

# Meeting Minutes of the North Front Range Transportation and Air Quality Planning Council

**March 5, 2026**

**Virtual Meeting**

## Voting Members Present:

Kristin Stephens – Chair	-Larimer County
Liz Heid – Vice Chair	-Eaton
Paula Cochran	-LaSalle
Dan Dean	-Milliken
Matt Fries	-Severance
Cecil Gutierrez	-Transportation Commission
Jason Hallett	-Windsor Alternate
Bill Jenkins	-Timnath
Patrick McFall	-Loveland
Johnny Olson	-Greeley
Andrew Paranto	-Johnstown

## Voting Members Absent:

Fil Archuleta	-Garden City
Jeff Crabtree	-Evans
Chris Conway	-Fort Collins
Jessica Ferko	-APCD
Scott James	-Weld County
Will Karspeck	-Berthoud

**MPO Staff:** Elizabeth Relford, Executive Director; Becky Karasko, Transportation Planning Director; Tanya Trujillo-Martinez, Mobility Director; Jerome Rouser, Transportation Planner II; Jonathan Stockburger, Transportation Planner I; Mykayla Graalum, Transportation Planner I; Tahjiba Tarannum, Transportation Modeler; Aaron Hull, Mobility Planner; Lisa Joyner, Mobility Specialist.

**In Attendance:** Brad Buckman; Tom Christian; Rich Christy; AnnaRose Cunningham; Lesli Ellis; Hanna Feldmann; Nicole Hahn; Will Jones; Robin Keen; Kim Koivumiemi; Jon Mallo; Dee McIntosh; Scott Pearson; Lynette Pepler; Evan Pinkham; Jaclynn Streeter; Josie Thomas; Eric Tracy; Colleen Whitlow; Dena Wojtach

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

## Public Comment

No comments were submitted.

## Announcements

There were no announcements.

## CONSENT AGENDA

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

### Lead Planning Agency for Air Quality Agenda

Chair Stephens opened the Air Quality portion of the meeting.

#### REPORTS:

##### Air Pollution Control Division (APCD)

Written Report was provided.

##### NFRMPO Air Quality Program Updates

Wojtach walked the Planning Council through the joint application from the NFRMPO and Pike's Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) for a Fall 2026 Intermountain West Ozone Conference Proposal. She noted other ozone nonattainment areas in the intermountain west region, including the Salt Lake City, Phoenix, and Las Vegas areas. She discussed a graphic showing these nonattainment areas were having issues with ozone levels not matching the reduction of ozone precursor pollutants similar to the Denver Metro-North Front Range Nonattainment Area. The conference proposal is for a two-day conference that will accommodate up to 500 people. The target audiences are researchers, air quality planning agencies, local governments, community members, and any relevant organizations. She noted Larimer County is offering potential locations for the conference. The NFRMPO and PPACG are requesting \$100,000 from Colorado's Air Quality Enterprise to help host the conference. The total estimated cost to run the conference is \$444,532. She walked through each proposed cost estimate that makes up the total budget. She noted that all costs will be offset and no profit will be made. Lastly, she noted the last time there was a conference in the Intermountain West region was 2016 in Phoenix.

Relford noted there would likely be an interview process for the funding proposal from the enterprise. She thanked communities that provided letters of support and noted the enterprise allows 30 days to provide additional materials. She noted a staff member from Weld County has volunteered to help with the conference planning. She noted the conference is aiming to be held in late September or early October.

Jenkins asked if the conference could partner with a scientific journal. Stephens noted a plan to reach out to atmospheric science groups at universities. Wojtach noted the AQE has researchers currently on their board. She noted she is scheduled to talk with further researchers in the state and Intermountain West region about the conference. Stephens noted the importance of a variety of viewpoints and sponsors at the conference.

##### Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC)

Stephens noted the February RAQC meeting was held in Louisville to discuss what they are doing pertaining to environmental concerns and the climate. She also noted an electric food truck that received a state Engines Off grant, a program which electrifies food trucks. She noted this is not only

beneficial for air quality but also the reduced amount of noise and vibrations for the workers of the food truck. McFall asked if the food truck must plug in to an outlet. Stephens noted Louisville built specific places for food trucks to plug in at their town center. RAQC also discussed a grant received from NAAPME which was over \$1,000,000 to help individuals fix their cars if they fail an emissions test and cannot afford to fix their vehicle. She noted this grant will be able to fix 20 to 30 cars in both Larimer and Weld counties. She noted the first shop that will help with these repairs is located on North College in Fort Collins. She also noted RAQC is still looking for a location in Weld County. Lastly, she noted RAQC may adopt the Control Strategies Blueprint in November.

