**NATA Board Meeting Minutes**

**December 17, 2020**

**7:30-9:00am**

**Zoom Virtual Meeting**

**Meeting Recording:** [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUwvV8FS\_m4**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUwvV8FS_m4)

**Welcome and introductions by Chair Julie Mullica. Instructions to sign-in via the Chat function.**

**NATA Members (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bo Martinez** | ACREP | **Phil Greenwald** | Longmont Staff |
| **Deb Durand** | ACREP | **Julie Mullica** | Northglenn Council |
| **Steve O’Dorisio** | Adams County Comm. | **Sara Dusenberry** | Northglenn Staff |
| **Chris Chovan** | Adams County Staff | **Brook Svoboda** | Northglenn Staff |
| **Greg Mills** | Brighton Mayor | **Karen Stuart** | SCMN |
| **Tim Williams** | Federal Heights Staff | **Carson Priest** | SCMN |
| **Sarah Grant** | Broomfield Staff | **Tammy Herreid** | SCMN |
| **John Hall** | Broomfield Staff | **Catherine Sanders** | SCMN |
| **Craig Hurst** | Comm City Council | **Jessica Sandgren** | Thornton Mayor Pro Tem |
| **Ari Harrison** | Erie Trustee | **Julia Marvin** | Thornton |
| **Sara Loflin** | Erie Trustee | **Kent Moorman** | Thornton Staff |
| **Todd Fessenden** | Erie Staff | **Jon Voelz** | Westminster Council |
| **Malcolm Fleming** | Erie Staff | **Debra Baskett** | Westminster Staff |
|  |  |  |  |

**SCMN Members (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Pat Monacelli** | Broomfield Chamber | **Sam Taylor** | Broomfield Chamber |
| **Tim Stewart** | E-470 | **Joyce Downing** | SCMN |
| **Neal Goffinet** | FHU | **Myron Hora** | WSP |
| **Carla Perez** | HDR |  |  |

**Agency Partners (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Julie George** | CDOT | **Dave Jensen** | RTD |
| **Andy Stratton** | CDOT | **Henry Stoppelcamp** | RTD |
| **Jordan Rudel** | CDOT | **Christina Zazueda** | RTD |
| **Danny Herrmann** | CDOT | **Lisa Trujillo** | RTD |
| **Brad Calver** | DRCOG | **Troy Whitmore** | RTD Board |
| **Andy Taylor** | DRCOG | **Vince Buzek** | RTD Board |
| **Debra Johnson** | RTD General Manager | **Judy Lubow** | RTD Board |
| **Pauline Haberman** | RTD | **Erik Davidson** | RTD Board |
| **Paul DesRocher** | RTD |  |  |

**Guests (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Randy Grauberger** | FRPR | **Faith Winter** | State Senator |
| **Matt Gray** | State Representative | **Heather McDaniel** | Souder Miller & Assoc. |
| **Jake Martin** | Strategies360 | **Reza Akhavan** | HNTB |

1. **Welcome by Chair Mullica**
2. **Brief Overview of NATA Slides**

*Karen Stuart*: As an overview of NATA’s background, we wanted to remind everyone in attendance that NATA was formed within its current boundaries with a set of shared goals anchored along the spine of I-25 with the inclusion of all of the communities in the area including Longmont, Brighton, Commerce City, Thornton, Northglenn, Westminster, Broomfield, and Federal Heights. Each of these communities as well as AC-REP and Smart Commute Metro North have a seat as a NATA representative. Meetings typically have 45-60 people attending each meeting, including our national congressional representatives. NATA is positioned around shared values such as transportation development with the goal of improved economic development and mobility in the region. NATA is also focused on advocating for FasTracks improvements. NATA has created a “leave-behind” document that contains all of the pertinent information regarding the current growth statistics and transportation project priorities of the NATA communities. Karen encouraged that people follow the link at the bottom of the “leave-behind” to learn more about each of the NATA priority projects. Karen introduced NATA’s current matrix of influence that shows NATA’s influence on transportation policy with advocacy across many stakeholder groups and organizations.

