

EXECUTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL
MEETING SUMMARY

Friday, September 21, 2007

Utah Department of Transportation
4501 South 2700 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

PRESENT: Wilson Martin, Utah State Historic Preservation Office
Carlos Braceras, Utah Department of Transportation
Butch Waidelich, Federal Highway Administration
Mike Styler, Department of Natural Resources
Bryan Cawley, Federal Highway Administration
Greg Punske, Federal Highway Administration
Jim McMinimee, Utah Department of Transportation
Shane Marshall, Utah Department of Transportation
Lori Nelson, Utah Department of Transportation
John Njord, Utah Department of Transportation
Laura Romin, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ted Knowlton, Envision Utah
Jerry Benson, Utah Transit Authority
Larry Svoboda, Environmental Protection Agency
Kristen Jensen, Utah State Historic Preservation Office
Matt Sneddon, Utah State Historic Preservation Office
Rick Sprott, Department of Natural Resources

I. CHAIR AND HOST WELCOME

Called to order: 11:15 a.m. John Njord, UDOT welcomed everyone to the meeting. John informed Council that there are currently 289 projects currently in process and has committed to stop at every project and speak with every crew. These projects are for the benefit of the citizens and have kept his agenda full.

II. DIGITIZATION INITIATIVES – STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Follow-up discussion of opportunities to improve Data Sharing & Electronic Consultation

Kristen Jensen, State Historic Preservation presented a slide show of a current project to digitize historic images for easier access. This project began 2 years ago through the department of community and culture. This is a multi-year digitization process.

From the initial project, three other projects were generated. The people of Utah Digitization Pilot Project, Archeology GIS Database Project, and the Historic building GIS Database Project.

1. People of Utah – A project to digitize a collection of photographs of the people of Utah. The goal is to increase access to the collection and create something beyond a just a website, something with strategic impact. Currently over 5 terabits of data to scan. Expect to be complete by June 2008.
2. Archeology GIS database – The goal is to convert all of the existing written records into digital format and place it on a secure searchable online site. Currently, consultants must travel to their office and search the records by hand. The average search cost \$1,200 and there are approximately 2,000 searches per year, resulting in \$2,400,000 per year. This new system could save over \$1,800,000 per year and is expected to help other agencies meet their goals. Expect to be complete by June 2008.
3. Historic Building GIS Database – The project is very similar to the archeology GIS database except that it is going to be a collection of historic structures. This project is currently under funded. The current cost estimate is \$700,000 and SHPO has \$50,000. This is a very high priority for SHPO.

Each of these projects are about partnering and adding value to other projects State Departments have ongoing.

As a separate project – the State Historic Preservation Office has been developing GIS server technology hopefully to be released by Christmas 2007. This service will provide online data entry, research, and business process management.

Follow up discussion:

Wilson – the issues are complex because they are GRAMA protected. Getting though these issues is almost complete. It has taken almost 15 years. They are confident this will lead nation on how this practice is being used on larger scale by utilizing and using all

state agencies to protect how they are sharing data.

Carlos – UDOT –Have data standards been established yet?

Kristen – Yes, the goal is to have consultants WANT to use database – maybe UDOT will require it as part of process. Will be working with other agencies

Rick Sprott – Department of Natural Resources has been involved with climate change planning, energy transmission, etc. and a number of power lines and pipelines planned in the Intermountain West. It would be a huge benefit in these planning processes and useful in Utah, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho – to move projects forward. Governors Blue Ribbon encourages renewable energy.

III. WILDLIFE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMS - UDNR

No presentation made.

IV. ENVISION UTAH PROGRAMS

Ted Knowlton – Envision Utah

Ongoing projects: Vision Dixie, Blueprint Jordan River, Wasatch choices 2040 Follow up, working with Wilbur Smith associates in Missoula on long-range transportation plan, and facilitation for Salt Lake East/West study.

Vision Dixie - Making a better Washington County. Long range, set of principles that should guide future development and open lands decisions, establishes a voluntary framework for implementation by local government.

The process included a broad range of people involved. Through workshops local residents brainstorm their long-term vision, themes of growth, and transportation.

Scenario planning was used to show how different decisions affected growth and transportation in 2035. The Dixie Principles were adopted by the steering committee.

Next step is implementation in terms of codes and ordinances.

Follow up discussion:

Carlos – A process similar to the Vision Dixie process was used during the planning of the Southern Corridor project. UDOT and EPA worked with St. George City to lay the groundwork for future growth in the study area of the corridor.

Hurricane City is anticipated to grow into a city larger than St. George. UDOT currently has two corridor studies underway to help set a vision for the transportation needs that will arise from this future growth. The two studies are I-15 to Iron County North and SR-9. It is expected that SR-9 will carry more traffic than Bangerter does today.

Blueprint Jordan

Coordinated plan from Lake to Lake

Ties into several ongoing plans.
Goal is to develop a vision for the entire corridor, develop the big picture.
Urban river renaissance
UDOT and several local governments have partnered in this project.

Wasatch Choices 2040 Follow-up

Workshop to explore case studies
Partner with WFRC to develop LRTP
Using the idea that if you could dramatically change the land use on 2% of the land mass, you could change the transportation demand by 20%.

V. CE DELEGATION UPDATE

Shane: As part of the last reauthorization bill, SAFETEA-LU, the states were given the opportunity to accept approval authority from FHWA for NEPA projects classified as Categorical Excluded. Approximately 90% of UDOT's projects are classified as categorical excluded NEPA projects, ranging from minor widening, and traffic signal installation, to pavement overlay projects. UDOT has elected to accept the authority and is in the process of developing an MOU with FHWA. The MOU must be approved by CEQ and is expected to reach CEQ by mid November. UDOT expects that we will be operating under the new authority by January.

Butch – UDOT will be under a microscope, being one of only a few states taking on this role. This is the only way to progress to the next step of full NEPA delegation.

VI. FHWA AWARDS

Butch: Environmental Stewardship Awards
Legacy Nature Preserve – EPA, USACE, Legacy Team and UDOT

VII. OTHER AGENDA ITEMS

Passed out project update spreadsheet and graph. Followed by a brief discussion of projects.

VIII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

Shane: Update list of projects.

All: Discuss highest priority projects to focus everyone's awareness of what will be coming next year.

Energy Development – Utah and Western Colorado, update on recent developments.
Invite John Harja.

BRAC recommendations next meeting and next steps. Dianne Nelson

Next meeting will be at Army Corps of Engineers on Tuesday, December 11, 2007.

ADJORN: Meeting adjourned at 1:06 p.m.