

# NATA Board Meeting Minutes

February 24, 2022

7:30-9:00am

Zoom Virtual Meeting

[Meeting Recording](#)

## NATA Members (who signed in)

<b>Lisa Hough</b>	AC-REP	<b>Tim Williams</b>	Federal Heights Staff
<b>Lynn Baca</b>	Adams Cnty Commissioner	<b>Phil Greenwald</b>	Longmont Staff
<b>Steve O'Doriso</b>	Adams Cnty Commissioner	<b>Julie Mullica</b>	Northglenn Council
<b>Chris Chovan</b>	Adams County Staff	<b>Sara Dussenberry</b>	Northglenn Staff
<b>Janet Lindquist</b>	Adams County Staff	<b>Brook Svoboda</b>	Northglenn Staff
<b>Brian Staley</b>	Adams County Staff	<b>Karen Stuart</b>	SCMN
<b>Greg Mills</b>	Brighton Mayor	<b>Carson Priest</b>	SCMN
<b>Chris Montoya</b>	Brighton Staff	<b>Tammy Herreid</b>	SCMN
<b>Guyleen Castriotta</b>	Broomfield Mayor	<b>Jessica Sandgren</b>	Thornton Mayor Pro Tem
<b>Austin Ward</b>	Broomfield Council	<b>Julia Marvin</b>	Thornton Council
<b>Sarah Grant</b>	Broomfield Staff	<b>Kent Moorman</b>	Thornton Staff
<b>Benjamin Huseman</b>	Commerce City Mayor	<b>Nancy McNally</b>	Westminster Mayor
<b>Brent Soderlin</b>	Commerce City Staff	<b>Debra Baskett</b>	Westminster Staff
<b>Todd Fessenden</b>	Erie Staff		

## SCMN Members (who signed in)

<b>Neal Goffinet</b>	FHU	<b>Gene Putman</b>	Putman Transp. Solutions
<b>Alex Pulley</b>	FHU	<b>Alex McKean</b>	RS&H
<b>Carla Perez</b>	HDR	<b>Myron Hora</b>	WSP

## Agency Partners (who signed in)

<b>Jamie Grim</b>	CDOT	<b>Debra Johnson</b>	RTD General Manager
<b>Julie George</b>	CDOT	<b>Vince Buzek</b>	RTD Board
<b>Bridget Hart</b>	CDOT	<b>Troy Whitmore</b>	RTD Board
<b>Andy Karsian</b>	CDOT	<b>Pauline Haberman</b>	RTD
<b>Tom Magenis</b>	CDOT	<b>Dave Jensen</b>	RTD
<b>Jan Rowe</b>	CDOT	<b>Chris Quinn</b>	RTD
<b>Andy Stratton</b>	CDOT	<b>Henry Stoppelkamp</b>	RTD

## Guests (who signed in)

<b>Jerry Mugg</b>	HG Consultants	<b>Sally Boccella</b>	Senator Hickenlooper
<b>Randy Grauberger</b>	Quandel Consultants		

### **1. Welcome - Chair Lynn Baca, Adams County Commissioner**

*Chair Lynn Baca welcomed participants.*

### **2. Approval of January 27, 2022 NATA Meeting Minutes**

*Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mayor Guyleen Castriotta seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Sandgren and approved unanimously.*

### **3. Smart Commute Update**

*Chair Baca congratulates Carson Priest on his new role as Executive Director starting March 1<sup>st</sup> and congratulated to Karen Stuart on her retirement and thanks for all your years of service.*

*Karen Stuart – We have reviewed all the ins and outs of the position and I feel very positive that he will be able to take this over, including some updated operations. On Monday I will hand him the checkbook and the keys to the “virtual” office and Carson will be official Executive Director, only the 2<sup>nd</sup> ever. This past week we took all our swag, supplies, equipment, and other things to our new storage unit; my garage has been our storage since March of 2020. Smart Commute is in good hands, and along with Tammy Herreid & Catherine Sanders, both of whom has great skill sets and excellent work ethic. This team is a good one and will bring bigger and better things.*

*Carson Priest – We are well underway with a new brand and website refresh with the one-time \$60,000 CDOT TDM Support Grant that we received late last year. Our brand and website are 10 years old and in need of an update. We will also be changing our name to just “Smart Commute”, so keep an eye out for more on that in the next month. Also, it is that time of year again where we start planning for our summer events and outreach. So please if you know or hear of any events you are planning for this summer and would like us to attend, please reach out to us to let us know so we can get that on our calendar.*

### **4. RTD Directors Report**

*Director Buzek – You all may have seen the article in the Denver Post this morning about our new Collective Bargaining Agreement of which negotiations are still underway. The final version of that Agreement will be coming to the Board for final approval soon. We are confident that with some of the terminology and concessions in the new contract we will have a better chance at hiring and retaining operators and other front-line workers. RTD has selected HDR to conduct the NW Rail Peak Service Plan Study.*

