



IRON COUNTY RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION

ICRTEC CHAIR—MAYOR CONNIE ROBINSON • ICRTAC CHAIR—TOM STRATTON • PLANNING MANAGER—CURT HUTCHINGS

MINUTES

Transportation Executive Council (RTEC)

September 2, 2015, 2:00 pm

Brian Head Town Offices
56 N. Hwy 143, Brian Head, UT

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Commissioner Dale Brinkerhoff
Mayor Donald Landes
Mayor H.C. "Dutch" Deutschlander
Mayor Robert Rasmussen

REPRESENTING:

Iron County
Parowan City
Brian Head Town
Enoch City

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Commissioner David Miller
Commissioner Alma Adams
Mayor Constance Robinson
Mayor Maile Wilson
Mayor Galen Allred

REPRESENTING:

Iron County
Iron County
Paragonah Town
Cedar City
Kanarraville

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Reed Erickson
Mr. Rob Dotson
Mr. Shayne Scott
Mr. Bret Howser
Mr. Rick Holman
Mr. Dave Demas

REPRESENTING:

Iron County
Enoch City
Parowan City
Brian Head Town
Cedar City
Five County AOG



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I. Quorum Declaration

The meeting was chaired by Mayor H.C. Deutschlander in the absence of Mayor Connie Robinson. Mayor H.C. Deutschlander called the meeting to order and declared that there was a quorum present.

II. Approve Minutes for June 3, 2015

A motion was made by Mayor Donald Landes, seconded by Commissioner Dale Brinkerhoff, to approve the June 3, 2015 Minutes of the Iron County Rural Transportation Executive Committee (ICRTEC).

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

III. RTP Update

Mr. Demas provided a quick update on the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). He explained that it was time to begin updating the plan as there are a number of comments to be added. The updated plan will also include a revised project priority list. He stated that he would e-mail the members a link to the plan and asked the members to e-mail him any comments they may have or projects they believe should be revised. He will work with the Technical Advisory Committee to make the changes. The update of the plan should not take long as it is just a revision to correct a few items and add a few projects. Mr. Demas will keep the committee informed as he proceeds with the update.

IV. Northern Leg of Belt Route Discussion & Update

Mr. Erickson reported that the planning of the belt route is moving forward. It was determined that there are certain amounts of the local corridor preservation funds that are available for planning purposes. He stated that, at the last RTAC meeting, Mr. Demas provided cost estimates from Horrocks Engineers for CUBE modeling and corridor studies. The CUBE model would provide an opportunity to look at projections for growth and help determine the need for the route based on traffic, population growth and other factors. The estimate for the CUBE model study would be \$5,000 - \$10,000. The estimate for the corridor study, which would help determine the alignment based on cost modeling, would be \$35,000 - \$50,000. Further discussion would be needed to identify what would be included in the studies and which study is needed first. Mr. Erickson noted that he and Mr. Platt felt it would be good to look at the CUBE modeling forecast first to see where the need really was and evaluate the future needs of the route.



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Mr. Erickson explained that there have been 10 areas of decision making identified regarding the alignment of the belt route and they will be presenting this information to the county commission as staff. He added that we know we will need the belt route in the future – we are just not sure if it will be in the next 5, 10, 20 or 50 years. It is also important to determine which portions of the route are needed first. The study will help to answer these questions. He pointed out that one of the main purposes for the corridor preservation funding is to acquire rights-of-way for the future in advance of a project. The name, “Corridor Preservation Fund”, clearly identifies that the intent of the funding is to preserve corridors. It is a better use of the funds to acquire the rights-of-way while the property is cheaper. However, we still need to determine where the correct alignment for the belt route should be so that acquisition can begin. Recently, the 2 major solar power plant projects have motivated the need to identify the alignment. In the conditional use permits for the 2 projects we have preserved corridors in their planning so that we can, when ready, acquire rights-of-way. It may be time to acquire the rights-of-way on the 2 projects now. We are fairly confident on the alignment near the solar farms but the remainder of the route still needs to be determined. Mr. Erickson stated that the work with the RPO will continue to help move the planning along. He would like to return in the future to present planning proposals to this committee for the use of corridor preservation funds to identify when the need for the belt route will be and where to begin so that an alignment can be determined.

Mr. Erickson pointed out that one area that is going to be a challenge is the railroad crossing on 5700 West just north of Iron Springs Road. Resolving that issue will help determine the alignment.

Commissioner Brinkerhoff remarked that he believes the city’s request for corridor preservation funds is appropriate and needs to happen. He added that 2/3’s of the corridor preservation funds are received from residents of Cedar City. In regards to the railroad crossing – the railroads policy has been to close 2 crossings for every new crossing authorized. The city has closed approximately 6 crossings so the city should have credit for a new crossing at 5700 West. Commissioner Brinkerhoff noted that, although we would not want to hold up the Coal Creek project, he would like to see corridor preservation funds set aside for acquisition of right-of-ways for the belt route.

