

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

May 7, 2026

Hybrid Meeting in Greeley, CO

Voting Members Present:

Liz Heid– Vice Chair
Nicholas Bashford
Chris Conway
Julie Cline
Paula Cochran
Matthew Fries
Cecil Gutierrez

Scott James
Will Karspeck
Bill Jenkins
Patrick McFall
Michael Orcutt
Brian Rudy- Alternate

-Eaton
-Johnstown
-Fort Collins
-Windsor
-LaSalle
-Severance
-Transportation
Commission
-Weld County
-Berthoud
-Timnath
-Loveland
-Milliken
-Greeley

Voting Members Absent:

Kristin Stephens – Chair
Jeff Crabtree
Jessica Ferko

-Larimer County
-Evans
-CDPHE-APCD

MPO Staff: Elizabeth Relford, Executive Director; Becky Karasko, Transportation Planning Director; Jerome Rouser, Transportation Planner II; Jonathan Stockburger, Transportation Planner I; Aaron Hull, Mobility Planner; Lisa Joyner, Mobility Specialist.

In Attendance: J Boraman; Brad Buckman; Tricia Canonico; Bill Cruise; Ray Cundiff; Bill Cruise; Jim Eussen; Hanna Feldmann; Edwin Wayne Grant; Jeremy Heid; Ann Hutchinson; SeonAh Kendell; Mark Johnston; Rich Werner; Will Jones; Katrina Klobberdanz; Jon Mallo; Lynette Peppler; Evan Pinkham; Denise Staley; Bonnie Saust; Will Sander; Justin Stone; Steve Teets; Josie Thomas; Eric Tracy; Dena Wojtach.

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

Public Comment

Steve Teets, Greeley, asked the Council for an update on the Colorado/Wyoming transit feasibility study. Teets noted the need for an RTA because both Larimer and Weld Counties are growing. Teets expressed the need for a good regional transit system. He noted the City of Greeley buses have a high pitch screech. Teets expressed concerns about people going out of the back of paratransit vans instead of coming out from the side due to safety concerns. E-bikes and e-scooters are becoming a hazard and dangerous,

especially for young people, when they ride on the sidewalk. The US34 transit route needs to be rerouted to improve regional connectivity. Teets recommended the US34 transit service should end at the Loveland Transfer Station. Teets noted he is a co-chair of the Weld County Mobility Committee (WCMC).

Councilmember Announcements

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Lead Planning Agency for Air Quality Agenda

Vice Chair Heid opened the Air Quality portion of the meeting.

REPORTS:

Air Pollution Control Division (APCD)

A written report was provided.

NFRMPO Air Quality Program Updates

Wojtach noted the Air Quality Enterprise voted to award the NFRMPO and PPACG \$100,000 for the Intermountain West Ozone Exchange Conference with an option to seek more funding. Relford stated PPACG will be the contractual agent for the grant. There are two virtual town halls scheduled on Friday, May 15th and Wednesday, June 3rd to inform the public and other stakeholders about the ozone exchange and seek their input. Call for abstracts are open and will close on June 23rd. Wojtach stated the Aurora East, Evergreen and Manitou Springs monitors observed high 8-hour ozone averages. These high ozone events have been flagged as being heavily influenced by stratospheric intrusions, typical springtime meteorological events. EPA is acting on a request from Utah's Wasatch Front to repeal a previous determination that Wasatch Front failed to attain the 2015 NAAQS based on an updated 179B analysis of international contributions and additional analysis of wildfire contributions. The American Lung Association published their annual "State of the Air" 2026 report which identified Colorado as one of seven states showing overall improvement while also giving Colorado a failing grade for air quality. This report listed two Colorado areas as being in the top 24 most polluted cities for ozone in the nation. The Denver-Aurora- Greeley area and Fort Collins-Loveland areas were ranked as #8 and #18 respectively.

