



Fort Collins Climate Task Force
January 8, 2008
281 N. College, Conf Rooms A&B
MEETING MINUTES



Present:

Board Members and Alternates

John Bleem	P			Garry Steen	P
Bill Farland	P	Blue Hovatter	P	Norm Weaver	P
Bill Franzen	A	Jeff Lebesch	P	Steve Wolley	P
Pete Hall	P				
Phil Friedman	P	Eric Levine	P		
Stephen Gillette	P	Liz Pruessner	P		

Others present: Art Bavoso, Facilitator

- Judy Dorsey, The Brendle Group
- Lucinda Smith, Natural Resources Department
- Mark Jackson, Interim Transportation Director
- Randy Hensley, Transportation Parking Manager
- Brian Woodruff, Natural Resources Department
- Eric Sutherland, citizen
- Dale Adamy, citizen
- Marcia Fitzhorn, PTAG

Public Input

Dale Adamy shared information from recent relevant articles with the Task Force indicating a lot of good thing happening in the City. He said that this committee is an important focal point. He offered two specific recommendations:

- 1) CTF should write guidelines for a new City position, CEO, Chief Environmental Officer
- 2) CTF should write guidelines as a green corollary to the Economic Advisory Commission to include a "Duties and Function" statement for a new Board or Commission.

Task Force Member Input

Phil shared a copy of the Solar Today magazine featuring Fort Collins LED holiday lights. He mentioned a Denver Post article about a Dutch effort to extract and use waste heat from roads. Salt Lake City is extracting waste heat from sewer pipes

Approve Minutes

Liz moved to approve the December 5, 2007 minutes. Garry seconded.

The task force unanimously voted to approve the December 5 minutes.

Agenda Review

Lucinda reviewed the agenda and wanted to do Numbers Update first, then the measure discussion. All agreed.

Numbers Update

Lucinda presented new VMT information and the impact on GHG inventory. Using the new (lower) VMT data, the 2010 forecast is lower as is the resulting 30% gap. Lucinda suggested the CTF keep this in mind and discuss again after they have selected measures, then asked for comments.

Eric said that population growth is a good metric and would like to see the relationship of GHG emissions to population to assess the new VMT info. Lucinda will provide this info. Phil said that regardless of the scenario chosen, we have to understand that both methodologies are correct, but that they are different. We have to consider if it's more important to move forward with a model that provides better ongoing data (the TransCad recent data).

Lucinda said the model is typically calibrated to ground count every five years, so it would be an on-going reliable source for VMT data every five years, with gaps requiring interpolation in between. Lucinda also reported a per capita emissions reduction between 2005 and 2006.

John points out that all these numbers are still estimates ($\pm 20\%$) and suggested presenting the GHG emissions with error bars indicating the uncertainty.

Measure Discussion

#17 Natural gas tiered rate – lobby PUC or Xcel

or

#6-Natural gas - Increase franchise fee OR gas company occupation tax

John said that the Colorado Association of Municipal Utilities tries to avoid interaction with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and it could be a mistake to lobby PUC because we are not in their jurisdiction. Blue felt the franchise fee approach would be better. John asked how much the rates would be raised. Lucinda said the analysis did not cover this.

Liz said that Xcel was going to change energy rates in 2008 for DSM, what happened with this? Was this due to HB1037? If so, it's accounted for in the "Existing" measures. Lucinda will find out.

Norm felt that we could chose between \$6 or #17. How did Boulder work with Xcel on the franchise fee? Was this just electric? John said a vote of the people was key there.

Steve points out that if we want a tiered rate, we'd have to figure out how we want to do it. Eric said that essentially, we're asking PUC or the voters. Is there a way to structure this so that it's not a tax? We need to find out the specifics of this (how Boulder did it.) Judy pointed out this was not intended it be a revenue generator, but a behavior approach.

Blue points out we'd have to give up the occupation tax right now if we wanted to consider a franchise fee. Blue prefers #6 – it's about putting teeth behind these initiatives and lobbying PUC would be difficult.

Eric asked if there is a way, since this is revenue neutral and not a tax, as such, that it wouldn't need a special election and voter approval.

Norm pointed out that it would be very difficult to address the structure (tiered rates) under the simple occupation tax approach.