*Director Whitmore – We are finally going to have an in-person Planning Retreat at the end of March for the Board and staff. It will be a great opportunity to have all the “new” board and staff together in-person, as most of our interactions so far have been virtual.*

*Debra Johnson (RTD CEO & GM) –The public comment period for Re-imagine RTD and the System Optimization Plan has been extended to March 9. We have a large amount of outreach planned, leveraging both multi-cultural and multi-lingual resources to make sure we garner feedback from a myriad of audiences. With our Spare the Air & Fares initiative, our team is working diligently to identify days on which there will be Fare Free Days to entice people to use public transit and change their habits on bad air quality days.*

*Mayor Pro Tem Sandgren* – I do have a couple questions about FlexRide, regarding receiving calls from senior on FlexRide not showing up on time causing them to miss doctors' appointments. Do you know what is causing this or how do they call in with concerns about this?

*Debra Johnson* – I will need to get with my team and our contractor regarding this specific question and get back to you on the reason for this missed service that would be in addition to the “great resignation” and ongoing staffing shortages. On Tuesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> Director Buzek, Director Catlin, COO Michael Ford and CFO Dave McCloud and myself went before the Legislative Audit Committee. In December 2020, the Office of the State Auditor completed their audit of their performance review of RTD in relation to (1) the availability of operators, rest breaks and quality of life issues for front line personnel, (2) RTD's internal audit function, and (3) fare box recovery ratio. We worked with the American Public Transit Association to get information on how we can improve on some of our practices and implement a lot of corrective actions to address some of the findings that came out of the audit. Some of the recommendations are partially implemented, and one of those is we are working with our union partners on some contract modifications. Another recommendation is regarding changing up our internal audit function by outsourcing this function via an RFP process.

#### **5. Update on 84<sup>th</sup> Subcommittee Meeting – Karen Stuart**

*Karen Stuart* – I will spearhead this effort as your CDOT Transportation Commissioner for the duration of the subcommittee's meetings. The tour that took place a few months ago with several local agency's elected officials and CDOT of I-25 from I-270 to 104<sup>th</sup> helped kickstart the formation of this subcommittee. The group consensus is to have 84<sup>th</sup>/I-25 and I-270 projects be done at the same time as both projects are equally important, both bottlenecks, and both cause significant safety issues. CDOT's Executive Director agreed to hire a new consultant to do an expedited Environmental Assessment (EA) for this specific I-25 project. In this new EA, there will be no general-purpose lanes included and the center-loading platform for the RTD bus stop. That portion of the project is still up in the air, primarily due to lack of funding. CDOT has plans of having a mobility hub every 10 miles for Bustang, which means bus stop at 84<sup>th</sup> is even more essential. We are planning on holding meetings every 3 weeks, and the next meeting will be with RTD Board Members and senior staff with a focused discussion on their position on the center-loading platform. Additional meetings are planned to be held with the ROADIS P3 Proposers, Colorado Motor Carriers Association, the North I-25 Coalition and then with State Legislators, Congressional Representatives, etc. We are hoping to have the RTD meeting on March 11 and all these meetings concluded by the first of May. After these series of meetings, we are planning to really hit our elected official, from the state house up to the federal representatives hard for support. The group is really focused on identifying federal funding, primarily to help with this center-loading bus platform. A key for this group, and an ongoing issue, is to quickly identify a proposed alternative because coalitions like this one with elected officials can fall apart as people change office and it takes time to build an educated group of supporters.

*Gene Putman* – I would like to suggest giving the corridor a catchy name, like CDOT did with “The Mousetrap” and T-REX projects. A name can give an identity to the project and can generate interest with the public.

*Councilmember Mullica* – I think it is a good idea to name the project. I'm concerned about how much this is costing our local first responders, not only monetarily but from a safety standpoint as well. I feel our biggest concern is safety and improving it on this corridor. It's such an important project and seems to continue to get stalled; it is time to get this addressed and moved forward.

*Mayor Pro Tem Sandgren* – I agree with Julie on the safety issue and constant drain on our resources, and about naming it. The lane markings are hard to see between all the highway mergers in both directions, which is another safety issue.

*Commission Baca* – Transportation is also one of AC-REP's biggest priorities this year. We are sandwiched in the middle between The Gap project and I-25 in Fort Collins. Those people on I-25 must go somewhere and are traveling through our project so whatever we do, so we need to include capacity improvements.

*Commissioner O'Doriso* – Karen, how you help us make sure we don't allow outside forces to pit I-270 against I-25?

*Karen Stuart* – We are making it very clear that these are both necessary projects and that they both be funded and completed at the same time. Even though they are both within Adams County, there should be no reason on why one project should be pit against the other. There are different funding challenges for each project, but both are equally important so that shouldn't be an excuse. We must band together and push these forward to get it done. The mantra is, it's not one or the other, it's both of them.