Fries asked which agency ultimately makes the determination for 179B analyses. Wojtach noted EPA makes that determination but must go through a public rule process before first. They must take public comment and process the comment then make a final action. That action will be published in the Federal Register and will likely take effect within 30-60 days after the final action.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Agenda

Vice Chair Heid opened the MPO portion of the meeting.

REPORTS:

Report of the Chair

Heid noted Will Sander is the new alternate for Eaton. Brian Rudy introduced himself as the Alternate and noted Olson has the Oversight Committee commitment over the next six weeks, so he will be attending the Council meetings. Rudy noted he served on the Council as Mayor of Evans years ago. Mayor Pro Tem Michael Orcutt introduced himself and expressed excitement in joining the council. Councilmember Nick Bashford introduced himself and noted he will be the Johnstown Council representative. Lynette Pepler noted she is the Weld County Alternate.

Executive Director Report

Relford noted NFRMPO staff met with FHWA and FTA on April 29th for the MPO's quadrennial certification review. As part of the certification review process, the NFRMPO was required to allow for public comment on the MPO's operations. No public comment was received. Relford is not anticipating any findings and noted the NFRMPO will receive comments from FHWA and FTA by June 14th. The NFRMPO application for a safety grant for a 2027 safety roundtable was unsuccessful. NFRMPO staff are still looking to hold a safety conference in 2027 and will continue to seek other opportunities for that conference. The NFRMPO's new IT service providers, Castle Rock Sky, brought the NFRMPO website to compliance with Federal accessibility requirements. The NFRMPO selected a new auditing firm for the 2025 audit, which is currently on schedule for completion. Relford noted the audit results will be brought to Planning Council at the June meeting. The HR consultants are working with NFRMPO staff to update job descriptions that will be fed into a compensation plan. The RideNoCo program was awarded two grants to support system improvements and implementation of new features to enhance the RideNoCo platform.

Front Range Passenger Rail District

Mallo noted the State of Colorado negotiated a term agreement with BNSF for rail access. Target launch for joint service is January 2029. Initial service will go between Denver and Fort Collins and will include three round trips a day. In the long term, the plan is to have ten round trips across the entire Front Range. The estimated capital cost is \$330 million which is half of the original projections. \$156M is coming from RTD fast track fund, and \$173M comes from CDOT, CTIO, and CTE. There are no new taxes for the initial service. Mallo noted SB26-172 will make changes to the FRPR district boundaries. Section 1 of the bill changes the boundaries to include only communities that will have a FRPR station. The bill also requires directors of the board to reside in the district beginning on July 1, 2026. Section 3 will allow for subdistricts within the district. Section 4 changes the method for determining the distribution of the costs of a district or subdistrict election. The costs of any FRPR district election are distributed in the same way as state primary, coordinated, general, congressional vacancy, special legislative, or recall elections conducted after July 1, 2024. The bill passed the Senate and is in the House with amendments.

McFall asked if the districts could be due to differences between BNSF and UP? Mallo said that could be an explanation. Karspeck asked when Sterling Ranch was included in the station locations? Mallo/Canonico noted Sterling Ranch was included due to Castle Rock rejecting a station. The Sterling Ranch station will serve as the Douglas County station. James asked how much money is coming from

oil and gas. Gutierrez noted \$12 Million will be coming from Oil & Gas fees. Relford noted there has been significant interest in the town halls expressing excitement about this project. MPO staff is getting a lot of questions about FRPR. Looking to partner with the district to get more information about outreach materials. Canonico noted there will be a second round of public engagement. District staff are waiting for the legislative session before beginning engagement. Karspeck expressed interest in having a town hall in Berthoud. Canonico noted the district is beginning to look at the process to request special event stations, and this process could possibly be used for secondary stations. Relford asked Berthoud if there is any benefit to do station area planning in case they are pulled into the FRPR. Is there benefit to go after other federal funds or a DOLA grant to do station area planning in Berthoud? Karspeck noted he is interested if Berthoud could be pulled into the district. Gutierrez noted the reason other communities already did station area planning due to the FAST track vote in 2004. There are discussions about potential SB184 money to be available for station area planning in Loveland and Fort Collins.

