

DRAFT
AGENDA

North Area Transportation Alliance

December 9, 2009

5:30 PM

*School District #12 Conference Center
1500 E. 128th Avenue
Thornton*

- I. Old Items
 - a. Approval of Minutes from September 23, 2009 (attached)

- II. New Items:
 - a. BBC Report Presentation – Ford Frick
 - b. Letter to Mayor Hickenlooper (re: NATA and upcoming Dec 15th meeting)
 - c. 2010 lobbying program
 - d. NATA presentations to member Councils (scheduling)

- III. Reports:
 - a. NATA Technical Group meeting with CDOT Regions 4 and 6 re: “gap” (attached)
 - b. 2009 Financial Report [received \$17,500 in dues-all members paid; haven’t charged any costs to this as of yet]

- IV. Action Steps

- V. 2010 Calendar:
 - a. January 27, 2010 (4th Wednesday) General Membership Meeting
 - b. March 24, 2010
 - c. May 26, 2010
 - d. July 28, 2010
 - e. September 22, 2010
 - f. November 24, 2010

North Area Transportation Alliance Steering Committee

DRAFT

Summary Minutes
September 23, 2009

Mayor Hansen welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the North Area Transportation Alliance being conducted via conference call.

Attending from member cities and businesses were: Broomfield – Kevin Standbridge; Commerce City - Mayor Pro-tem Scott Jaquith, Tom Acre; Dacono – Wade Carlson, Mayor and Bill Efting; Erie –Trustee Cheryl Hauger; Frederick – Derek Todd, Dick Leffler; Longmont – Phil Greenwald; Thornton – Mayor Erik Hansen, Gene Putman, Joyce Hunt, Todd Barnes; Westminster – Mayor Nancy McNally; and Metro North Chamber of Commerce – Deb Obermeyer.

Minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

New Items.

1. Draft Letter to Russ George, Executive Director, CDOT. Broomfield requested the letter be amended to recognize additional laneage on I-25 from SH7 to US 36. The group discussed that the purpose of this letter and the priorities was to emphasize the gap but agreed that having a statement supporting the widening of I-25 from SH 7 to US 36 in addition to emphasizing the gap was fine. An affirmative statement saying that NATA is in support of widening I-25 to provide additional laneage from SH 7 to US 36 will be added in the letter and in the appropriate resolutions. The request was approved unanimously.
2. Draft resolution supporting the recommended preferred alternative for the North I-25 Environmental Study. Mayor Nancy McNally made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Scott Jaquith to approve the resolution with the inclusion of the comment noted above. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Draft resolution approving the purpose statement and top two priorities of NATA. Mayor Nancy McNally made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Scott Jaquith to approve the resolution with the inclusion of the comment noted in number 1 above. Motion passed unanimously.
4. Draft resolution urging RTD to develop a Financial Plan and Implementation Plan. Mayor Nancy McNally made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Scott Jaquith to approve the resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Items.

1. The group reviewed the draft press release regarding these resolutions and actions taken by NATA. A request was made to expand the language to include electric, wind and power systems in the description of the major new green economy located in the NATA area. With this change, the group approved the press release.
2. Mayor Hansen shared that the Metro Mayors FasTracks Task Force was trying to schedule a meeting to discuss RTD's proposal regarding new revenue equity. The meeting hasn't been finalized but likely will be on October 12.
3. Mayor Hansen shared that the Coalition for Transportation, through Deb Obermeyer, was requesting a meeting with NATA to discuss transportation issues. Mayor Hansen indicated that he hadn't really heard of the Coalition and other members indicated they

had not either. He indicated he would obtain additional background on this group and the purpose of the meeting and report back to NATA at the next meeting.

