



April 5, 2019

Shannon Gifford, Chair, Colorado Transportation Commission
Members, Colorado Transportation Commission
c/o Herman Stockinger, Commission Secretary
Colorado Department of Transportation Headquarters
4201 E Arkansas Avenue
Denver, CO 80222

**Re: Northern Colorado Government and Business Leaders Request
Transportation Commission Support For:**

- Approval of a request for a supplemental \$250M in funding for North I-25 Segment 7 & 8 from available SB 1, COP and General Funds**

Dear Madame Chair Gifford and Members:

Thank you for the work you do on behalf of our state. For years, you have endured the difficult task of making the limited dollars available for Colorado's transportation system go as far as possible. Thank you for your tireless efforts.

Since 2015, Northern Colorado has been at the epicenter of the transportation funding and finance discussion. As a region, we were undaunted by news that the North I-25 corridor would be completed in 2075. Rather we saw the challenge as an opportunity to elevate the conversation about the needs in the corridor and across the state.

We remain hopeful and have continued to drive the conversation about funding transportation. In light of the voters' decisions in 2018, our attention has shifted to other options that could be politically and financially viable. We are confident that by the end of the legislative session more funds – while still modest – will be available for our state's highway and transit system.

As you start deliberating the utilization of these available funds, we wish to make the strong case for supplemental support by the Commission for full funding of the permanent fix to Segments 7 and 8 of North I-25.

The Permanent Fix of North I-25 Segments 7 & 8

In recent years, North I-25 has been the beneficiary of a patchwork of state, local and federal funding to address its \$1.8 billion projected costs.

The North I-25 corridor has undergone an extensive Environmental Impact Study, with a corresponding Record of Decision, detailing the standards for expansion of the roadway from Broomfield (Highway 7) through Fort Collins (Highway 14). Notwithstanding the funds thus far allocated, the corridor still requires significant dollars to build the highway to the necessary EIS standards as outlined in the Statewide 2040 Transportation Plan.

Phase One Interim Project – Segments 7 & 8

The “Phase One” North I-25 Express Lane Project, in Segments 7 and 8 between Fort Collins and Loveland, is underway. As now funded, this is only an **interim** project. It provides an additional Express Toll lane in each direction and additional interchange improvements. While providing long needed congestion relief, these segments are being built in an “urban” 2+1 configuration and are not being built to the full EIS standards. The interim project also does not replace the aging infrastructure that exists in the segments.

The region understood this to be a temporary, or “interim”, solution with a commitment for the permanent fix to be delivered within the life of the interim project.

The permanent, EIS standard fix for the corridor provides a “rural” configuration and requires \$250M in additional funding for the Segments 7 and 8. This is our request.

Approving a supplemental allocation of \$250M now will save over \$150M in overall project costs.

The savings will be realized by undertaking a construction project for the full permanent build rather than building interim or temporary structures, \$150M of which will have to be demolished or replaced to make way and construct the permanent fix. Moving the current project to a full permanent 2+1 rural configuration fix will save a huge amount of money that can be used for other critical projects in the corridor or the state.

Available and Future Available Funds

SB 1 One-Time Funds and COPs

In part due to our continued efforts, we anticipate \$730M+ in available funds from the following sources will be available for CDOT project consideration:

- \$500M COP Tranche 2 Proceeds
- \$150M One-Time SB 1 Funds
- \$50M General funds commitment from SB 1
- \$100M General Funds from FY 2019-20 Budget

We seek allocation of \$250M of the anticipated \$800M+ in available funds for North I-25 Segment 7 and 8.

Northern Colorado is United

Northern Colorado is united in its efforts to assure full funding of North I-25.

The North I-25 Coalition, founded in September 2013, encompasses local government Mayors, Commissioners and Councilors representing entities – counties, cities and towns – along the I-25 corridor. Their focused and cooperative efforts by members of the Coalition, chaired by Weld County Commissioner Barb Kirkmeyer, has produced millions in local matching funds to position the North I-25 Corridor to receive TIGER grant funding and partner with CDOT for the Phase One project.

The region's business community founded the Fix North I-25 Business Alliance in early 2014. The Alliance, chaired by David May, President & CEO of the Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce, is made up of business organizations and leaders in Larimer and Weld counties. It has invested significant financial resources in the unified North I-25 effort, and the statewide funding conversation, by retaining a lobbyist, media relations firms, pollsters and other experts to help advocate for more transportation funding for Colorado and North I-25.

Together, the North I-25 Coalition and Fix North I-25 Business Alliance, represent the local governments and the business community of the Northern Colorado region. We work in close alignment to maintain a common vision and agenda and coordinate our work.

Conclusion

We appreciate the work you do as a Commission and understand you have difficult choices to make with limited resources. Full funding of North I-25 through a \$250M funding commitment for the full EIS build of Segments 7 and 8 is a wise choice with limited resources. Because of the planning already done along the corridor, the momentum and the regional support, you can get quick results on one of the state's most significant transportation corridors.

Sincerely,

Barbara Kirkmeyer
North I-25 Coalition

David May
Fix North I-25 Business Alliance

cc: Governor Jared Polis
Executive Director Shoshana Lew, Colorado Department of Transportation
Senator John Cooke
Senator Joann Ginal
Senator Vicki Marble
Senator Rob Woodward
Representative Jeni Arndt
Representative Rochelle Galindo
Representative Lori Saine
Representative Perry Buck
Representative Hugh McKean
Representative Stephen Humphrey