*Carson Priest*: Presented highlights of the success of the grant-funded 144th FlexRide as a pilot program of success in the NATA region. He noted that the success of this FlexRide pilot program can be attributed in large part to the customer service-based model that allows for micro adjustments to the operations as the demand for riders shifted during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Karen Stuart*: The last portion of this overview of NATA is to remind everyone in attendance of the RTD Districts that we as a group interact with and those are Districts I, J, K and L.

1. **Transportation Legislative Update**

*Chair Julie Mullica:* Introduced Senator Winter and Representative Gray presenting NATA with an update as to what we might expect to see in the 2021 legislative session.

*Senator Faith Winter: W*e are excited to share with you all that we are working on a transportation bill for the upcoming session. We want to get this group’s input and feedback on our initial plan. We are optimistic that this is the year to get some meaningful transportation funding done. It’s the top priority for both Matt and myself as well as Governor Polis. We are going to discuss the inputs and outputs of the transportation funding puzzle. We will discuss where the inputs would come from and what the outputs might look like as we spend this money. I will pass it over to Representative Gray to discuss the inputs and then I will take back over to talk about the outputs.

*Representative Matt Gray:* Speaking on the input side of this equation we finally need to address the stagnant gas tax problem that we have in our state. The gas tax is the primary state funder and hasn’t changed since 1992 when TABOR was passed. 30 years of inflation has created a negative impact on this funding stream, and we are starting to use less and less gas for climate reasons. We want to increase a fee on gasoline to cover the short and medium term. Long term we want to look at introduce modernization by building a funding structure for transportation as it will exist in the future. This could include charges for electric or autonomous vehicles, and delivery services. There is a plethora of services where people are paying others to use the roads for them (e.g., Uber Eats, Amazon, etc.). On another subject, when we have AV’s on the road we will need to charge the ones without passengers more than those with passenger. As we said, this will be a package of fees and we are not going to the ballot because there is no funding appetite for something like that right now. None of these groups have shown any issues with willingness to pay in a little bit more in order to have a better system.

*Senator Faith Winter:*  On the output side this bill will look different than bills in the past because we are trying to look toward the future while trying to encourage behavior change. Since the legislature has passed the Climate Goals 1261 bill, we are interested in reducing the carbon output of the transportation sector since it is the second largest contributor of carbon emission in Colorado. Firstly, that means a lot more money for multimodal. Multimodal isn’t just RTD; we are working with the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies to make sure we are working with all 63 transit agencies across the state. All of these transit agencies have been decimated by COVID restrictions. In the 1261 bill there is a lofty goal for how many EVs we are to have on the road, and we don’t have the infrastructure to support those vehicles right now. We are working with the CO Energy Office and utilities to see what something like this might look like from an operational standpoint. We also want to ensure we are adding an equity lens to this bill because we do know that the gas tax is regressive, and we want to also make sure that lower income folks have access to EV’s as well as increased multimodal accessibility. We want to optimize any new lane miles that reduce congestion and pollution. We are not taking the local government portion of the pie away; we are just going to try to direct where some of that money gets spent. As we all know, 117 passed on the ballot this year that prohibits new fees over a certain amount, but we can raise fees through our existing enterprises in HUTF and HPTE. Overlying factors include how we can forward Front Range Passenger Rail’s mission by connecting to the existing RTD system. This is an overview of where we are from an input and output perspective and would love to now open it up to questions, concerns and ideas. We are asking that everyone give us feedback in terms of what they really do/don’t want included in the bill and what their aspirations for the bill are.

*Representative Matt Gray:* I’d like to add one more thing on the input side in that the Governor has a $220 million request for spending on infrastructure from the general fund, but Faith and I both want to include that request within this greater long term funding solution conversation. We want to make sure that the general fund money is leveraged to accomplish something substantial.

*Paul DeRosher:* Do you all have a draft bill that can be reviewed?

*Senator Faith Winter:* We do not, this bill is likely to be 70 pages long. Our plan it to get feedback from everyone, create a whitepaper from that feedback and ask for reactions.

*Malcom Fleming:* Representative Gray mentioned imposing a fee on EVs and I just want to make sure he is aware that we currently charge a $50 fee for EVs and PEVs. If you extrapolate that $50 out over one year it assumes that the EV would drive about 20,000 miles per year as compared to a comparable gas tax payer. What kind of fee are you looking to charge in conjunction with that existing fee?

