

**MEETING MINUTES of the
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)
North Front Range Transportation and Air Quality Planning Council**

Virtual Meeting

March 17, 2021

1:00 p.m. – 3:50 p.m.

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mitch Nelson, Chair – Severance
Eric Tracy, Vice Chair – Larimer County
Dawn Anderson – Weld County
Allison Baxter – Greeley
Aaron Bustow – FHWA
Rick Coffin – CDPHE-APCD
Jessica Ferko - RAQC
Josie Hadley – CDOT
Omar Herrera – Windsor
Dave Klockeman – Loveland
Mark Oberschmidt – Evans

NFRMPO STAFF:

Medora Bornhoft
AnnaRose Cunningham
Ryan Dusil
Alex Gordon
Becky Karasko
Suzette Mallette
Cory Schmitt

TAC MEMBERS ABSENT:

Stephanie Brothers – Berthoud
Brad Buckman – Fort Collins
Marco Carani – Johnstown
Eric Fuhrman – Timnath
Pepper McClenahan – Milliken
Jeff Schreier – Eaton
Town of LaSalle
Ranae Tunison – FTA

IN ATTENDANCE:

Scott Ballstadt – Windsor
Abdul Barzak – Severance
Erika Benti – CSU
Darren Davis – GET
Aaron Fodge – CSU
Candice Folkers – COLT
Katie Guthrie – Loveland
Nick Heimann – Fort Collins
Dan Joseph – Weld County
Tamara Keefe – FHU
Katlyn Kelly – Transfort
Lauren Light – Weld County
Evan Pinkham – Weld County
Randy Ready – Evans
Danielle Serna – Weld County

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Nelson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Aaron Fodge, Colorado State University (CSU), stated CSU is going to engage in the rulemaking process for the Employee Traffic Reduction Program (ETRP). CSU has convened all the universities in the state to discuss ETRP and is open to sharing what comes out of that forum. CSU is supportive of the initiative and wants to see the region request resources for employers that would be participating, like funding from RAQC and for Employee Transportation Coordinators, and a survey tool for employers to use.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 17, 2021 TAC MINUTES

Klockeman moved to approve the February 17, 2021 TAC minutes. Oberschmidt seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Transit Safety Targets – Baxter moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Klockeman seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Environmental Justice (EJ) Plan – Dusil stated no substantial changes have been made to the *EJ Plan* since TAC discussed it at their February 17, 2021 meeting. Dusil noted the *EJ Plan* is not required but is considered a best practice. Dusil stated Planning Council had a few questions about the process but did not raise any content concerns at their March 4, 2021 meeting. Oberschmidt moved to recommend Planning Council adoption of the *EJ Plan*. Baxter seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

March 2021 TIP Amendment – Cunningham reviewed the three revisions to the FY2020-2023 TIP, which included separating the existing *37th Street Widening* project into two projects based on scope and funding, adding the *Widening and Roundabout at 37th St and 47th Ave* project, and revising the *South Boyd Lake Trail* project by removing local in-kind match. Cunningham stated the public comment period began on March 10, 2021 and will conclude on April 8, 2021. Nelson asked if the *South Boyd Lake Trail* funding was from a developer. Cunningham noted it was from Centerra Metro District and the Loveland Housing Authority. Both of those entities' projects will proceed but they are not required to meet the federal standards, so they are being removed from the TIP entry. Klockeman recommended Planning Council approve the March 2021 TIP Amendment. Oberschmidt seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

Fort Collins Earth Day Challenge – Nick Heimann, FC Moves, presented on the Fort Collins Earth Day Challenge, which is related to Fort Collins' *Climate Action Plan*. The Shift Campaign is a behavior change program which has three main areas: Shift Your Laundry, which focuses on the time-of-day people do laundry to spread out energy demand and skip the dryer; Shift Your Ride to shift people to use alternative modes of transportation; and Shift your Mug from disposable to reusable cups. The Earth Day Challenge is to reduce 5,000 pounds of CO₂ by Earth Day and earn points to win a prize. The Earth Day Challenge can be entered individually or as a team/household. More information about the program is available at shiftfoco.com and fcgov.com/shift. Oberschmidt asked if participants have to be Fort Collins residents. Heimann noted the NFRMPO was chosen as a partner because it is regional, and people should sign up regardless of where they live. Heimann asked for the group to share information about the Challenge with their networks.

