

**Meeting Minutes of the
NORTH FRONT RANGE TRANSPORTATION &
AIR QUALITY PLANNING COUNCIL**

**November 5, 2015
6 p.m.**

**UNC University Center, Columbine Suite A-B
2045 10th Avenue
Greeley, CO**

Voting Members

Present

Sean Conway-Chair	-Weld County
Jan Dowker	-Berthoud
Kevin Ross	-Eaton
John Morris	-Evans
Tom Norton	-Greeley
Tom Donnelly	-Larimer County
Paula Cochran	-LaSalle
Joan Shaffer	-Loveland
Jordan Jemiola	-Milliken
Kathy Gilliland	-Trans. Comm.

Absent

Chris Colclasure	-APCD
Gerry Horak	-Fort Collins
Troy Mellon	-Johnstown
Don Brookshire	-Severance
Paul Steinway	-Timnath
John Vazquez	-Windsor
*No member	-Garden City

MPO Staff:

Terri Blackmore, Executive Director; Becky Karasko, Regional Transportation Planning Director; Renae Steffen, Administrative Director; Crystal Hedberg, Finance Manager; Alex Gordon and Josh Johnson, Transportation Planners.

In Attendance:

Dawn Anderson, Mary Atchison, Jeff Bailey, Eric Bracke, Leah Browder, Dave Clark, Karl Gannon, Mark Jackson, Joel Hemesath, Suzette Mallette, Karen Schneiders, Steve Teets, Gary Thomas.

Chair Conway called the MPO Council meeting to order at 6:12 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Steve Teets, Citizen’s Bus Improvement Committee, Chairman, commented that he was pleased that a Highway 34 Coalition had been formed; citing that if something isn’t done now the highway will wind up like I-25 in the very near future. He also stated he is happy about the success of Bustang and the possibility of an additional bus and more routes. He indicated that he appreciated receiving a copy of the 2040 Regional Transit Element (RTE) from Eric Bracke and he had read the entire report. He felt some of it should already be implemented but he was pleased with it as a whole. He hopes that many projects will be started within the next three years. He thanked the Council. Conway thanked Teets for his comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING AGENDA:

Ross ***moved*** to accept the meeting agenda. The motion was ***seconded*** and ***passed*** unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Shaffer ***moved*** to approve the September 3, 2015 meeting minutes. The motion was ***seconded*** and ***passed*** unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING:**2016 VanGo™ Fare Increase.**

Conway opened the public hearing at 6:15 and stated the following:

- The NFRMPO Planning Council approved the FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program and Budget on July 19, 2015. The FY 2016 no longer budgets STP Metro funds and includes a one percent fare increase.
- The VanGo™ Program has lost seven routes since the budget was prepared primarily due to low gas prices.
- The VanGo™ Program has been moving towards financial independence with annual fare increases the past three years. The 2007 fare increase was the first since 2002 and the delay in adjusting fares required three years of 10% increase.
- Fuel prices have been trending down since August 2014. The future price of fuel is projected to continue decreasing due to increased availability but the actual price is uncertain.
- The 1% increase will move the program closer to being self-sufficient; the program has excess reserves which can be used to keep the fare increases as low as possible.

There was no public comment.

Conway closed the public hearing at 6:17

Lead Planning Agency for Air Quality Agenda

Chair Conway opened the Air Quality portion of the meeting.

Air Pollution Control Division Report

A written report was provided. Blackmore noted that there were responses to questions raised at the September 3rd Council meeting on the back of the report.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Agenda

Chair Conway opened the MPO portion of the meeting.

Executive Director Report:

Terri Blackmore, Executive Director, indicated that she had provided a written report in the packet and briefly reviewed information from the November 2015 Director's Report Addendum with the Council.

Report of the Chair:

Chair Conway referenced the editorial titled "State Transportation officials have lost way" from *The Gazette* from October 25th, which was in the packet and handed out a press release regarding Governor Hickenlooper's announcement of a \$100 million commitment to Colorado's biking infrastructure from September 16th. He expressed his concern that the content and timing of these articles did not help the efforts of the various highway coalitions (North I-25, US 34, etc.) in Northern Colorado that have worked very hard to convince Colorado voters to allocate additional resources to transportation funding. He stated he would like to discuss how to avoid these types of pitfalls in the future and invited Gilliland to speak to the issue. Gilliland responded that it was unfortunate the way the commitment made had been misrepresented and clarified that the \$100 million was not new money and had not been prioritized by CDOT. \$10M continues the Safe Routes to School, \$60M was TAP funding previously prioritized by MPO's and other planning organizations in the State and \$30M is Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) money. She indicated that she did not feel the articles clearly explained where the money had come from and therefore it gave the appearance that CDOT was giving money to bike and pedestrian projects when there were transportation projects in desperate need of funding. She believes the Governor has very good intentions and wants the State to be healthy and successful. She asked that the Council direct people to CDOT for explanation and any clarifications that need to be made.

