

# Northern Colorado Bike & Ped Collaborative

Minutes – Wednesday, March 11, 2020  
Windsor Recreation Center, Pine Room  
250 11th St. Windsor, CO 80550



## 1. Introductions

- ❖ **Aaron Fodge**, Colorado State University
- ❖ **Betsy Jacobsen**, CDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Section
- ❖ **Dave Dixon**, Bike Fort Collins
- ❖ **Eric Tracy**, Larimer County Engineering
- ❖ **Evan Pinkham**, Weld County Public Works
- ❖ **Katie Guthrie**, City of Loveland Public Works
- ❖ **Kelly Zuniga**, City of Loveland Open Lands
- ❖ **Kristen Debo**, City of Evans
- ❖ **Leslie Beckstrom**, Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment
- ❖ **Liz Young Winne**, Larimer County Department of Health and Environment
- ❖ **Mitch Nelson**, Town of Severance
- ❖ **Ryan Dusil**, NFRMPO
- ❖ **Suzanne Bassinger**, City of Fort Collins Park Planning
- ❖ **Tamara Keefe**, Felsburg Holt & Ullevig (FHU)
- ❖ **Tom Jones**, Great Western Trail Authority
- ❖ **Will Karspeck**, Mayor – Town of Berthoud

## Ice Breaker: What is your favorite place you've walked or biked outside of Colorado?

Answer included: Madison, Wisconsin; Newport Beach, California; Great Wall of China; Moab; Hawaii; Santa Monica to Pallas Verdes, California; the Oregon Coast; Medicine Bow Rail Trail, Wyoming; Puerto Rico; Barcelona, Spain; Scotland Backcountry; Ohiopyle State Park, Pennsylvania; High Line Trail, New York City; North Shore of Kauai, Hawaii; Camino de Santiago ride across Spain.

## 2020 NFRMPO Call for Projects

Dusil stated the NFRMPO anticipates holding a Call for Projects for the CMAQ, STBG, and TA funding programs later this year for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025. The process will be handled similar to past Calls. Dusil highlighted how non-motorized projects fit into the process in 2014, 2016, and 2018, highlighting that only the TA program has funded standalone non-motorized projects. Some CMAQ and STBG projects have included non-motorized components. The group discussed how non-motorized projects can become more competitive in the process and how other regions allocate funding.

Fodge and Jacobsen stated the projects awarded CMAQ funding often do not align well with the intent of the program when the long-term impacts of induced Single-Occupant Vehicle (SOV) travel are accounted for. CMAQ emissions calculations often inflate the benefits of roadway projects that reduce idling and queuing in the short-term, while ignoring the induced demand for SOV travel created through increased throughput and capacity. The long-term potential of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) projects to reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) is undervalued because they are not easily quantified in traditional emissions calculations. This can discourage innovative TDM projects, specifically bicycle and pedestrian projects, from being submitted.

Emissions are typically only calculated for a fixed amount of time, rather than over the predicted lifetime based on project type.

Zuniga asked whether the focus should be on better articulating the benefits of projects in the application or changing the scoring criteria. The group agreed both are important, with changing the scoring criteria and adopting policy on VMT reduction as the most effective and long-lasting strategy.

While 10-20% of CMAQ projects nationwide fall in the bicycle and pedestrian project category, no such projects have been awarded in the last three NFRMPO Calls for Projects; however, only one bike/ped project application has been received in recent Calls. Potential applicants have reported not wanting to compete with other worthy projects with such little funding dedicated to bike/ped projects and the time it takes to complete an application. Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) have each awarded funds to several projects through the CMAQ and/or STBG funding programs in recent years. Fodge stated DRCOG has a TDM set-aside to ensure some funding goes to projects encouraging behavioral change.

Guthrie stated local agency plans should be referenced to highlight adopted policies, language, and future projects consistent with the intent of the CMAQ funding program and the NFRMPO Goals, Objectives, Performance Measures, and Targets (GOPMT).

Beckstrom asked if project packages have been submitted in the past. Fodge and Dusil stated it has typically been a location-specific project or geographically-dispersed project such as citywide signal retiming. Beckstrom suggested health equity be further incorporated in all funding programs, consistent with the region's Walkability Action Plan. Young Winne stated the Larimer County Built Environment Program is always willing to assist with and review local agency applications with a health equity lens.

Fodge suggested projects be evaluated to assess how closely their observed impacts align with how their applications were originally scored.

Specific to CMAQ and STBG, the group discussed recommendations for increasing the scoring weight of health equity, project innovativeness, reduction in SOV travel, and mobility benefits. The group also discussed the idea of a competitive bicycle and pedestrian set aside, citing the foreseeable shortfall in funding to complete the Regional Non-Motorized Corridors (RNMCs) given the current regional funding strategy. In the next two months, the NoCo Leadership Team will summarize the ideas, recommendations, and next steps identified at the March meeting into memo format and request a list of candidate projects from NoCo members. Initial project ideas included the Power Trail grade-separated trail crossing at Harmony Road and a Regional Wayfinding Plan. NoCo will plan to highlight their recommendations with NFRMPO staff and during TAC discussions on the Call for Projects in the coming months.