Heid asked if there is a threshold on what can be repaired with the grant. Stephens noted there are waiver programs if the repairs cost upwards of \$750 but noted she will ask for further information on the threshold. She noted a similar program currently exists in the DRCOG region.

#### Nonattainment Area Air Pollution Mitigation Enterprise (NAAPME)

Stephens noted NAAPME approved fees tied to the consumer index for the retail delivery fee and the rideshare fee. She noted the April meeting will be held in Fort Collins to discuss funding Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as Fort Collins has the only BRT system within the state.

### **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Agenda**

Chair Stephens opened the MPO portion of the meeting.

#### REPORTS:

##### Report of the Chair

Stephens noted information on the Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act. This Act brings more formula funding to MPOs and local governments. She noted there is bipartisan support for the Act at the federal level. The Planning Council agreed to wait before sending a letter of support. Relford noted MPOs are in support of the Act since it brings in money that MPOs can directly distribute. Stephens noted a National Association of Counties meeting where they discussed the BASICS act and the potential Surface Transportation Reauthorization bill. She noted there will be an opportunity for communities to apply for SS4A funding soon. She noted there is one billion dollars available, with 70 percent of the funding will be for implementation grants and 30 percent will be planning grants. Lastly, she awarded Mallo with a certificate of appreciation thanking him for his time on the NFRMPO Planning Council.

##### Executive Director Report

Relford noted there was a report discussing traffic fatalities in Colorado in the Agenda Packet. She noted the data is not geolocated so there is no way of knowing what is located within the NFRMPO's boundaries. She thanked the communities for their support on the State Highway Office Safety Grant to help fund a safety roundtable conference in 2027. Relford explained the NFRMPO is exploring logo and color palette changes to help with compliance with the State's digital accessibility standards. She noted the results of the changes will be presented to the Planning Council at a future meeting. She noted there is a grant opportunity available to potentially go after funding to assist with purchasing digital accessibility software. She noted Fort Collins is drafting an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to formalize the

existing Exchange Funds program for VanGo™. She noted the NFRMPO Accounting Team is working on the financial audit for 2025. She also noted various accounting-related policies and procedures have not been updated since 2019. She noted this will likely result in a complete update of the employee handbook. She also discussed NFRMPO Staff are currently in the process of meeting with every community in the region.

Stephens noted the Larimer County website is around 90 percent accessible and noted they would be happy to aid any agencies that may need accessibility help.

### Colorado Transportation Investment Office (CTIO) and Transportation Commission

Gutierrez noted CTIO and the Transportation Commission have been meeting jointly for the past few months. He noted CTIO purchased Burnham yard a few years back, initially to be used for Front Range Passenger Rail; however, the site will now be the new future home of the Denver Broncos once the sale documents have been confirmed with CTIO. He noted they had a presentation on Floyd Hill, and he noted a flyover of the current progress which is available to view. He noted CTIO will be seeking a bond or loan to help fund the project. He noted CTIO will see a funding plan for North I-25 Segments 2, 3, and 4 at their meeting this month. CTIO will also review strategies for funding I-270. He noted there is currently only one potential plan for funding Bustang, which involves diverting revenue made from tolling. Gutierrez noted the Transportation Commission and CTIO want to explore further funding possibilities. He noted the history of Bustang, which started as a commuter service in 2015 and then expanded in 2022 with SB 22-180. He noted the expansion was started with one-time money instead of with a recurring funding plan. He noted the number of daily trips on each route the expansion added. He noted Bustang's ridership has been increasing since FY 2021 and had its highest ridership in FY 2025 and walked through charts showcasing Bustang's current revenue sources and expenses and the forecasted revenue and expenses up to FY 2030. He then showed tables which compare Bustang's revenue and expenses. These tables show a growing deficit each fiscal year. He noted the funding plan for North I-25 Segments 3 and 4 are predicated on finding additional funding for Bustang.

