, Director of the Office of Policy and Government Relations, said that many programs operate in the same way: money goes to areas of the state with greater needs.
 - Commissioner Scott suggested CDOT use some of the FASTER Safety money to establish a statewide pool to spend on identified safety needs throughout the state. He also suggested that CDOT establish a way of being more pro-active to reduce fatalities and serious injuries.

Regional Priority Program (RPP) Formula

RPP funding provides flexible funding for regional priority projects. Currently, CDOT allocates \$50 million a year for RPP. Forty-eight million goes to the CDOT Regions for regional priority projects, with \$2 million off the top for permanent water quality and management projects. When it became apparent that SB97-01 would not fund TransBonds for strategic projects in the 1990s, CDOT used some of the RPP money to pay off the bonds. This reduced the RPP amount distributed to Regions in a given year. During the economic downturn that began in 2007, CDOT allocated no RPP money at all for two years.

For years, CDOT used the historic formula of 45% vehicle miles traveled (VMT), 40% lane miles, and 15% truck VMT. Population later became one of the formula inputs.

- The current formula is 50% population, 35% lane miles, and 15% truck VMT.
- The STAC recommended Option B (25% VMT, 20% population, 40% lane miles, and 15% truck VMT) by a vote of 12-3, with three MPOs voting against it.
- Option A was 25% VMT, 25% population, 35% lane miles, and 15% truck VMT.

At the January STAC meeting, three MPOs favored a vote prohibiting CDOT from using the RPP allocation formula for other purposes, but the other TPRs voted against it. TPR representatives did not want to tie the hands of the TC, said Vince Rogalski, STAC chair.

The SWP Committee meeting did not end with a final decision on the formula to use for RPP. Commissioner Hofmeister wanted to know how much and what funds are going to the Front Range compared to the rest of the state as background information. Commissioner Connell said she would like some input from the five CDOT RTDs about the formula they would prefer, if possible.

Discussion:

These were among the topics covered in the discussion:

- Commissioner Zink noted, regarding Option B, that the STAC favored, does a better job of being fair to all CDOT Regions than the current formula, which she said perpetuates the urban-rural divide.
- Commissioner Hall agreed that Option B is a more balanced proposal.
- DRCOG sent a letter to Debra Perkins-Smith, Division of Transportation Development Director, regarding the future of RPP allocations, stating DRCOG prefers the current formula.
- Commissioner Stuart said she thought it was a good idea to stick with the current formula for now, but resolve to consider other formulas in about four years.
- Commissioner Thiebaut expressed that he thought the TC should use the current formula for fear of stirring up the urban/rural divisions again.
- Commissioner Connell explained that the newer Commissioners might not fully understand that \$50 million out of a large budget is not a lot of money.
- Commissioner Rocky Scott added that he thought the TC should be concerned more with advocating for more transportation dollars, versus arguing over such a small sum of money, when looking at the overall budget.
- Johnny Olson, former Region 4 RTD and now CDOT Deputy Executive Director, regarding use of RPP money within the CDOT Regions commented that Region 4 Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs) (North Front Range MPO and the rural TPRs) distribute RPP money on a project basis now, rather than a fixed amount to each TPR. He said the allocation of money to projects within Region 4 usually aligns with the Regional Transportation Plan for the areas. Vince Rogalski said in his area, Gunnison Valley, when one area of the Region comes up short for one project, it may get the needed RPP funds from another area of the Region.
- Commissioner Connell noted regarding the urban/rural division that urban areas have sources of funding that are not available to rural areas. She mentioned CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) and STP-M (Surface Transportation Program – Metro). She said she wants to get more money out to the Regions to spend on their priorities.
- Commissioner Gilliland recalled that the current formula was a very contentious issue in Region 4 last time in the more rural areas.
- Commissioner Thiebaut commented that the last thing he wants is an urban/rural division.
- Commissioner Zink said she thought the current formula heightens the urban/rural division.
- Commissioner Hofmeister said, regarding the urban/rural division, that the SWP Committee members can talk about trying to increase the amount of money allocated for RPP, but they already know there is \$50 million a year for RPP. The SWP Committee needs to make a decision.
- Jeff Sudmeier noted that the TC has until March 2019 to make a decision about the RPP formula to have any bearing on the FY 2020 budget. The TC needs to approve the budget in March 2019.
- Commissioner Thiebaut said, regarding the future of RPP allocation, that he would like to end RPP funding gradually. Other ways of getting money to the Regions for their priority projects are available.
- Josh Laipply, CDOT Chief Engineer, suggested the RPP money could go to a statewide pot, with the distribution of RPP funds decided statewide based on need.

