



Chaffee County Planning
PO Box 699, Salida, CO 81201
719.530.5565

City of Salida Planning
PO Box 417, Salida, CO 81201
719.539.4555

SALIDA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN STAFF REPORT JULY 15, 2009

Date: July 2, 2009
To: Salida Regional Planning Commission
From: Dara MacDonald, Don Reimer, Michael Yerman, Kim Antonucci
Subject: Staff Report – Salida RTP
First Round of Agency Review Comments & Upcoming Process

SUMMARY OF REQUEST: This is a proposal by the Salida Regional Planning Commission ("RPC") to adopt a Salida Regional Transportation Plan, which is a plan that responds to existing transportation patterns and provides a framework for transportation planning for the future.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE INFORMATION

Advertised in *The Mountain Mail* on July 1, 2009.

CITY OF SALIDA/CHAFFEE COUNTY INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT PROVISIONS:

The intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that was signed between Chaffee County and the City of Salida on March 18, 2008 sets forth procedures regarding coordinated land planning efforts for lands in and around the City of Salida. The City and County recognize that coordination between the two entities result in better management for directing growth and the provision of public services, as well as protecting valuable open and agricultural lands. As such, the IGA called for the creation of the Salida Regional Planning Commission whose charge is to not only review land use developments within the Salida Municipal Growth Area, but also to participate in Joint Master Planning.

Based on Section 7.2 of the IGA, *"the County and the City agree to coordinate and negotiate in good faith concerning long-range planning efforts. To that end, the City and County agree to work together through the Salida RPC on alternative growth management tools, including, but not limited to design guidelines, transportation, impact fees, attainable and affordable housing, and open space and agricultural preservation initiatives."* The Salida Regional Transportation Plan is the Salida RPC's first initiative.

AGENCY REVIEW COMMENTS. On June 3, 2009, the Salida Regional Transportation Plan was sent to the following agencies for review and comment:

Regional Transportation Plan
Staff Report
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Salida Public Works, Chaffee County Road and Bridge, South Arkansas Fire Protection District, Salida-Area Parks, Open Space and Trails, Salida Recreation Advisory Board, Chaffee County Transportation Advisory Committee, Salida Rotary, Town of Poncha Springs, Chaffee County EMS, Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board, Colorado Department of Transportation, Salida Mountain Trails, Salida Business Alliance, Heart of the Rockies Chamber of Commerce, Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, Bureau of Land Management, Salida Police Department, Chaffee County Sheriff Department, Chaffee County Board of Realtors, Chaffee County Airport Board, Salida School District, Cattlemen's Association, US Forest Service.

The following review agencies have, so far, submitted comments:

Colorado Division of Wildlife: In their letter of June 15, 2009, the DOW states that (1) they would like the proposed road on the west side of Franz Lake be eliminated as there is no use for it; (2) They are opposed to the proposed trail leading to the proposed bridge on the south side of the Arkansas River as it will lead to user conflicts between hunters/anglers and trail users; (3) They are opposed to the proposed collector road bisecting the DOW lands south of County Rd 154.

US Forest Service: In a conversation with Bill Schuckert on June 30, 2009, the US Forest Service had no verbal comments on the Plan and they are not planning to submit any written comments. They anticipate interaction only when they develop their Travel Management Plan at some point in the future.

Chaffee County Airport Board: Carl Hasselbrink: In a telephone conversation on July 2, 2009, Mr. Hasselbrink indicated the Airport Board had no comments.

Chaffee County Board of Realtors: In a July 2, 2009 conversation, Kevan Lyons indicated that the Board had no comments.

Chaffee County Sheriff: On July 2, 2009, Sheriff Tim Walker indicated that he is reviewing the proposal, and would make comments prior to the meeting.

Cattlemen's Association: In a memo dated June 25, 2009, Andrew Richardson suggested (1) that Kaess Construction in their reclamation efforts of their gravel pit on CR 160 incorporate a trail toward the Mt. Ouray Wildlife area; (2) that the 90-degree corner at CR160 and CR161 be "rounded out" to reduce the number of accidents in the area and (3) That the proposed collector road south of CR 154 be eliminated to avoid cutting the irrigated hay meadow.