Art said that most are leaning to the #6 approach, but more info will be needed, so action on this measure is deferred .

#11- Increase Energy Efficiency

Increase energy efficiency above existing policy by increasing energy conservation programs 50% (or 66%) to achieve a reduction of 1% of total load, resulting in a net savings to the participants.

- 11,000 tons Co2e in 2010

Discussion:

John asked if this increases energy efficiency above existing policy by some percentage, and is it funded through a rate increase. Norm clarifies that the measure cost was based on industry data of \$.04/kWh. John said that most likely this will lead to a rate increase. John said before we lock into the numbers, they had an Electric Generators meeting with the Governor to discuss his proposal about the state goal of 20% reduction in GHG below 2005 levels by 2020. 50% of this is supposed to come from energy demand side management. The utilities responded that this is huge. 50% of 20% is 10%, so demand side management programs would need to provide a 10% reduction in carbon by 2020. 10% is huge but 1% is perhaps small. Judy said that John Phelan was trying to be mindful of the short-term nature of this effort (2010 goal), so that led him to suggest a total 1% reduction. Judy points out that 1% is an industry best practice.

John asked if we are considering the State's efforts in our plan. Judy referred to the spreadsheet from last time that assesses the benefit ("Shores Up" or "Adds" to the local efforts). Lucinda pointed out that all the new strategies being considered by the CTF are 'additional' to other quantified efforts.

Eric suggests that when we have a better handle on costs and funding source, plus the legal aspects, we can discuss further. Bill Farland feels it's not intuitive why there is a substantial cost to this and it would help to give a sense of how much it would cost. Judy says it has an overall cost savings. It is modeled to split capital costs between City and user, but all the savings go to the end user. Bill Farland said that saying there is a cost to achieve this doesn't give people a sense of this; who wins, who loses, etc. How it is communicated is more important than how it is funded.

Bill Farland suggested the terminology to achieve a total 1% energy reduction, resulting in a net savings of \$30/ton. Judy expects the wording and packaging for the public would happen next, after the measures design parameters were selected and voted on. Bill reiterated that this leads to a net savings.

Steve moves to accept the "Increase Energy Efficiency" as one of the measures. Norm seconds Vote: All in favor. Motion passes.

Liz likes Eric's suggestion of asking City staff for funding ideas to implement these measures. Lucinda will ask staff.

Transportation Measures

Marcia Fitzhorn introduced herself as a rep for PTAG (Public Transportation Action Group). She is interested in what will be proposed and wants to encourage what's being done.

Mark Jackson, Interim Transportation Services Director offered his perspective on transportation issues to the task force. If he had one recommendation to give the CTF, it is to help transportation infrastructure become funded. He said that the City has good, solid, award-winning plans. It's not that we don't know what to do, it's that we don't have adequate resources. He supports land use policies that encourage alternative modes, shorter trip lengths, and infill development. He supports non-traditional design alternatives like roundabouts. He said that the Mason Corridor will be up and running by the end of 2010, assuming we receive the federal funding we are seeking. Mark supports honest discussion about the actual cost of travel. He thinks things are moving towards user-based, "pay as you go" approaches.

Regarding short-term transit improvements, he said the City is moving towards cleaner fleets (CNG buses with CMAQ funding) and improved route efficiency. The philosophy now is to focus on the most productive routes. An obvious gap is Shields Street, which currently has no transit. In 2008/2009, the Transfort Strategic Plan will be updated. He supports collaboration with CSU and PSD and recognizes the transportation challenges from the School of Choice issues.

Regarding the "Reinstate a TDM-type program" measure the CTF is considering, Mark said not many places have the political will to do TDM, because that provides the stick as well as the carrot. Education (TDM) doesn't work without a good system in place. Mark reviewed the TDM components that are currently being implemented by the City and the MPO.

When asked if Fort Collins is meeting the original transportation goals of City Plan, Mark said no. He said there are no triggers or contingencies in the Transportation Master Plan. Mark is concerned about losing funding since the cost of fuel and cement are increasing, but the gas tax has not been raised since 1991. Pavement management is seriously under-funded right now.

