

**Get to Know
Victor M. Mendez
FHWA Administrator**



Victor Mendez was sworn in as the Federal Highway Administrator in 2009 and is the 18th person to hold the position. In this role, he oversees the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) 2,900 employees in Washington and field offices across the country and provides executive guidance on strategic initiatives and policy.

Victor earned a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Texas at El Paso and later earned an MBA from Arizona State University. He worked for the U.S. Forest Service before joining the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). Victor spent 24 years inside the agency, starting as a transportation engineer, eventually rising to the post of Director when President George W. Bush appointed ADOT Director Mary Peters to run FHWA (she later would be appointed Secretary of Transportation). Upon his election in 2009, President Barack Obama also looked to Arizona for his FHWA administrator, when he appointed Victor to lead FHWA.

During his career Victor has also served as president of the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

I-70 Proposal

On March 16th, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) released a Request for statements of interest (RFSOI) for qualified firms interested in submitting a co-development proposal to assist CDOT in providing a long-term solution to the congestion and mobility issues on the I-70 Mountain Corridor through a program of highway, transit and other improvements. This co-development proposal will also include helping CDOT to secure a Public-Private Partnership for financing, designing, building, and operating these improvements through a long-term concession agreement.

In July of 2011, the High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE), a division of CDOT, received an unsolicited proposal for a program of phased transportation improvements on Interstate 70 between C-470 and Silverthorne initially and extending to Eagle in the future. The proposal includes adding managed lanes to I-70 that are priced according to the level of congestion, as well as a transit system for the long term. Existing lanes of I-70 would remain free to all vehicles. Parsons, an international design, engineering and construction company submitted the unsolicited proposal which indicates that the project could generate sufficient revenues so that little to no state or federal dollars would be required.

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Federal Update

Congress is coming off of a two-week recess. During this time members were home in their districts holding town hall meetings and visiting with constituents. Prior to leaving for the recess, the House and Senate continued to dispute whether to extend the existing Transportation Authorization (SAFETEA-LU) or to simply adopt the newly approved Senate transportation authorization, MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century), a two-year \$109 billion transportation bill that was approved overwhelmingly in the Senate. Rather than pass the Senate's bill, the House of Representatives opted to take more time to put together a long-term bill. As a result, the House passed a new continuation of the current SAFETEA-LU bill for another 3 months, the Senate, preferring its own MAP-21 bill, reluctantly concurred.



Washington D.C.

As Congress is out on recess, there are little, if any, talks between the House and Senate on moving forward. Stay tuned to *Interchange* for the latest information as Congress moves forward with Transportation funding.

Upcoming Events

Colorado Transportation Commission Workshops/Meeting

April 18-19, 2012

CDOT Headquarters in Denver, CO

E-Mail: Toni.Bircher@dot.state.co.us

CML Annual Conference

June 19-22, 2012

Beaver Run Conference Center in Breckenridge, CO

Website: <http://www.cml.org>

Colorado Transportation Commission Workshops/Meeting

May 16-17, 2012

CDOT Headquarters in Denver, CO

Website: Toni.Bircher@dot.state.co.us

WASHTO Annual Meeting

July 7-12, 2012

Crowne Plaze in Colorado Springs, CO

E-Mail: <http://www.washto2012.com>

I-70 Proposal *cont. from page 1.....*

Following a review of the proposal and modifications to better align with improvements identified in the I-70 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) Record of Decision (ROD), CDOT is now moving ahead with the next step of seeking comparable proposals.

Whether the Parsons plan or another co-development proposal is selected, the successful applicant will be tasked with project development efforts designed to examine and validate the project concept, and will include the following elements:

- A Detailed Traffic & Revenue Study – confirms study assumptions and revenue forecasts
- Technical Plan - the engineering details of the project being proposed
- Financial Plan – to establish a financial structure, balancing risks and rewards, that will be attractive to private investors
- Federal Environmental Clearance

Throughout this process, CDOT and the selected co-developer will have “off-ramps” (the option to not proceed to a final agreement involving construction) should the project not be deemed financially feasible. The RFSOI response date is April 23rd, 2012 and CDOT expects to issue a Request for Proposals in the summer of 2012 for the shortlisted co-developer. For more information on the I-70 RFSOI, contact CDOT Local Liaison, Angie Drumm at 303-757-9105.

From the Capitol

The Colorado General Assembly is over two-thirds of the way through the 2012 legislative session. The annual appropriations bill, HB 12-1335 (Gerou/Hodge), is being debated in the House before it heads to the Senate the week of the 23rd. As of now, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is tracking/monitoring over 100 of the 581 bills that have been introduced to date. Each of these bills may have an impact on transportation or our employees. 33 bills that CDOT has been monitoring have already been postponed indefinitely.

All three CDOT Legislative Agenda bills have been introduced and acted upon. (1.) HB 12-1108 (Kagan/Scheffel) The LOGO Signs in Urban Areas bill, which allows LOGO and TOD signs in urban areas and on expressways, was approved by the House and now moves to the Senate. Currently, it awaits a hearing before the Senate Transportation Committee. (2.) HB 12-1222 (Becker/Hodge), the CDOT Renovation Fund bill, re-establishes the repealed Renovation Fund which expired with a cash balance remaining. This bill was approved overwhelmingly by both chambers and has been signed into law by Governor Hickenlooper. (3.) HB 12-1012 (Williams A./Guzman and White), the Business Relocation Reimbursement bill, would increase the cap for relocation payments. The bill has already received unanimous approval by both the House and Senate. It awaits one final technical motion to reconcile bill differences before it will be delivered to the Governor for his signature.

If you have any questions on these or any other legislative issues please feel free to contact Kurt Morrison, Legislative Liaison at 303-757-9077. This memo and a link to the bill tracking chart are available online at: <http://statebillinfo.com/SBI/index.cfm?fuseaction=Public.Dossier&id=16253&pk=251&style=pinstripe>