*Representative Matt Gray:* Yes, we are aware of this and we plan to increase it anyway. We are going to try and moderate the fee increase on EVs under the umbrella that everyone will pay a little bit more for an improved system. We will do whatever it takes to get more EVs on the road, but we have to increase fees on everyone that use the road. All that being said we will have a very climate friendly lens on this bill and allow that to influence what we want the outputs to be.

*Commissioner Steve O’Dorisio:* Thank you Senator Winter and Representative Gray for the outreach you are doing on this bill, it’s the best I’ve seen on a bill of this type. It sounds like we need to provide you guys feedback on the inputs and outputs of this bill, and I am sure that Karen Stuart would be happy to write the first draft of that white paper if you needed help with that. Please let us know how we can have some input on the “how” of this bill’s creation. Can you clarify if this bill will impact the existing funding streams or only new funding streams?

*Senator Faith Winter:* We have to have conversations around what is “fair” on the inputs side – e.g. Uber is on board but taxis are having an ongoing conversation. If anyone on this call has expertise or input on these fairness questions, we would welcome that feedback. On the output side, we are looking at how much should be spent on multimodal. In the last bill we allocated 15% for multimodal, and in this bill we will allocate more. There are some jurisdictions that do want to change the funding formula for the local share. There will be disagreements between local, rural and urban environments around what that share looks like. Should we share equally and ask everyone to spend the same percentage on climate and multimodal? That is an ongoing conversation and I’m asking for the thought leadership from everyone on this call.

*Karen Stuart:* We really appreciate all of your hard work on this and we know that you have been working closely with CDOT’s executive director Shoshana Lew and chief of innovative mobility Kay Kelly on the crafting of this bill. At CDOT we are reviewing the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Roadmap, and are excited about the work in this area. CDOT has a 10-year list of projects that we have identified through a 4-year effort and a number of those projects are on NATA’s list. We, as NATA, will be putting together a letter that includes a list of priority projects that coincide with CDOT’s priorities as well. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this bill.

*Senator Faith Winter:* We have also been working with CDOT on their main street’s projects. When we talk about multimodal, we are also talking about these types of projects that tie transportation directly to land-use.

*Representative Matt Gray:* We are not talking about changing how projects get prioritized through CDOT and their TC. We will not earmark projects.

*Chair Julie Mullica:* We will put together a list of priority projects from NATA and get that to you. We would ask that you keep us in the loop on when that white paper gets released.

*Trustee Ari Harrison:* My point that I’d like you to look at is just how this pandemic has impacted our transportation system. Erie has the highest rate of remote workers in the metro area, and I’m sure that trend will only accelerate metro-wide. While there are less cars on the road at rush hour times, we need to think about how the fee revenue might be less than you thought.

*Representative Matt Gray:* The answer is yes, but we need your help. In order to charge a fee to a person in Colorado, there has to be a nexus to that fee and a direct positive impact to the user who provides that fee. The ratio doesn’t have to be 1:1. We need your help in building a case that those that are not on the road are benefiting those that are on the road by creating less congestion.

*Senator Faith Winter:* CDOT also has modeling that shows how this COVID impact will permanently mean less people on the road. We are also looking at a large employer telework percentage requirement where if you don’t adhere to that percentage, you pay a fee. Additionally, we do have a lot of people who are using services that are using the road for individuals. The fee will be road-usage based on that service. We have all given up that privacy already, but we have to get there with the technology and politically.

*Chair Julie Mullica:* Thank you for this update and keeping us involved. This has such a huge impact on not only our citizen’s lives, but also our businesses so thank you for being willing to tackle this issue and make a positive change in the right direction. We will look forward to the white paper in the first week of January. We will send out Faith and Matt’s email addresses if you have further questions.