### **NFRMPO Bike/Ped Counter Purchase**

Dusil stated the NFRMPO has budgeted \$9,500 to purchase one or two permanent non-motorized counters in FY2020, to be installed on a Regional Non-Motorized Corridor (RNMC) and maintained by local agencies. Dusil stated the \$9,500 is likely not enough to purchase two counters capable of collecting direction of travel and distinguishing between pedestrians and cyclists. Cheaper options include counters that only collect total visitors, collect user type but not direction of travel, or collect direction of travel but not user type. Local agencies can choose to extract the collected data manually or through an automatic data transmission service with a subscription. Jacobsen stated while manual data collection may seem more cost effective, the staff time can add up quickly, especially when the counter is having an issue that is not communicated directly. Tracy stated Larimer County was able to get roadway counters to transmit data through their existing stormwater network connections at no cost.

NoCo agreed purchasing one counter with these capabilities and rolling the remaining funds over to the FY2021 would be amenable, rather than purchasing two counters with less capabilities. Dusil stated the NFRMPO will

not be purchasing any additional mobile counters since demand to check them out has not increased significantly. NoCo agreed the segment of RNMC #1: South Platte/American Discovery Trail in Riverside Park in Evans would be a good location for a permanent counter. The group will discuss more potential locations at a later meeting. Dusil stated the NFRMPO will put out a counter Request for Proposals (RFP) soon. Jacobsen stated local agencies should work with CDOT to discuss potential counter installation on trails within CDOT right-of-way.

### Severance Walk Audit Planning

The Planning Team stated they are finalizing event details with Nelson for the April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 Walk Audit around the Severance Town Core. Nelson stated the effort aligns well with the design of some downtown infrastructure improvements and other long-range planning efforts. Nelson will be recruiting Town staff and residents to attend. NoCo members and other transportation, planning, and public health professionals are encouraged to participate, offer insight, and discuss strategies. **THIS EVENT HAS BEEN POSTPONED DUE TO COVID-19 AND WILL BE RESCHEDULED.**

### Roundtable Updates

Guthrie stated the Loveland City Council will be adopting the Connect Loveland Plan over the summer. Loveland has expanded its annual June celebration to be Walk and Bike Month, instead of just Bike Month. So far, there are 12 biking and seven walking events scheduled throughout June.

Zuniga stated the City is planning to open the Prairie Ridge Trail on May 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Copper Ridge Trail should be completed this summer. The I-25 trail underpass at the Big Thompson River is in the design phase now. The City changed the alignment of the Namaqua Trail project due to landowner disputes and the City is beginning discussions for the Front Range Trail (RNMC #7) connection to Berthoud.

Beckstrom stated the Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment will be shifting a lot of its short-term focus to COVID-19 response. Community Health Survey data should be available mid- to late-summer.

Young Winne stated Larimer County Department of Health and Environment is expecting a similar response to COVID-19 and timeline for health survey data. The Built Environment Program (BEP) is assisting with two Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) in Fort Collins. The BEP has also partnered with a doctoral student at CSU on a walkshed analysis and is up for an innovation award at the County for the Multimodal Index (MMI) project.

Pinkham stated he is looking forward to the Severance Walk Audit.

Jones stated the Great Western Trail Authority (GWTA) has sent 5.5 out of 7 miles of the trail to bid for construction. They will open the bids on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and award the project on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. the GWTA will continue working to resolve the remaining landowner dispute.

Fodge stated the COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity for organizations to evaluate and update their teleworking policies for both normal operations and emergency operations. CSU assembled a task force in response to a fatality in which a student was hit by a car on the first day of classes in August 2019. The task force has generated recommendations, including six roundabouts, three of which would be specifically for bike and pedestrian conflicts.

Bassinger stated the City of Fort Collins is hosting a two-day training on evaluating the accessibility of park and trail facilities in late May. The training is open to partners outside the City. Bassinger will send the information to

Dusil for distribution. The City is also continuing discussion with landowners regarding the Poudre Trail alignment southeast of the CSU Environmental Learning Center (ELC).

Jacobsen stated CDOT will open a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant application online in August. CDOT is hiring its first ever TDM Manager and redeveloping it. CDOT will alter their bicycle and pedestrian facility design classes this year. The bicycle classes will be held on May 11 and 12. The pedestrian classes will be combined with a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) pedestrian training held on May 27 and 28.

Nelson stated Severance is working on a corridor-specific plan for downtown that would address walkability.