Salida Public Works: These comments were shown as mark-ups on Map #10: (1) Vandaveer Road connection; (2) Town and Country Auto Sales - 60' road easement; (3) Salida construction standards will need to be specifically referenced in Chapter 9.

Salida Recreation Advisory Board: These comments were shown as mark-ups on Map #10: (1) Finish up the trail ends on CR 105/50; (2) Move lines so that the trail is visible on CR120/Lazy Daze area; (3) New Trail proposed – Monarch/County Rd 120.

Salida Parks Open Space and Trails: In emails dated June 24 and June, 2009, SPOT asked that existing trails be shown on the map that include the trail from Bongo Billy's to Riverside Park; the trail around Sands Lake and connecting to Mesa Lane; the trail along the south side of Crestone Avenue, the trail from Crestone and County Rd 144 intersection down to Franz Lake; the trail around the old gun Club property; the trail on the south side of CR140 and south down along Holman; the Little River Ranch in Poncha (note: trails in Poncha are not the subject of this plan); and asked that the Little River Trail connect Hwy 50 to CR 111.

Chaffee County Heritage Area Advisory Board: These comments were shown as mark-ups throughout the Plan. (1) On Objectives: Safety, "Whenever possible, separate streets and sidewalks with easements to ensure safety and allow for improved drainage"; (2) There was a suggestion to consider upgrades for existing pedestrian and bike lanes in the City; (3) There was a question on if air traffic was considered, (4) There was a question on gateways and commercial traffic/growth. (5) Noted that it is difficult to walk or bike along US 50, (6) Noted that bike lanes are critical in areas with heavy truck traffic, (7) Use best practices and storm water drainage features in road designs.

Chaffee County Road and Bridge: In a conversation with Joe Nelson, the Road and Bridge Supervisor on July 1, 2009, Mr. Nelson was concerned with the connections to the hospital and stated that the Overall Map appeared adequate. Mr. Nelson would like to meet with planning staff to discuss the budget priorities in more detail and to go on a field trip; he will have additional comments prior to the public hearing.

Salida Fire Department: These comments were shown as mark ups throughout the Plan. (1) Remember to include all review agencies; (2) Discuss the IGA earlier in the document; (3) Misc formatting changes; (4) Consider adding "E" Street and Hwy 50 as a problem intersection; (5) Incorporate "emergency call boxes" at transit stops.

STAFF COMMENTS ON AGENCY REVIEWS:

1. DOW commented on removing a road shown west of Franz Lake. Staff agrees it should be removed.
2. DOW and the Cattleman's Association each commented that the road connecting CR 160 to SH 291 through the DOW hay meadow should be reconsidered. This road was proposed as a solution to improve the north-south connection between US 50 and SH 291, and to improve access to the Hospital.

The final road location has not been finalized, and staff agrees that the location should be carefully selected to minimize impact to the hay meadow and DOW lands. It should also be noted that the road will only likely be considered for construction for when the parcel is ripe for development.

3. DOW, Cattleman's Association and SPOT each commented on various trails. DOW and Cattleman's disagreed on the location of a trail along the river between Franz Lake and the Mt Ouray hatchery; DOW would prefer to remove it from within the property due to potential user conflicts. While staff agrees that a path in this location along the river may be desirable, at this time, we recommend accepting DOW comments and aligning the trail along the north side of CR 160.
4. The Cattleman's also suggested smoothing a 90 degree curve near CR 160 and CR 161. This is outside the immediate area of this plan, but should be considered in future County capital improvements projects.
5. SPOT and the Recreation Advisory Board suggested existing and new trails be shown. Those trails that are within the area of this plan will be added to the maps.
6. Overall comments in the City of Salida. Some of the comments made on the plan were strictly within the City of Salida's jurisdiction and outside of the scope of this plan; accordingly some of the suggestions may not have been incorporated into the Plan.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY:

City of Salida Comprehensive Plan:

The Regional Transportation Plan is a guiding document for growth and the expansion of the transportation infrastructure in the 3-mile region around Salida. This coordinated effort to plan for new growth with the County is a major goal of the Comprehensive Plan. The direction this document provides for new development and expansion of new transportation infrastructure is consistent with the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan outlines the need for coordinated planned growth in the 3-mile growth area around Salida, the need for future transportation growth to be connected, expansion of the grid pattern around the City, new development providing adequate transportation infrastructure, the creation of new trails and provisions for alternative transportation, and the importance of making new connections between US 50 and SH 291. The Regional Transportation Plan utilized the transportation maps in the Comprehensive Plan that outlined where new road connections could be made.

The Regional Transportation Plan details the obligations of developers to provide and pay for their transportation infrastructure. The plan also addresses the importance of

maintaining and improving the infrastructure that exists currently in the City and County. These are consistent with the aims of the Comprehensive Plan for directing new growth and development.

The Regional Transportation Plan proposes new trails and encourages alternative modes of travel. These proposed trails connect to public lands that provide citizens with recreational opportunities. The creation of trails and encouraging alternative modes of transportation is a goal of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan articulates the importance of US 50 and SH 291 and creating new connections to and between these important arterials. The Regional Transportation Plan addresses making new connections between these two arterials. The Regional Transportation Plan details new connections that will also help relieve local traffic pressure from these arterials.

Chaffee County Comprehensive Plan:

One of the ten key goals in the March 2000 Chaffee County Comprehensive Plan is to "provide a safe and efficient transportation system for all county residents". In Section 4, Land Use and Development Patterns, the Plan states, "perhaps the most important objective of the plan is to focus new higher density residential development around existing towns and developed areas... An overwhelming majority of the county's citizens, 76%, disapprove of continuing the current development pattern of scattered small and large lots in rural areas."

If the preferred trend were to materialize, the implications are far-reaching with respect to the transportation connections around the Salida area. A well thought-out plan and vision for the future is crucial, particularly considering the DOLA growth projections, which suggest that Chaffee County is expected to grow about 1.9% between 2005 and 2035 and will result in about 10,000 more people (29,515)¹.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND POTENTIAL FINDINGS OF FACT:

1. The transportation interface between the City of Salida and Chaffee County has seen and will continue to see tremendous growth pressures and past transportation connections have been created without a long-term vision.
2. The Regional Planning Commission was formed in an effort to plan for growth in and around the City of Salida and the creation of a regional transportation plan is considered a priority by the Regional Planning Commission.
3. The Regional Transportation Plan has been created from a series of public outreach events, including public workshops held on December 9, 2008, February 4, 2009 and May 6, 2009; and a public hearing held on July 15, 2009.
4. Public agencies have been sent a copy of the Regional Transportation Plan and have had an opportunity to comment. These comments that have been received are the subject of this public hearing.

¹ www.dola.state.co.us/dlg/demog/population/forecasts/counties as of July 2, 2009.

5. Additional time is needed for staff to incorporate the review agency comments into the final Regional Transportation Plan, and another public hearing is likely necessary for the Salida Regional Planning Commission to consider the Plan in final form.

POTENTIAL PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

Commissioner _____ moved to direct staff to CONTINUE the public hearing to Wednesday, August 19, 2009 at 6:00 pm, so that review agency comments may be incorporated into the final SALIDA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATIONAL PLAN; Commissioner _____ seconded the motion, based on the following findings of fact and conditions:

Findings of Fact:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Conditions:

1. That staff shall incorporate the review agency comments as described below:
 - a. _____.
 - b. _____.
 - c. _____.
 - d. _____.
 - e. _____.

2. That staff shall NOT incorporate the review agency comments as described below:
 - a. _____.
 - b. _____.
 - c. _____.
 - d. _____.
 - e. _____.

Prepared by City and County Planning Staff on July 2, 2009.

Note: This report includes findings resulting from staff review only through date shown. Review of the application is continual until the date of the Regional Planning Commission meeting. Information supplied by the applicant after the submittal deadline is not required to be considered by the Planning Commission.