Conway handed out a draft agenda for the Regional Issues Summit and briefly reviewed the details with the Council. The event was originally discussed at the October 15th Northern Colorado Legislative Alliance

(NCLA), a united consortium between the Fort Collins, Greeley and Loveland Chambers of Commerce, and the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation. NCLA traditionally holds a pre-legislative event and will be addressing transportation issues for 2016 as well as the items listed on the back of the draft program. He explained that the MPO had been approached on this as the Lead Planning Agency for Transportation and Blackmore will be a presenter. The MPO used Public Outreach funding to obtain two booths which provided them a table for ten. Those seats are available to interested Council members who wish to participate. The event registration link is <http://fortcollinschamber.com/event/regional-issues-summit-2015/> and is also listed in the November 2015 Director's Report Addendum.

Norton specified that transportation became the NCLA's priority because even with the state and federal efforts more financial support was needed from the municipalities and counties, particularly with regards to the bridges considered for the Presidential Challenge. They have come to a general consensus on how the funding issues should be approached; now their overall goal is to hash out the particulars before they are presented to the Legislature. Dowker suggested that invitations be sent out to the local media agencies. Blackmore agreed to send it out to the MPO's Public Service Announcement Media list.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

A written report was provided.

Mobility

A written report was provided. Blackmore thanked the Council for distributing postcards highlighting the Find My Ride portal and reported that hits to the website had increased 40% in the last month.

Norton commented that the City of Greeley and Greeley's School District 6's "Ride Free with ID" program for kids on GET (Greeley Evans Transit) had increased ridership from 400 to 4000 the first year and 7000 the second year. Blackmore noted that they had been awarded the "Large Community Transit Agency of the Year" by the State for that program. Conway cited the many rewards of the program and congratulated Norton for its success.

CONSENT AGENDA:

*Shaffer made a **motion** to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was **seconded** and it **passed** unanimously.*

- *Approve the 2015 Public Involvement Plan (PIP).*

ACTION ITEMS:

VanGo™ Fare Increase

Crystal Hedberg, Finance Manager, announced that there were no public comments at the Public Hearing and offered to answer any questions regarding the fare increase.

*Morris **moved** to approve Resolution 2015-15 of The North Front Range Transportation and Air Quality Planning Council to Approve a 1% Fare Increase For The VanGo™ Vanpooling Program For Calendar Year 2016. The motion was **seconded** and it **passed** unanimously.*

FY2015 TMA Program of Projects

Karl Gannon, Financial Analyst, City of Fort Collins-Transfort, stated that, as in prior years, the Transportation Management Area (TMA) members had agreed to swap federal funds for local funds with the City of Fort Collins and specified that there were no public comments at the Public Hearing held on November 4th. Norton inquired if non-TMA communities should vote. Blackmore clarified that the MPO Council must vote to approve it, not the TMA.

*Gilliland **moved** to approve Resolution 2015-16 Adopting an Amendment To The FY2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Regarding FTA §5307, §5310, §5339 Fort Collins/Loveland/Berthoud Transportation Management Area (TMA) Program of Projects for FFY15. The motion was **seconded** and it **passed** unanimously.*

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2015 Q4 TIP Amendment

Josh Johnson, Transportation Planner, briefly reviewed information from the 2015 Q4 TIP Amendment AIS and indicated it would be an action item at the December Council meeting. There was no discussion.

Executive Director Evaluation Update

Conway conveyed the following to the Council:

- Executive Director, Terri Blackmore provided an updated progress report on her goals for this year to the Executive Committee and Council member, Jordan Jemiola, who is assisting the Council with the evaluation process.
- The Executive Committee met informally with the staff in September and received very favorable feedback on the Executive Director.
- The Executive Committee was meeting immediately following the Council meeting to make final decisions regarding the administering of the evaluation survey. The Council will receive a follow-up from that meeting along with a copy of Blackmore's updated goals and a summary of the short electronic staff survey conducted in August.
- The Council is scheduled to "hold Executive Session at the December Council meeting to complete the evaluation process and finalize any negotiations" according to the guidelines outlined in the Articles of Association amended in July of 2015.

