



PORTS-TO-PLAINS

A L L I A N C E

Securing the Benefits of Commerce to
North America's Energy & Agricultural Heartland



June 17, 2010

Colorado Department of Transportation
Colorado Transportation Commission
4201 East Arkansas
Denver, CO 80823

Dear Commissioners and Executive Director George and Employees of the Colorado Department of Transportation:

The purpose of this letter is to thank the state of Colorado, Colorado Department of Transportation and the Colorado Transportation Commission for keeping a long term commitment to the U.S. 287 Corridor as a Colorado Strategic (7th Pot) Project. Government is often criticized for its lack of long range commitments. Elected officials come and go with today's term limits. Agency staffs and leadership change. "Priorities" change. Commitments fall by the wayside.

On Thursday, May 20, 2010 the current Transportation Commission approved the final \$19 million to fund the last two phases of this project in Lincoln and Cheyenne counties.

The Super 2 project began back in 1992-93 when Don Morrison of Limon and a current member of the Ports-to-Plains Board of Directors, then a member of the Colorado Transportation Commission, and Philip McCullough and John Unbewust, regional transportation directors for CDOT were able to fund a demonstration project to install a concrete Super 2 roadway between Limon and Hugo.

In 1997, as the state of Colorado looked to the future, the Transportation Commission prioritized 28 projects around the state to be beneficiaries of the proceeds of a proposed bonding proposal that was sent to the voters of Colorado for consideration. The voters of Colorado approved allowing bonded indebtedness to be used to advance these 28 Strategic Projects which included U.S. 287 from Limon to the Colorado/Oklahoma border.

A key component of the 7th Pot Program was the passage of Senate Bill 1 in 1997 which committed a percentage of sales tax revenues on automobile related goods to continue the work on the 28 Strategic Projects. This provided state general fund revenue for transportation and construction on the Ports-to-Plains Corridor during years when it was not diverted by the legislature or Colorado's budget law.

Limon Office
P.O. Box 9
Limon, CO 80828
P: 303.586.1787
F: 719.775.9073

Lubbock Office
5401 N MLK Blvd., Unit 395
Lubbock, TX 79403
P: 806.775.2338
Fax: 806.775.3981

www.portstoplains.com

The Ports-to-Plains Corridor was identified as a Congressionally designated *High Priority Corridor on the National Highway System* in 1997 and that opened the door for some specific federal funding. The SAFETEA-LU Transportation Reauthorization identified \$20 million of High Priority Corridor Funding for Ports-to-Plains and U.S. 287. In 2009, the projects were prioritized again by the Transportation Commission as a priority for the federal stimulus funds through the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)*. Ports-to-Plains projects received over \$28 million for this source.

The final funding of \$19 million approved by the Transportation Commission also came from federal funding through the *Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act*.

With changing economic and political situations; changing governors, CDOT executive directors, and transportation commissions and new transportation issues facing the state since 1997, there was plenty of opportunity to set a commitment aside. Colorado kept its commitment.

The Ports-to-Plains Alliance looks forward to continuing to work with the state of Colorado and the Colorado Department of Transportation in advocating for transportation funding that will allow Colorado and the economies of the Ports-to-Plains communities in Colorado and our other states to be strengthened. There is work still to do, but working with those who fulfill their commitments make it worth of the effort. Thank you all and those that came before you again from the Ports-to-Plains Alliance.

Sincerely yours,



Joe Kiely
Vice President of Operations
Limon, Colorado



Michael Reeves
President
Lubbock, Texas