MINUTES
Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC)
June 5, 2013, 2:00 pm
Iron County Offices
82 N 100 E, Cedar City, Utah

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:	**REPRESENTING:**
Mr. Kit Wareham	Cedar City
Mr. Steve Platt	Iron County
Ms. Brenda Pugh	Kanarraville Town
Mr. Monte Aldridge	Utah Dept. of Transportation

MEMBERS EXCUSED:	**REPRESENTING:**
Mr. Tom Stratton	Brian Head City
Mr. Rob Dotson	Enoch City
Mr. Shayne Scott	Parowan City
Mayor Connie Robinson	Paragonah Town

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:	**REPRESENTING:**
Mr. Walt Steinvort	Utah Dept of Transportation Planning
Mr. Reed Erickson	Iron County
Mr. Dave Demas	Five County Assoc. of Governments

I. Quorum Declaration

Mr. Kit Wareham acted as Chair Pro Tem. In the absence of Mr. Tom Stratton, Chair, and Mr. Shayne Scott, Vice-Chair. Mr. Platt declared there was a quorum present.

II. Approve Minutes for April 3, 2013

A motion was made by Mr. Steve Platt, seconded by Mr. Monte Aldridge, to approve the April 3, 2013 Minutes of the Iron County Rural Transportation Advisory Committee meeting.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

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III. Update on Smoothed Boundary and Functional Class

Mr. Dave Demas reported that there was no real change to the smoothed boundary. A Federal Highway process will determine the final version. The Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) agreed to expand the smooth boundary west to 5700 West and northerly to the railway tracks which will include Iron Springs Road as requested by one of the Iron County Commissioners.

UDOT requested some additional traffic count information from the County as they finalize the functional class road designations. Mr. Platt has provided the traffic information. The next step of the UDOT process is to look at the total number of roads designated within each category and make adjustments to create a certain ratio of road types; they call it "balancing". For the Iron County RPO, UDOT may have downgraded a major collector to a minor collector, but that was the only recent change. Mr. Demas explained that RTAC members can access the functional class maps through the uPLAN program. Mr. Demas has a link to uPLAN he will share with anyone interested. One member asked Mr. Demas to send him the link. The link may be active for only a limited period of time.

IV. Regional Transportation Plan

A. Review status

Mr. Dave Demas provided a draft of Sections III and IV of the ICRPO Regional Transportation Plan. Section III A. 1. focuses on a general overview of the transportation system within Iron County, including bridges, transit, and bicycles. Mr. Monte Aldridge of UDOT provided a table of the non-UDOT local bridges in Iron County and will be able to provide a concurrent map. Mr. Platt questioned the inclusion of Bridge ID 021009D. It has a sufficiency rating of only 23.2. Mr. Platt suggests this may be a private bridge, upstream from Parowan's Main Street. Mr. Demas thought that it was still a public bridge in the public right of way. Mr. Demas and Mr. Aldridge will follow up on the question.

In Section III A. 2. Mr. Demas expands on the subject of Access Management. He states that the RPO partners have entered into an Access Management Agreement between all of the RPO jurisdictions and UDOT. This section suggests that the RPO continue discussion on this topic and to start developing standards and create jurisdictional plans. Mr. Demas intends to include the recommendation that individual Access Management Plans be created.

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It was pointed out that Section III B. includes a sentence that seems unfinished, ending with the word "local".

Regarding bicycle and pedestrian facilities or trails, Mr. Demas would welcome names and specifics on trails to add to Section III A. Mr. Wareham indicated that he had additional information that would help.

In Section IV Mr. Demas broke down the project priority list into categories such as safety and capacity. UDOT is moving toward a performance rating system and traffic counts , safety and capacity numbers are going to become more important in selecting projects for the STIP.

Section IV B. addresses public transportation. Paratransit and demand response transit needs appear to be quite high in the area. Transit is currently only available within Cedar City, but it also appears that transit needs to extend much further.

RTAC members are going to read through Sections III and IV and make recommendations to Mr. Demas. Mr. Demas described this Regional Transportation Plan as a "phase one" type plan and in a few years it might be appropriate to go into more detail regarding the road system.

V. <u>CUBE Traffic Modeling Presentation - Walt Steinvorth, UDOT Planning</u>

Mr. Walt Steinvorth, UDOT Transportation Planning Manager, explained the concept of traffic modeling and addressed the question of whether or not it is appropriate for the Iron County Rural Planning Organization (RPO) to invest in upgrading the current level of modeling available to Iron County.

Mr. Steinvorth explained there are different levels of complexity in modeling. In Washington County the type of modeling done by the Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization is long range system level type modeling. It takes a lot of time and money to set up and maintain. This modeling can dynamically demonstrate what roads are affected if certain elements of a road system are altered or traffic counts change significantly due to changes in land use and population growth.

Another type of modeling is focused on a specific project or traffic situation like an intersection. This modeling uses very specific parameters, including peak traffic flow

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periods. Air quality can also be modeled, and may soon be necessary in Washington County.

