**NATA Board Meeting Minutes**

**September 26, 2019**

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

**ACED Offices, 12200 Pecos Street, #100, Westminster, CO 80234**

**Welcome by Chair Chaz Tedesco and introductions.**

**NATA Members (who signed in)**

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| **Deb Durand** | ACED | **Phil Greenwald** | Longmont Staff |
| **Chaz Tedesco** | Adams County Comm. | **Brad Harvey** | MNCC |
| **Greg Mills** | Brighton Council | **Julie Mullica** | Northglenn Council |
| **Lynn Baca** | Brighton Council | **Brooke Svoboda** | Northglenn Staff |
| **Liz Law Evans** | Broomfield Council | **Catherine Sanders** | SCMN |
| **Kevin Standbridge** | Broomfield Staff | **Karen Stuart** | SCMN |
| **Nicole Frank** | Commerce City Council | **Tammy Herreid** | SCMN |
| **Rick Teter** | Commerce City Council | **Jessica Sandgren** | Thornton Council |
| **Joe Wilson** | Commerce City Staff | **Kent Moorman** | Thornton Staff |
| **Todd Fessenden** | Erie Staff | **Debra Baskett** | Westminster Staff |
| **Tim Williams** | Federal Heights Staff | **Jon Voelz** | Westminster Council |
| **Kevin Ash** | Frederick Staff | **Herb Atchison** | Westminster Mayor |
| **Joan Peck** | Longmont Council |  |  |

**SCMN Members (who signed in)**

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| **Joyce Downing** | Smart Commute | **Jennifer Carpenter** | Michael Baker Intl. |
| **Joseph Tate** | RS&H | **Myron Hora** | WSP |

**Agency Partners (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stephanie Alanis** | CDOT |  |  |
| **Julie George** | CDOT | **Dave Genova** | RTD |
| **Andy Stratton** | CDOT | **Judy Lubow** | RTD Board |
| **Brad Calvert** | DRCOG | **Vince Buzek** | RTD Board |
| **Ron Papsdorf** | DRCOG |  |  |

**Guests (who signed in)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Jeremy Rodriguez** | Rep. Ed Perlmutter | **Kevin Vargas** | Rep. Jason Crow |
| **Holly Peterson** | Westgate Schools | **Steven Emmer** | Sen. Gardner |
| **Amanda Cushing** | FHU |  |  |

* **Approval of August 22, 2019 NATA Meeting Minutes**

**Nicole Frank:** One typo in the minutes: “I want to thank COT” instead of “CDOT” under US-36 update. (Will be revised.)

***Approval of August 22, 2019 Meeting Minutes:*** *Motion to approve minutes made by Mayor Atchison, seconded by Council Member Teter, and approved unanimously.*

* **Smart Commute Metro North Update: Karen Stuart, Tammy Herreid**

**Transit Grant brief update**

**Karen Stuart:** Smart Commute applied for Adams County Sub Regional TIP funding – thank you Adams County for allowing us to apply (provided details about the grant). The service targets workforce and multifamily in the 144th and I-25 area. We had 20+ people attend a public meeting, no attendees had any concerns or issues, and all were supportive. RTD is targeting service to begin the second week of November.

**Railvolution brief report**

**Karen Stuart:** I attended RailVolution in Vancouver. One of the presentations was by the Mayor of New Westminster (Vancouver suburb) – his presentation was engaging, and he was a great proponent of transit. New Westminster is 18-20 miles outside of Vancouver proper. He talked about the importance of transit to the suburbs, to reduce traffic and increase access – to be able to get in and out without congestion that is crippling. I thought his comments were great and wanted to mention that you Westminster Mayors rock it! I also found that TransLink (Vancouver transit agency) is putting $7B in funding to expand transit. Given, they have very robust transit, but the fact that that area embraces transit is a good lesson for us. Yes, please get us transit to the suburbs!

**Go-Tober campaign brief update**

**Tammy Herreid:** Getting ready to kick off this challenge, goes for the whole month of October. We have six companies participating: Circle Graphics, City of Northglenn, City of Longmont, Imagine!, Seagate and Xilinx. The challenge encourages employees to track their “smart trips.” Tracking trips helps each respective organization to win in their category. Companies compete against others – there are 75 in the metro this year. There are $5k in media advertising as a prize.

**Karen Stuart**: We want to recognize Longmont for their participation; there are a lot of Longmont companies participating with us this year.

* **RTD Directors Comments - Director Buzek, Director Lubow**

**Director Buzek**: I attended the 144th & I-25 service meeting. There were only a handful of constituents that came, many had a great deal of questions, including questions about other things than just this new service. We also recently had meetings in Thornton and Northglenn about the new bus service changes for the N Line. There was a lot of input, which will help us to make some tweaks to the service.

**RTD General Manager Dave Genova**: Many of you received our email on Tuesday evening. We gave our board an update on our progress. We were targeting first quarter to open the N Line, but we unfortunately won’t make the first quarter. It is very desirable to us to start service to coincide with service changes, which would be May or August 2020. That’s why, in the notice, we called out May or August.

