

**DRAFT**  
**AGENDA**

**North Area Transportation Alliance**

February 3, 2010

6:30 PM

*City of Thornton Training Room  
9500 Civic Center Drive  
Thornton*

- I. Old Items
  - a. Approval of Minutes from December 9, 2009 (attached)
  
- II. Presentations:
  - a. CDOT Funding for "Gap" - Jim Paulmeno (CDOT)
    - i. Resolution supporting CDOT environmental study (attached)
  - b. RTD presentation on Secretary LaHood's announcement regarding New Starts program criteria/implications for FasTracks – Julie Skeen (RTD)
  - c. Transportation legislation update
    - i. Rosemary Rodriguez, State Director, Senator Bennet's Office
    - ii. Staff representative from Representative Polis's office
  - d. Draft Outline for Representative Polis tour/presentation February 19, 2010 – Technical Group (to be handed out at meeting)
  
- III. Old Business:
  - a. Moving NATA under auspices of North Metro Chamber
  
- IV. New Business:
  - a. 2010 Lobbying Program
  
- V. 2010 Calendar:
  - a. March 24, 2010
  - b. May 26, 2010
  - c. July 28, 2010
  - d. September 22, 2010
  - e. November 24, 2010

North Area Transportation Alliance Steering Committee

**DRAFT**

Summary Minutes

December 9, 2009

Mayor Hansen welcomed everyone to the December 9 meeting of the North Area Transportation Alliance held at the School District #12 Conference Center.

Members and alternates attending were: Brighton – Mayor Dick McLean, former Mayor Jan Pawlowski; Broomfield – Mayor Pat Quinn, Kevin Standbridge, Deputy City Manager; Commerce City - Tom Acre, Deputy City Manager; Dacono – Bill Efting, City Manager; Erie – Trustee Cheryl Hauger; Firestone – Mayor Chad Auer, Wes LaVanchy, Town Manager; Longmont – Mayor Bryan Baum, Phil Greenwald, Transportation Planner; Northglenn – Mayor Joyce Downing; Thornton – Mayor Erik Hansen, Gene Putman, Transportation Planning Manager; Westminster – Mayor Nancy McNally, Matt Lutkus, Deputy City Manager; and Metro North Chamber of Commerce – Todd Steward, Jonathan Perlmutter, and Deb Obermeyer. Also attending were: Travis Reynolds (Northglenn), Gordon Pedrow (Longmont), Angie Drumm, (CDOT); Joyce Hunt and Todd Barnes (Thornton); and Jeff Leib (Denver Post).

Minutes. The September 23, 2009 minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

New Items.

- a. BBC Report. Ford Frick provided a brief overview of the key points included in the critiques prepared by Urban Engineers, Inc. and First Southwest Company – independent consultants who reviewed RTD's 2009 FasTracks Financial Plan on behalf of the Denver Regional Council of Government (DRCOG). He made the observation that it was not so much what the consultants and DRCOG said in their critiques as much as what they didn't say. Ford indicated that the most notable shortcoming of the critiques was the reluctance to raise and comment on the compounding risk in RTD's multiple sources of revenue as well as RTD's failure to address the practical implications of possible revenue shortfalls. He also commented that while the consultant reports noted the high level of risk in each element of the FasTracks funding, they failed to note that the public participants in this project don't share the risk equally and that it falls on those lines scheduled to be constructed last. Ford indicated that there's been a dramatic change in the practicality of achieving the original FasTracks vision and this problem hasn't been dealt with...and with an uncertain revenue picture, RTD should be looking at alternative plans on what they will do depending on the revenue outcomes.

Ford said that the DRCOG consultants had commented about the "optimistic" sales tax projections but did not offer any suggestions or comments on the methodology other than RTD should take another look at this. Mayor Quinn commented that RTD has done just that with the recent formation of a sales tax peer working group charged to further refine the sales tax estimate methodology. Ford said that he had attended the groups first meeting and noted that this group was scheduled to finalize their recommendations as to how to improve the model at a meeting on December 10, 2009. Ford made the comment that while what comes out of this effort may be a better model, the reality is that it is very difficult to predict sales tax revenues in the

future particularly given the fundamental changes that have taken place in the economy over the last several years. He indicated that what he hoped would come out of this peer group is more of a range of estimates and a recognition of the difficulty in predicting long-term sales tax growth rates.

Mayor Hansen indicated that there had been a lot of discussion among the NATA members regarding the timing of the release of the BBC Report and press event as well as the tone of the cover letter. Mayor Hansen said that the timing was the function of several factors: a) that there was no funding for the North Metro Line and other lines and funding had been relegated to reliance on a new sales tax increase; b) that RTD's 2010 Annual Performance Evaluation was scheduled to be presented January 5, 2010 and the desire was to have some ability to influence the report and future steps; c) RTD had scheduled the announcement of its acquisition of the ROW for the North Metro Line on December 1; d) wanted to bring forward to the public an awareness of the funding issue and that we can't just have a couple of lines completed and call it good; and e) that there needs to be a concerted effort among the entire area to complete FasTracks. Mayor Hansen apologized for the short turn-around time which was further complicated by the Thanksgiving holiday.