Project Spotlight: 37th Street – Oberschmidt presented on the *37th Street Overlay* project in Evans. The project stretched for 1.25 miles from 23rd Avenue to the railroad crossing east of US85. The project repaired sidewalks, curbs, gutters, sewers, and ADA ramps throughout the corridor. Oberschmidt noted coordination and communication were key to the project, specifically with local businesses, Centennial School, and Evans Fire Department. The project was managed by a firm due to limited resources, which improved the process and project. Oberschmidt noted the project was finished ahead of schedule and under budget. Coordination with the UPRR went smoothly, and CDOT was involved in the crossing of 37th Street and US85.

Transportation Conformity 101 – Bornhoft reviewed Transportation Conformity, specifically conformity requirements, nonattainment area designations, the Conformity process, and TAC's role going forward.

Bornhoft stated Transportation Conformity is required for MPOs with nonattainment or maintenance areas based on National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Transportation Conformity means fiscally constrained RTPs and TIPs will not cause new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, or delay timely attainment of NAAQS. The Conformity process is required under the federal Clean Air Act (CAA) Section 176(c) and regulated with federal and state regulations. Each month, the Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) meets to discuss and select models, methods, and assumptions for conformity. The ICG also proposes Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets (MVEB) for the State Implementation Plan (SIP).

The key piece of conformity is the Regional Emissions Analysis (REA), which forecasts future on-road mobile source emissions and compares these with SIP emission budgets for the relevant pollutants. REAs have multiple staging years that are no more than 10 years apart, include the horizon year of the RTP, and meet other requirements. Per an agreement with Upper Front Range TPR, the NFRMPO completes modeling and the conformity determination for the Northern Subarea of the Denver-North Front Range 8-hour Ozone Nonattainment Area, while DRCOG completes modeling for the Southern Subarea. The steps of the Conformity Determination Process include: 1) drafting a new or amended RTP and/or TIP; 2) ICG concurrence on assumptions and process; 3) performing a new REA; 4) holding a public hearing; 5) Planning Council approving the Conformity Determination; 6) APCD/AQCC concurrence; and 7) USDOT approval.

In the past, transportation conformity determinations were not reviewed by TAC. Going forward, NFRMPO staff will request TAC recommend Planning Council approval of a positive conformity determination as part of the action to recommend approval of new or Amended TIPs and RTPs. This recommendation would be based on TAC's review of the included projects by staging period, reasonableness of travel model outputs, and budget test results.

Baxter asked if the MVEBs are validated with sensors. Coffin stated the monitoring data and emissions reporting data/permits feed into the modeling. Ferko stated RAQC cannot parse out emissions sources at the monitoring level. Ferko also stated there will be an ozone modeling forum on April 14, 2021.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

TAC Air Quality Structure – Mallette stated there is discomfort about air quality items at TAC; however, Planning Council has requested input from TAC on these items. Mallette identified two options to get more air quality input from TAC, including forming an Air Quality Advisory Group, or dedicating the first portion of the TAC agenda to air quality, similar to Planning Council agendas. Mallette stated a disadvantage of forming a separate Air Quality Advisory Group is that TAC would still be responsible for voting on recommendations. Nelson noted Severance does not have air quality staff but supports a separate portion of the agenda. Klockeman noted Loveland also does not have air quality staff. Klockeman also noted Planning Council discussion about air quality tends to be at a policy or legislative level. Mallette clarified Planning Council is looking for TAC input on the technical side of air quality. Anderson noted Weld County has air quality staff who have started attending TAC. Oberschmidt recommended a hybrid of the two, which would help him learn about air quality. Baxter noted she would be interested in a subcommittee to learn more about air quality. Ferko stated the RAQC would be happy to help, especially with the SIP process or air quality overall. Nelson suggested trainings for TAC members to attend. Mallette summarized the recommendation as adding an air quality section to TAC agendas and hosting trainings. Karasko asked TAC to recommend topics for trainings so NFRMPO staff can reach out to the right people. Mallette stated NFRMPO staff would send out air quality-related trainings and public involvement opportunities to TAC members.