The contractor still hasn’t hit the substantial completion milestones, which would signal the turnover of the corridor to RTD, allowing us to do our testing, training, and regulatory approvals – many approvals by FRA and PUC. Good news: we have a few days of good data on the grade testing crossing, as far as approvals. We have ATC (conventional) and PTC (positive control). They are different systems with different operating conditions, and different timing elements. We haven’t tested the wireless crossing yet. That testing will start next month and will take two to four weeks. Once we are through the wireless testing, we present the data to FRA, allowing us to test the wireless grade crossings and PTC with all trains running on the system.

We are hoping to start that testing in November, and that is a two-week process. Wireless testing and multiple train testing are the two critical testing milestones for us. We are putting together a complete list of the remining tasks and regulatory approvals, so we have a tangible product to show you all where we are in in the process. I know everyone is highly interested in getting this open as soon as possible. That is our status on testing.

**Council Member Sandgren, Council Member Baca, Council Member Peck, Council Member Julie Mullica, Commissioner Tedesco, Karen Stuart, Council Member Downing: [**All raised substantial concerns about RTD, primarily focusing on (in no particular order):

* + RTD’s failure to provide advance communications to elected officials prior to media releases – elected officials are finding out in the daily news about major N Line decisions
  + Lack of trust and general disbelief of any promise or commitment that RTD makes until it is demonstrated that promises have been kept
  + Difficulties in receiving different “target dates” for the N Line opening, especially depending upon what meeting someone attends, and which RTD staffers are in attendance
  + The lack of transparency and communication from RTD about the train and it’s progress; so much failure that someone should to lose their job
  + RTD’s failure to provide accurate and consistent communications at public meetings
  + RTD sometimes engaging in finger-pointing to deflect constituent angst at public meetings at the expense of local government
  + The “death spiral” of bus service cuts that the north metro is often experiencing, where our already low service levels, which result naturally in low ridership, are further targeted for cuts due to low ridership
  + The high fares in parts of the north metro prohibit ridership from being affordable, and appear to have been set arbitrarily
  + Elected officials being placed in the difficult position of defending RTD to constituents without any information or support from RTD
  + RTD setting elected officials up for failure or embarrassment in front of constituents by excluding them from updates, or changing information without updating elected officials
  + RTD forgetting that taxpayers and their elected officials are its “customer” and not providing adequate “customer service”
  + Elected officials are being held accountable for RTD’s failure to deliver FasTracks, and today is RTD’s turn to be held accountable by elected officials
  + Past elected officials, many of whom are still in the room today, stood up before their constituents and promised them that giving RTD this tax money would be a good thing for their community, and the failure of FasTracks to be delivered has damaged the integrity and credibility of all other requests for taxpayer funding
  + RTD needs to understand that elected officials will not stop holding RTD accountable until they have been delivered the promised projects in full
  + And, regarding the B Line specifically: No apparent work in educating the media about the B Line Peak Service Plan, which has built a coalition of support; no information about BNSF pricing, and no communications about RTD’s plans for engaging with BNSF; and difficulty working with RTD to decide on the fare box recovery price for Longmont’s service buy-out in general.

**Dave Genova’s /RTD’s commitment:**

* + Providing the “checklist” about remaining tasks to be finished prior to opening
  + Providing elected officials with timely progress reports
  + Dave Genova coming to any meeting to provide a report]
* **I-25 Segment 3 Construction update- Stephanie Alanis, CDOT**

**Stephanie Alanis**: *(Presentation available on NATA website)*

This has been a “completion schedule contract” – the contractor has a date to be completed, set by us, and they need to hit it. For that reason, we’ve been seeing 7-days-a-week work on I-25

Pavement work will be completed in the fall, before freezing impacts work, but ITS and lane configurations will be happening through the winter to wrap everything up. However, there shouldn’t be any more major lane closures from this point on.

Median barrier is being finished – there was a change, which meets a new safety standard, and the change is a good thing for overall roadway safety.

Paving on the toll lanes still needs to happen .

The major visual aspects of the project that the public will see have been completed.

**Council Member Sandgren**: Are you continuing the rough grading between the general purpose and toll lanes, so that if people cross it, it will be noisy?

**Stephanie Alanis**: Yes, we will have a light rumble strip in that space.

* **DRCOG/NATA Regional Planning, Data Collection and Reporting Presentation**

**Ron Papsdorf:** There have been a lot of conversations at NATA with staff about land use, population data, and forecasting. I am going to talk a bit about the regional transportation plan process, and then Brad will talk about modeling. We are moving from RTP 2040 to RTP 2050 – significant amount of work over the next year and a half to complete.

*(Presentation on the NATA website)*

**Director Lubow**: What are the consequences of not being on track for the targets?

**Ron Papsdorf**: No consequences for us per se – some are tied to federal standards, though, so there could be future consequences, mostly around air quality. For instance, what is happening in California currently, with federal funding possibly being withheld. Primarily these measures help us determine if the decisions we are making now are getting us to the vision we want to achieve.

