

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

**July 1, 2021
Virtual Meeting**

Voting Members Present:

Will Karspeck- Chair -Berthoud
Jeni Arndt -Fort Collins
Elizabeth Austin -Milliken
Frank Bazler -Severance
Kathleen Bracke -Transportation Commission
Mark Clark -Evans
Lanie Isbell -Eaton
Scott James -Weld County
Troy Mellon -Johnstown
Paul Rennemeyer -Windsor
Kristin Stephens -Larimer County

Voting Members Absent:

Fil Archuleta -Garden City
Lisa Laake -Timnath
Dena Wojtach -CDPHE-APCD
Dave Clark -Loveland
Paula Cochran -LaSalle
Brett Payton -Greeley

MPO Staff:

Suzette Mallette, Executive Director; **Becky Karasko**, Transportation Planning Director; **Merideth Kimsey**, Accounting Manager; **Cory Schmitt**, Mobility Manager; **Alex Gordon**, Transportation Planner III; **Medora Bornhoft**, Transportation and Air Quality Planner III; **Ryan Dusil**, Transportation Planner II; **AnnaRose Cunningham**, Transportation Planner I

In Attendance:

Dawn Anderson; Elizabeth Austin; Jeff Bailey; Abdul Barzak; Dan Betts; Rich Christy; Rick Coffin; James Eussen; Josie Hadley; Myron Hora; Will Jones; Dean Klingner; Katrina Klobberdanz; Mitch Nelson; Heather Paddock; Jan Rowe; Mike Silverstein; Robin Stoneman; James Usher

Chair Karspeck called the MPO Council meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Move to Approve Agenda:

Stephens **moved** to *APPROVE THE JULY 1, 2021, MEETING AGENDA AS SUBMITTED* and *APPROVE THE JUNE 3, 2021 MEETING MINUTES AS SUBMITTED*. The motion was **seconded** by Baszler and **passed** unanimously.

Lead Planning Agency for Air Quality Agenda

Chair Karspeck opened the Air Quality portion of the meeting.

REPORTS:

Air Pollution Control Division (APCD)

A written report was provided.

Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC)

Silverstein stated various ozone monitoring sites across the Denver Metro/North Front Range ozone nonattainment area are exceeding the 2008 and 2015 standards, with more exceedances expected in July and August. The RAQC's Mow Down Pollution Lawn Mower Exchange Program is underway. The program offers discounts to people who recycle and replace their gas-powered lawn mowers and lawn and garden tools with rechargeable, electric lawn mowers and lawn and garden tools.

Discounts are also available to those who do not recycle a gas-powered lawn mower. RAQC has issued 1,000 vouchers through Home Depot and one-third of the vouchers have been issued in the North Front Range region.

NFRMPO Air Quality Program Updates

Bornhoft stated CDOT is leading the development of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) budgets for state and MPO transportation plans. The budgets will be established through a formal rulemaking process of the Transportation Commission (TC) instead of through an AQCC rulemaking.

In late May, the EPA notified the State of Colorado it intends to modify the boundary of the 8-hour Denver Metro/North Front Range (DM/NFR) Nonattainment Area for the 2015 ozone standard to include all of Weld County. A 30-day public comment period regarding the boundary changes opened on June 14, 2021. James stated Weld County intends to submit a letter to EPA requesting a postponement of the designation to allow data from the recently established air quality monitors in Weld County to be evaluated. Arndt asked what the implications are of expanding the Nonattainment Area. Mallette stated the NFRMPO would need to perform additional conformity analysis for the expanded area and additional CMAQ funding may become available to the Upper Front Range Transportation Planning Region (UFRTPR). Arndt asked where the new Weld County monitors are located. James stated they are in Hereford, Windsor, and Southwest Weld County. Stephens stated the highest air quality readings are typically along the foothills due to the geography of the front range and prevailing weather patterns rather than proximity to major ozone contributing sources. Planning Council members expressed interest in writing a letter of support requesting a postponement of the designation.

ACTION ITEM:

NFRMPO ETRP Pre-Hearing Statement

Bornhoft stated the NFRMPO was granted party status for the AQCC rulemaking on GHG emissions from the transportation sector, which includes the proposed Employee Traffic Reduction Program (ETRP) in Regulation 22. The NFRMPO can provide testimony at the hearing and the Pre-Hearing Statement is due to AQCC by July 9, 2021. In a draft ETRP Pre-Hearing Statement, the NFRMPO is proposing that the employer participation be voluntary with no civil penalties for non-compliance, creating tiered Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) rates based on location, improving economic impact assessment (EIA) inputs to better understand economic impacts of the program, revisions to address the limited applicability of the ETRP strategies, and revisions and improve definition and clarity.

Stephens stated the current ETRP proposal does not apply equitably to all employers and she supports a tiered, voluntary approach. Other Planning Council members agreed.

James stated he would like to know where the legislative authority is derived that allows the AQCC to create the ETRP.

Baszler asked if Northern Colorado businesses have been engaged. Bornhoft stated the Northern Colorado Legislative Alliance (NCLA) is working with individual chambers of commerce for employer outreach.

Bracke stated she would like to know what incentives would encourage voluntary participation in the ETRP. Solutions need to be customized for business type and land use context, with more cooperation between public and private sectors.

Planning Council members expressed support for the NFRMPO's Pre-Hearing Statement as presented. The AQCC rulemaking hearing is scheduled for August 18-20, 2021.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Agenda

Chair Karspeck opened the MPO portion of the meeting.

REPORTS:

Report of the Chair

Karspeck stated the NFRMPO needs a Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) alternate. Stephens offered to serve and was appointed by Karspeck.

Executive Director Report

Mallette stated the NFRMPO submitted a letter to the Colorado High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTe) in support the continuing analysis of the unsolicited proposal to create more funding options for I-25. Colorado SB2021-238 was signed by Governor Polis, creating the Front Range Passenger Rail District. The NFRMPO will need to have two representatives on the District by March 2022. Appointments must be confirmed by the Colorado State Senate. The Planning Council will discuss appointments at upcoming meetings.

Mallette stated CDOT may set side funding to create Transportation Management Associations/Organizations (TMAs/TMOs) to help with employer outreach around transportation demand management (TDM) strategies and the ETRP. Bracke stated TMAs/TMOs have been very useful in Denver metro, and she would be willing to assist anyone who is interested in starting one.

Finance Committee

A written report was provided.

TAC

A written report was provided.

Mobility

A written report was provided.

PRESENTATIONS:

SB 2021-260 Overview

Stockinger stated SB 2021-260 is now signed into law, creating \$5.3B of new transportation revenue. \$1.6B will come from the general fund over 11 years, with frontloading of general funds over the first five years. The bill also creates new fees that will be increased over time to create a more reliable funding source than the general fund and gas tax. The bill also creates four new enterprises.

SB 2021-260 funding will be ramped up as SB 2018-267 funding is ramped down and is expected to fund 6.5 years of projects on CDOT's 10-Year Strategic Pipeline of Projects.

Stockinger explained the various funding areas, new Highway User Tax Fund (HUTF) estimates, and new greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction planning requirements that CDOT, DRCOG, and NFRMPO will need to incorporate into their long-range plans by fall 2022.

Baszler asked if the bill does anything to standardize electric charging infrastructure across the State. Stockinger stated he would follow up with the CDOT Office of Innovative Mobility.

Mallette asked how the GHG budgets will be established. Stockinger stated the GHG Roadmap will inform the budgets and TC will set them within the next couple months, with an opportunity for public comment.

CONSENT ITEMS

Active Transportation Plan (ATP)

2021 Q1 Unaudited Financial Statements

Stephens **moved** to *APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA*. The motion was **seconded** by Baszler and **passed** unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

FY2021 STBG and TA Additional Funding

Cunningham stated the NFRMPO was allocated approximately \$4.3M stimulus funding and agreed to swap the stimulus funds for STBG and TA funded projects programmed in FY2021. From the FY2022-2023 Call for Projects, the Greeley 83rd Avenue Roadway Improvements project was partially funded and the Windsor WCR13 Alignment Improvements Project was waitlisted. At their meeting on June 16, 2021, TAC recommended Planning Council allocate additional funding to Greeley and Windsor as identified in the Planning Council packet attachment and roll the remaining STBG and TA funds into the upcoming FY2024-2025 Call for Projects with the option of the \$2.3M STBG and \$85K TA remaining FY21 funding being awarded to projects prior to FY24 and FY25.

Stephens **moved** to approve RESOLUTION 2021-17 *APPROVING ADDITIONAL ALLOCATIONS OF FY2021 SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT (STBG) FUNDS TO PROJECTS SELECTED IN THE 2018 CALL FOR PROJECTS AND ROLLING ADDITIONAL STBG AND TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) FUNDS INTO THE UPCOMING FY2024-2025 CALL FOR PROJECTS*. The motion was **seconded** by Arndt and **passed** unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2021 Call for Projects Discussion

Cunningham summarized TAC recommendations in three areas for the 2021 Call for Projects. In the first proposal, TAC recommends a \$5M I-25 set-aside from the CMAQ program. This amount leaves half the CMAQ program and the entire STBG program for local project applications. The TAC suggests reassessing the need for the set-aside closer to the funding year. Stephans asked if Planning Council is taking Action on this item. Mallette stated NFRMPO staff will put together a Call for Projects Guidebook based on the Planning Council's recommendations during this discussion.

Planning Council members expressed support for this recommendation.

In the second proposal, TAC recommends revising the CMAQ and STBG scoring criteria to ensure multimodal projects can be competitive rather than creating a bicycle and pedestrian percentage set aside program. Planning Council members expressed support for this recommendation.

In the third area, TAC recommends retaining population-based STBG request limits and allowing all communities to apply for at least \$1M while retaining the existing minimum allowable project request of \$100k. Planning Council members also expressed support for this recommendation.

Cunningham stated next steps include NFRMPO staff developing the Call for Projects Guidebook and discussing it with the TAC. The Call for Projects will open in October 2021, with Planning Council making funding recommendations in early 2022.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Transportation Commission

Bracke thanked Paddock and the CDOT Region 4 team for the tour of the North I-25 Express Lanes project. Bracke extended an invitation to all Planning Council members to discuss their community needs.

CDOT R4 Update

Hadley highlighted the status of various sections of the North I-25 Express Lane project, including closures, structure completion percentages, and proposals received for upcoming work.

STAC report

A written report was provided.

Host Council Member Report

Karspeck stated the Town of Berthoud is excited about the SH56 Mobility hub. The Town's new Community Recreation Center is under construction using a 1 percent local sales tax and will open in the fall. The Town is also implementing various walkability improvements including a Colorado Safe Routes to School (SRTS) project, traffic calming at a downtown intersection, and parklets to expand public and restaurant seating. The Town will be hosting its annual fireworks show on July 3.

MEETING WRAP-UP:

Next Month's Agenda Topic Suggestions

Mallette stated the Planning Council will be appointing someone to sit on the new State Nonattainment Area Air Pollution Mitigation Enterprise.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by: Ryan Dusil, NFRMPO Staff