Eric said we really need the land use folks here because we need funding for transportation infrastructure from land use strategies. Eric said we have a gas tax but it doesn't provide enough revenue. We are talking about tiered electric rates, but there is nothing like that in the transport sector. How do we adjust the tax structure and development fee structure to be equitable? Has the Transportation Department looked at these approaches in a methodical manner? Are there any studies? Mark said there are studies out there. As a community, we came to a second reading vote to passing the Transportation Maintenance Fee. It failed on the ballot 1.5 years ago. There has been some discussion about a regional impact fee under the RTA but it was very unpopular. Eric said that conservation minded folks don't like flat user fees – they are inequitable. Mark feels that transportation is moving into the user fee mentality, nationally.

Liz asked about improvements to Transfort. Many suggestions involved a grid system, or using smaller vehicles. Mark suggested reading the Transfort Strategic Operating Plan. We know what would be effective, but it's just not funded. We are 6 years behind where we should be because of limited funding. We have looked under every rock. Many people ask, "Why can't we be like Boulder?" Boulder has taxed themselves as a community – they outfund us 10 to 1 and have built an elegant transit system.

Phil asked how we break the chicken and egg cycle of funding vs. capacity. Mark said that Fort Collins doesn't have a lock on the "empty bus syndrome" but the bus is often full at peak times. He gave the analogy of College Avenue. Should we cut down the road size because it is essentially empty at certain times of day? Mark thinks it's a matter of economics; when oil prices get high enough, alternatives become more competitive.

Randy Hensley then spoke about downtown parking management and explained staff interest in the proposal to install parking meters downtown to reduce traffic congestion and emissions. He discussed all the supporting research data about the benefits of optimizing parking efficiency. He said that some downtown businesses were initially opposed to the idea, but after hearing info presented by Randy about the benefits, 75% are reconsidering. He said the bulk of City parking revenue is from fines and citations, not parking meters and that this is backwards. He said it could cost ~ \$40,000/block to install the meter system, and it would have a 1.5 year payback.

Brian Woodruff then spoke about transportation demand management (TDM) from the 30,000 foot level. TDM is all of the things that reduce miles driven, not just "SmartTrips". The Climate Task Force is interested in reducing miles driven. TDM measures contained in a packages can and do support each other. If you implement several measures as a package, you get more bang for the buck. Therefore, he encouraged the task force to go after the funding. He suggested that the CTF might want to suggest to the City Manager and Council to set quantified objectives for reducing vehicle trips and then allow the transportation staff as experts to select specific strategies in a cohesive, managed effort to reduce VMT.

Bill Farland raised a concern that increasing the efficiency of the downtown parking system could reduce VMT for an individual vehicle, but it might bring more vehicles to the downtown area and have a net VMT increase. The CTF was not ready to vote on this issue. Lucinda will post references provided by Randy Hensley on the CTF resource page.

#63 Walking and Cycling Improvements

Liz moved to adopt the aggressive scenario; Steve seconded.

- Conservative – 54 tons CO₂/yr
- Aggressive -8,000 tons Co₂/yr (1% VMT reduction)

Discussion

Lucinda explained that the aggressive scenario is based on achieving a 1% VMT reduction through increased walking and cycling. Liz likes Brian's idea about packaging things and setting a goal to reduce VMT and having the experts come up with the specific ideas to achieve this goal. Art asks if it's possible to have an over-arching goal for VMT reduction. Judy said this is like the "50% waste diversion goal" that has several elements within it.

Bill Farland feels it is difficult to rationalize the difference between the conservative scenario and the aggressive scenario. The aggressive scenario translates to ~ 100 miles/resident, or about 25 trips that would have to be taken by walking or bicycling; two trips/month. That's a lot of trips. Bill Farland is surprised that the conservative scenario is so low. It seems like an extreme.

Pete likes combining this into a bigger picture scenario. Eric reminds the group about the short-term focus of this effort, but said he is also looking at these measures from a longer-term perspective, and weighing the potential benefit. Eric asks what is the average VMT/person in Fort Collins. If daily VMT is 3 million and there are ~ 130,00 people, that ~ 23 miles/person. Lucinda will provide info about number of vehicles per person in Fort Collins.

Art asks if the group wants to proceed going through the transportation measures one by one. Norm said why not adopt the aggressive strategy and work towards that goal. If we don't make it, it's not like we've lost a significant number of tons on the overall package.

