



Council Communication

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DC/NLC Recap

Summary and Background Information:

Commerce City conducts an annual advocacy trip to Washington, DC, each year. The purpose of this trip is to build and maintain relationships with our partners in Congress and in federal executive agencies, raise awareness of key issues facing the City, advance City interests in policy and rulemaking, and advocate on behalf of City grant applications and seek other sources of funding. This year, members of Council and Staff, along with the City's retained federal lobbyist, traveled to Washington, DC and held a series of meetings on March 6 and 7, then attended the National League of Cities Congressional Cities Conference afterwards.

The delegation conducted seven meetings during this trip. The talking points for these meetings were approved by the whole of Council prior to the trip in order to ensure that the delegation accurately represented the position of the Council as a whole during the meetings. In general, these meetings were designed to bring attention to issues important to the City, influence federal policy and rulemaking, and seek out federal funding opportunities while supporting funding applications that the City has submitted. What follows is a brief description of the topics covered in each meeting. These notes are not verbatim transcripts and are intended only to provide a very high-level summary of the discussions in the meetings.

- US Fish and Wildlife Service - The delegation discussed the need to conduct a health assessment of the bison herd at the Arsenal as a first step to potentially allowing for sharing with native communities. The delegation also raised the possibility of constructing a northern entrance to the Arsenal in order to allow for easier access by North Range residents, as well as a plan to install solar farms on the Arsenal. The meeting concluded with a discussion of the wildfire plan for the Arsenal.
- Department of Transportation - The delegation met with representatives from both the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Railroad Administration. The discussion centered on grant applications: releasing funds that have already been awarded to the City, supporting current City grant applications, and identifying other potential sources of funding. The delegation also raised the significant problem created by rail blockages.
- Environmental Protection Agency - The delegation elevated the community's serious concerns regarding the Suncor Refinery. The EPA asked to hear more

community input on ideas to address the health and environmental issues stemming from the refinery operations. The meeting also covered the EPA's efforts to collaborate with SACWSD on PFAS and PFOA mitigation. The EPA also shared that they are planning on using settlement funding to look more closely at Refuge documentation and conduct a health assessment of the bison herd.

- Department of the Army - The Army shared updates in staffing changes for the Arsenal and reviewed the command structure as well as updates on PFAS mitigation and other environmental remediation efforts. The delegation raised the possibility for installing a solar array at the Arsenal.
- Senator Bennet - The delegation met with members of Senator Bennet's staff. During the meeting, the delegation discussed infrastructure development funding opportunities and Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) applications, as well as difficulties with HUD in permitting for affordable housing, environmental problems with the Suncor Refinery, and collaboration with SACWSD on PFAS.
- Senator Hickenlooper - The delegation met with Senator Hickenlooper and members of his staff. The delegation raised the need for construction defect reform and the ability to build more housing without displacing current residents. They also discussed Suncor and associated environmental concerns as well as infrastructure funding and CDS applications. The meeting concluded with a discussion of aviation noise from DIA.
- Representative Caraveo - The delegation met with members of Representative Caraveo's staff. The discussion focused on infrastructure development, including the City's pending RAISE Grant application, Safe Routes to School funding, and CDS. The delegation also raised concerns about train blockages and Suncor.

Staff has already taken action as a result of these meetings. Staff prepared and submitted applications for three projects for CDS funding for FY25. Additionally, the grants office is working to identify funding opportunities discussed in these meetings and integrate them within the office's grants strategy. Staff will continue to maintain and develop the relationships strengthened by these meetings.

Staff Responsible (Department Head): Jim Tolbert, Assistant City Manager

Staff Member Presenting: John Bourjaily, Management Analyst

Financial Impact: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

Staff Recommendation: N/A

Suggested Motion: N/A