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Memorandum

October 21, 2019

TO: Members of the Transportation Legislation Review Committee

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SUBJECT: 2019 Committee Mountain and Western Colorado Tour

Mountain and Western Tour

Mountain and Western tour. In September 2019, the Transportation Legislation Review Committee (TLRC) toured several sites in the mountains and on the western slope. The committee held discussions with the following entities:

- Park County Senior Coalition and Rocky Mountain Rural Health in Fairplay;
- Breckenridge Free Ride;
- Summit Stage in Frisco;
- Colorado State Patrol at the Loma Port of Entry;
- Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) about Bustang and Transportation Region 3 in Grand Junction;
- ECO Transit in Gypsum;
- I-70 Coalition in Frisco;
- Clear Creek County Commissioners and staff about the Prospector local transit in Georgetown; and
- Regional Transportation District (RTD) in Denver.

Park County Senior Coalition and Rocky Mountain Rural Health. The committee met with representatives from the Park County Senior Coalition and Rocky Mountain Rural Health to discuss how the organizations have provided 360,156 miles of travel for residents of Park County. The Senior Coalition handles transportation for seniors visiting doctors and shopping within and outside of the county, with funding from non-profit and for-profit organizations providing mileage reimbursement and rides from volunteers. Rocky Mountain Rural Health provides transportation for all ages needing Medicaid-related medical visits within and outside of the county with funding from the federal government and non-profits through mileage reimbursement and rides from volunteers. Reduced funding levels and difficulty recruiting volunteers to provide rides have been challenging for both organizations.

Breckenridge Free Ride. The Town of Breckenridge discussed the Breckenridge Free Ride, transportation geared toward residents and visitors to reduce congestion at peak times. The Free Ride operates year round transporting riders on routes up the mountain, working in conjunction with resorts operating their own transportation as well as Summit Stage. The town recently purchased an electric bus, as well as charging infrastructure, using a federal Low or No Emission Vehicle (5339 (c)) grant.

Summit Stage. Summit Stage representatives discussed their fleet of buses serving Summit County, mainly to transport the workforce. Discussions included a project to electrify the county bus fleet, using a federal grant.

Loma Port of Entry. Representatives from the Colorado State Patrol provided a tour and answered questions about the Loma Port of Entry facility. The committee watched the process as trucks rolled over the scales and received direction about the appropriate load weights and permits. The State Patrol also demonstrated the use of a mobile scale unit.

Bustang and CDOT Region 3 Updates. CDOT representatives provided a presentation about Bustang and updates for Region 3. Bustang is an interregional express bus service operated by CDOT.

ECO Transit. ECO Transit discussed how the agency provides transportation for approximately 6,000 riders daily in Eagle County, who typically work in the Vail resorts. Other mobility options are important to the county, including bike and e-bike share, taxis from transit centers, and sidewalks and crosswalks for pedestrians. Recent projects include the addition of two electric buses to ECO Transit's fleet in 2020, and a new mobile application to help riders find routes and connections.

I-70 Coalition. The committee heard a presentation from members of the I-70 Coalition, a non-profit group formed in 2004 to provide input on changes to I-70. The coalition of 28 local governments and businesses is interested in furthering discussions about transportation options along I-70. Recent priorities for the coalition include an additional westbound lane near Floyd Hill, an auxiliary lane near Vail in both directions, study of the feasibility of high-speed transit, congestion reduction, implementing Snowstang, and the launch of a carpool mobile application, Gondola. Snowstang is a CDOT bus service from Union Station to Steamboat, Loveland, and Arapahoe Basin ski areas with stops along the way at the Denver Federal Center and Idaho Springs.

Clear Creek County Prospector. Clear Creek County commissioners, transportation staff, and volunteers provided information about their only intra-county transportation, the Prospector, operated by the Senior Resource Center between Georgetown and Idaho Springs with stops along the way and a connection to Bustang. Started in December 2016, the service initially provided trips to the health clinic, grocery store, and food pantry. The Prospector is funded with a 5311 federal grant through CDOT and has served 4,000 riders to date in 2019.

EasyMile Shuttle. RTD and EasyMile representatives presented information about their autonomous shuttle project and provided a demonstration of the shuttle. The EasyMile shuttle was a partnership between the City and County of Denver, Denver International Airport, the Regional Transportation District, L.C. Fulenwider, EasyMile, and Panasonic to offer first and last mile electric shuttle service to and from the 61st and Pena light rail station to Panasonic and Easy Mile offices from January to July

2019. The goal of the program was to test the viability of autonomous vehicle technology for these connections. The test highlighted certain issues, such as the length of a workday for the shuttle (seven to eight hours) and conditions that interrupt the technology, including inclement weather and obstructions.