*Commissioner O-Doriso* – We need to make sure these are not designated as Adams County projects; these are Colorado projects. We are connecting portions of Colorado to each other and say these are for all of Colorado. Those that get impacted the both are the ones that travel through this corridor, not those that necessarily live right next to one or the other.

*Karen Stuart* – The way these projects get designated as Adams County projects is that CDOT asks Adams County to give them a Priority List, which contains these two projects. Region 1 has a lot of massive projects, but when CDOT looks at the map they see that Adams County has two large projects. We have to get past that thought process and looking at these as state projects. These are corridors used for statewide travel, national freight, transit, disproportionately impacted communities, safety among others.

## **6. State Transportation Legislation Update – Andy Karsian, CDOT**

*Andy Karsian (CDOT)* – HB1026 is a bipartisan bill creating an income tax credit for alternative commuting for all employers, which is sitting appropriations right now awaiting a fiscal note. HB1138 is pretty much the same tax credit as HB1026 but is for 7 years instead of 10 years. HB1138, which is in committee today, adds in CDOT funding for TMAs of \$250,000 out of the multimodal options fund. It also would require CDOT to create a survey that TMAs would administer with employers. There are ongoing conversations about the future of HB1138 once it comes out of committee, especially around the funding. The multimodal options fund is not a sustainable option, so we are looking at transfer from the General Fund to CDOT to allow for additional grants to TMAs to develop these surveys and their services. HB1028, the Bike Safety Stop Bill, has passed the House and is now in the Senate. CDOT feels it works for signed intersections, but not for signalized intersections so we are trying to offer some amending language.

*Commissioner O'Doriso* – Who would administer this (HB1138), and how long would it take for each business to get these requirements done? Some of these businesses have a hard of enough time controlling what they do on the job, not including what they do before and after they get there.

*Andy Karsian* – I think you have accurately summarized the issues surrounding that bill with your question. The intent is that CDOT is the administering agency for this and we would work in

collaboration with the CO Energy Office, TMA's, DRCOG and other partners to develop the survey and then put it out. CDOT allocated 1.5 FTE to facilitate this process. I do not know how many businesses this would impact.

## **7. Federal Infrastructure Funding and Grant Opportunities**

*Jamie Grim (CDOT)* – The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) are referring to the same piece of legislation. Congress passed this \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill, and it was signed by President Biden Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>. Of this \$1.2 trillion, \$550 billion is allocated in new spending, \$150 billion is in discretionary grants, and the remainder of the total was allocated to transportation projects in the Surface Transportation Reauthorization. The funding breakdown is: roads and bridges \$110 billion; transit \$39 billion; rail \$66 billion; safety \$11 billion; airports \$25 billion; ports and waterways \$17 billion; EV chargers \$7.5 billion; electric buses \$7.5 billion; and reconnecting communities \$1 billion. In Colorado, we are expecting to see about \$200 million annually in new funding for 4 years. At CDOT we plan to allocate \$225 million for bridge repairs and replacements; \$35 million over 5 years for wildfire protection, \$688 million over 5 years for water infrastructure improvements and \$100 million for broadband expansion. \$200-250 million in new money for transit providers across the state and \$57 million for EV charging network expansion in Colorado. There are several new grants, but CDOT does not have a lot of information about these programs yet and we would encourage everyone to go the USDOT website and sign up for press releases on information on these grants for the latest information.

*Sally Boccella (Senator Hickenlooper)* – There is still a lot to unpack and a lot of unknowns around the IIJA. We also did put together a document with information on these grants and projects with hyperlinks which I will send to Carson for dissemination. Feel free to follow up to me directly with any questions.

*Karen Stuart* – I would like to thank Jamie and for all her work on this she is tuned into what we are looking to find. I'm excited to think about these opportunities as we put together our game plan on the 84<sup>th</sup> project. Thank you for your efforts on this and we will want you to come back as these grant opportunities develop.

## **8. NATA Retreat Planning Update**

*Carson Priest* – I sent out an email to the NATA membership about an in-person NATA retreat in April. I will put the link to the Doodle poll in the chat and ask that the NATA membership fill out the poll with your preference so we can start working on planning for that retreat.

*Commissioner Baca* – Thank you to the jurisdictions & AC-REP that stepped up to offer space for the retreat.

## **9. Closing Comments**

*Chair Baca* – As a reminder, anyone is welcome to attend the SPC meeting on where we plan the NATA meetings.

*Karen Stuart* – I would like to say farewell as Smart Commute Executive Director but will continue to attend these meetings as your CDOT Transportation Commissioner. I look forward to when we can meet in person again to capitalize on the great networking opportunities. Thank you for letting me be your leader these past years.

*Chair Baca* – Thank you for your longstanding leadership, and I look forward to continuing to work with you as our CDOT Commissioner.

*Meeting Adjourned at 8:35 a.m.*