**Brad Calvert**: *(continuing presentation slides)* I am the Director of the Regional Planning and Development Division. We support Ron and his team with good data and assumptions for the planning work. Ron laid out the big schedule, and I want to give you a sense of the land use, growth, and planning assumptions, especially because those have funding implications.

We met with the data sub-committee group here in February, which was great timing for us. We had been considering changes in our modeling, and that conversation with NATA pushed us over the edge of making the decision, and we’re changing things. Any change in the modeling world has cascading consequences, however. Over the last 6 months, we have focused on the modeling and the tools with a deadline in mind, looking for a set of assumptions that can feed the modeling scenario. This isn’t the final forecast; it is a deadline to begin modeling from. Our target deadline is the middle of next summer. We are going a to do a lot of testing this year, and will be ready for conversations with local governments and finalization of the assumptions next year. We are trying to understand local growth in the next 50 years to see what the year 2050 might bring.

For this group in particular, you have been frustrated with our ability to capture recent developments. We heard that loud and clear in February, and really saw that as a blind spot in our modeling, and we have changed the process to make our process more responsive to development. As development projects are approved, we are able to feed that into the model, which might change assumptions moving forward.

In our previous modeling, we took every planning category in the region and collapsed them into 7 categories. Now, we take every zoning category that exists in the region and keep it in our assumptions. “R1” means different things in different local governments – there are no consistent zoning categories. We want to fine tune to the local level.

On the employment data side, we were running into data sharing issues. As far as we are concerned, when we co-develop data, we want it to be sharable. With the employment datasets we were using, we were running into public sharing restrictions, which we’ve had to manage.

Currently, DRCOG is working on the model over the next quarter, in cooperation with local governments – in some cases, local government staff are reviewing data outputs at the same time as DRCOG staff.

**Mayor Atchison**: We’re working to get accurate, meaningful data to DRCOG. The data does change regularly.

**Brad Calvert**: I’ve spent this time getting to “today” – our next thing will be to look at future zoning plans, master planning efforts. That way, we’ll be understanding the development happening today, as well as the development planned for the future at the local government level.

**Mayor Atchison**: In the “mixed use” developments, is there a common definition people are using?

**Brad Calvert**: Our number-one pain point are “PUDs.” It is a major wildcard for us, we have no way of knowing what the development community is going to do. We have a hard time understanding the local expectations.

**Mayor Atchison**: That’s because we don’t know either. The point is to leave it open to development.

**Brad Calvert**: We need to get better at working with local staff to translate local plans/priorities to get things to a point where we can run a calculation.

**Ron Papsdorf**: If I can circle back to the RTP – we need to collectively achieve an understanding of the needs of the region, and how to allocate limited resources. Neither land use forecasting nor transportation forecasting are hard sciences. We shouldn’t make “perfect” the enemy of the “good.” What is critical is the near-term projections. We do an RTP every five years by law. It is near-term needs that need to be accurate, and if long-term are “good enough,” we will make better decisions.

**Brad Calvert**: The only guarantee I can make is that the model will be wrong somewhere. We want to be close enough to right in as many places as possible.

**Kevin Standbridge**: Thank you to Karen and her staff for pushing this forward. And thank you to DRCOG.

**Brad Calvert**: There are a half-dozen jurisdictions that have really been a part of the ride. I appreciate the time and energy from people in this room as well.

I worked in land development in the past in Florida. I don’t know if things work the same there and here. Is there a way that a template could be put together and filled out in order to keep track of things like PUDs?

**Brad Calvert**: That isn’t something we’re doing. If we’re going to ask something at the local government level, we need to make sure that what we’re looking for is “bulletproof.” If we get to that point, we will have a discussion about whether or not that is something local government could accommodate, we could talk about schedule, etc.

**Council Member Downing**: I wanted to comment – thank you for hearing us. I know we put you on the spot in February. This is so important, having accurate data in the model. It really impacts us.

**Karen Stuart**: I wanted to remind the group of why we did this in the first place – it started with the presentation on BRT by Holly Buck, which showed no development in our area. We felt overlooked by the data presented once again. We’ve found that development can move very fast in our area, and that accelerated development isn’t reflected in the current models. That determines how studies look, and if we receive investment. I wanted to thank you for hearing us and working with our sub-committee. Is our committee still going to be a part of this?

**Brad Calvert**: I am viewing your sub-committee like a focus group. We’re trying to understand things across 50+jurisdictions, but we are getting our reality check from the sub-committee. We are getting a gut check from them. We can talk about ideas and new things with that group. We are probably three months from that conversation, maybe first part of next year. We have begun to create that scheduled development, need to deploy the model, and determine our ask.

**Acting Chair -Council Member Mullica**: Thank you for your presentation.

* **Discussion for NATA re Proposition CC support: Information slide about CC.**

(NATA will not take a position for or against Proposition CC due to local City Councils deciding to abstain from taking a position and therefore not being able to sign on to a Letter of Support by NATA)

**Meeting adjourned at 9:01 am.**