Olson noted Bustang has grown faster than anticipated without a true revenue source. He noted fears of moving I-25 Bustang funding to I-70 Bustang funding due to I-25 being a higher source of income. Gutierrez noted similar sentiment is shared by community leaders in the Pikes Peak region. Olson asked if there is anything Gutierrez needs from the Planning Council. Gutierrez noted public comment is always encouraged. Olson noted he supports sending a letter of support from the Planning Council to CTIO and the Transportation Commission. Jenkins encouraged examining how Bustang can be more efficient with its business model. Gutierrez responded that the efficiencies will be presented to the CTIO and Transportation Commission at an upcoming meeting. He noted the highest cost is the I-70 West Line, which is almost half of Bustang's costs and will be one of the subjects when discussing efficiencies. He noted recent routing changes to remove the Sterling to Greeley route and replace it with Sterling to DEN. McFall asked if Gutierrez is confident there will be a secondary option for funding Bustang. Gutierrez responded that discussions are ongoing, and neither board is prepared to vote on anything. Stephens noted she mentioned finding efficiencies when this Bustang information was reviewed by STAC. Olson noted the deficit is likely to increase beyond FY 2030. Stephens noted she believes Bustang needs its own dedicated funding source. She noted there could be better data collection from Bustang in terms of where people are getting picked up and dropped off. Overall, Planning Council agreed they want money

from funding their corridors to stay on their corridors. Gutierrez encouraged Councilmembers to watch the CTIO workshop on March 18.

#### Front Range Passenger Rail District (FRPR)

Mallo noted it is town hall season for FRPR. He noted FRPR wants to continue outreach and complete a cost analysis before deciding whether to put FRPR on the ballot in 2026. They are aiming to complete 22 town halls by the end of phase one. The Fort Collins FRPR Planning Meeting will be on Thursday, March 12. The Fort Collins FRPR Town Hall will be on March 30 at City Hall. Loveland's will be on April 16 at the Pulliam Community Center. Stephens noted Sal Pace will be presenting at the April Planning Council meeting.

#### Finance Committee

A written report was provided.

#### TAC

A written report was provided.

#### VanGoTM Dashboard Quarter 4 2025

A written report was provided.

#### 2026 Colorado Legislature Updates

A written report was provided.

#### Mobility

A written report was provided.

#### ACTION ITEMS:

##### February 2026 TIP Amendment Resolution 2026-04

Stockburger noted the February 2026 TIP Amendment included three project additions and one pool addition. The first project addition was the Larimer County *US Highway 34/Canyon Edge Open Space Safety & Access Improvements* with \$1,250,000 Local HPOS funding in Future Funding. The second project addition was the City of Loveland *Transit Operating* with \$220,500 State SB-230 funding and \$24,500 Local funding in FY26. The third project addition was the City of Loveland *Transit Vehicle Purchase* with \$611,340 State SB-230 funding and \$67,927 Local funding in FY26. The pool addition is *Nonattainment Area Air Pollution Mitigation Enterprise Funding* with \$3,612,937 State NAP funding and \$843,987 Local funding in FY26. He noted the pool features four projects and that once the pool is in the TIP all project additions to the pool will be modifications instead of amendments unless the funding amount is over \$5M.

Olson **moved** to approve RESOLUTION 2026-04 APPROVING THE FEBRUARY 2026 AMENDMENT TO THE FY2024-2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) The motion was **seconded** by Heid and **passed** unanimously.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS:

### NFRMPO Planning Council Transit Representative

Relford noted the need for documentation of who the transit representative on the Planning Council is for the NFRMPO. The representative was selected in 2022 but not formalized by Resolution. This role must be a member of the NFRMPO Planning Council from Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland, or Berthoud since they are the Region's transit providers. She noted Olson is the current Transit Representative. The Planning Council agreed to continue Olson's term. The Planning Council agreed to make McFall the alternate. Relford noted there will be a Resolution documenting these appointments at the April Planning Council meeting.

### Amended FY2026-2027 UPWP FY2026 Budget

Relford noted there have been new contracts and actual funding amounts varied from estimates when the FY2026-2027 UPWP was approved in May 2025. Additionally, she noted the NFRMPO did not apply for FTA \$5310 Urban funding, and the reduction in revenue is reflected in the amended budget. She noted there will be a Resolution for the budget amendment at the April Planning Council meeting.

