AGENDA ITEM or FINAL CONTRACT REVIEW SUBMITTAL FORM

AgendaTitle:
Cottonwood Pass Road Project

Action Requested: Discussion

Parties to the Agreement: Gunnison County and FHWA

Term Begins: **Term Ends:** **Grant Contract #:**

Summary:
Submitted please find two draft letters for discussion regarding previous discussion about the FHWA grant and matching funds for the Cottonwood Pass project.

Fiscal Impact: 5% of a 16.2 million dollar project is 810,000.

Submitted by: Deborah Ferchau **Submitter's Email Address:** dferchau@gunnisoncounty.org

Finance Review: (●) Required ( ) Not Required

Comments:

We would need to stretch this over 4 years to reach the 200,000/year number we are comfortable with.

Reviewed by: GUNCOUNTY1\lNienhueser Discharge Date: 4/18/2014

County Attorney Review: ( ) Required (●) Not Required

Comments:

Reviewed by: Discharge Date: Certificate of Insurance Required

Yes ( ) No ( )

County Manager Review:

Comments:

Reviewed by: GUNCOUNTY1\khaase Discharge Date: 4/18/2014

( ) Consent Agenda (●) Regular Agenda ( ) Worksession Time Allotted: 5 Minutes

Agenda Date: 4/22/2014 Follow Up Agenda Date:

Revised April 2013

GUNNISON COUNTY, COLORADO
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
195 BASIN PARK DRIVE
GUNNISON, CO 81230

MEMORANDUM

TO: **Board of County Commissioners**
Matthew Birnie County Manager

FROM: **Marlene Crosby and Jim Kint**

DATE: **April 18, 2014**

SUBJECT: **Funding for Cottonwood Pass**

Attached to this memo are drafts of two letters for the FHWA regarding the Cottonwood Pass project. One declines the project and one offers a 5% match. I spoke with Linda today and annually we try and put about $200,000 in our construction budget. We would not be able to do some other projects, but for the next 4-5 years that construction budget could be used to pay the tapered match if the FHWA would agree.

In both letters I tried to speak to the fact that local government is being "squeezed" out of projects because of the match. In all cases we want them to know it is still a priority project, but not at 17.21%.

Any suggestions or comments that you might have that I can change before Tuesday, please give me a call or send me an e-mail. We hope to be able to come home sometime Friday.

Thank you

April 22, 2014

Mr. Micah J. Leadford
Project Manager/Construction Operations Engineer
Central Federal Lands Highway Division
12300 W. Dakota Ave., Suite 380A
Lakewood, CO 80228

Dear Micah:

The Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners has met with our staff on two occasions to discuss the proposal recently submitted for work on the upper 5.5 miles of Cottonwood Pass and the preliminary engineering on the remainder of the route. We agree with your agency and the Program Development Committee that safety is a huge factor and that widening and paving the upper section would enhance the traveling public's experience.

As Marlene has told you this is a difficult time for Gunnison County to commit funding to the project. We have several new facilities either built or under construction and some of our revenue sources are lower than in previous years. Normally the Public Works Department has a strong fund balance, but as you know many of those resources were used to complete the Taylor River Road Project.

We appreciate the effort you have put forth in presenting a project with a smaller scope, but at this time we cannot participate. We will continue to push Cottonwood Pass as an important arterial into our County, and to push our legislative representation to vote for a transportation bill that reduces the match to a reasonable amount. It is our feeling that local governments in states with a high match such as Colorado are being shut out of the program.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to work with your agency. We have had a very positive relationship in the past and we hope to have another opportunity to complete this route.

Sincerely,

_____	_____	_____
Paula Swenson, Chairperson	Phil Chamberland, Commissioner	Jonathan Houck, Commissioner

April 22, 2014

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Central Federal Lands Highway Division
12300 W. Dakota Ave., Suite 380A
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We understand the value of this project and very much want to be a partner in improving the upper section of the pass and completing the preliminary engineering on the entire section. This road is an important arterial route into Gunnison County and continues to be a priority for us, and for the Forest Service since it provides access to many thousands of acres of Forest Land.

We support paving the upper section to minimize the maintenance costs of repeated applications of magnesium chloride. We also find value in the completion of the preliminary engineering which would allow our staff to complete some of the needed work. That said, we simply cannot provide funding for a 17.21% match. We do not have the financial resources and we are concerned that if we tried to raise that amount of money and committed to that amount and the match changed in a future transportation bill to the 5% that is being discussed we would face a very angry public.

We have worked with our Public Works staff and our Finance staff and we can provide a 5% tapered match. It is much different for a small local government to look at $818,000 than multiple millions of dollars. The current match is going to cause distribution of the funds to State and Federal projects rather than local roads.

If this amount is acceptable to you we are willing to commit to the project. We look forward to an opportunity to work with your agency and to move this route to completion.

Sincerely,

_____	_____	_____
Paula Swenson, Chairperson	Phil Chamberland, Commissioner	Jonathan Houck, Commissioner