4. Mayor Hansen also indicated that at the last meeting, the group had requested the financial people from our respective entities review RTD's financial plan. One of the things that is not clear in the financial plan is the likely outcome to the North Metro area if the revenues don't come in as assumed. The Mayor indicated that Thornton had contacted an independent firm regarding doing an assessment of RTD's Financial Plan through the "lens" of the Metro North region to help us better identify the implications. He indicated the City would pick up this cost.
5. Future Items. Tom Acre asked if NATA had a future items list and the Mayor indicated that we had an informal list which currently had two items: an independent report on FasTracks financial plan and SH 2 but that it was a good idea to have a formal list. The members agreed to send future items to be included on the list to Joyce Hunt.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

November 11, 2009	Will need to be rescheduled due to the Holiday
January 27, 2010	(4 th Wednesday – GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING)
March 24, 2010	(4 th Wednesday)
May 26, 2010	(4 th Wednesday)
July 28, 2010	(4 th Wednesday)
September 22, 2010	(4 th Wednesday)
November 24, 2010	(4 th Wednesday)



North Area Transportation Alliance

Summary of Meeting November 20, 2009

Technical Group Meeting

9 am at Thornton Civic Center

9500 Civic Center Drive, Thornton, Co.

Attendance

Lizzi Kemp	CDOT Reg. 6	303-757-9929
Debra Baskett	City and County of Broomfield	303-438-6385
Angie Drumm	CDOT Office of Government Rel.	303-757-9105
Bob Garcia	CDOT Reg. Director of Reg. 4	970-350-2101
Steve Hersey	CDOT Reg. 6 Traffic Engineer	303-757-9511
Mike Normandin	City of Westminster	303-658-2143
Chris Cramer	City of Commerce City	303-289-3678
Phil Normandin	City of Longmont	303-651-8335
Myron Hora	CDOT Reg. 4	970-350-2263
Jim Paulmeno	CDOT Reg. 6	303-757-9385
Michelle Halstead	CDOT Office of Government Rel.	303-75—9441
Dick Leffler	City of Frederick	720-382-5601
Dave Lindsay	City of Firestone	970-278-0029
Gene Putman	City of Thornton	303-538-7333
Robert Larson	City of Thornton	303-538-7442

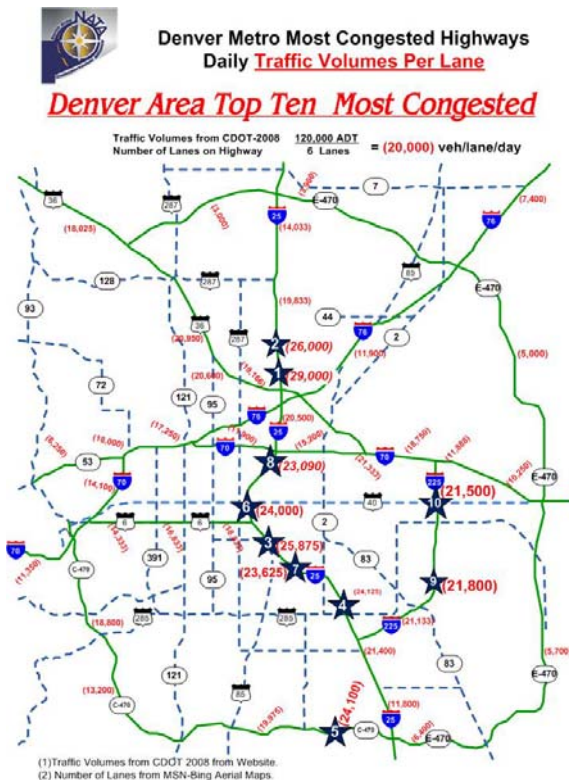
The following is the draft agenda sent out to all those invited to the meeting with the Colorado Department of Transportation to discuss I-25 concerns from the North Area Transportation Alliance.

