



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Our Roads are OK, and DOT will take care of us. Really?**

Claimed by opponents: "Optimist Club and Bypass 16 is the number 1 project and can't be accelerated." The project (H170830 -- a full bridge interchange) got a high score, but at \$13m is a bit expensive, and it has NOT yet been funded -- it will be voted on in the spring. DoT has it scheduled for land acquisition in 2021, construction in 2022 (as per the County Planning Director). That doesn't sound like the top priority project. It CAN be accelerated by someone paying the \$2m (est.) cost of the design in 2019, at which point you'd have the proverbial "shovel-ready" project, and then some additional political pressure and funding might move it up.

GCLMPO often shuffles things, e.g. the agenda for the Sept 2018 meeting contained this: "The GCLMPO's 2018-2027 MTIP is being modified to reflect changes to the I-85 widening project (I-5719) schedule in Gaston County, a **change in scope and cost increase** for the NC 279 widening project (U-5821) in Gaston County, the **addition** of a bridge replacement project along Marys Grove Road in Gaston County, and the **acceleration** of the resurfacing of I-85 in Cleveland County. To make these modifications a transportation conformity determination must be completed. "

So it IS possible to get things accelerated. Notice that there are no projects in Lincoln County being helped. The current scoring system provides 10 points (out of 100) for local matches (20% funding gets you 10 pts). Another 10 pts is voted by the GCLMPO board (members from towns and counties). In addition, local funding reduces the "cost to DoT", which in turn moves the project scoring up. A project can almost double its scoring by providing 60% funding (more doesn't help). Current scored projects can be found on the GCLMO website [gclmpo.org](http://gclmpo.org).

There have been NO DoT bulldozers sighted anywhere in Lincoln County since 2008. Two projects which were claimed in 2014 to be funded and would start next year (i.e. 2015) are still "starting next year" (i.e. 2019). (Bus 16 and Unity Church, and Bus 16 / Hager's Ferry / N. Pilot Knob). We'll see what June 2019 brings us!

The GCLMPO road project map looks impressive, with 7-9 projects. But only two (the two just mentioned) are funded, and many of the dates in that map stretch out 15 years. Although the dates have moved (out), that map hasn't really changed in 3 years. In those same three years, towns in Gaston County have gotten 4 projects added, generally by spending money on preliminary design studies, which is what DoT says is needed before it evaluates a project. It's a chicken and egg thing!

Because of the leverage effect of sales tax revenue, gas tax revenue and some more minor revenues, every \$100 in Denver property tax generates \$150 in money that can be spent for roads. Traffic studies show that many intersections, already graded as failing, will experience delays during rush hour of twice or three times as long by 2020 as developments come online. We'd guess that most people have to suffer more before demanding that something be done!



E-mail us at [denverinc2018@gmail.com](mailto:denverinc2018@gmail.com)

**Close this window to return**