

# Northern Colorado Bike & Ped Collaborative

Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, December 13, 2017  
Windsor Recreation Center, Pine Room  
250 11th St. Windsor, CO 80550

## 1. Introductions

- ❖ Aaron Fodge, CSU
- ❖ Andy Nagel, Great Western Trail Authority
- ❖ Betsy Jacobsen, CDOT
- ❖ Dawn Anderson, Weld County
- ❖ Katie Guthrie, City of Loveland
- ❖ Kelly Smith, City of Loveland
- ❖ Kenyon Neal, City of Fort Collins
- ❖ Kyle Fehr, City of Evans
- ❖ Leslie Beckstrom, WCDPHE
- ❖ Mitch Nelson, Town of Severance
- ❖ Nancy Nichols, City of Fort Collins
- ❖ Ryan Dusil, NFRMPO
- ❖ Tom Jones, Great Western Trail Authority
- ❖ Sarah Boyd, City of Greeley
- ❖ Sarah Martin, NFRMPO
- ❖ Wade Willis, Town of Windsor

## 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The October 11, 2017 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

## 3. Great Western Trail Project Update

Jones stated each of the three towns involved in the project (Eaton, Severance, Windsor) committed to \$50,000 (\$150,000 total) in local match for the Transportation Alternatives (TA) funds in their 2018 budgets, should the project be awarded the funds. Jones will present the project and the Collaborative's recommendation at the December 20 meeting. Beckstrom recommended Great Western Trail Authority (GWTA) speak with Weld County commissioners to obtain additional support. Jones stated, based on recent construction estimates, GWTA may propose to reduce the initial trail width from ten to eight feet to reduce project cost, with a plan to widen it later. Boyd commented it will be difficult to get additional funding later. Boyd believes trail use will be higher than anticipated and recommends funding the total width now. Jones noted the alternative is shortening the initial construction to less than seven miles. Jacobsen noted it is easier to obtain funding to lengthen a trail in the future rather than to widen it. Boyd recommended grading the full length and width and adding signage indicating "Trail is Unimproved Beyond Here," at a Weld County Road TBD. Although the trail surface will be crusher fines initially, Jones is hopeful developers will contribute to paving sections of the trail in the future. Smith indicated ten feet is a minimum width for paved trails due to heavier use, but eight feet is acceptable for non-paved trails because there is less traffic from road bikes. Willis recommended GWTA put together a bid with alternatives for initial construction. Jacobsen noted although narrower trails can work, anything narrower than ten feet can become very crowded with heavier traffic. Jones stated GWTA accepts the Collaborative's recommendation of maintaining ten feet in width for initial construction if the Collaborative supports potentially shortening the total trail length. Jones noted the costs are only estimates at this point. Dusil clarified that the Collaborative's recommendation for this project is still going to TAC regardless of the alternative, with

emphasis on the importance of ten-foot width. Nelson suggested the three communities be consulted to ensure they support potentially shortening the trail.

#### 4. US34 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study Update

Guthrie explained the PEL Study is a planning process to analyze the US34 corridor from Kersey to West Loveland. The process brings together stakeholders to discuss existing conditions, gaps, challenges, and opportunities along corridor process and will wrap up in June 2018. The PEL Study also considers existing Access Control Plans within a defined study area. The purpose of a PEL Study is to create a document identifying opportunities and to leverage partnerships and funding opportunities to be used into the future. Guthrie passed around the agenda and draft outline of document, welcoming feedback and involvement from anyone. Guthrie is the PEL Study representative and liaison on behalf of the NoCo Bike & Ped Collaborative. Beckstrom noted there are significant barriers to installing non-motorized infrastructure north and south across the US34 corridor. Guthrie noted regardless of infrastructure challenges, consideration for non-motorized needs and gaps were welcomed during the process. Dusil added several consultants have requested data from the NFRMPO Regional Travel Demand Model as well as non-motorized data. Dusil noted trails like the Great Western Trail were not prioritized initially if they are mostly located outside the study area. Interested members should work with Guthrie and Dusil to add comments. Fodge asked if the four Regional Non-Motorized Corridors (RNMCS) that cross or traverse the US34 corridor are well-represented in the PEL Study. Dusil responded information the *2016 Non-Motorized Plan* had been incorporated in the draft. Dusil added we should be proactive in reviewing the documents and processes affected when our RNMCS and other plans are updated. Guthrie noted two public events were recently held for the study and were well attended.