### 2025 TMO Call for Projects

Trujillo-Martinez recapped the goals of the call for projects, which include Mobility, Connectivity, Sustainable Projects, Accessibility, Innovation, and Local Commitment. She noted the timeline, which will end with the announcement of funding on April 3, 2026. She noted the funding is sourced from the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) set aside approved by the Planning Council in 2023. The total amount of funding is \$400,000 between FY 2025 and FY 2027. A local match of 17.21 percent is required for the projects selected. She noted that two MPO Mobility Staff members and one MPO Transportation Staff member were members of the scoring committee. She noted the system for scoring the projects, which included three main categories: Mobility and Connectivity had a weight of 50 percent, Sustainable Projects and Local Commitment had a weight of 25 percent, and Accessibility and Innovation had a weight of 25 percent. She noted that GoNoCo34 TMO was the only project submitted and finished with a score of 11 out of 15. She noted the next steps, which include a TAC recommendation and a Planning Council Resolution.

Jaclynn Streeter, GoNoCo34 TMO, noted the proposed programs the funding award would utilize, including transit pilots, vanpool awareness and incentives, bike education events, and data collection and targeted outreach. Streeter provided a funding breakdown of the specifics of what the \$400,000 will be spent on, including staffing, direct costs, and program costs. She noted the prospective outcomes of what the GoNoCo34 TMO programs will provide for the region.

### 2055 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Kick-Off

Graalum and Rouser presented the kickoff for the 2055 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). They announced the name of the RTP will be Connected Communities 2055. Graalum noted the RTP is a document that focuses on all modes throughout the region. The document is updated every four years. The goal is to identify projects and strategies based on regional goals and performance measures. She noted the changes the 2055 RTP will feature compared to the 2050 RTP, which include compliance with digital accessibility standards, restructuring the chapters, and giving the plan a more interesting name. Rouser noted the timeline and deadlines for the plan. The approval of the RTP will be September 2027.

He noted the phases of outreach and stakeholder input. Phase 1 is Goals and Problem Statement, Phase 2 is Visioning, Phase 3 is Scenario Planning, and Phase 4 is Closing the Feedback Loop. Rouser noted the structure of the Plan. Chapter 1 is Introduction, Chapter 2 is Regional Context, Chapter 3 is Safety and Resiliency, Chapter 4 is Emerging Technology, Chapter 5 is Regional Transportation Vision, Chapter 6 is Funding and Financing, and Chapter 7 is Projects.

Stephens asked if fiscally constrained projects are forecasted. Karasko responded the projections for projects are provided by CDOT to the out year of the RTP. She noted the projects must be reasonably anticipated to be funded. Stephens asked about the RTP-specific outreach process. Rouser noted there will be RTP-specific outreach, but NFRMPO staff are still discussing what that will look like. He noted communities should send RTP questions to [planning@nfrmpo.org](mailto:planning@nfrmpo.org) instead of individual Planning staff.

#### COUNCIL REPORTS:

##### STAC Report

Stephens noted STAC heard a legislative report, which included the information that MMOF is likely going away almost entirely except for a small portion that will be going to Bustang. She noted the general fund is most likely being cut but the MMOF funding though the retail delivery fees will remain in place. She noted a regional MMOF reconciliation will likely take place again this year. STAC sent a recommended budget to the Transportation Commission. They were shown a demonstration of the new STIP tracking software CDOT has implemented. They also discussed Bustang with the same slides as shown to CTIO and the Transportation Commission. She noted Bustang and passenger rail could be competing for SB 24-184 funding.

##### Host Council Member Report

Stephens noted a BUILD grant on Larimer County Road (LCR) 50E is finalizing an agreement with FHWA. She noted multiple grants for a project on Taft Hill Road, which is anticipated to start construction this summer. She noted the Poudre River Trail project construction is complete and awaiting an official opening date. She noted a bridge project on Taft Hill Road was unsuccessful in securing state off-system bridge funding.

#### MEETING WRAP-UP:

Next Month's Agenda Topic Suggestions – None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by: Jonathan Stockburger, NFRMPO Staff