

Northern Colorado Bike & Ped Collaborative

Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, August 9, 2017
Windsor Recreation Center, Pine Room
250 11th St. Windsor, CO 80550

1. Introductions

- ❖ Aaron Fodge, CSU
- ❖ Andy Nagel, GWTA
- ❖ Betsy Jacobson, CDOT
- ❖ Jamie Gaskill-Fox, City of Fort Collins
- ❖ Janet Lundquist, Weld County
- ❖ Kyle Fehr, City of Evans
- ❖ Leslie Beckstrom, WCDPHE
- ❖ Mark Heidt, City of Brighton
- ❖ Mitchell Nelson, Town of Severance
- ❖ Nancy Nichols, City of Fort Collins
- ❖ Rich Christy, CDOT
- ❖ Ryan Dusil, NFRMPO
- ❖ Sarah Martin, NFRMPO
- ❖ Scott Rees, CDOT
- ❖ Suzanne Bassinger, City of Fort Collins
- ❖ Tessa Greeger, City of Fort Collins
- ❖ Tom Jones, GWTA
- ❖ Wade Willis, Town of Windsor
- ❖ Will Karspeck, Town of Berthoud
- ❖ Zac Wiebe, Larimer County DNR

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The July 12, 2017 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

3. I-25 Project Update

Scott Rees and Rich Christy provided an update on I-25 construction with a focus on anticipated bike and pedestrian improvements. Contractor proposals were received July 28, 2017 and CDOT is in the process of selecting a contractor. Construction is expected to start early 2018 and finish December 2020. Rees stated major interchange improvements at Prospect and at SH 402.

Rees stated the bridge replacement at Prospect Road will include a six-foot bike lane with a two-foot buffer. Rees added construction will include a bike path with crossing at Poudre River as part of requirements for receiving the Tiger Grant. SH402 will receive an interchange replacement that will include five-foot on-street bike lanes and sidewalks. The frontage road will be relocated to help alleviate congestion and minimize collisions. There is also a request for contractors to construct SH 402 over I-25, which would shift bridge icing to the lower volume roadway and allow expansion of SH 402 in the future.

Most other intersections will receive various combinations new striping, sidewalks, and wider lanes. There will be a Bustang pull-off with a parking lot and improved pedestrian access at Kendall Parkway.

Fodge asked whether there still existed opportunities to work with the cities to get trails to run underneath I-25 for alignment with Front Range Trail at Prospect Road and the Big Thompson River. Rees noted that although these crossings are not part of the base scope, there exists opportunities to add them through the change management process. Janet

Lundquist asks if it would be possible to get Fodge's comments formalized and submitted to consultants for consideration during the evaluation process. Rees responds providing comments during evaluation phase wouldn't be appropriate given the pre-determined scoring criteria, but official comments could be sent to him directly to see how they can best be accommodated.

Nichols asked if the bridge at Prospect Road is considered safe for children crossing from west to east to access schools and other amenities. Rees responded that CDOT has worked in partnership with Fort Collins to implement City standards. Nancy commented she was hoping for CDOT to go beyond the standards to create a truly safe crossing. Greegor asked if there is opportunity to engage in design conversations. Rees responded it is up to local partners to decide to build beyond the standard and provide the funding. Rees asked what additional standards she envisions. Greegor noted a grade separated 10-foot path on both sides would be a safe option, adding that on-street bike lanes serve a smaller subset of users. Rees noted that would have to come later as change to scope and recommends contacting Brad Buckman to request changes to the project.

Fodge noted we are missing opportunities to consider and plan for future development along important corridors and adds that if CDOT is funding I-25 crossings in Denver, then it shouldn't be the responsibility of localities to fund crossings on I-25 in Northern Colorado. Lundquist asked if NFRMPO provides comments about the importance of bike/ped components when reviewing community development projects. Dusil responded NFRMPO comments on plans that request our review and they are reviewed for consistency with regional and local plans. Lundquist suggested NFRMPO reach out to communities to advertise the local plan review service.

Nichols asked if there was public comment opportunity during corridor planning. Rees responded that the opportunity for public input occurred during the early phases of the project in the early 2000s. He recognized that given the long timeline of the I-25 project, there may exist a need to consider new plans and priorities that have come into play since the beginning of the project. Willis noted there seemed to be an opportunity for the group is to work through local representatives to implement necessary change to scope.

4. Regional Trail Update Work Session

Non-motorized Funding Project Recommendation:

\$383,000 of funding available from unused federal Transportation Enhancement (TE) and Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funds will be returning to the NFRMPO region. The money can be used for shovel-ready projects on Regional Non-Motorized Corridors (RNMCs) where a local match of approximately \$100,000 can be identified. Ultimately, the Collaborative will make recommendation to TAC for use of funding.