#### 5. I-25 Memo and Project Update

Dusil reported the I-25 memo written and endorsed by the Collaborative was presented at the November TAC meeting and has been reviewed by CDOT Region 4 engineers. Because the bridge structures at the two locations identified in the memo are being widened but not replaced, CDOT representatives have stated there is not opportunity to fund additional infrastructure. Fodge added he has reached out to Fort Collins City Council member and NFRMPO Planning Council member Gerry Horak for additional support and leadership. Fodge also added since the interstate will be closed for construction, there are cost savings in equipment mobilization. Fodge noted he also reached out to the Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) and spoke with a representative working on the Front Range Trail and Governor Hickenlooper's "16 in 2016" Initiative. Fodge asked if the group is willing to present the memo to the NFRMPO Planning Council to garner support for continuing the conversation with CDOT. Nichols stated she supports continuing conversations with CDOT. Jacobsen responded the CDOT staff was unsure what the group was asking for in the memo and made clear CDOT has no additional money to fund additional scope changes, but is open to discussion. Jacobsen also noted the Collaborative needs to develop a clearer memo before proceeding. Fodge added that since local communities are funding significant proportion of the I-25 expansion project, funding these non-motorized elements should be CDOT's responsibility. Fodge also added appropriate culvert locations should be identified by engineers, not the Collaborative.

Fodge requested CDOT Region 4 project engineers come to a meeting to help identify locations and discuss why it should be a CDOT investment, then have members of the Collaborative present to the NFRMPO Planning Council. Jacobsen recommended a representative of the Collaborative go meet with Region 4 project engineers rather than having them present at a formal meeting. Willis asked whether it would be effective to continue discussions with CDOT without support from elected officials. Boyd noted that advocacy for regional bicycle & pedestrian connections is the role of the Collaborative and that speaking for the regions needs is not outside of purview of individual group members. Beckstrom noted that before going to Planning Council and Region 4 it is important to get the individual municipalities on board. Jones asked whether money was the only obstacle and if so, what resources are available for funding. Jacobsen asked where MPO stands and Dusil responded the MPO has only reviewed the memo and provided staff time to the discussions within and outside regularly scheduled NoCo Bike & Ped Collaborative meetings. Dusil added that explicit support from the NFRMPO would need to come from the Planning Council. Willis added local staff could go to their individual Planning Council representatives first to gain support for a revised memo clarifying the specific request from CDOT and then go to the Planning Council if necessary. Fodge stated the issue should be brought to the Planning Council as an action item to request support from CDOT on the identification of locations and funding. Dusil responded that he would discuss this further with MPO staff and reach out to Fodge. Fodge asked if the group is comfortable adding to the memo that mobilization of equipment is a major project cost saving. Boyd added the memo should highlight future cost savings.

## 6. Potential Bike/Ped Counter Locations

Willis noted the Collaborative has discussed at past meetings that the Collaborative should be responsible for recommending counter locations. Dusil added that the MPO bought two permanent non-motorized counters in 2017 and wants to install them in 2018 in locations where data collection will be most beneficial to bicycle and pedestrian network development in the region. Dusil stated he could provide more background information in January and invited discussion on the topic. Willis asked Jones if the Great Western Trail has any counters. Jones reported they do not, but had concerns about low counts and safety from vandalism. Dusil added the strips go underneath the trail and are compatible with soft surfaces. Nelson proposed a location on the Great Western Trail between Windsor and Severance. Willis suggested a location on the Poudre River Trail somewhere between Windsor and Greeley. Boyd added the Poudre Learning Center, west of 83rd Avenue in Greeley, fits that location descriptions and would be of interest to the City of Greeley. Willis stated a permanent counter will be installed at the Kodak trailhead on the Poudre River Trail. Willis put in a formal vote for Great Western Trail and the Poudre Learning Center. Fodge added a request for a counter near the Long View Farm Open Space. Smith stated Loveland will be putting in a counter at the junction of the Long View Trail and Recreation Trail as part of trail construction in 2018. Smith stated Loveland is proposing a counter in the southwest portion of the Recreation Trail. Dusil added the southern portion is the only portion not yet covered on this trail and the segment is part of two future RNMCS. Willis asked whether the GWTA was required to install a counter when receiving Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds.

