

NATA Board Meeting Agenda

July 28, 2022

7:30-9:00am

Adams County Human Services Center

11860 N Pecos St, Westminster, CO 80234

Apple B Conference Room - **In-Person Only**

NATA Members (who signed in)

Lisa Hough	AC-REP	Malcolm Fleming	Erie Staff
Lynn Baca	Adams Cnty Commissioner	Stephanie Lubanovic	Federal Heights
Chris Chovan	Adams County Staff	Brook Svoboda	Northglenn Staff
Brian Staley	Adams County Staff	Carson Priest	Smart Commute
Greg Mills	Brighton Mayor	Tammy Herreid	Smart Commute
Noe Martinez	Brighton Staff	Kent Moorman	Thornton Staff
Austin Ward	Broomfield Council	Nancy McNally	Westminster Mayor
Michael McGoldrick	Commerce City Staff	Debra Baskett	Westminster Staff

SCMN Members (who signed in)

Carla Perez	HDR		
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Agency Partners (who signed in)

Karen Stuart	CDOT Commissioner	Vince Buzek	RTD Board
Stephen Henry	CDOT	Dave Jensen	RTD
Doug Rex	DRCOG	Michael Davies	RTD
Ron Papsdorf	DRCOG		

Guests (who signed in)

Paul Jesaitis	EST	Simon Drunsew	I-25Now
Mike Cheroutes	I-25Now	Johnny Olson	JWO Engineering / I-25Now

1. Welcome and introductions – Chair Lynn Baca

Chair Lynn Baca welcomed participants and attendees introduced themselves

2. Approval of May Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mayor Nancy McNally seconded by Mayor Greg Mills and approved unanimously.

3. Approval of Quarter 2 Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Greg Mills

Mayor Mills - We have a carryover balance from the beginning of year of \$9,405.54. Membership dues have all been deposited totaling \$27,360.00, which gives us an operating income of \$36,765.54. The NATA administration fee is set at \$20,000, which is just down for last year due to less hours going into NATA from Smart Commute staff. The Smart Commute membership dues for NATA totals \$12,500. This gives us a net cash balance of \$4,265.54 for the remainder of 2022.

Motion to approve the Q2 Treasurer's Report was made by Mayor Nancy McNally seconded by Lisa Hough and approved unanimously.

4. Smart Commute update – Carson Priest

Carson Priest - We launched our new brand and website which has been in the works for a few years now. We kept the same color palette and values that everyone has come to know us by. Our new domain and emails are much shorter, please be sure to add us to your safe senders list. Our new look is a much simpler, more modern, and lighthearted. We would appreciate it if you could please take a look at our new website and let us know any thoughts and please provide feedback, the new website is smartcommute.org.

I just have a short Bike To Work Day (BTWD) recap with a few photos from the stations we staffed that morning and video of Kit handing out thank you cards to our vendors on her bike. We supported two stations on Bike To Work Day with roughly 60 people stopping by our Northglenn Station at EB Rains Park and about 120 riders stopped at the Adams County Station with is a key location as the confluence of the South Platte River Trail and a few others. The Adams County is a primary historical BTWD location with an average of 300+ riders in the BTWD years prior to COVID. We are looking at working with Adams County next year to bump that station up, much like we did this year with the Northglenn Station. Overall, there were about 12,000 registered riders across the region, less than normal, but much better than the past couple years.

5. CDOT Commissioner Update - Commissioner Karen Stuart

Commissioner Stuart – I had hoped I would be able to come to today with an idea of what the 10-year plan would look like, but unfortunately that is not the case. We are currently going into the second 5 years of the 10-year plan. Because of the GHG directive put in place, CDOT has had to go back and reevaluate all the projects in the 10-year plan to see if they meet that GHG goal as they are currently proposed. The Commission has not received the CDOT Region 1 projects yet. Once we do receive the list, we will be able to see how and if these projects meet GHG goals. If they do not meet the goals, then that project loses funding and their place in the 10-year plan. We always suggest that CDOT collaborate with RTD on projects along the front range. The GHG Initiative adjusted list must be in place by October 1st.