CDOT/North Area Transportation Alliance (NATA) Technical Group Meeting
 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., Friday, November 20, 2009
 City Development Building, EOC/Training Room, 9500 Civic Center Drive, Thornton

AGENDA

- I. Welcome & Introductions 5 min.
- II. Describe Existing Concern/Challenge (NATA Staff) 20 min.
- III. NATA Request of Director George (NATA Staff) 15 min.
- IV. North I-25 EIS Update (CDOT Region 4) 15 min.
- V. Options to Advance NATA Request (CDOT Region 6/NATA Staff) 20 min.
- VI. Next Steps 10 min.

A. After introductions where made Gene Putman, City of Thornton handed out some analysis that he had done (see below) looking at not only the total traffic volumes but traffic volumes per lane on State Highway but Top Ten Most Congested roadway in the Denver Area and the State of Colorado.



Denver Metro Most Congested Highways
 Daily **Traffic Volumes Per Lane**

This is a simple comparison of traffic volumes per lane of highway, in the Denver Metro area on State Highway. No special traffic engineering calculation, but a simple math comparison. ADT= Average Daily Traffic

Traffic Volumes from CDOT $\frac{120,000 \text{ ADT}}{\text{Number of Lanes on Highway } 6 \text{ Lanes}} = (20,000) \text{ veh/lane/day}$

The Denver metro area has the highest traffic volumes in the State of Colorado and the roadway with the highest congestion. What are the top 10 locations with the highest traffic volume per lane?

- 1) I-25 at 84th Ave., ADT 179,000/6 lanes, **29,000** vehicles/lane/day
- 2) I-25 at Thornton Pkwy, ADT 152,000/6 lanes, **26,000** veh/lane/day
- 3) I-25 at Santa Fe Drive, ADT 207,000/8 lanes, **25,875** veh/lane/day
- 4) I-25 at Hampden, ADT 193,000/8 lanes, **24,125** veh/lane/day
- 5) C-470 at Colorado Blvd., ADT 96,400/4 lanes, **24,100** veh/lane/day
- 6) I-25 at Colfax, ADT 216,000/9 lanes, **24,000** veh/lane/day
- 7) I-25 at University, ADT 189,000/8 lanes, **23,625** veh/lane/day
- 8) I-25 at south of I-70, ADT 254,000/11 lanes, **23,090** veh/lane/day
- 9) I-225 at Yale Ave., ADT 109,000/5 lanes, **21,800** veh/lane/day
- 10) I-225 at Colfax Ave., 129,000/6 lanes, **21,500** veh/lane/day

The worst section of congestion in the Denver Metro Area and the State of Colorado is I-25 from 104th Ave. to U.S. 36

This shows that the top two locations for congestion in Denver and the State of Colorado is at I-25 at 84th Ave. (1) with 179,000 vehicles per day or 29,000 per lane and Thornton Parkway (2) with 152,000 vehicles per day or 25,000 per lane. Currently I-25 at these two locations has 3 lanes in each direction. If one additional lane in each direction was added to I-25 for a total of 8 the volume per lane would still be 22,375 vehicles per lane per day or ninth on the list.

B. Michelle Halstead, of CDOT Local Government Relationship Office, spoke of the meeting that NATA REPRESENTATIVES had on October 2nd with CDOT Executive Director Russ George. That the NATA group had ask him for starting an environmental impact study (EIS) on the "Gap" on I-25 from E-470 south to U.S. 36. Lizzi Kemp informed the group that an EIS would take several million dollars and that with current funding there is not any funding in CDOT Region 6 to fund that scope of a study for several years. Michelle and Jim Paulmeno stated that during the month of October the CDOT had met and discussed the request from the NATA group and what CDOT could do to address these concerns.