Great Western Trail: Tom Jones requested funding to complete the 11-mile Rails-to-Trails project extending from Windsor to Eaton, which is part of RNMC #4. The trail is a soft-surface trail, 10-feet wide and four-inches deep. The Severance to Windsor portion of the project was completed in 2014 with SRTS grant money and other funding. The remaining portion of the

trail will extend seven miles from Severance to Eaton and will include a 300-foot elevated trail over Roulard Lake with a deck and guard rails for enhanced safety. To date, the land has been acquired and is mostly graded. Preliminary work, including design, surveying, and an environmental study are expected to be completed by 2018 with construction documents in place. The project is expected to cost \$955,000 in total. Current funding available include a TAP grant for \$550,000. Jones noted that only \$220,000 of the \$380,000 available is being requested due to anticipated difficulty fulfilling the total local match requirement. The project team is applying for a GOCO grant for \$150,000. If awarded, this amount will be used to fulfill the local match needed to receive the TAP funding and the remaining \$55,000 is readily available. If the GOCO grant is not awarded, then local match funds may come from participating member communities or from a recently formed 5013c, Friends of the Trail, tasked with fundraising for the project.

If full funding is not received at this time, the project will be broken into phases, which Jones stated would be costlier than doing construction all at once. Jacobsen added if they are awarded the funding, but are unable to fulfill the local match, it may be more difficult for them to receive funding in the future.

Fort Collins funding request: Bassinger requested funds for the final design and construction of a 1600-foot section of the Power Trail, part of RNMC #7. The trail section would be completed in conjunction with a grade-separated crossing planned for construction to connect the trail across Harmony Road. Bassinger cited 300 users per day cross this intersection using neighborhood roads to connect to the trail on the other side. Final plans are expected to be completed by early 2018 and the City will be ready to construct in 2019. The City has local match funds available.

Nichols commented that the Great Western Trail and Power Trail would each project could be incorporated into the City's Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program. She noted there are schools adjacent to Power Trail and there could be spur trails to access schools from the trail. Bassinger noted that without funding, the trail would not be connected until 2022. Nichols asked if Fort Collins could use partial funding. Bassinger added her preference for doing the whole project at once, which would be possible with full funding and a local overmatch.

In response to splitting funds, Jacobsen noted that contracting for projects with such small funding amounts is difficult and it would be more efficient to award all of the funding to a single project. Lundquist agreed and recommended trying to rank and fully fund one project, even though splitting the funds for a project in each county could appeal to TAC members.

Windsor: Willis requested funds for a 10-foot wide, six-inch thick concrete trail in partnership with Larimer County to connect the Greeley Number 2 Canal Trail to River Bluffs Open Space. The project would create an alternative route for riders who must currently ride on county roads. Windsor is currently working with landowners to get easements near the southeast portion of the project. Construction is expected to occur in 2019. Willis noted that about half of the project lies in each county. The project total is approximately \$600,000, not accounting for environmental which might bump it to \$750,000. Local match funds are

available from the City's Conservation Trust Fund. The project would be a key corridor connection for RNMC # 5 (North Loveland/Windsor) and RNMC #6 (Poudre River Trail).

Additional Comments

Lundquist requested the project sponsors demonstrate a guarantee that full project funding and local match is available so TAC members can feel assured that the selected project will get done. Willis added that though Great Western Trail appears to have the largest regional benefit (serving Severance, Eaton, and Windsor), the viability of the local match remains a concern. Lundquist added that TAP funding can be used for other things besides bike and ped projects, so if no strong project comes through, other project sponsors may have the opportunity to submit other types of projects. Willis asked if the funds can be used towards expanding safety at Prospect Road across I-25. Janet noted that this is a great idea and is likely to get buy in from Council because it is a regional project.

Dusil noted that there will be at least one more work session in September to select a sound project for recommendation to TAC.

Permanent Counter Location Recommendation:

Dusil recommended conversation about locating mobile and permanent bike counters be postponed until a future meeting due to time constraints. Willis proposed that the Collaborative take a stronger role in selecting permanent counter location. He stated the group should decide where it is most beneficial to collect data to best represent the regional network.

5. NoCo Workshop Committee

Willis proposed that the November 8th workshop be part of the regularly scheduled meeting, running from 9am-noon with no associated fee. Proposed topics include winter trail maintenance for everyone and monetizing the value of trails. Members cited several potential scheduling conflicts that make the regularly scheduled meeting time a safer bet. Bassinger asked who the target audience is for this workshop. Willis responded trail and bike advocates, as well as public works departments may find the information useful. Discussion continued about potential scheduling conflicts and Heidt suggested that the meeting be moved earlier to November 3.

6. 2018 Walkability Action Institute Update

Dusil provided an update that group is still thinking about applying for the three-day intensive workshop designed to help regions develop an action plan for improving walkability. Dusil noted that the application is expected to release in late September/early October. Willis proposed delegating a team leader and beginning to form a team as soon as possible. Dusil reported that teams must be four-six people and include one elected official, one public health professional, one transportation professional, and one MPO representative. Nichols suggested Aaron Iverson with the City of Fort Collins might be available to be the transportation representative. Beckstrom agreed to be the public health representative and Karspeck offered to serve as the elected official.

7. NFRMPO TAC

Dusil reported that Karspeck attended the last TAC meeting on behalf of the Collaborative. Dusil will give the August NoCo update on at the August 9 TAC meeting given the technicality of the funding issue.

8. Updates / Other Business

Nichols provided information on the ribbon-cutting for the Walk & Wheels Skills Hub on Wednesday, August 30 in Fort Collins