There was another crash this morning in the Crash Corridor. There was an Environmental Assessment (EA) done on this corridor several years ago, but nothing has been done since. We have put together a Scope of Work for a consultant that will be required to come up with some suggested “fixes” for the Crash Corridor and have them to CDOT by October, then some final decisions will be made in December. Once we have these decisions, then we can look at potential funding sources to pursue.

The IIJA grants are coming out rapidly. We are looking at projects for these grants and one of these is the Bridge Replacement package along I-270 to replace/fix eight bridges that are failing along that highway. We hope that will be a competitive project enough to get funding.

The CTIO has the authority to ask for unsolicited proposals. The process for unsolicited proposals is that when one is submitted to CDOT, the executives of CTIO & CDOT look at it and decide if it is a feasible project. If they agree, then the proposer must put forth a larger effort, which includes a Financial Plan, detailed Proposal, and \$50,000. Usually, these proposals are P3s, which is a good fit for this type of project on I-25 North. The ROADIS unsolicited proposal is a good proposal and good option for this project. They have put a lot of work into this effort and brought on a very knowledgeable and experienced team.

One last item, I would like to introduce Steve Henry, he replaced Andy Stratton as the CDOT Region 1 North Program Regional Engineer.

Steve Henry – Thank you Commissioner Stuart, it was fun coming to this meeting, you could tell by the vibe in the room. I have been at CDOT over 20 years in various roles and I am excited to have the opportunity to have a more of a localized focus.

6. RTD Directors Reports – Director Chair Vince Buzek

Director Buzek – I would like to start with an update on the N Line. We are currently operating at around a 93-95% reliability, and riders seem to love it. We did have some stumbling blocks along the way, especially when the line was first launched during the pandemic, but we got through that. We struggle with the “People Power Problem” on all our services, but especially on the commuter rail lines - the A, N and G lines. We can’t get and keep enough people to meet the federal “2nd person” requirement. We just approved a package of better benefits for employees. Denver Transit Partners (DTP) currently operates the A, N and G lines and they contract out for their employees. The Feds are requiring that this “2nd person” to be an armed guard, which is making it even harder to hire for that position and make sure they are legally certified to possess a weapon. Over the past few weeks, DTP and RTD has worked with the Feds to change this requirement and were recently successful in ridding the armed requirement for the “2nd person”. Hopefully the outcome of this negotiation will help improve the issue of cancelling trips due to lack of the 2nd armed guard.

The RTD board also passed the SOP in the past few weeks, which is a 5-year plan. A big challenge is trying to get people back to transit as we come out of the pandemic. Shelly Cook and Doug Tisdale proposed an amendment that we come back and revisit this plan at least every 2-years to reevaluate it and change as needed, which was accepted and passed.

The “Zero Fare for Better Air August” campaign starts August 1. We are very excited and nervous as you all can imagine. All RTD services will be zero fare during the month and we have a big kick-off media conference at 10:30am today and Denver Union Station. What do we want to get out of this? There is a big push is to reduce the GHG emissions and to get people back on RTD with this campaign.

We also have a system-wide fare structure analysis going on. We know that if you want transit to be successful you need transit to be affordable and easy to use.

As Chair, I get to appoint Ad Hoc committees. At the June meeting I appointed a Zero Emissions Vehicles committee which will evaluate on how we can transition our buses to electric buses. I want us to be a leader in this industry. We have one of the largest electric buses in the country, which is the 16th Street Mall buses. We have another 17 electric buses on order and are scheduled to get them in Q1 2023 for the fleet.

Mayor Nancy McNally – The college kids need to be addressed because many kids take the buses, especially to DU. I am pushing it in our community to families to take the bus to downtown and do something together. Target the college kids to get them use to it now before school gets in swing.

