 **CITY OF MONTE VISTA**

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**For Immediate Release**

**CDOT HWY 160 RESTRIPING PROJECT**

Recently CDOT conducted a restriping project in the City of Monte Vista along HWY 160. This project has gotten a lot of attention in the City and has created some confusion for drivers.

CDOT considered the project a part of their maintenance and the City, unfortunately, was not aware of the project until it came into town a week prior to Stampede. Thankfully the Project Manager grew up in the Valley and was able to convince the Contractor to change the estimated start date; as it was scheduled to begin the week of Stampede.

“Once the City notified CDOT of our concerns, they were very forthcoming about the project and addressed the City’s concerns,” said Robert Vance, Public Works Director. Vance indicated that CDOT believes the new striping will improve traffic flow along Hwy 160.

The project consisted of restriping the highway from the intersection of Hwy 285 and Hwy 160 west to Morris Street. The restriping included a center turn lane, two way travel lanes and on street parking. This is where the confusion started for travelers on Hwy 160. The center turn lane was created to allow better traffic flow and to allow people turning to do so in a protected area instead of having vehicles trying to pass on right. At each intersection there are arrows that allow left turning movements in both directions. This center lane is outlined with two sets of yellow striping. The next is the travel lanes bordered to left with yellow stripes and to the right with a solid white stripe. This is the driving lane.

These driving lanes also have a bicycle symbol with arrows and have been the biggest area of confusion, according to Vance. “The symbol is called a “sharrow” or “shared lane marking” and indicates where in the travel lane people should preferably cycle. The area to the right of the solid white line is actually for on street parking and not a bike lane,” Vance said.

“CDOT, being aware of our on street parking requirements and also in an effort to meet their requirement to create a multimodal transportation system, decided that due to a lack of right of way in that portion of Monte Vista, the “sharrows” would be the best solution to meet both of the above listed issues.” Sharrows are used to alert both motorists and bicyclists that they are to share the road. One of the complaints is the lanes are narrow and they are designed that way to slow traffic, according to CDOT. “It is important to recognize that the Highway travel lane is being used by both bicyclists and motorists,” Vance indicated. “The sharrows indicate to the bicyclist that the far right edge of the travel lane is to place to ride; it also notifies motorists that they might encounter bicyclists and should drive accordingly to ensure everyone’s safety.”

“While there has been a lot of confusion about the transformation, once the changes are understood and people have time to adjust to the changes I do believe that people will find them to be a benefit,” Vance added. “And regardless of how you feel about bicyclists on the roadway please be aware that the highways are being more and more utilized by them and it is important to be on the watch for them no different than it is important to watch out for the other two wheeled users of the highways—motorcyclists.”

Citizens with questions about issues with the City’s roadways and other Public Works issues should contact Vance at City Hall.

**END**

For more information

Contact: Robert Vance, Public Works Director