Jones responded they were not required to do so. Fehr added Riverside Trail in Evans, to be reconstructed in 2018, to the list of potential locations. Dusil stated he would gather more data and identify barriers and opportunities for each location.

## 7. 2018 Walkability Action Institute

Dusil stated five members of the Collaborative submitted an application as an MPO-level team for the 2018 Walkability Action Institute. The team is made up of Katie Guthrie, Will Karspeck, Eric Aakko, Aaron Buckley, and Ryan Dusil. Dusil reported Chris Johnson from Bike Fort Collins was part of team, but is leaving his position, so the team submitted the application with just five members. If accepted, the group would go to a multi-day workshop in Georgia to develop an action plan for improving walkability in the region. The team hopes the Collaborative would be the engine for implementation of the action plan.

## 8. NoCo Bike & Ped: 2017 in Review and 2018 Goals

The group recapped major accomplishments from 2017, including:

- Organizing and/or hosting workshops, and promoting several others
- Creating a bank account to support future workshops through revenue generated from past workshops
- Supporting efforts like the MapNOCO Tool
- Reporting monthly updates to NFRMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Writing memos and letters of support for regional projects
- Agreeing to absorb some responsibilities of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Education Coalition (BPEC)
- Applying to the 2018 Walkability Action Institute
- Sharing best practices and general information on non-motorized developments
- Recommending the Great Western Trail receive \$415k in additional funding
- Proliferating the use of non-motorized counters
- Leadership and collaboration in regional trail connections (Front Range Trail)

The group also generated goals for 2018, including:

- Increasing the focus on pedestrian networks and walkability
- Continuing workshops and events, with a focus on engaging elected officials
- Increasing the profile/awareness of non-motorized issues in the region
- Holding a collaborative lunch/dinner with MPO Council
- Hosting elected official rides
- Supporting BPEC as a subcommittee of this group through trainings and workshops
- Coordinating with People for Bikes for a network analysis of the region's non-motorized facilities
- Beginning discussions with NFRMPO staff six months prior to the 2018 Call for Projects deadline to understand the scoring criteria

## 9. Updates / Other Business

Dusil stated Chris Johnson has left Bike Fort Collins and Rachel Hultin has left Bicycle Colorado.

Boyd stated the City of Greeley will partner with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to analyze the East Memorial Neighborhood for connectivity with a focus on non-motorized connectivity. Boyd added 1.3 miles of Sheep Draw Trail funded partially through NFRMPO TAP funds is in the design phase.

Nichols updated there is a grade-separated crossing prioritization project in process and \$10 million dollars of city funding will be available for crossings in the next few years. An underpass at Harmony Road along the Power Trail (Front Range Trail) will be the first new grade-separated crossing and will trigger trail completion. Nichols stated The City of Fort Collins Safe Routes to School team will be assisting Big Thompson School District.

Smith noted the RFP for the Namaqua Road Underpass of the Loveland Recreation Trail was sent out to complete southwest portion of trail. Long view Trail construction will be completed by September 2018. The City is working with BNSF to close the trail gap on the east side of the railroad, with an expected completion date of 2020.

Fodge stated the Shields underpass is peaking at 2,300 trips per day. Fodge state CSU was awarded a grant from the City of Fort Collins to create an online curriculum focused on developing videos and motion graphics for incoming students to discuss transportation in the region. Fodge added UNC students reached out to CSU to express interest in better transit and trails on campus in Greeley. CSU is in the middle of two master planning efforts at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital and the Foothills Campus.

Jones thanked the group for its support of the Great Western Trail project during the non-motorized funding discussions.

Fehr updated Riverside Park is still under construction and scheduled to open fall 2018.

Jacobsen stated the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) online application is in development to be available by August 2018. There is discussion of transitioning to a two-year Call for Projects with training and workshops in the off-years. There will be a 2019 Call, but it is undecided whether it will be for one or two years. Jacobsen added CDOT recently completed bicycle and pedestrian facility design trainings and there will be more again in the spring. The CDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program is currently surveying engineers for barriers to incorporating bicyclists and pedestrian components in projects.

## 10. NFRMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Dusil will give the NoCo update at TAC meeting next Wednesday, December 20. Jones will present the Great Western Trail project and NoCo recommendation for TAC discussion. The meeting starts at 1:00PM with luncheon at 12:30PM.