Director Buzek – Getting people to use their route is a big challenge to start riding transit. We always recommend the Transit Watch App which allows you to report to RTD anything you think is a problem. We use that info as a tool to help deploy our security officers to where they need to focus. Doug Tillsdale says “when you ride with the Transit App, you never ride alone”.

Lisa Hough – In regards to the 2nd crew member, do they need to be over 21? The local schools have a program where they are training kids to go into the police force. Is this something that RTD can go into these schools and train them on RTD?

Dave Jensen (RTD) – Yes, they do need to be over 21 for the 2nd crew member, but I do encourage them to look at RTD because we are starting to supplement those positions with RTD staff. Yes, we could definitely talk to them about coming to work at RTD

Mayor Mills – What is the range of the electric buses and where will they be in service?

Director Buzek – We are not sure of the range yet since it is a new product. It will depend on the time of year and if we need charging stations along the routes. The assigned routes have not yet been determined for these buses. The technology is constantly changing, so hopefully by the time we get them it will be even better

Commissioner Stuart – CDOT is looking for entry level employees, to piggyback on the school students that Lisa Hough was talking about. I recently was able to tour the CDOT Maintenance Facility which was amazing. They are looking for people they can train to drive these new technologically advanced machines. I think we should meet to discuss this to have CDOT & RTD come and present to this school on their workforce needs, opportunities, training, and opportunities.

Lisa Hough – We can discuss this and make plans for a presentation.

Commissioner Baca – I want to go back to Commissioner Stuart's presentation for questions because I skipped over her. I want to thank her for all the incredible information and support she brings to us. We are in the GHG non-attainment area, which means we won't get certain funding as long as we are in non-attainment. The GHG Board is really concerned with this non-attainment issue and our much needed projects not getting funding, especially for I-25 North.

7. I-25 Now Group Project Update - Mike Cheroutes, Johnny Olson, Simon Drunsew

Mike Cheroutes – I have been in transportation for numerous years. I used to be the Director of the first HPTC group in CDOT. We did a lot of work trying to convince CDOT that there are alternatives to get massive projects done, for example the P3 on US 36. ROADIS USA is a toll operator and road asset manager around the world. When CDOT opened up for unsolicited proposals, we decided to submit a proposal for a P3 on North I-25 between Denver & Fort Collins. I am the idea guy and Simon Drunsew is the implementer on our team. Our proposal addresses the entire I-25 North Corridor, whereas there are some bad ideas floating around only doing only part of the corridor.

Johnny Olson - I have been working on this project and corridor since 1999. We did the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) at CDOT Region 4 when I was the Region Director for CDOT. We know there is a solution.

Simon Drunsew – This project is over a \$1 billion investment. One of the key elements to take into consideration is the EIS and the individual needs at each segment. One key component is to connect Bustang through the whole corridor. Another one is the Segment 2 addition of a center loading platform and accel/decel lanes between 84th to 104th. This would be a large safety improvement. Segments 3.2/4/5 are buildouts of the express lanes and safety improvements. The I-25 NOW team is a highly capable and knowledgeable team consisting of ROADIS USA, JWO Engineering, Horrocks Engineers, RLW/SEMA Joint-Venture, FH\U, Squire Patton Boggs, HFA, Citibank and Blissway. Each team member is an expert in their own field. When submitting this proposal, we worked with CDOT and took all their comments into consideration and made revisions to address the concerns. Our team is

proposing a CM/GC approach. Our approach also allows local stakeholders to provide input and be involved in the process, which is also a way to accelerate the project. Every year that we delay, the project cost increases an estimate of \$1.5M.

Johnny Olson – I have been working with NATA for a long time and I worked with Reza back in 2011 to get this “temporary” solution on I-25 Segment 2. When you look at Segment 2, there are a lot of people and stakeholders that say “we want more”. Why do you have so many accidents? The merge to get on and off the highway between the vehicles and buses is a huge problem. The solution in this proposal we are talking about fixes these problems and drastically improves the safety. This project finishes Segments 2 and 3 and improves the safety. I like to call it the “Christmas Tree Affect”, we bring in the tree at start and everyone wants to keep adding more and more ornaments to it, then the tree gets to weighted down and fails. This is like the situation on Segments 2 and 3 because people just want to add more and more to the solution, which is not needed. Why does CDOT say “Why do you think you can do this better than us”? - It’s not that it is better, it’s that it is faster and more complete.