Draft FY2022-2025 TIP – Cunningham introduced the *FY2022-2025 TIP*, including the narrative and tables. The tables include projects with funding in FY2022 and FY2023 in the current TIP as well as projects that have been rolled forward to FY2022. An additional call for roll forwards will happen in summer 2021. Cunningham asked for feedback on how to allocate additional funding to CMAQ and TA programs. Cunningham stated the NFRMPO is suggesting changes to what constitutes an Air Quality Significant Project, including clarifying new lane-miles are along a regionally significant corridor (RSC) and removing regional transit projects between jurisdictions. Cunningham highlighted proposed changes to TIP Amendments and Modifications, such as what constitutes a minor and major scope change. A new procedure is proposed for project scope change request for NFRMPO selected projects. Federal transit safety measures were added to the TIP. A new table was added to show how TIP projects contribute to achievement of the federal performance measures. The Draft TIP is available online for review. A 30-day public comment period will open on April 2, 2021 and close May 3, 2021. The draft Conformity Determination link is included in the AIS. No new Regional Emissions Analysis (REA) was needed because no air quality significant projects were added. Nelson asked if any updates will be made prior to the public comment period opening. Cunningham noted updates will be made if there are any suggestions at the Planning Council Discussion on April 1, 2021.

Draft FY2022-2023 Work Tasks – Karasko stated NFRMPO staff have drafted new tasks for FY2022 and FY2023. The UPWP was reformatted to only include NFRMPO tasks in the tasks section, while VanGo™, transit agency, local, and CDOT projects were moved to appendices. The UPWP will be released for public comment from April 5 to May 5, 2021. Tasks and budget will go to Planning Council for discussion and be approved by CDOT and FHWA prior to October 1, 2021. Karasko requested TAC input by Wednesday, March 31, 2021. Klockeman asked if the updates mentioned were the only things updated in this UPWP. Karasko stated it was mostly task changes and some Prospectus updates. Klockeman asked to clarify if any changes will be made to local match requirements. Mallette stated the local match process will be determined by the Finance Committee.

Employee Traffic Reduction Program (ETRP) Update – Bornhoft reviewed the March 4, 2021 Planning Council meeting where Planning Council approved the letter drafted by staff and added additional concerns. The letter is currently being approved and will be sent to APCD and RAQC. Ferko and Coffin discussed the ETRP efforts underway and provided additional context. One strategy being considered is a tiered approach based on urban categorization (downtown, urban edge, rural, etc.). Other considerations include phasing; hardship waivers and exemptions; the use of local governments, MPOs, consultants, or transportation management organizations (TMOs) in lieu of internal staff; and developing incentives for smaller employers to participate or for large employers to overachieve. Also under consideration are the cost and benefits of implementing the program. The draft rule proposal is scheduled for the AQCC meeting in May and the rulemaking hearing and decision is scheduled for August. Anderson asked about the timeline of when the draft will be released and what size employers will be impacted. Coffin stated the draft rule will be released in April and APCD is considering a 100-employee threshold. Anderson asked if there were updates to enforcement. Coffin stated there are still discussions happening, but no specific decisions have been made. Coffin noted exemptions are being considered. Anderson asked to clarify the deadline for party status. Ferko stated the deadline is identified after the request for rulemaking at the May AQCC meeting.

Dan Joseph, Weld County, asked how much the ETRP is expected to reduce emissions and the proportion it would contribute toward the state's GHG targeted reduction from transportation. Ferko stated the RAQC's ETRP framework, which covers the nonattainment area, would reduce 180 tons of VOCs, 160 tons of NOx, and 500k tons of GHG emissions per year.

OUTSIDE PARTNERS REPORTS

NoCo Bike & Ped Collaborative – A written report was provided.

Regional Transit Agencies – Davis stated GET is working through providing transportation to students now that they are going to school in-person. GET is working with CASTA to identify strategies to keep students safe and healthy.

Senior Transportation – Schmitt reported the One Call/One Click Center has a new name, RideNoco, and branding. Some functions of RideNoCo have been implemented to help with transportation to and from COVID-19 vaccination appointments, including a phone number. Schmitt noted the call center has received 10 calls for rides to vaccinations with the average age of the caller being 81.

Regional Air Quality Updates – NFRMPO staff has been involved in the discussions about the MPO Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions budgets for RTPs. CDOT staff will discuss this proposal with Planning Council in April. A separate presentation time for TAC to hear about the proposal from CDOT will be set up for late March or early April.

REPORTS

March Planning Council Meeting Summary – A written report was provided.

ROUNDTABLE

Gordon stated the application for the NFRMPO's Community Advisory Committee is open through April 2, 2021. If people have questions, reach out to Cunningham or Gordon.

Hadley stated the National Highway Freight Program Call for Ideas is open until March 22, 2021. If a TAC member did not receive an email from Karasko with information, contact Hadley.

MEETING WRAP-UP

Final Public Comment – There was no final public comment.

Next Month's Agenda Topic Suggestions – Project spotlight.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 PM.

Meeting minutes submitted by: Alex Gordon, NFRMPO Staff

The next meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 21, 2021 as a virtual meeting.