A member of the audience asked if it was anticipated that the crossing at 5700 West would be an overpass. Mr. Erickson responded that is not known at this point. There will be a big concern about whether it should be an at-grade crossing or separated



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grade crossing. A short discussion ensued regarding the need to determine the frequency of the trains at that crossing and the expense of a separated grade crossing.

Mr. Demas took a few minutes to explain the CUBE modeling process. He explained that the state has a statewide model that looks at traffic in the entire state – mainly in urbanized areas. Each urbanized area is broken up into Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ's). The socio-economic and population data is entered into the model to determine what type of traffic could be expected now and in the future on different corridors. In the past, Mr. Demas had worked with UDOT to put more TAZ's in the system for the Cedar area as there were very few that had been identified. Because of the limited number of TAZ's and the work that would be required, the original estimate for the modeling study was \$50,000 - \$60,000. However, in reviewing the latest state model, he found that they have identified a larger number of TAZ's in the Cedar area – approximately 40+. This number is sufficient to begin the modeling.

Mr. Demas explained that he obtained estimates from Horrocks Engineers because they have done modeling for the Dixie MPO with Five County AOG in St. George. Other consultants could certainly be used. The consultant would place the belt route in the model with other strategically placed roads and run the model. They could run the model for a 5, 10, 15, 20 or 40 year population projection to determine the need for the belt route. This modeling process is used by the state and all of the MPO's and the Dixie MPO uses it as well. The modeling can be a great benefit in answering questions about the need for certain projects. For example, the question was raised by the Advisory Committee whether or not there is need for the belt route. The CUBE model is a tool that can provide data to help to answer that type of question. The county could make the decision on which years to model in order to see when or if the belt route is needed. The study would provide information for planning purposes and help in identifying rights-of-way.

Commissioner Brinkerhoff commented that the greatest value of the belt route is the industrialization of the county; it would not necessarily be driven by population. Mr. Demas explained that the model will take into account all of the industrial and commercial areas as well as truck traffic to make their projections. The CUBE modeling has been tremendously valuable on several projects in the St. George area.



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V. UDOT Update

Mr. Aldridge provided copies of the Iron County section of the Draft 2016 STIP to members of the committee. It has been approved by UDOT and currently is in the public comment period. It is anticipated that it will be accepted by the Federal Highway Administration in October. He briefly reviewed each of the projects on the list.

Mr. Aldridge noted that there is a special significance to the passing lane on SR-20 project. He explained that UDOT is moving forward rapidly with 3-D engineered models. Although they have been designing in 3-D for 15-20 years, they end up losing a lot of the intelligence of their design by taking the 3-D model into CAD software and putting it on paper. Their goal for the SR-20 project is to do a CMGC delivered project to try to eliminate a paper plan set as the legal document for advertising purposes. This will allow UDOT to take the next step in using technology to gain considerable efficiencies in contracting and earth work.

A question was raised regarding the “Will Not Adv” notation on some of the projects on the list. Mr. Aldridge explained that the notation indicates that the project will not be advertised.

Mr. Aldridge concluded by expressing his appreciation for the support that the communities and the county have given to the RPO. He believes that the Iron County RPO has been instrumental in helping projects move forward on the STIP list.

VI. Modern Roundabouts – Video Presentation

Mr. Demas presented a short Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) video entitled “Modern Roundabouts: A Safer Choice”.

A short discussion ensued regarding the roundabout located in St. George at the Brigham Road interchange. Mr. Demas noted that as a traffic engineer, he is always looking for different tools to solve intersection and safety problems. Roundabouts may be an option in communities with difficult and challenging intersections. He added that roundabouts are not a solution for all situations. They must be placed in the correct location - when used correctly they work very well.

The committee members discussed the pros and cons of roundabouts and the learning curve required to navigate them. Mr. Aldridge noted that one possible application would be to try using a roundabout at the intersection of US-89 and SR-



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12. It is currently a high T intersection with a high number of accidents. The traffic turning left off SR-12 to go southbound on US-89 is pulling right over into the traffic lane rather than the acceleration lane. Flexible delineators have been installed to try to keep vehicles in the acceleration lane but they have not been successful. Vehicles continue pulling directly in front of traffic. He indicated that a roundabout there may be difficult to be approved but he will offer it as an option. There are a high number of foreign travelers in that intersection so it may work. It was agreed that it is a difficult intersection that requires drivers to really pay attention.

Mr. Demas shared an example of a roundabout located at 200 East and Main Street in St. George. It is a 5-legged intersection and would have been extremely difficult to signalize the intersection as one lane would need to have been closed off. A roundabout was used and it has worked very well; it may have been the only solution that would have worked. He added that there are approximately two dozen roundabouts in the area between Hurricane and St. George and most of them work quite well.

VII. Other Discussion Items

A. Mr. Demas informed the committee that the RPO is working with Brian Head regarding a grant for a transportation master plan. A planning group from Salt Lake City is working with them and the RPO is also helping them through the process.

VIII. Next Meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2015

IX. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mayor Don Landes, seconded by Commissioner Dale Brinkerhoff to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY