

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

**July 6, 2023
Hybrid Meeting in Severance, CO**

Voting Members Present:

Scott James – Chair	-Weld County
Jon Mallo – Vice Chair	-Loveland
Will Karspeck – Past Chair	-Berthoud
Frank Baszler	-Severance
Kathleen Bracke	-Transportation Commission
Tricia Canonico	-Fort Collins
Mark Clark	-Evans
Paula Cochran	-LaSalle
Dan Dean	-Milliken
Liz Heid	-Eaton
Johnny Olson	-Greeley
Paul Rennemeyer	-Windsor
Kristin Stephens	-Larimer County

Voting Members Absent:

Fil Archuleta	-Garden City
Jessica Ferko	-APCD
Lisa Laake	-Timnath
Troy Mellon	-Johnstown

MPO Staff:

Suzette Mallette, Executive Director; **Becky Karasko**, Transportation Planning Director; **Cory Schmitt**, Mobility Director; **Brooke Bettolo**, Mobility Planner; **Alex Gordon**, Transportation Planner III; **AnnaRose Cunningham**, Transportation Planner II; and **Michael Saunders**, Transportation Planner I.

In Attendance: Abdul Barzak; Brad Buckman; Rich Christy; Jim Eussen; Ailish Ferrick; Gianna Guido; Nicole Hahn; Omar Herrera; Myron Hora; Katrina Klobberdanz; Dee McIntosh; Brian Metzger; Mark Oberschmidt; Heather Paddock; Evan Pinkham; Elizabeth Relford; Jan Rowe; Mike Silverstein; Robin Stoneman; Nick Wharton

Chair James called the MPO Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment:

No comments were submitted.

Move to Approve Agenda and Minutes

Stephens **moved** to *APPROVE THE JULY 6 2023, MEETING AGENDA*. The motion was **seconded** by Mallo and **passed** unanimously.

Baszler **moved** to *APPROVE THE JUNE 1, 2023, MEETING MINUTES*. The motion was **seconded** by Heid and **passed** unanimously.

Lead Planning Agency for Air Quality Agenda

Chair James opened the Air Quality portion of the meeting.

REPORTS:

Air Pollution Control Division (APCD)

A written report was provided.

Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC)

Mike Silverstein, Executive Director of the RAQC, reviewed the residential, local government, and commercial Mow Down Pollution program. Silverstein reviewed the emissions from lawn and garden equipment and outlined the related control strategies including potential regulation of the sale of gas-powered lawn and garden equipment within the non-attainment area beginning in 2025. Olson asked for clarification on the process for the proposed regulation, Silverstein stated if the proposal is approved by the RAQC it would be considered by the State Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC) for rulemaking and could become a mandate. Stephens asked if special districts, such as library districts are included in the definition of a local government. Silverstein stated that would need to be clarified through the State during rulemaking. Stephens asked if contractors for local governments are subject to the rules. Silverstein confirmed a contractor would be subject to the proposal as if they were a public entity.

Stephens asked who would be enforcing the rule. Silverstein stated if the rule is adopted by the Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC) the Air Pollution Control Division (APCD) would be the enforcing authority though the goal of the program is to provide education and outreach, and would anticipate approximately 50 percent compliance. James expressed concern about the cost for the program, how it would affect local governments, and asked how many commercial applications have been received at this time. Silverstein stated the application only opened a week ago and that there have been two applications. James asked if there would be any exemptions for local governments, Silverstein stated there were none in place at this time.

NFRMPO Air Quality Program Updates

Karasko reviewed the timeline for Ozone Conformity for the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the upcoming FY2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) including the public comment period, public hearing, and approval by Planning Council at the September 7 meeting, and subsequent approvals by the State and FHWA.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Agenda

Chair James opened the MPO portion of the meeting.

REPORTS:

Report of the Chair

No reports this month.

Executive Director Report

Mallette introduced Brooke Bettolo, the new Mobility Planner with RideNoCo and Michael Saunders, the new Transportation Planner. Mallette stated the statewide household travel survey should be going out in the near future.

TAC

A written report was provided.

Mobility

A written report was provided.

Community Advisory Committee

A written report was provided.

PRESENTATIONS:

CDOT Transit Town Halls – Jan Rowe, Assistant Director Transit Programs, and Brian Metzger Assistant Director Transit Planning and Delivery reviewed the purpose and the structure of the Division of Transit and Rail (DTR) with CDOT and stated the Division has hired a new director that will be starting soon. Rowe reviewed grant opportunities provided by DRT including grants received within the NFRMPO. James asked for clarification on the grant received by Milliken, Cory Schmitt stated the grant was for a vehicle for the Milliken Senior Center.

Metzger reviewed the operations area of the Bustang program and outlined the Bustang Expansion Plan. Stephens asked for a status update on doubling the service between Fort Collins and Denver, asking if that had been implemented or if that was part of the Expansion Plan. Rowe stated that was mandated by the Senate Bill but the Expansion Plan would outline how that could be implemented. Bracke noted the importance of implementing those service expansions with the investment CDOT has made on I-25 with the construction of the mobility hubs. Metzger noted the three mobility hubs on North I-25 should be open in January 2024.

Olson noted the Bustang Expansion plan only focused on the I-25 and I-70 corridors but noted the importance of the US34 corridor. Rowe stated CDOT is working with the NFRMPO and local jurisdictions on planning efforts along the US34 corridor.

Canonico asked if Bustang fares are free or reduced during the ozone season. Rowe stated most Outrider routes are fare free, but Bustang is not eligible for the Free Fare for Better Air funding.

Rowe highlighted the CO/WY feasibility study and Metzger outlined future planning efforts including a Bustang electrification study and the Intercity Bus Plan.

ACTION ITEMS:

Fiscally Constrained Plan – Cunningham reviewed the Fiscally Constrained Plan for the 2050 RTP and addressed the questions Planning Council had raised at the June meeting about operations and maintenance costs and noted costs for Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) have been removed from the Fiscally Constrained Plan following discussions with FRPR staff.

Rennemeyer asked for clarification on what flexible funds are. Cunningham stated the flexible funds are any funding which can be used for a variety of project types and are not restricted to one project type, such as dedicated transit funding. Stephens asked for clarification on information included in the memo in the Council Packet on revenues for Larimer and Weld Counties. Cunningham explained revenues for the counties were apportioned based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and lane miles because the NFRMPO Planning Area only includes portions of the counties, and the county budgets are for the entirety of the counties. Olson asked for clarification for assigning funds based on the Council's priorities. Cunningham clarified at the June meeting Council had prioritized how to assign flexible funds remaining after assigning funding to fiscally constrain the operations, maintenance, and expansion of the system.

Rennemeyer **moved** to approve the Fiscally Constrained Plan. The motion was **seconded** by Canonico and **passed** unanimously.

NFRMPO Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Transportation Report – Karasko outlined the strategies within the GHG Transportation Report to meet the required reductions outlined in the Colorado GHG Planning Standard as they apply to the 2050 RTP and the FY2024-2027 TIP. The GHG Transportation Report public comment period will be from July 7 to August 6 and is also in the process of review by State agencies.

Olson moved to approve *RESOLUTION NO. 2023-12 APPROVING THE NFRMPO GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) TRANSPORTATION REPORT*. The motion was **seconded** by Baszler and **passed** unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

2023 Call for Projects Guidebook – Cunningham provided an overview of the 2023 Call for Projects which will award approximately \$22M in federal funding and is scheduled to open following the Council meeting in August. Olson asked for clarification on the STBG Community Targets and why some of the large communities had a lower maximum request than some small communities. Cunningham explained the formula for STBG calculations which has been in place for the previous NFRMPO Calls for Projects which is being carried into the 2023 Call for Projects and includes population-based targets and a small community set aside. Regarding the scoring criteria, Canonico asked for clarification on why there are fewer points allocated to multimodal. Cunningham stated the points were allocated based on funding program requirements and the prioritization of goals the Council completed at the May meeting. James asked how the Regional Health goal will be assessed. Cunningham stated the criteria under that goal are air quality emissions benefits which are calculated based on reductions over the life of the project, equity, and economic development.

2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Draft – Gordon outlined the structure of the draft 2050 RTP which staff has been working on for the previous year. The plan 2050 RTP will be posted for public comment the second week of July and is scheduled for adoption by the Planning Council at their meeting in September.

Gordon stated some of the sections have been discussed with Council at previous meetings and the full draft will be presented to Council at the August meeting. Bracke asked about the role of resiliency in the RTP. Cunningham outlined the information included within the resiliency section and stated the role of the NFRMPO in safety and resiliency is mainly informational. The RTP also outlines opportunities for additional funding and planning available for the region.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Transportation Commission – Bracke emphasized the importance of transit planning in the region. Bracke stated her term on the TC may or may not be extended.

CDOT R4 Update – Paddock stated the TAP awards have been finalized and two awards were made within the NFRMPO region including the City of Fort Collins and the Town of Milliken. Paddock provided an update on the US34 project stating the final pavement should be completed by July 8. The frontage road along I-25 Segment 7 and 8 has been reopened, Segment 6 is 85 percent complete, and LCR 16 is targeted to open July 11. Segment 5 is underway and grant applications for MPDG grants are due on August 21. There will be closures on SH257 in July and September, the I-25 diamond grind project north of SH14 is out for bid, and there will be a corridor safety study on US287.

STAC Report – A written report was provided.

Colorado Transportation Investment Office (CTIO) – A written report was provided.

Nonattainment Area Air Pollution Mitigation Enterprise (NAAPME) – Stephens stated the NAAPME met on June 29 where they completed an Open Meetings training. The revenues have exceeded the funding originally forecasted by approximately \$1.3M and they will soon look at award criteria for allocating the funding.,

TPR Boundary Study – Stephens stated a TPR Boundary Review survey will be sent to all elected officials. Mallette noted the survey should be out at the end of July or beginning of August in conjunction with regional meetings. Olson asked if there was the anticipation for the boundaries to change, Stephens noted the outcomes of the survey and study will make that determination and should be brought to the TC in November. Mallette noted data is currently only at the county level and additional analysis is being completed. Bracke asked if there will be an effect on the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC) representation, Mallette noted that is part of the discussion and Rowe stated there will be a reassessment of the role of the TRAC.

Front Range Passenger Rail District – Karspeck and Olson provided an update on the progress of the Front Range Passenger Rail District. Council discussed the implications of potential alignments and station locations, equity implications, taxation structure, and the public engagement process. The Council requested representatives from Front Range Passenger Rail present to the Planning Council at a future meeting.

Host Council Member Report – Baszler reviewed two projects being constructed with funding awarded by the NFRMPO including intersection improvements at CR19 and CR74, and work on the Great Western Trail.

MEETING WRAP-UP:

Next Month's Agenda Topic Suggestions

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by: AnnaRose Cunningham, NFRMPO Staff