Colorado Transportation Investment Office (CTIO)

Canonico noted CTIO discussed the Congestion Impact Fee, which is being inflation adjusted. The fee is currently \$3 for rental cars. It will increase to \$3.13 for 2026-2027 and will continue to rise to \$3.37 by 2030. The CTIO board received a presentation from Winter Park discussing the Winter Park Express partnership between Amtrak and the Winter Park Resort and CTIO. CTIO is using some of the funding to help reduce the cost of tickets. Total ridership for 25-26 has more than doubled pre-expansion ridership levels. The Winter Park Express saw 90% load capacities on Saturdays. A big factor for increased ridership is reduced fares due to CTIO. Ticket prices capped at \$39 one way with promotional fares as low as \$9. The average ticket price fell from \$56 in 2023 to \$26 in 2025.

Transportation Commission

Gutierrez noted the 10-year plan is scheduled to be adopted in May, and the STIP will be adopted in June. The TC and CTIO held a joint session to discuss Bustang. As part of that joint session, the TC and CTIO received a letter from Director Lew regarding Bustang. The Governor dropped a request for legislation to remove corridor restrictions. Director Lew's letter removed the restriction on I-25 north from being completed. Lew noted there is belief that Bustang can be moved to CTIO which will make it a CTIO project similar to I-25 and I-270. CTIO will investigate if funding is available. Gutierrez noted CTIO is an independent board which is separate from CDOT. Gutierrez noted the letter seemed prescriptive and did not respect the independence of CTIO. Gutierrez noted TC has found a solution to fund Bustang through FY27. James asked if CTIO is an enterprise? Gutierrez said yes. James asked if the enterprise has the authority to run Bustang and if maintenance is in the purview of CTIO? Gutierrez said yes maintenance is allowed under CTIO. State law states CTIO can fund any surface transportation projects, including transit. Gutierrez will request CTIO staff to investigate all of the CTIO funding programs to see how much funding is available. Relford asked if Gutierrez knows what CDOT will do with the increased MPOF Retail Delivery Fee percentage allocation to CDOT? Gutierrez noted he did not know. Jenkins noted the change to the allocation is permanent. Gutierrez noted CTIO has a limit on how much funding they can receive from CDOT.

Finance Committee

A written report was provided.

April 2026 TAC Executive Summary

A written report was provided.

2026 Quarter 1 TIP Modifications

A written report was provided.

2026 VanGo™ Dashboard

A written report was provided.

2026 Colorado Legislature Updates

A written report was provided.

Mobility Program Updates

A written report was provided.

PRESENTATION:

Labor Market Profile

Ann Hutchinson, Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce, SeonAh Kendall, City of Fort Collins, Mark Johnston, Larimer County, and Rich Werner, Upstate Colorado, gave an overview of the Northern Colorado Labor Market Profile. The presenters discussed the 2024 Northern Colorado Workforce Analysis tool and the tool's capabilities. In 2024, the combined population of Larimer and Weld Counties was 730,169. The two combined counties have a labor force of 393,490 in 2024. The presenters noted both Larimer and Weld Counties saw significant population growth since 1990, with Weld County seeing the most growth. The presenters discussed the differences among the Larimer and Weld County communities' age distribution. In 2023, Weld County and Greeley, and Northern Colorado overall had a higher percentage of children than the national average while Fort Collins and Larimer County were below both the national and state average. Fort Collins saw the highest percentage of their population with a bachelor's degree or higher while Weld County and Greeley saw lower proportions of college educated populations. This is likely due to the differences in industries across the region. Northern Colorado has an almost even spread of educational attainment which reflects the variety of industries in the region. The presenters noted Northern Colorado has seen steady total employment since 2001. The healthcare industry is the largest employer in the region. The presenters discussed the differences in industry sectors between the two counties. The presenters noted the top 12 in-demand occupations in Northern Colorado and noted the variety of educational requirements across the industries which reflects the variety of industry types in the region.