C. Bob Garcia, Regional Director of Region 4 gave a brief history of the North I-25 EIS that has been going on for over five years. This study is in the final stages of drafting the Final North I-25 EIS document. Bob stated that yes, there is a "Gap" in the North I-25 EIS because it does not deal with general purpose lanes, only HOV and Managed Lanes. He agreed that something needs to be studied in this section of I-25 from E-470 south to U.S. 36. He needs the DRCOG Regional Transportation Plan changed to show that the current improvements that are shown to add general purpose lanes from U.S. 36 to Thornton Parkway needs to be changed. He wants the DRCOG Transportation Plan to be changed to show HOV-Managed Lanes from U.S. 36 north to 120th Ave. with no general purpose lanes. Gene Putman of Thornton stated that having only the HOV-Managed Lanes without the general purpose lanes would only serve the north end of I-25 because the only access to the HOV-Managed Lanes is at 120th Ave. Debra Baskett of Broomfield stated that she is in support of the HOV-Managed Lanes concept.

D. Jim Paulmeno, CDOT Region 6 informed the group that one possible path to take since an EIS is so expensive is to try a new process called "Planning and Environmental Linkages" or PEL. PEL is a new process that FHWA has started and Colorado is one of fifteen states to sign an agreement to use it. PEL is an integrated systems approach to transportation decision process that takes environmental, communities' needs into starting a project. It is less costly initially that an EIS by 30 to 70% but the information can be used in an EIS and make it a little simpler. See the attached PEL fact sheet from CDOT. Lizzi Kemp stated that while she could not come up with the funding for a full EIS, she did think that it might cost \$1 million to do a PEL study and work and with saving from other projects, she might be able to pull that type of funding together. Representatives from the NATA cities thought that doing a PEL study may be the best way to move this need of improvements to I-25 forward.



“The planning process and the environmental assessment required during project development by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 should work in tandem, with the results of the transportation planning process feeding into the NEPA process...”

- Federal Highway Administration

For More Information:
 Jim Paulmeno, Manager
 Region 6 Planning & Environmental
 303.757.9385
jim.paulmeno@dot.state.co.us

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES

Fifteen state, federal, and local agencies signed the Planning and Environmental Linkages partnering agreement at the Transportation Environmental Resource Council meeting on June 11, 2009. The purpose of the agreement is to encourage the use of the Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) approach in an effort to meet agency needs while expediting transportation project delivery.

What is PEL?

According to the Federal Highway Administration, PEL is an integrated approach to transportation decision-making that takes into account environmental, community and economic goals throughout the project lifecycle.

Much of PEL can be summarized as the effort to increase the level of information and complexity of decisions being considered at the planning level by integrating useful National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) information into corridor planning.



Using NEPA concepts for corridor planning is a hallmark of PEL, allowing agencies to address environmental concerns early and advance decisions.

Consistent with Regulations

Using a PEL approach enables the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to advance corridor planning activities within the context of today’s fiscal challenges. The 2009 agreement is consistent with federal regulations, including the:

- Safe, Accountable, Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
- White House Council on Environmental Quality regulations
- Executive Order 13274: Environmental Stewardship and Transportation Infrastructure

PEL in Practice

CDOT has instituted a PEL approach on a number of studies, including:

- Arapahoe Road Corridor Study, I-25 to Parker Road.
- Parker Road Corridor Study, Hampden Avenue and E-470.
- 56th Avenue Study.
- U.S. 34 Corridor Optimization Plan.

A PEL study can cost 30 - 70% less compared to an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. Using PEL in a corridor context allows the identification of smaller projects that can advance given available funding and environmental approvals. Information gleaned from a PEL study can remain active for several years. Information can easily be updated to ensure consistency with changing environmental conditions, regulations or local plans.

To get a PEL study underway, several steps need to take place. First, CDOT needs to develop a project to do the PEL for I-25 and get it defined this needs both Region 4 and 6 involvement.

Second, during the DRCOG TIP cycle that starts in 2010, CDOT needs to submit the project into the DRCOG TIP. All of the NATA members need to support CDOT submittal of this PEL study for I-25 at all levels of review at DRCOG.

CDOT staff indicated that they would investigate the possible funding of a PEL study and getting in into the DRCOG TIP and they would report back to us.

Meeting ended at 11am.