Mr. Steinvorth continued, saying that UDOT runs a Statewide Travel Demand Model (USTM) using CUBE software. UDOT manages the process, but hires consultants to do data entry and run the traffic scenarios. This Statewide modeling includes only State routes, not local roads. The demographic data input for it comes from the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (GOPD) forecasts. In the USTM model, Iron County is broken down into only approximately four transportation analysis zones (TAZ's).

UDOT has just extended their CUBE modeling license to encompass the entire State and could provide Iron County with a free license if the ICRPO wants to invest in that level of modeling. Mr. Steinvorth advised that If the ICRPO wants to undertake more complex modeling with more TAZ's and the inclusion of local roads, it is best to run the modeling on a local rather than State level.

Mr. Steinvorth suggested there are two primary questions Iron County traffic planners need to ask themselves: 1) What is the land use plan for an area?; and 2) What will happen if a road is built in a certain spot? Mr. Monte Aldridge added that historically the population threshold for considering in depth system modeling a good investment has been about 250,000. However with more complex transportation systems that number is considerably less and may be in the 125,000 range.

According to Mr. Steinvorth, funding is always an issue. He has been working to set up a planning resource system where UDOT can provide a basic CUBE model scenario for any area that requests it. Once an area is provided with a basic scenario, then the area can choose to invest in increasing its detail and complexity. Due to funding and time restraints, Mr. Steinvorth estimates this system to be two to five years out in the making. He also indicated that the State is building a freight model as well.

One Committee member responded that doing modeling is a good goal, but now is probably not the time; there are no huge issues pressing on Iron County currently. Mr. Demas pointed out that the role of planning is to try and project the future in order to prepare for that future now. A member responded with the question of whether the cost of modeling is worth it yet in Iron County – will there be enough growth and land use changes?

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Mr. Demas shared an example of where early modeling and planning proved to be very expedient. Ten years ago the need for a traffic corridor north of the City of St George seemed unnecessary, but modeling indicated the need for the corridor in the future. Mr. Demas kept the proposed corridor in the area's long range plan. Now, the need for the corridor is evident and it is in the process of trying to move forward. Without these early planning projections it would be nearly impossible to introduce as a new project.

In response to the question of cost, Mr. Steinvorth shared that Washington County just spent $100,000 to convert from the QRSII modeling system to the CUBE system. To set up a new model takes between $75,000 and $150,000 and the cost increases if the modeling includes transit. Then approximately $20,000 is needed annually for running scenarios and maintaining the data. The time to input data and run projections for a long range plan costs about $50,000. Of course these costs would be less for a smaller area like the RPO.

One Committee member suggested that since growth in Iron County has slowed, there might not be justification to invest in a modeling system right now. He added that it might be better to wait for the free basic CUBE model that Mr. Steinvorth hopes to offer within 2-5 years. Mr Demas questioned if it might be possible to negotiate with UDOT to input some of the primary local roads and create more TAZ detail into the existing model so that the RPO members could get some benefit out of it - possibly enough to help create a Long Range Plan. This would help not only with the prioritization of projects that UDOT wants but also help in making sure the Long Range Plan is moving in the correct direction.

Mr. Steinvorth indicated that he could possible add a little more in the model in this area to make it more useful. He would work with Dave in the RPO to see what could be done. Mr. Steinvorth indicated that he would coordinate with the planners in the area to make sure he used appropriate population, employment and land use information. UDOT doesn't use zoning at this high a level of analysis. UDOT can make use of the data from the ICRPO Build Out Study. They could also add census block data since they couldn't divide the TAZ's. UDOT did an initial model like this for St George City already.

Mr. Demas asked if this modeling could assist the RPO to better prioritize the projects that they submit annually to UDOT for inclusion onto the Statewide Transportation

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Improvement Program list. Mr Aldridge indicated that this could help in the process. It was noted that UDOT relies heavily on the model output.

Mr. Platt asked if the use of bicycles and motorcycles is expected to explode in the near future as the economy continues to struggle. Mr. Steinvorth said that the new Director of UDOT has indicated they will begin doing more planning for bicycles, but

in general UDOT serves transportation needs more than recreation needs and bicyclists are a small transportation user group.

In conclusion, Mr. Steinvorth stated that when the time is right for the planners in Iron County to invest in a transportation modeling system, they will know.

VI. Other Discussion Items

A. Other Items

Mr. Aldridge commented that he is still uncertain about when it is the appropriate time to invest in modeling. Modeling is integral to future planning. After the five

years outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the ICRPO and UDOT, the RPO needs to maintain itself financially. It would be good to see how much modeling assistance UDOT can provide the ICRPO before the formal five year partnership is completed. Mr. Demas is planning to follow up with Mr. Steinvorth to see if he could add some Iron County specific roads and more detailed traffic analysis zone type information.

B. Next meeting

The next ICRTAC meeting will be held on August 7, 2013 at the Town of Brian Head.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by mutual agreement.

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