Liz moved to adopt the aggressive scenario for the Walking and Cycling Measure. Steve seconded.
Vote: All in favor. Motion passes.

60-School Transport Management Plans

- 1000 tons/year

Lucinda described that the analysis was based on past successful SmartTrips programs with schools (School Pool, Drive Less Challenge, etc.).

Norm moved to add School Transport Management Programs to the package of transportation-related measures. Garry seconded.
Vote: All in favor. Motion passes.

#55 – Reinstate TDM-type

- Conservative – 400 tons
- Aggressive - 5,000 tons CO2

Garry moved to adopt the aggressive scenario and Liz seconded.

Discussion

Lucinda said that before Mark Jackson left the meeting, he shared his opinion that the time is not right for this measure politically. You can't market something that is not there. Eric thinks there will be synergy with #63 (walking and cycling) and asked for specificity in the way this measure is described. Brian points out that TDM is not just education, it's also pricing signals, parking, etc. and feels the group can be comfortable with the 5000 tons. Pete suggests that we pull working with the schools out of this one and clarify that this is employer focused, since the schools are covered under School Transport Management. Lucinda clarified that the aggressive scenario is analyzed based on employer programs. Pete states that the text description covers schools programs. Steve points out that on average, this would require a lot of trips by alt modes for employees. Judy responds that this analysis is based on 20% of employees engaging. Steve said that at Avago, the Try Transfort program was not actively embraced, even though it is an excellent program

Garry moved to adopt the aggressive scenario; Liz seconded.
Vote: All in favor. Motion passes.

#61-Transit Service Improvements

- Conservative -300 tons CO2
- Aggressive – 3,000 tons CO2

Pete felt that we might need to move out of the fiscally constrained box, a lot of what the CTF is doing is cutting edge. We should strive for more funding, because there are other benefits including social benefits. Eric points out that Mark said the transit system is 6 years behind, and if we continue to under-funded, we'll never catch up.

Steve moves to adopt conservative scenario in light of fact the Mason Corridor project is not coming on line until 2010, and Mason is a key backbone to more (environmentally sensitive) transit.; Jeff seconded.

Phil points out that Mark Jackson said clearly there is just not enough funding for transit at this point. Art asks if the CTF should take a stand to support the request for funding for Mason Corridor. Lucinda replied that the application has already cleared a lot of hurdles. Liz wants to see the CTF come out for improved transit in the future recommendations, if we go with the conservative scenario for the 2010 plan. Bill Farland asked if the transit plan is really optimized for environmental sustainability. Eric suggested splitting the difference between the conservative and aggressive options; it's critical to invest in the local community. Lucinda said the transit plan will be updated in 2008/2009, and the CTF could recommend that it be sustainable. Brian points out that Mason Corridor alone will double the amount of ridership on the whole system, so it is a key.

Steve moves to adopt conservative scenario of transit improvements; Jeff seconded.
Vote: 10 in favor, one opposed (Norm). Motion passes.

Norm was holding out for Eric's motion to split the difference between the conservative and aggressive scenarios.

#59 Roundabouts

Norm moved to adopt aggressive scenario; Eric second.

- 207 tons (1 roundabout)
- 1,000 tons (five roundabouts)

Norm move to adopt the aggressive scenario of roundabouts. Eric second.
Vote: All in favor. Motion passes.

#70 – \$ Incentives for Purchase of Low Emission Vehicles by FC residents, registered in FC, and purchased in FC

- 3,000 tons

Phil move to adopt this; Garry seconds. Group discussion led to clarification of local elements from this.

Phil move to adopt financial incentives for low emission vehicles purchased by Fort Collins residents, purchased in Fort Collins and registered in Fort Collins; Garry seconds.
Vote: All in favor. Motion passes.

#70b-parking incentives for LEV

- 54 tons

Steve moves to accept this measure. Eric seconds.

Steve moves accept the measure for parking incentive for LEVs; Eric seconds.
Vote: 10 in favor, one opposed (Pete). Motion passes.

Pete does not support this because the demand for LEVs already exceeds the supply.

Downtown Parking District

- 500 tons CO2

Garry moves to adopt the measure for downtown parking management; Phil seconds.
Vote: motion deferred until additional information can be obtained and posted to the Web site..

Next Meeting

Monday, February 4, 2008

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

215 North Mason, Community Room