



COLORADO
Department of Transportation
Division of Accounting and Finance

4201 East Arkansas Avenue, Room 262
Denver, CO 80222

MEMORANDUM

TO: HIGH PERFORMANCE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
FROM: MEGAN CASTLE, CDOT COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER
CC: DAVID SPECTOR, DIRECTOR OF HIGH PERFORMANCE TRANSPORTATION ENTERPRISE
DATE: JANUARY 3, 2017
SUBJECT: CDOT'S HOV EXPRESS LANES CHANGE TO HOV3+ TELEPHONE TOWN HALL SUMMARY

Purpose

At the October 2016 HPTE Board meeting, staff presented on the ongoing education efforts to educate the public on the change to HOV3+ from HOV2+ on CDOT's HOV Express Lanes (I-25 and US 36). A telephone town hall on the HOV3 topic was included in this comprehensive public outreach campaign to be held on Monday, Dec. 12, 2016. This memo contains details on HPTE's telephone town hall on HOV3+ change.

Action

This item is informational only and no Board action is required.

Background

CDOT and HPTE hosted a telephone town hall meeting Dec. 12, 2016, on the HOV3+ change on CDOT's HOV Express Lanes (I-25 and US 36 Express Lanes).

Details

About the Dec. 12, 2016 Telephone Town Hall (TTH):

- The TTH hosted 3,418 participants
- Outbound calls were made to Front Range communities and counties along the US 36 and North I-25 corridors
- 28 questions were answered live and 16 voicemails received with questions or comments following the live call

On Monday, Dec. 12, 2016, David Spector (HPTE Director); State Rep. Tracy Kraft-Tharp, D-Arvada; Audrey DeBarros (Executive Director, 36 Commuting Solutions); Will Drier (Program Manager, Smart Commute Metro North); and Megan Castle (CDOT Express Lanes/HPTE Communications Manager) facilitated a telephone town hall with residents in the Front Range along the US 36 and I-25 Express Lanes metro area to provide an overview of the change to HOV3+ for carpoolers on the HOV lanes.

Information was provided on the change that would take effect on Jan. 1, 2017, as well as details on resources from local partnering agencies for carpoolers to find options for the change to HOV3+. The options discussed included finding a third passenger for carpooling, vanpooling, transit, using the general purpose lanes, paying a toll and incentives to try these choices offered on Express Lanes. The speakers took comments and answered questions.

Telephone Town Hall Participation

Approximately 3,090 households participated with 55 participating as "inbound" callers. These in-bound callers used a 1-800 number that was publicized in all public notifications of the event.



The average minutes spent on the TTH by participants was 14 minutes, and the peak level participation was 662 persons.

Question and Comments

The panel responded to 28 questions during the 60-minute telephone town hall. Another 16 participants left questions and comments via voicemail recording at the conclusion of the town hall.

The most frequent questions and comments presented live during the call, via email and in voicemail messages related to why the change from HOV 2+3 change on Jan. 1, 2017 would happen as well as funding constraints.

Interactive Survey Questions

The telephone town hall also included the following two live survey questions and the results:

Q1: “How often do you use the free carpool option on Express Lanes?”

Responses:

- Carpool daily for commute: 8 percent
- Carpool 1 to 3 times per week: 13 percent
- Carpool a few times per month: 29 percent
- Never carpool: 49 percent

Q2: What’s the best way for you to get information about Express Lanes news?”

Responses:

- Electronic signs on the highway: 32 percent
- ExpressToll emails & newsletters: 28 percent
- TV, radio or newspaper stories: 21 percent
- Advertisements
TV, radio, bus ads or billboards): 11 percent
- Other: 8 percent

Information provided for the calls included the expresslanes.codot.gov website with links to partner websites that include resources for carpoolers. The Dec. 12 TTH Audio File and information on the new procedures for motorcycles and carpoolers, has been posted on the HPTE website.

Key Policy Considerations

HPTE’s outreach was helpful in educating the public on HOV 3. The telephone town hall format allowed CDOT and HPTE to reach thousands of residents along the corridor, directly and /or through media coverage. Through the TTH, CDOT, HPTE and its partners were able to answer questions, provide explanations and information regarding:

- What and When: Jan 1, 2017 HOV3+ Change
- Why: To provide trip reliability in the lanes and to use the toll revenue to help to offset the costs of providing the added infrastructure as well as the ongoing operations and maintenance costs
- Who: CDOT’s Transportation Commission and the Denver Council of Regional Governments Board (DRCOG) approved the change in early 2013.
- Options and Resources for Carpoolers: CDOT and HPTE are working to help carpoolers and motorcycles travel for free on CDOT’s HOV Express Lanes. This includes working with partners including DRCOG, Smart Commute Metro North, 36 Commuting Solutions, RTD, North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization, Lyft and Uber.

The Telephone Town Hall followed HPTE’s protocol notifying the public, media and elected officials along Us 36 and I-25 Express Lanes.

Commission Options/Decision Matrix

- 1) **Staff Recommendation:** Review and acknowledge the memo presented by staff.
- 2) Review the memo, but with instructions or questions for additional outreach to be conducted if deemed necessary.