Mike Cheroutes – The objection I have to the “Christmas Tree Affect” is that it sounds like we giving something away, but the actuality is that if the revenues on the tolls are what we anticipate they will be, then we get paid back. If they are not, then we sit down with CDOT and figure out a way to split the costs. CTIO is the decision maker on this, but CDOT can block it. We don’t anticipate that based on CTIO’s support and feedback. We hope to hear next steps in Q4 2022. You don’t have to support this specific team, but hopefully you will support the process and a team submitting to complete this project

Simon Drunsew – In our model all the financials and risk are transferred to the financier, us.

Kent Moorman – Does this project also include the interchange at CO7?

Simon Drunsew – No it does not, but as CDOT progresses on the interchange at CO7 and the diverging diamond at the mobility hub there, then there is more opportunity for us to work with them to further the work along on I-25 and the mobility hub along.

Johnny Olson – Because we are bringing funding to the table, we can work with CDOT to best allocate these freed up funds for the benefit of the project.

Dave Jensen – The bus needs in the corridor are always a concern of ours, especially the needs and access. How would this work for them?

Mike Cheroutes – It would work just like it works on US 36, the toll rates are free for the bus so this would be just like that for RTD and Bustang. Maybe we could provide charging operations along the corridor for the electric buses in the future, as an idea.

Simon Drunsew – Sustainability is very important to us. We have target goals along the corridor and integrating a clean transit solution is quite important to us as a group.

Malcolm Fleming – The slide does say the transit hub is included as part of this project.

Johnny Olson – It does include the transit hub at 84th but not the mobility hub at CO7.

Commissioner Stuart – The mobility hub at CO7 is another huge project that is very important to us up here.

Johnny Olson – Right now we are looking at around \$70-100M for Segment 2 and about \$175M for Segment 5, but CDOT can choose where to invest that. Simon says the baseline funds are allocated to this.

Carla Perez – In regard to reducing congestion and the impact on GHG emissions, have you modeled that, do you know what the impact is?

Mike Cheroutes – FHU is working through that with us. The baseline project will get us there, but other mitigation ideas are being discussed to further that effort. The unsolicited proposal cost us \$50,000 to file with CDOT. In reality we have put in 10x that amount of funding to get to the place we are at right now – that’s how confident we are in the project.

Commissioner Stuart – What is your ask of NATA?

Mike Cheroutes – We need support from groups like you along the corridor. Get behind the proposal and the process, doesn’t have to be our team, but the proposal process is a must.

Simon Drunsew – Be willing to talk through the P3 or CM/GC process and how we can make it work.

Johnny Olson – There are 70 different connected communities and organizations along the North I-25 corridor. When a coalition comes together in support of a project stuff gets done. We ask that you be a coalition of people that support this and get stuff done. We don’t want to miss the opportunity to get something done now.

Commissioner Baca – What is your timeline?

Mike Cheroutes – Our team is ready to go now. We are waiting for the next steps from CTIO, which would be a competitive proposal process, then a 6-9 month negotiation process, then construction in 2024 (with the P3 or CM/GC). The traditional design process would extend this by another 1-1.5 years.

Commissioner Baca – Thank you so much and I don’t think you will be getting any opposition from this group, nothing but support. We need something for us up here like the south has.

Mike Cheroutes – NATA has a lot of punch and sway, thank you.

8. Other – Carson Priest

Carson Priest - I just have a few things to note. The next NATA meeting will be August 25th, in-person or virtual is still to be decided. Also, there is a webinar on I-25N on August 24th hosted by the Colorado Sun, we can send out link if you would like to attend.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:56 a.m.