Gilliland requested that the Council keep within the Executive Director Evaluation guidelines as outlined in the Articles of Association. Conway replied that he was very optimistic that the Council would be on schedule to complete the evaluation process by the January meeting. All Council members were invited to attend the meeting to discuss the evaluation questions immediately following the meeting.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Transportation Commission

Kathy Gilliland, Transportation Commissioner, District 5, announced the passing of former Broomfield Councilmember and CML Executive Board Member Bob Sakaguchi, commenting that he was a noble man with a positive attitude who generated valuable ideas, and he will be greatly missed. A card for Sakaguchi's family was available for members to sign. She then reported on the following:

- CDOT's Transportation Matters Summit on October 28th was well attended with 700 in attendance. The focus was future advancements in transportation technology. CDOT has plans to implement some testing that was featured at the summit in the near future. The summit allowed for a lot of feedback and the public seems to be more open to funding options, such as gas tax or sales tax to help pay for transportation projects around the State.
- Bustang will soon have two buses coming down from the west route. They will discuss the possibility of ordering three new buses at the next STC meeting. CDOT is currently evaluating the benefits of adding weekend routes to the schedule. The "RamsRoute" CSU Friday- Sunday program is running well and is proving to be beneficial to students. Ross expressed his concern regarding the number of spaces being used for drive-thru bus traffic on the east side of the Harmony Park n' Ride and asked if that was due to increased ridership. Karen Schneiders, CDOT R4, responded to the inquiry stating that approximately ten spaces had been dedicated to the newly instituted "Kiss-n-Ride" station as a temporary fix to the parking problem

there. Gilliland indicated that the fare box recovery numbers, which are an average of all the fare types, had increased by approximately 20% which was very positive for a 3-month old program. Norton agreed those were impressive numbers for that type of service, but added he would like to see them increase. Shaffer stated that the new CSU service and anticipated weekend service would be very beneficial to the program. Donnelly calculated that there were only approximately 60 riders traveling roundtrip from Denver each day and stated that number was unreasonably low. It was noted by Norton that the addition of a dedicated lane would increase efficiency substantially. Gilliland reminded the Council that transit is subsidized and Bustang provides the public with another viable transportation option. The Council engaged in a lengthy discussion regarding the benefits of the service and options that may be considered to improve the program overall. Conway concluded the discussion citing the program's struggles as well as its successes and recognized CDOT for their willingness to tweak the program where necessary.

CDOT Region 4

Karen Schneiders, CDOT R4, handed out the Project Status Updates (3 Nov 2015) and noted that the SH1 to the LaPorte bypass project is scheduled to receive a second bid. She also announced that the CDOT offices are in the process of moving to their new location at 10601 West 10th Street in Greeley. She suggested that anyone needing to communicate with CDOT R4 call their cell numbers until they report to the new building on Monday, November 9th. A date has not been set for the new building open house, but she believed it would be in January. Gilliland invited everyone to attend the Transportation Commission meeting that would be held at the new location at 9:30 a.m. on November 19th.

Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) Report

Dowker provided the STAC minutes from the October 23rd meeting. She handed out copies of letters supporting two bills being introduced by state legislator, Terri Carver, and reviewed the letters with the Council. She indicated that she would be signing them as the MPO STAC representative.

North I-25 Coalition

Shaffer reported that the coalition met on November 4th and had an interesting presentation on a new technology for transit called Evacuated Tube Transport, "Space Travel on Earth", by ET3 in Longmont. The coalition also discussed their support of NCLA's six principles. They have concerns about endorsing all of the points, especially the TRANS II program, without it being associated to new transportation funding.

Conway added that the NCLA and FIX I-25 have worked closely with, and are joined in the legislative effort by, members of the Coalition. Sandra Solin, founder/CEO of Capitol Solutions, government affairs and lobbying firm, gave a briefing from the recent meeting with NCLA and FIX I-25 on how to accelerate the funding and completion of the I-25 North Corridor and 30 other economically significant transportation projects across the state, including the approximately \$225M needed for maintenance. Herman Stockinger, CDOT Office of Government Relations Director, was also in attendance and was optimistic that they were close to reaching a consensus. CDOT is proposing additions to NCLA's six principles and will also be meeting in November to discuss the potential of a Colorado Infrastructure Tax Credit Bill. Conway said he was very pleased to have so many groups working cohesively on feasible funding solutions and he believes the upcoming Regional Issues Summit will be a perfect opportunity to showcase those potential resolutions and proposed bills. Blackmore stated that once it was known exactly how the bills would read there would be requests for letters of support.

Highway 34 Coalition

Conway announced the coalition met earlier in the day and approved their formal bylaws that will constitute the organization. CDOT will be presenting on the access plan for the route from Kersey to Loveland at the December meeting. The Council was invited to attend the meeting from 4-5 p.m. in the same location as the MPO meeting each month, in December that will be the Eaton Public Library.