1. **Approval of October 22nd NATA Meeting Minutes**

***Approval of October 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes:*** *Motion to approve minutes made by Malcom Fleming (Erie), seconded by Thornton Mayor Pro Tem Sandgren and approved unanimously.*

1. **Election of 2021 Board Officers** -*NATA representatives participated in a virtual vote to approve the slate of officers for 2021 as follows:*
   1. Chair, Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Sandgren, Thornton
   2. Vice Chair, Councilmember Joan Peck, Longmont
   3. Treasurer, Mayor Pro Tem Anita Seitz, Westminster
2. **Smart Commute Report on 2020 North Metro Commuter Survey**

*Catherine Sanders:*  We had 1,200 responses for our survey this year which is less than 2019 but still good in the time of COVID. We want to specifically thank Longmont, Northglenn and Thornton for their participation in the survey. 11 companies or organizations participated at a level that allowed us to create a customized report like the one you see on the screen here that shows their results in comparison to the regional averages. As expected, teleworking has grown from 2.2% of commutes in 2019 to nearly 30% of commutes in 2020. All other modes decreased, except for walking with a small uptick. I-25 is the most prevalent commute corridor. We did ask directly about COVID, and only 55% of people responded that COVID directly impacted their commutes with most people teleworking but some saying they started working staggered or compressed work schedules. Flexible work schedules were the most popular desired policy from those that responded. We do ask people what would make people more likely to bike, walk, ride transit or carpool more and those responses are laid out in the full report and provide great insights for those in the planning space. We received over 1,600 write-in comments and this is a sampling of those comments. A lot of my work is to compiling and categorizing those comments for sharing organizations.

*Chair Julie Mullica:* I do ask that everyone check out the full report that Catherine put together. If you have questions, please reach out to the Smart Commute team.

1. **RTD’s new General Manager, Debra Johnson**

*Debra Johnson:* Thank you madam chair for this opportunity to attend this meeting today as it’s been enlightening to see the alliance taking place in the north area around transportation. I come into this space as us being a collaborative partner in all of this while being enthusiastically motivated to work with Senator Winter and Representative Gray in this whole effort. It’s my goal at RTD to not only bring transit, but to ensure we are playing our part in bringing a comprehensive transportation network to this region. Front Range Rail is exciting as a complementary piece to RTD. I come here to enthusiastically listen and admit when I don’t know something. I recognized that we are cash strapped at RTD, but also have urged my team to drive forward in finding the abundant opportunities for partnership. Collectively and collaboratively, we can come up with the transportation “cure”. With that I will yield the floor to questions.

*Mayor Pro-Tem Sandgren:* Thank you for your comments; it is refreshing to hear your comments and look forward to meeting you in person and working with you.

*Commissioner Steve O’Dorisio:* Welcome to the team. I want to make sure that as the north metro gets to the front of the line to get some of our improvements that help us plug into the rest of the existing system, I don’t want to see the queue change during this transition. We have great RTD Directors and I want to ensure that we continue to work together to get transit to our folks.

*Debra Johnson:* I want to recognize that the rules of engagement can change and I’m willing to listen and work with you all to make sure that we manage expectations together around the promises that have been made. Thank you for those comments.

*Malcom Fleming:* Welcome and we look forward to your visionary leadership in fulfilling promises that haven’t been kept from the past. In Erie, we don’t have very much service and we want to see a more equitable service with RTD within the bounds of their financial circumstance.

*Debra Johnson:* Thank you for those comments, I recognize that the foundation of RTD’s house isn’t very solid right now and we have to get that into a better place before we start upgrading the bathrooms in the house. I appreciate what you have said, and I pride myself in being a transformational leader and not just transactional.

*Sam Taylor:* Ms. Johnson, you come to RTD at an interesting time and I just wanted to say that there is a serious lack of trust in RTD among the northern communities. I’m glad to see you have a strong knowledgeable board and I look forward to seeing how you overcome the public lack of trust.

*Debra Johnson:* I recognize that lack of trust and I think first and foremost we have to get out there and listen in forums such as this. It’s important that I learn what I don’t know by listening more than I speak. If we don’t communicate out as RTD, then we are not managing expectations. Building trust starts with what comes out of your mouth, first and foremost.

*Chair Julie Mullica:*I agree with my fellow colleagues who have spoken before me. Our major concerns are always equity. We look forward to working collaboratively with you and appreciate you taking the time be with us today. We also want to ensure that we have open lines of communications moving forward.

