



## Board Summary Report

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**File #:** 21-402

**Agenda Date:** 5/25/2021

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**To:** Board of County Commissioners

**Prepared By:**

Bryan D. Weimer, PWLF, Director, Public Works and Development

**Presenter:** Bryan D. Weimer, PWLF, Director, Public Works and Development

**Subject:**

1:00 PM \*Strategic Plan - Transportation Update

**Purpose and Request:**

The purpose of this study session is to provide the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) an update on various transportation topics including the Arapahoe County Transportation Forum, overview of proposed state legislation - SB21-260, funding options and their impacts, and transportation master plan update status.

**Background and Discussion:**

In 2020, the Board of County Commissioners embarked on a strategic planning process, establishing a multi-year action plan in alignment with a new vision, goals, guiding principles, and

values for the County. Embedded within the strategic initiative is maintain current assets including the quality, condition, and operations of our infrastructure including deferred maintenance. Transportation was one of four areas in which action plans would be developed (open space reauthorization, develop a sustainable budget for the next 5-7 years, determine how changes to the criminal justice system impact our long-term facility needs).

**Transportation Forum**

In 2019, the Arapahoe County Transportation Forum (Forum), at the encouragement of the BOCC, embarked on investigating options associated with solving transportation challenges countywide and whether or not to consider a new dedicated transportation funding source and what would a new countywide funding sources could look like. The Forum acknowledged that maintenance demand is increasing, congestion is increasing, and costs of everything and providing services is increasing. Furthermore, the funding necessary for these needs is not increasing, which is limiting the government agency buying power and service levels. Up until the

beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, the Forum had synergy in developing a countywide dedicated funding source for transportation. However, since that time and the advent of the impacts of COVID-19, there is not support among the Forum members to pursue a countywide funding solution over the short-term.

### **New Funding for Roadway Maintenance**

To address one of the strategic plan areas of maintaining existing assets, we have evaluated options of funding within the Road and Bridge Fund. These options include evaluating various funding sources such as funding availability from debt retirement, proposed state transportation legislation, and other opportunities that could be considered. During the study session, the options will be presented and what that means to deferred pavement maintenance and overall network pavement condition.

### **SB21-260 Proposed Transportation Funding Legislation**

In May 2021, a Bill was introduced concerning the sustainability of the transportation system in Colorado, and, in connection therewith, creating new sources of dedicated funding and new state enterprises to preserve, improve, and expand existing transportation infrastructure. The Bill creates new sources of dedicated funding and new state enterprises to enable the planning, funding, development, construction, maintenance, and supervision of a sustainable transportation system by preserving, improving, and expanding existing transportation infrastructure, developing the modern infrastructure needed to support the widespread adoption of electric motor vehicles, and mitigating adverse environmental and health impacts of transportation system. The Bill aims to raise \$3.784 billion in new revenue through fees on everything from gasoline sales to food delivery over a 10-year period. Another \$1.484 billion will come from the state's general fund and one-time stimulus funding. If put into law, the County would receive a portion of the increased funding within the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) proposed with the Bill. During the study session, staff's evaluation of the Bill will be presented and the projections of increased revenue to the County.

### **Transportation Master Plan**

The 2040 Transportation Master Plan (TMP) update of the 2035 Plan began on March 30, 2020. The updated TMP is required to take a holistic approach on the role of Arapahoe County on transportation, recognizing the responsibility the County has within unincorporated areas, the existing plans of municipalities, and the changing nature/existing constraints of the system. The TMP will produce a prioritized list of projects that address the issues that exist and are projected in the future. This plan shall align with the County's Strategic Plan: Fiscally Sustainable, Provide Essential and Mandated Services, and be Community focused. These three pillars are woven into the priorities for this planning process and will be reflected in the strategy and approach. The draft plan will be available for review in June 2021.

During public outreach in 2020 we learned that:

- 70% of residents want a focus on roadway modifications to increase safety and manage congestion
- Residents highly value safe infrastructure that will encourage different mobility options, i.e. bike lanes

- Residents hope that this feedback helps to provide a more connected, accessible and reliable transit system.

Defining existing conditions and future land uses is critical to the master planning process. Data defines which roadways are expected to be over capacity and helps to identify priority areas for improvement. An Existing Conditions Report was completed and some important highlights were:

- 85% of the County population lives within an incorporated city.
- 65% of employed residents work outside of the County
- Widespread congestion is currently the highest along Arapahoe Road, Belleview Avenue and Hampden Avenue/I-285 corridors.
- 77 intersections or road segments have been identified for cost-effective safety improvements.
- Drivers and travelers on county roads will notice a 32% increase in total miles traveled by the year 2040.
- The sharpest traffic increases are expected for the area around and east of E-470 including I-70, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Jewell Avenue, Gun Club Road, and Watkins Road.
- Today, 16.5% of travel is considered “congested.” An increase to 20.4% is expected by 2040.
- Projections forecast the highest levels of congestion will be along 6th Avenue, Hampden Avenue, Belleview Avenue, Arapahoe Road, Santa Fe Drive, University Boulevard., I-25, Havana Street, and Gun Club Road.

The latest public outreach and community input survey on the County’s 24 critical transportation corridors performed earlier in 2021 indicates the following highlights from 431 people with 460 corridor responses.

- The most common highest priority concern was congestion/traffic (the most cited highest priority for 17 of the 24 corridors).
- Updating facilities was the number one priority for 4 corridors and maintenance was number one for 3 of the 24 corridors.
- Safety was mentioned often as a priority and carried the most citations after congestion/traffic; however, safety was the number one priority for only the Colfax corridor, along with pedestrian improvements. Mississippi, Hampden and I-225 also had significant safety concerns.

The TMP team is currently wrapping up a series of 12 meetings that address the 24 critical corridors that run through the County. These meetings address the opportunities for improvements along the corridor along with the future role of the corridor. Recommendations will be incorporated to create a draft plan for review with another round of public meetings.

**Fiscal Impact:** To Be Determined

**Alternatives:**

The Board could determine various alternate approaches.

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:**

- Be fiscally sustainable
- Provide essential and mandated service
- Be community focused

**Staff Recommendation:**

For information and future discussion.

**Concurrence:** Not Applicable