The presenters stated that Northern Colorado has an average commute time of 45 minutes due to a lack of regionwide mass transit. The presenters discussed which industries are prevalent in Fort Collins and Greeley and how those differences impact workers' commute patterns. Overall, Fort Collins is a net importer of labor while Weld is an exporter. This is likely due to the differences in housing costs across the region. The presenters noted that this data will be used in a two-county talent plan.

ACTION ITEM:

April 2026 TIP Amendment

Stockburger noted the April 2026 TIP Amendment included four project additions and one project modification from Fort Collins, Loveland Greeley, and CDOT. The projects for additions are *Fort Collins Codes and Standards Audit*, *Harmony Road Study*, and *Lake Street Demonstration Project* with \$925,006 Federal SS4A funding and \$266,458 Local funding in FY26, Greeley *SS4A Demonstration Projects* with \$7,917,600 Federal SS4A funding and \$2,029,400 Local Funding in FY26, Loveland *SS4A Demonstration Projects* with \$396,000 Federal SS4A funding and \$99,000 Local Funding in FY26 and lastly *Shields Street Separated Bike Lanes* with \$580,000 Local Fort Collins Climate Projects Tax Funding in FY26. Stockburger mentioned the one project modification from CDOT Region 4, *Median Safety Berthoud Sourth*, shifts \$2,036,250 Federal DIS funding from FY25 to FY26, increases \$12,438,750 in FY26, adds \$1,354,995 Federal HSIP funding to FY26 and \$2,748,165 to FY27, and adds \$1,445,840 State FASTER funding to FY26, \$2,400,000 to FY27, and \$4,699,000 to FY28.

James **moved** to approve *RESOLUTION 2026-10 APPROVING THE APRIL 2026 AMENDMENT TO THE FY2024-2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)*. The motion was **seconded** by Karspeck and **passed** unanimously.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

STAC Report

Jenkins noted there was a public comment requesting CDOT to create a statewide bicycle committee similar to their other committees such as freight and transit. Jenkins stated HB26-1399 will eliminate the MMOF general fund transfer for the next three fiscal years. Jenkins noted HB26-1430 was recently introduced to reduce the state gas tax from 22 cents to 14 cents and reallocate \$700 million from being transferred from the general fund to CDOT which would offset Initiative 75 if it is approved by the voters. This gas tax reduction and general fund transfer elimination will only happen if voters approve Initiative 75. STAC held leadership elections, and Gary Beedy was reelected as STAC Chair, and Commissioner Stephens was elected as STAC Vice Chair. STAC unanimously voted to recommend the Transportation Commission approve the 10-year plan. CDOT Region 1 provided a presentation on safety enhancements for vulnerable road users, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Jenkins noted the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Call for Projects opens on June 1st and will close on August 31st. There is no local match requirement for these funds and can be combined with other funding sources.

Host Council Member Report

Rudy noted the MERGE project is projected to reduce 40% of crashes on US34. The MERGE project will create a safer pedestrian connection between the north and south sides of US34. The project is projected to decrease air pollution by approximately 40% and will increase travel time consistency along the corridor. The City of Greeley is advancing coordination across key work streams, including consultant scoping, coordination with CDOT, and onboarding an independent cost engineer. The O Street and 59th Avenue roundabout project received MPO funding and will increase safety, efficiency of the intersection, and will promote better traffic flow. Rudy stated more than 11,000 vehicles pass through that intersection daily. Construction on the roundabout began in February with an anticipated project completion date of June 26th. The intersection will be fully closed while construction progresses. The 16th Street Enhancement Project includes wider sidewalks, traffic calming elements, improved transit stops, and ample parking. Crews are completing masonry work and irrigation. The City of Greeley anticipates this

project being completed by May 16th. The City of Greeley is investing \$9.9 million in Safe Streets for All projects. These projects are part of the City of Greeley's Vision Zero commitment.

MEETING WRAP-UP:

Next Month's Agenda Topic Suggestions – None.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by: Jerome Rouser, NFRMPO Staff