1. **RTD Director Judy Lubow Farewell Comments**

*Chair Julie Mullica:* We wanted to thank you for all of your work as an RTD Director in District I and give you a chance for some farewell comments to this group here today.

*Director Judy Lubow*: What I would like to share is that for this District, I’m the only director that has two unfunded corridors so you need patience, determination and humility. It has been a privilege working with all of you folks and I will not only miss the work, but I will miss this particular time of transformation for RTD. I urge you to think through what you would like to see from RTD in terms of changes. You all know what you are missing and I urge you to communicate that as partner of RTD. Mold RTD to your own needs. I will miss working with each of you, but know that I will continue to see you all as we work together for the benefit of the people in our areas. We have an idea of geographic equity at RTD due to the massive size of the district, and we need to make sure we are serving the non-dense areas. This isn’t goodbye, thank you.

*Chair Julie Mullica:* Thank you for your service and your strong advocacy for this region for so many years. Please come back and grace us with your expertise.

1. **Presentation by DRCOG – Data Subcommittee Update, Brad Calvert (DRCOG)** ([**https://youtu.be/yUwvV8FS\_m4?t=4839**](https://youtu.be/yUwvV8FS_m4?t=4839))

*Brad Calvert (DRCOG):* I oversee the regional planning and development department at DRCOG. We work on the growth and development / land-use side of this equation. This presentation will be a final product of all of this work of the data subcommittee and others around the region. We have delivered three different presentations to the DRCOG board over the past year, so if you are interested in those please check DRCOG’s website. The Regional Transportation Plan is still in review, so please look out for more on that in the coming months. I’m essentially working in the middle of data inputs and outputs as we try and figure out what the spatial allocation of growth looks like for the region. The state demographer's office sets the forecasts for population, households and jobs and we at DRCOG break that data down to the county level and try to understand what that would look like in the future at that level. This data helps influence our transportation modeling. We used the NATA Data Subcommittee to help inform our thought process going into this back in 2018-2019 in order to get to this final product. In the past approach we used a regional zoning categorization with 17 categories, and now we have shifted to over 1,500 local zoning categories. We also are incorporating the local development pipeline that allows us to assume what is going to be built in the near term. We rely heavily on local input on our forecasts to ensure they are accurate. I’d encourage you all to go to www.data.drcog.org to see more of these interactive maps. Over the next 30 years, our growth is going to slow as a region as compared to the past 30 years. Birth rates are declining with slowing job growth is driving this projected change. Sometimes when we talk about the forecast, we forget that people are already here and that’s really important to understand to start. We have been working with our board about how we use this data modeling to inform our aim to achieve goals laid out in our existing Metro Vision plan. Despite growth in multifamily stock, many people in our region are still housing burdened by paying more than 30% of their annual income for their housing. Our affordable housing stock is still lacking as well. We looked at areas of household growth and if they are having new growth or additional growth, and we identified the new growth areas are the biggest driver of housing growth in our region moving forward. Master-planned communities that are in existing locations account for over 215,000 units across the metro region in the next 25 years and we are accounting for those. In terms of next steps, we are gearing up for a public review for our Regional Transportation Plan, engaging in discussions with our board for deeper dives in specific subjects, and piloting a more formal feedback loop with the state demographer’s office. Thank you for the time and I’m happy to answer any questions.

*Chair Julie Mullica:* Thank you for this important work and presentation, Brad. I will not take any questions at this point since we are over time, but please do reach out to Brad or the Smart Commute staff with questions. I want to recognize Erik Davidson as the new District I director. I’m completing my time as the NATA chair and I’m looking forward to 2021 and the leadership coming in after me.

*Karen Stuart:* I want to thank you Chair Mullica, on behalf of all of us for your excellent leadership and I think that we have accomplished a lot as NATA this year under unique circumstances. I appreciate your willingness to take on a leadership role at the RTD Accountability Committee as well. Be on the lookout for a quick meeting for the NATA officers as we try to offer feedback to Faith and Matt on their bill. Thank you all and congratulations Jessica, Joan and Anita.

1. Adjourn 9:11 a.m.