Mayor McNally indicated that she had expressed her concerns through emails to the members and reiterated that she didn't sign the letter because of its tone and inability to meet ahead of time to discuss this before it was launched. She felt that a coalition doesn't work this way and she suggested that if this coalition wants to move forward, it needs to be under a different umbrella. Mayor McNally suggested moving NATA under the umbrella of the Metro North Chamber and suggested that this would take personalities and politics of elected officials out of the process. Mayor Quinn said he was in Hawaii over the holiday and had no means to download and review the letter in advance but agreed with Mayor McNally's comments. He also said that he agreed that the RTD process to date hasn't been good but there is a change in management at RTD and staff has been more participatory and we should be participating in this new process. Mayor Quinn stated that he shared Mayor Hansen's concerns about the funding but the question now is what is the way forward and do we work with RTD or not. The group agreed that NATA needs to work with RTD to try and fix the problem. Mayor Hansen asked if anyone had an issue with the content of report everyone agreed the BBC report was accurate.

Todd Steward commented that coalitions are hard to create and maintain and that even if we have a global statement on NATA's focus, everyone will still have a need to express their own specific needs. However, it is in NATA's best interest to speak in a cohesive voice and if we don't, NATA will become ineffective. Mayor Baum commented that there's a difference between advocacy and activism and activism needs stronger language...his question was if we want to be advocates, what's the best way to do that? Mayor Baum also stated that he didn't know if the Metro North Chamber was the way to go but would be interested to see more information. Bill Efting and Cheryl Hauger indicated that neither the tri-cities nor Longmont were in the Metro North Chamber and that the Chamber didn't represent their businesses either. Mayor McNally made a motion seconded by Quinn to move NATA under auspices of North Metro Chamber but the group decided to defer this discussion until the January

meeting and asked for the North Metro Chamber to provide a construct as well as for others to provide any other ideas as well.

- b. Letter to Mayor Hickenlooper. Mayor Hansen indicated that a draft letter to Mayor Hickenlooper had been sent out for review and comment and the intent was to send this to Mayor Hickenlooper in advance of the January 15<sup>th</sup> meeting. Joyce Hunt indicated that we had received several comments back concerning some language that may imply that we are asking for the New Starts grant criteria to be changed in a manner that would jeopardize the \$1 billion grant currently in process. The discussion was that this wasn't the intent ... that the idea was to look prospectively at every opportunity we might have to secure additional federal funding. Joyce Hunt read some proposed language changes in the letter and that these changes would be emailed out to the group in the morning. The goal was to have all members sign this letter so there will be a request for a quick turn around on this matter with signatures sent back via email or fax for the final letter.

A question was asked about how this meeting came about and Mayor Hansen indicated that Mayor Hickenlooper had asked for this meeting before the November 30 press event on the BBC Report. Mayor Quinn said that he had spoken with Mayor Hickenlooper at another venue and that Mayor Hickenlooper is an advocate for going to ballot in 2010. Mayor Quinn stated that perhaps Mayor Hickenlooper's motivation was to get people on board for a 2010 ballot and to get an advocacy going again. Mayor Baum stated that we need to move on from the BBC Report and get a strategy in place to follow-up with this effort. He felt that we have an advocate in Mayor Hickenlooper, that he carries lot of weight nationally, so need to partner with him to develop a solution. Mayor Baum indicated that he felt we collectively would need Mayor Hickenlooper to push the funding solution forward and that it was likely going to cost some money to hire a professional to help us lobby for funding. Mayor Baum also stated that we need to concentrate our efforts on being a group with a common cause...that we need to come up with a plan to leverage our clout and Mayor Hickenlooper's clout as FasTracks has national attention. We have to follow-up with the first step and move forward with some action.

- c. 2010 Lobbying. Mayor Quinn commented that the bottom line is that if nothing happens to secure additional funds only the west and east lines will be completed...and that we should concentrate on advocating for building the entire system. Mayor Hansen said that some of the members have competing interests and when there's a limited amount of funding available for FasTracks, corridors are going to be out there negotiating for their own corridor for whatever is left, if anything. Mayor Quinn stated that there are two major sources of revenue ...federal dollars and tax dollars which RTD is going to have to ask for a tax increase at some point in the future...although he doesn't think 2010 is right year to go to the voters. The group discussed the need to advocate for more federal money as a group particularly at a time when there is a potential for a second stimulus or jobs bill...even though a reauthorization of the transportation bill likely wouldn't be taken up until 2011. There was also discussion that the group should be lobbying RTD for an equitable distribution of whatever monies and that there will be a need to go to other leaders in the metro area to get them on board to support a ballot issue when and if that comes up in the future.

- d. NATA presentations to member Councils. Mayor Hansen indicated that in some conversations he had with other members, there was a desire to schedule a NATA briefing with member Councils. He indicated that if a presentation was desired, to contact Joyce Hunt to coordinate a schedule. Bill Efting indicated that the tri-cities would be having a joint meeting in March 2010 and he would contact Joyce Hunt to schedule a briefing.