Next Steps:

- The TC will have a workshop in March 2019, followed by TC approval of all the different Program Distribution funding formulas anticipated to occur in April 2019.

[2018 Colorado Fatalities Summary \(Charles Meyer\)](#)

Purpose: To provide overview of the status of transportation safety in Colorado

Action: None, information only

Colorado Status:

- Total Fatalities 627- 33% higher than 2010-2014 average, 4% lower than 2017 60% on CDOT highways
- Fatality Rate 1.15 - 16% higher than 2010-2014 average, 6% lower than 2017.

National Comparison 2017

- Fatality Rate – 1.16
- 13% increase in fatalities from 2010-2014
- 4% increase in fatality rate from 2010-2014
- 27 states decreased in fatalities from 2016 (Nationally 1.8% decrease)

State Comparison in Colorado 2017

- Fatality Rate – 1.21
- 38% increase in fatalities from 2010-2014
- 22% increase in fatality rate from 2010-2014
- 30th worst VMT fatality rate by state
- 25th lowest population fatality rate

CDOT Efforts to Improve Safety include:

- Update of State Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) in 2019
- Establish and Monitor National Safety Performance Measures – Colorado and MPOs
- Data Integration, Analysis and Sharing
- Education Campaigns
- Enforcement (partner with Colorado State Patrol)
- Engineering – Programs & Projects
 - Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding & FASTER Safety program funding, Before After Analysis
 - Level of Service of Safety (LOSS) listing and mapping
 - Patterns listing and patterns
 - Mobility and Operations Evaluation during projects and earlier in National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental clearance projects.
 - LRSP – Local Road Safety Plans with LTAP, FHWA
 - Traffic Incident Management (TIM) , TIM track, secondary crash analysis

Discussion:

- Commissioner Pulido observed that the information from Charles Meyer indicates that the number of fatalities and serious injuries is often a matter of people making the wrong choices, such as choosing to drink or use drug while driving and failing to use seatbelts. CDOT should set bold goals for safety. He added that he would like continued discussion on the issue.
- Commissioner Hall said the data seems to show that the huge motorcycle safety campaign CDOT had may have helped bring down fatalities and serious injuries of motorcyclists.
- Commissioner Scott asked if a primary seatbelt law is in the state legislative agenda this year.
- Herman Stockinger replied no. The primary seat belt law is not in this session's legislative agenda.
- Commissioner Scott said such a law seems like a low-cost option for the state, and added that he thinks the TC and CDOT need to advocate strongly for it.
- Commissioner Hofmeister asked about the safety work CDOT is doing with the counties. Charles Meyer said CDOT distributes Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) money for local projects. One project example is making the roadway striping wider in strategic locations.

FHWA Colorado Division Administrator's Report (John Cater, Division Administrator)

- All federal offices are up and running.

- FHWA has good news - FAST Act levels of appropriation have been received and FHWA will continue business as usual.
- Hopeful that Colorado will be successful with INFRA grant applications; \$900 million is available and we hope our success from previous years will continue.
- Highway and STP funds are coming in next month.
- \$475 million will be available for a competitive bridge program – states with lower bridge condition status are eligible, but Colorado did not qualify.
- LTAP in Colorado includes a road scholar program for maintenance workers (CDOT and local maintenance workers are eligible). This program is intended to help roadway maintenance workers grow professionally. This is a CDOT, FHWA and LTAP program partnership. Through a Front Range Community College program, this program leads to an Associate's Degree of Applied Science in Highway Management.

NEXT MEETING NOTICE TPR meeting March 7, 2019

Place: Region 10 Offices 10:00 to 2:00pm