



City of Glenwood Springs Transportation Commission

February 2, 2021 Monthly Meeting Minutes

Meeting convened at 7:30am via remote computer connections.

I Call to order/preliminaries

- Commissioners Lee Barger, Sandy Lowell, Roger Poirier, Steve Smith, John Stephens, Ralph Trapani attended (commissioner Rob Gavrell intended to attend but was unable to get telephone connection)
- City councilwoman Shelley Kaup attended
- City staff Linda DuPriest, Debra Figueroa, Terri Partch attended

Agenda modifications

Mid-meeting, topics IV (subcommittees; TDM report/MOVE recommendations) and V (commission/staff protocols and preparations for city council work session) were switched to reverse order to accommodate Shelley's schedule.

II Minutes

February 5 regular monthly minutes were approved unanimously.

III Staff reports

- South Midland reconstruction

Terri reported that TC recommendations for design adjustments to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety are being review by assistant city engineer. Some items can be readily accommodated in the course of construction; at least two require formal change orders (pending approval by city council (and perhaps FHWA)): a) specification of continuous-pour, saw-cut joints for multiple-use path; and b) changing roundabout pedestrian warning sign to bicycle-pedestrian warning sign.

Conclusions/next steps – TC will update list of recommendations and deliver to staff. Staff will then provide detailed written response to the recommendations; no timing for that response was specified.

- 27th Street underpass project

Terri reported that unused RFTA funding has been shifted to complete funding for the project. The unused funds would have been used to implement West Glenwood local bus service in 2019, 2020, 2021—postponed due to combination of virus-reduced transit ridership and waiting for results of MOVE study and its integration with local transit in general.

Additional details (including aesthetics, traffic control coordination, and updated cost estimates) will be presented to TC at future meetings.

Bids for the project likely will be requested in late fall 2021.

SGM is design manager; design plans are currently at 30% level.

Conclusions/next steps – Presentation of project details planned for city council work session, probably March 4.

- MOVE study

Terri reported that 80% of approved funding has been spent, and no new funding has been approved. (City and RFTA staff had requested additional funding to extend study six months to engage in further public outreach and evaluate integration of BRT with local transit.)

Remaining tasks will be compartmentalized and presented again to city council (and RFTA board). Some components might be undertaken by RFTA with its funds.

Ralph recommended spending portion of remaining funding on Kinetics analysis of both BRT options *vis a vis* local buses. Terri reported that that might require additional funding, which is not available. Ralph noted that the analysis may cost less than additional outreach.

Conclusions/next steps – Further discussion deferred to item IV.

- Blake Avenue traffic calming/gate opening

Update and outline of traffic-calming design options will be presented to city council on February 4 (afternoon work session discussion; regular meeting decision)

Conclusions/next steps – Sandy noted that TC has offered a Blake Avenue recommendation and is otherwise finished reviewing the topic. (NOTE – *TC recommended experimental period with Blake one-way; staff delivered that rec to city council as part of range of alternatives to be considered by council Feb. 4.*)

V New business

- Transportation governance—protocols for interaction with staff and city council, clarification of recommendations procedure

Shelley began the discussion emphasizing that the commission's role is to make recommendations to city council. She noted that competing or disagreeing

recommendations from TC, staff, and other sources are fine; city council's will consider all those when making decisions. TC recommendations can go directly to the council, but success is more likely if recommendations are crafted in consultation with city staff (mutual recommendations are most helpful). She also noted that the commission does not have authority to direct or insist on particular aspects of the work of staff members.

Debra corroborated Shelley's comments, clarifying that even the city council cannot direct the work of professional staff, whose work plans are managed by the city manager and by respective department leadership (city council communicating through the manager). Related, all recommendations and other documents prepared for city council must be delivered through city manager (for public notification and coordination with council packet).

Terri described the extensive and consistent pace of work that she and her staff cover. She also reminded that she does not have direct means of implementing TC recommendations, since many tasks and projects involve staff in multiple departments. She said she seeks to balance staff workload with enthusiasm and interest from the commission.

Sandy and other commissioners noted two recent problems, from the commission's perspective: 1) some TC recommendations were not presented to the city council, and 2) some important transportation topics were presented to the council for decision without review or discussion by the commission.

Terri responded that bringing every transportation-related topic to the commission would require more TC meetings, perhaps weekly.

Steve suggested devising a mechanism for informing TC of all important transportation topics, even if not all are actually taken up by the commission—perhaps a monthly conference among Terri and Sandy (chairman) and Rob (agenda builder). Shelly suggested instead having Terri send a monthly list of key topics to all commission members, providing opportunity for members to collectively request that select items be presented to the commission.

Debra noted that topics for city council work sessions are scheduled several months in advance. She offered to provide that calendar to TC so commissioners can anticipate topics of transportation interest.

Steve noted that TC needs to be more efficient and productive with time in its meetings by a) selecting only number of topics that can fit within time available, and b) ensuring that time is managed so that all topics get attention.

