

**Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan
Transportation and Planning/Zoning Partnership Group Meeting
16 June 2009
3:00pm – 4:30pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alicia Archibald	Fort Carson
Larry Bagley	PPACG Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
Mary Barber	Fort Carson
Colleen Guillotte	Felsburg, Holt, and Ullevig (FHU)
Kate Hatten	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG)
Christopher Juniper	Fort Carson
Richard Normandie	PPACG
Rick Orphan	Fort Carson
Tim Roberts	City of Colorado Springs
Steve Saint	Green Cities Coalition
Dave Smedsrud	City of Fountain
Travis Waldrip	CDOT Region 2
Sarah White	PPACG

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Phase II Update and Status

Ms. Kate Hatten welcomed the members and briefly discussed preliminary results from surveys completed at the Mountain Post Welcome at Fort Hood in May. BBC Research and Consulting and PPACG are sifting through preliminary demographic data provided by DEERS-West and Fort Carson along with the survey results.

Mr. Christopher Juniper asked Ms. Hatten whether there were any questions directly pertaining to transportation on the surveys. Because of the limited amount of time and questions allowed on surveys, there were no questions directly related to transportation. This may be addressed in future focus group discussions.

Mr. Juniper also asked the peak time of troops stationed at Fort Carson will be. Kate will provide Christopher with data of peak times when soldiers will be at Fort Carson. Tentatively, 2011 appears to be when Fort Carson will have most of its troops back from deployments.

3. Mountain Metro Route 30 Update

Mr. Juniper provided an update about the status of Mountain Metro Route 30 to Fort Carson. The Colorado Springs City Council decided to cut Route 30 because of its low ridership and the \$28,000 per month (approx. \$17,000/month net) costs for operation, fuel, and maintenance. Fort Carson requested that the bus travel during peak times only,

which would lower the costs to \$6,000 per most (\$4,000/month net). This is still a problem as many non-choice riders who work at Fort Carson, especially those who work at the dining facilities, the hospital or perform janitorial/house cleaning work, need transportation during off-peak times. Further, only 50 people on-post cannot drive at all, but not all of those individuals take public transit. The city is aware that the route is not adequate to attract choice riders.

Fort Carson is investigating different options for mass transit or options that decrease vehicle traffic. One option is to pursue monies from the Department of Defense's Mass Transit Benefit Program, which pays for monthly transit passes for employees. Fort Carson has yet to take advantage of these funds.

Fort Carson may also pursue on-call van-pooling options. Vans could travel on a quasi-fixed route and possibly pick people up at the Pikes Peak Community College (PPCC) bus stop, if the PPCC stop survives the next round of city cuts. Such a service may cost \$25 per ride, which is beyond most riders' budgets. If enough people use the service, then that drops the cost per person making it more affordable for everyone.

Preserving jobs for disabled workers is the highest priority for Fort Carson right now. Car pooling remains to be the best option, although there are no incentives to offer people for volunteering to car pool. Fort Carson is working with non-profits, such as Community Intersections, to investigate the feasibility of a door-to door based service. Other options entail extending FREX routes to PPCC or to Fort Carson or having a service similar to the Broadmoor's dial-a-ride program. However, the dial-a-ride option may cost almost the same amount of money to operate as a fixed route.

Mr. Steve Saint asked whether Fort Carson could use out of service buses and/or shuttles (e.g. the Dash shuttles) for transit for its employees. Mr. Juniper stated that obtaining vehicles is not a problem. The major expenses are the operational costs- drivers are 89% of costs – not the procurement of the vehicles. In addition, current DoD regulations do not permit Fort Carson personnel to run transit, except for specific DoD purposes – not commuting.

Mr. Rich Normandie asked how these transit cuts affect Fort Carson's master transportation plan. Fort Carson's long-term transportation plan calls for getting the community to Fort Carson without cars. Given funding restraints and the lack of demand, this is not on anyone's "short-term radar". If Fort Carson comes up with a long-term plan for transit to the post, then perhaps the city will extend Route 30 (possibly to the end of 2009) until that plan is established.

Mr. Dave Smedsrud discussed the City of Fountain's plan for mass transit to Fort Carson and for conducting a travel demand study. Fountain has low ridership for mass transit, but has the highest Para-transit use in the region. Federal laws place additional burdens on cities/municipalities because they require that all Para-transit routes have fixed routes nearby and all fixed routes run Para-transit.

Members asked whether PPACG can extend its scope of work to include Fountain study. Ms. Hatten will review scope. It may be too late to include new scopes in Phase II.

Mr. Rick Orphan discussed the status of Gate 19 funding and updates about Wilderness Road development. He stated that Defense Access Funding (DAR) could pay \$5 million for road improvements on the off-post road to Gate 19; El Paso County would be responsible for maintenance. However, there is no funding for the gate operation or on-post road construction/maintenance. He also stated that currently Gate 6 is a priority over Gate 19 at Fort Carson.

Mr. Orphan reported that construction on Wilderness Road is continuing as planned despite the 47th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) not coming. Other Fort Carson units will utilize these facilities. There are some discussions about eliminating funding for the construction on Wilderness Rd., but no official decision has been made and construction continues to this day.

4. Update on Phase I Recommendations

Ms. Hatten provided members with spreadsheets of Phase I recommendations and asked whether the recommendations are still relevant, if there is progress being made in any areas and whether or not PPACG should revise any recommendations.

In reference to one of the action items listed in the spreadsheet, Mr. Orphan discussed plans for bike path/pedestrian access from PPCC to B-Street entrance to Fort Carson. Although there is designated funding, costs for adding bike/pedestrian access at the gate are still too high. Such construction would be over \$750,000, which falls under a MILCON project. Until the Army Corps of Engineers (COE) can lower the costs, the project cannot be implemented. There are other bike access plans for Gate 4, which are more cost effective and moving forward.

Mr. Juniper suggested a gap analysis study of El Paso County goals regarding transit to Fort Carson.

Ms. Hatten will email the spreadsheet of Phase I recommendations to all of the transportation partnership group members for further input.

5. Next Steps

It was agreed that the next meeting would be 15 July 2009 at 10:00am. Future meetings will return to the regular schedule on the second Tuesday of each month at 1:30pm, as needed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 pm