Host Council Report

Baker welcomed the Council to the meeting hosted by Windsor and announced it was the 125th anniversary for the town. He then reported on the following:

- A new gastropub, Chimney Park Bistro, which opened recently, has a view of Boardwalk Park and Windsor Lake and is serving wood oven pizza and beer on tap.
- Windsor approved a 2100 home metro district with a PGA golf course.
- There was a meeting early on November 5th to wrap up their Comprehensive Plan which will be finalized at the beginning of 2016.
- Ground was broken on the \$60M expansion of the Windsor Recreation Center.
- New Public Works facility is being purchased with cash- work will begin next year.
- Project to make all of Windsor's Railroad crossings "Quiet Zones" funded with a \$3M TIGER Grant They are expected to be finished in early 2016.
- Windsor is finalizing their budget. Approximately \$3.5M is allocated for transportation.
- They are working with Poudre Valley REA to change 1/3 of all the residential street lights to LED lights. The project will have a six year return on investment.
- Windsor, Loveland, Estes Park, and Larimer County applied for a Regional Tourism Authority Grant. The "Go NoCo" application was well received by the committee. Notification of the applications success will be received the week of November 9th. The grant will allow the communities to offer extended stay and will expand tourism to year-round attractions. Weld County has also played a significant role in supporting the grant for this regional project.

Conway thanked Baker and the Town of Windsor for making special accommodations and hosting the meeting at UNC.

Other Council Reports

Greeley- Conway applauded Mayor Norton on his re-election on November 3rd with 75% of the Vote. Norton announced that on November 3rd Greeley residents passed ballot measures 2A and 2B with 57 percent and 74 percent of the vote, respectively. Measure 2A raises sales tax on everything but groceries by 0.65 percent, while Measure 2B renews a 3.46 percent sales tax on groceries. The first is aimed specifically at road repairs, while proceeds from the second will go toward roads as well as maintenance of city buildings and parks.

Eaton- Ross said the town is excited to host in December at their new library.

Transportation Commission- Gilliland commented that at the "Beyond Traffic" conference Colorado communities were praised for working collaboratively as well as with the State- they just need more money to accomplish their transportation goals.

Larimer County- Donnelly reported that the Poudre Bridge project on Shields Avenue in Fort Collins is complete. The project was funded, in part, with STP Metro money through the MPO.

Berthoud- Dowker informed the Council that she had been involved with DIA's newest parking facility, ParkDIA, which received private and public support and was funded by investors from around the State of Colorado. ParkDIA provides valet, covered and uncovered parking; a Heroes Row parking program supporting first responders, veterans and members of the military; and a community program that gives back to area nonprofits. Invitations to their November 17th event will be forthcoming.

Evans- Morris reported Evans is getting ready for 2016 transportation projects. On November 3rd the City of Evans passed an oil well facility project which partnered with Synergy Oil and Nobel Energy. The project includes new wells and the capping of some existing wells in residential areas and also possibly a pipeline to Platteville, which will get many trucks off the road throughout Weld County. Some rezoning was done on US 85 to accommodate a new truck and parts sales at Rush Truck Center.

Loveland- Shaffer stated that the 287 Coalition had a productive meeting on October 29th with transportation presentations from Loveland and Fort Collins. Over the next few months they will have presentations from Berthoud, Larimer County and Longmont. Train horn issues continue to be discussed frequently at the meetings. Front Range on Track will be holding the Front Summit 2015 for

commuter rail service between south Fort Collins and Denver on November 16th at the Rialto Theatre in Loveland. The Lunch Keynote speaker will be DJ Mitchell, Assistant Vice President, Passenger Operations, BNSF Railway Company.

Milliken- Jemiola reported that a 1% transportation sales tax increase was denied by 17 votes and 65% were against marijuana, even though the tax on it passed.

LaSalle- Cochran stated that LaSalle is preparing for winter and their new Park-n-Ride.

Weld County- Conway invited everyone to the Weld County Parkway (WCR49) Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening on Tuesday, November 10, 2015, at 2:00 p.m. on the new Cache la Poudre River Bridge. Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) Executive Director Irv Halter and the DOLA Regional Manager for North Central Counties, Don Sandoval, will be in attendance as well as many others.

MEETING WRAP-UP:

Final Public Comment: Steve Teets, Citizen's Bus Improvement Committee, Chairman, commented that Loveland has a route to meet up with Bustang and he thinks that is very helpful that that system. He would like to see a similar connection for Greeley. He said there is a need for Regional, State and local buses working together to provide good transit route system in Northern Colorado. He stated that the United States was number two or three in the world for transportation and transit several years ago, but have sunk. He believes improving systems in Northern Colorado will help get us back up there. He concluded by stating that transit is our future.

Next Month's Agenda Topic Suggestions: Tom Donnelly will lead a discussion on the Mill Levy funds for I-25. MPO Council elections will also be held in December; Conway will not be running for a second year as he believes the position should only be held for one year.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by: Renae Steffen, MPO Staff