Reports.

- a. NATA Technical Group meeting with CDOT Regions 4 and 6 regarding the “gap”.  
Gene Putman provided a brief update on the meeting the NATA Technical group had with CDOT staff on November 20, 2009. At that meeting, CDOT staff indicated there was a new planning and environmental review process called a “PEL” that they believe would be appropriate for this issue. Liz (CDOT) had informed the technical group that over the next several months she believed CDOT could have enough project savings to fund the PEL study [which is in the \$1M range]. The advantage of the PEL is that it would start the environmental review process and begin identifying what needs to be done as well as obtain cost estimates. As part of this process, public outreach would be required. The Technical Group/CDOT will keep NATA updated on the progress of obtaining the funds to do a PEL and moving ahead with this. As part of the PEL, a public outreach process would be required.
- b. 2009 Financial Report. Joyce indicated that all members had paid 2009 dues for total revenue of \$17,400. No expenditures have been made from these funds. The BBC Report was paid for by the City of Thornton.
- c. 2010 Calendar. A suggestion was made to change the November 24, 2010 date since this is the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. The new date is December 8 [National League of Cities Conference starts on December 1].

**2010 Calendar.**

January 27, 2010	(4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday – GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING)
March 24, 2010	(4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday)
May 26, 2010	(4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday)
July 28, 2010	(4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday)
September 22, 2010	(4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday)
<b>December 8, 2010</b>	(2nd Wednesday)

## R E S O L U T I O N

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PROPOSAL TO INITIATE A PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGE STUDY FOR THE SECTION OF NORTH I-25 BETWEEN US 36 AND STATE HIGHWAY 7.

WHEREAS, in October 2009, representatives of the North Area Transportation Alliance (NATA) met with the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to discuss the need to initiate an environmental review of the section of North I-25 between US 36 and State Highway 7 as to the improvements needed to enhance the capacity and safety of this section; and

WHEREAS, as a result of that meeting NATA and CDOT created an ad hoc technical staff group consisting of representatives from NATA, as well as CDOT Regions 4 and 6, to meet and discuss how best to address this issue; and

WHEREAS, at the December 9, 2009 NATA meeting, the technical staff group reported that there is a new planning and environmental review process called a Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) study that they believed would be appropriate for this issue and that the advantages of this process were twofold: a) it would cost less than a regular environmental impact study and b) it allowed the identification of smaller projects than can be advanced given available funding and environmental approvals; and

WHEREAS, CDOT has indicated that is has funding available to initiate a PEL study for the section of North I-25 between US 36 and State Highway 7 and is seeking NATA's concurrence to proceed; and

WHEREAS, the PEL study would be a collaborative effort between CDOT's Regions 4, 6, and NATA, with the lead being provided by CDOT Region 6 staff; and

WHEREAS, CDOT has submitted a TIP amendment for this project to be considered by DRCOG as an amendment to the 2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Plan as part of the first quarter 2010 amendments; and

WHEREAS, NATA wishes to support the initiation of a Planning and Environmental Linkage Study for this section of I-25.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE NORTH AREA TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE, AS FOLLOWS:

That NATA supports CDOT's proposal to initiate a Planning and Environmental Linkage study of the section of North I-25 between US 36 and State Highway 7.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the North Area Transportation Alliance on February 3, 2010.

NORTH AREA TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE

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Erik Hansen, Chair

## NORTH AREA TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE

### 2009 Members Dues\*

\*As NATA was formed in the middle of a budget year, some members indicated they may not be able to pay the 2009 dues and the direction was to pay whatever they could in 2009.

Community	Membership Dues	Billing Address
Brighton	\$1,200	City of Brighton c/o City Manager's Office 22 South 4 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Brighton, CO 80601
Broomfield	\$2,400	City and County of Broomfield c/o City Manager's Office #1 Des Combes Drive Broomfield, CO 80020
Commerce City	\$1,200	City of Commerce City c/o City Manager's Office 7887 E. 60 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Commerce City, CO 80022
Dacono	\$600	Town of Dacono c/o Town Manager's Office 512 Cherry Street Dacono, CO 80514
Erie	\$1,200	Town of Erie c/o Town Manager's Office 645 Holbrook Erie, CO 80516
Firestone	\$600	Town of Firestone c/o Town Administrator's Office PO Box 100 Firestone, CO 80520
Frederick	\$600	Town of Frederick c/o Town Administrator's Office 401 Locust Street Frederick, CO 80530
Longmont	\$2,400	City of Longmont c/o City Manager's Office 350 Kimbark Street Longmont, CO 80501
Northglenn	\$1,200	City of Northglenn c/o City Manager's Office 11701 Community Center Drive Northglenn, CO 80233
Thornton	\$3,000	City of Thornton c/o City Manager's Office 9500 Civic Center Drive Thornton, CO 80229
Westminster	\$3,000	City of Westminster c/o City Manager's Office 4800 W. 92 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue Westminster, CO 80031
Total Collected	\$17,400	

(cmo/NATA/NATA 2009 Dues.11.12.09)