

## **Northeast Tour**

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The committee traveled to northeast Colorado to hold meetings with local officials and transportation stakeholders and visit Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) projects in the area. The tour included:

- a transportation stakeholder meeting at the CDOT Region 4 Headquarters in Greeley;
- a presentation from CDOT's engineers on the US 85 Eaton to Ault Resurfacing project;
- an en route tour of State Highway 392, State Highway 14, US 6, and US 138;
- a transportation stakeholder meeting at Sterling Public Library in Sterling; and
- a meeting with Fort Morgan and Morgan County officials in Fort Morgan.

***Stakeholder meeting at CDOT Region 4 Headquarters.*** The committee visited the new Region 4 CDOT and Colorado State Patrol headquarters in Greeley to hear from transportation stakeholders in the region. Region 4 Transportation Director Johnny Olsen, District 5 Transportation Commissioner Kathy Gilliland, and two representatives from the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Executive Director Terri Blackmore and Chair Kevin Ross, made presentations to the committee.

Director Olsen discussed the cost benefits of the new headquarters building and provided an overview of CDOT Engineering Region 4. Commissioner Gilliland provided an update from the Transportation Commission, discussed general transportation funding challenges in the state, discussed what other states were doing to raise revenue, and highlighted local and federal partnership successes on the I-25 North project. Both presenters responded to questions from the committee on public awareness of funding gaps, project partnerships, and the implementation of new technologies. Discussion ensued on the intricacies of local funding and the challenges CDOT faces with Senate Bill 17-267 funding. Executive Director Blackmore and Chair Ross provided an overview of the North Front Range MPO, discussed transportation challenges faced by the MPO, specifically on County Road 74, and highlighted public-private partnership successes on the I-25 North project.

***US 85 Eaton to Ault Resurfacing Project.*** The committee visited a section of US 85 in Eaton to hear from on-site engineers about the scope of the 14-mile resurfacing project. The committee heard about the challenges of working on a deadline when unforeseen obstacles delay the project. On this project, the crew discovered a house foundation when digging into the subgrade at an Eaton intersection, which it had to excavate to bring the road up to code. The crew also encountered a section of US 85 built 5 feet below grade and some pipes that had not been reported. More information on the project online at: <https://www.codot.gov/projects/us-85-eaton-to-ault>.

***En route highway tour.*** En route to and from Sterling, the committee had the opportunity to see State Highway 392, State Highway 14, US 6, and US 138. The state highways, which connect Lucerne to Briggsdale to Sterling, experience heavy truck traffic and primarily lack shoulders. The CDOT representative on board, CDOT Local and Federal Liaison Ron Papsdorf, discussed how these factors led to frequent traffic delays on those highways. US 6 in Sterling is undergoing a resurfacing project that includes drainage, bridgework, and pedestrian improvements. Finally, the committee stopped to see potholes and other pavement deficiencies on US 138, which is a major arterial between Sterling and Julesburg.

***Stakeholder meeting at the Sterling Public Library.*** Committee members met again with representatives from CDOT Region 4, including Director Olsen and Sterling Resident Engineer Jeff Vickers. Senator Jerry Sonnenberg also joined the discussion. The CDOT representatives answered questions about the project life cycle cost analysis and economic models used by CDOT. Discussion ensued about transportation funding solutions in terms of specific roads in Region 4. The group discussed the Weld County Road 49, a controlled-access highway paid for by Weld County primarily with local severance tax funds, and the different requirements that project had to meet. The committee also had a discussion on how the department would utilize federal block grants if issued. The committee also discussed bicycle and pedestrian projects, road shoulders, and distracted driving.

***Meeting with Fort Morgan and Morgan County officials.*** The committee met with Fort Morgan public officials, including Mayor Ron Shaver, City Manager Jeff Wells, and Public Works Director Steve Glammeyer, and Morgan County Commissioners Mark Arndt and Jim Zwetzig. The area representatives discussed proposed and needed transportation projects in Morgan County and posed questions to the committee about how to raise transportation funding. The area representatives also brought up issues of public buy-in to the funding need and shortage of local funding to contribute to transportation projects. They stated that Fort Morgan would be going forward with an initiative to increase taxes for local roads.