Conclusions/next steps –

- TC recommendations are to be directed to city council.
- Recommendations have better chance of success if developed in collaboration (preferably in agreement with staff, but not necessarily).
- Staff and TC leadership will confer on method of screening potential topics for commission review (monthly list in advance? prioritizing by timeliness and/or significance? selecting topics best suited to expertise in TC membership?)
- TC will discuss its own further ideas for a) improving its effectiveness and influence, and b) ensuring that it gets opportunity to discuss transportation topics of interest to it.

- Preparation for annual work session with city council (February 18)

Work session will last 45 minutes; important to plan presentation and to allow plenty of time for discussion.

Debra noted that the presentation does not need to be too formal, and certainly not too long.

Shelley recommended presented TC priorities for the coming year (specific topics and projects, goals, direction).

Discussion revealed that priority topics for work session likely will include:

- Transportation demand management initiative (anticipating work with regional entities)

- MOVE conclusions recommendations, questions, and next steps (especially as relate to TDM)

- Small and large capital projects update

- Improved TC influence through improved communication with staff and city council, screening and prioritizing topics, and effective use of topical subcommittees

Conclusions/next steps – Commission members will confer via e-mail in preparing work session presentation and materials – due to city manager Feb. 10.

IV Transportation demand management initiative (Transit Subc report and draft recommendations)

Ralph summarized work and presentations undertaken so far, noting purpose of TDM is prioritize lower cost policy and management to reduce growth in motor traffic volume. The document describes scale of projects in three successive stages: research/design/data collection; implementation of TDM strategies; and major new infrastructure as last resort.

Ralph also noted that Linda had prepared a slide-show describing basics of TDM management and authorities used in other parts of Colorado, presented to TC in January; he recommended it be presented to city council; staff confirmed that it will be delivered to councilmembers, probably in spring.

Ralph also highlighted a federal greenhouse initiative that may produce funding for local TDM projects.

Terri noted that some of the implementation strategies included in the document involve facilities and policies beyond city control and authority (RFTA, CDOT, other communities *e.g.*). She concurred on value of regional approach, but noted lack of cohesive regional structure for it (even with multiple agencies working on transportation).

Sandy and Lee each responded that the Transit Subc views the outline as a “leadership document” to guide the city in its own actions, and also in conferring and collaborating with other agencies, municipalities, and regional cooperatives.

Commissioners further discussed revising TDM/MOVE documents into more durable format, emphasizing it as a living, evolving document.

On motion by Steve, with second, the commission resolved to re-title and reformat the larger Transit Subc document as primarily a TDM/long-term strategies measure, with MOVE questions and recommendations incorporated.

John presented a related list of questions regarding next steps in the MOVE study (list also refined by Transit Subc), including: route and frequency of BRT service; integration with local bus service; and origin/destination data.

Extensive discussion ensued, focused primarily on history of origin/destination data assumed (and potential methods for updating it); latest from 2014 suggesting traffic passing through Glenwood Springs may be less than commonly assumed; this may have ramifications of travel patterns for choice of BRT route, and options for realigning the MOVE study to incorporate such information. Terri noted that the 2014 (*Charlier*) data might not be accurately interpreted in excerpted chart accompanying John's questions. John clarified, but all acknowledged that further clarification may be needed, *vis a vis* other data sources that suggested higher volumes of pass-through traffic.

Ralph noted that other recent attempts at documenting travel patterns have been incomplete or inconclusive, in some cases because of inadequate sampling.

Lee noted that RFTA has extensive data (at least on bus ridership). Linda noted that RFTA has issued RFP that will include some new origin/destination research, at least for transit riders.

The commission then returned to discussion of how and when to deliver and use the list of MOVE questions. Debra reported that a draft copy has already been delivered to city council, but recommended including them as part of city council work session.

Terri concurred that, after council consideration and authorization, the questions could be distributed to city staff, to RFTA, and perhaps to other sources.

Ralph reminded that the basic message from the questions is that there is a significant need for better and more up-to-date travel data. Sandy proposed that be the approach for the work session; commissioners concurred.

Conclusions/next steps – Commission will rework TDM/MOVE document, plus MOVE/data questions list, and deliver to city manager *by Feb. 10*, as part of background packet for Feb. 18 work session with city council. Ralph will prepare first revision, then relay to Rob for refinements.

VII Agenda planning for next meeting

Commissioners requested several topics to be addressed at next or subsequent meetings:

- RiverTrail connections – high school, elementary school, 12th St. (staff)
- South Midland reconstruction – response to TC recommendations (Steve, staff)
- Otis/CDOT site traffic data collection technology and results (Lee)
- proposed new land-use developments with transportation implications (staff)
- continued discussion and pursuit of TDM initiative (all)
- MOVE study final phase (John, staff)
- 27th underpasses – design review, updates (staff)

The meeting adjourned at 9:35am.