



**City Manager's Office**  
300 LaPorte Avenue  
PO Box 580  
Fort Collins, CO 80522  
**970.221.6505**  
970.224.6107 - fax  
[fcgov.com](http://fcgov.com)

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF FORT COLLINS**  
**FUTURES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Date:** July 8, 2019  
**Location:** CIC Room, City Hall, 300 Laporte Ave.  
**Time:** 4:00–6:00pm

**Committee Members Present:**

Mayor Wade Troxell  
Julie Pignataro

**City Staff:**

Darin Atteberry, City Manager  
Jeff Mihelich, Deputy City Manager  
Jackie Kozak-Thiel, (Staff Liaison)

**Presenters:**

Becky Karasko, Transportation Planning Director, North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization

Randy Grauberger, Project Director Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission

Dr. R. Paul Williamson, CEO Sustainable Systems Colorado

**Additional Staff Present:**

Drew Brooks, Transfort  
Kaley Zeisel, Transfort  
Carter Hill, City Manager's Office  
Kelly DiMartino, Sr. Assistant City Manager  
Joe Olson, Traffic  
Tyler Marr, City Manager's Office  
Molly Saylor, Environmental Services  
Rhonda Gatzke, Utilities  
Teresa Roche, Human Resources  
Jayla Hodge, City Manager's Office

**Community Members:**

Will Jones, City of Greeley  
Dale Adamy, RIST.org

Aaron Fodge, CSU  
Nathalie Rachline, Transportation board  
Mark Jackson, City of Loveland  
Kevin Jones, Fort Collins Chamber  
Bob Briggs, Rocky Mountain Rail  
Mark Peterson, Larimer County Engineering

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### **Meeting called to order at 4:03pm**

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

Julie moved to approve May minutes. Emily seconded. Motion passed unanimously. 3-0-0.

**Chairman Comments:** None

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#### **Summary**

- Panel discussion is continued conversation of other Futures committee topics and trends that are being seen.
  - Need to think about how population growth will drive the Future
- Current infrastructure is not meeting our needs and conversations about transportation need to consider mobility and integrate systems thinking
  - Consider how to move beyond corridor thinking
- We are in an era with many changes in Technology, behavior and preference changes
  - There are intergenerational differences with mobility preferences that drives change
- Right of Way is important when thinking about how to transport freight cargo and people
- Burden falls on local government to consider what they want the future of transportation to be and there continues to be a need to think and act regionally
  - How does Fort Collins compliment national and regional approaches?
- Hypothesis that Advanced Transportation Innovation fosters improved quality of life
- This will continue to be an ongoing dialogue:
- **Next steps** include continued involvement with NFRMPO and continue to engage relevant partners.
  - Council member Kristin Stephens is the City's liaison to the NFRMPO

### **Think Tank Item 4-2019: The Future of Regional Transportation**

#### **Becky Karasko, Transportation Planning Director, North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization**

- Introduction to what the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO) is and its responsibilities:
  - It is a transportation and Air Quality planning organization within the Urbanized area that includes Fort Collins, Berthoud and Timnath
  - NFRMPO is funded through a variety of sources including federal, state and local funds.

- NFRMPO has a 17-member planning council comprised of representatives from local governments
  - Council member Stephens is the representative for Fort Collins
- There is also a 15-member technical advisory committee
- Responsibilities of the NFRMPO include:
  - Transportation planning, Air Quality planning and coordination
  - Prepare plans and reports; some required, some that are best practices
  - Operate a Vanpool program
    - 50 vanpool in operation
- Overview of landscape of the NFRMPO in 2015:
  - There were 483,00 residents and 284,000 jobs
  - 50 million vehicle miles traveled annually
  - 4 million transit trips and 3 million users on regional non-motorized corridors
- Growth from 2010-2017 has been significant in smaller communities
- Looking to the NFRMPO in 2045:
  - Population is projected to be 883,000 residents, an 82% increase
  - 473,000 jobs
  - Question of what the impact will be on transportation needs with increase of people and jobs
- What can Fort Collins do specifically:
  - NFRMPO is calling for projects that can move the region toward achieving performance measures targets
  - 6 performance measures—first five are federally required
    - Safety
    - Pavement condition
    - Bridge condition
    - Reliability
    - Air quality
    - NFRMPO-Specific targets—what is important to our region
  - When submitting projects, provide the dream list, NFRMPO will then determine what can be funded and what the needs of the region are

**Randy Grauberger, Project Director Southwest Chief and Front Range Passenger Rail Commission**

- Provides brief history of the evolution of the Commission, and its governing:
  - Colorado Legislatures Senate Bill 17—153 effective July 2017
  - Housed under CDOT but pay attention to 11 voting commissioners
    - Five appointed by governor
    - 3 non-voting members
- The purposes of the Commission include:
  - Ensure that Amtrak SW Chief service continues
  - Collaborate and work with other states
  - Explore development of Front Range Passenger Rail corridor
- Development of passenger rail continues to be of interest:
  - Significant highway congestion, and continued population growth population

- Growing population over 65 and trends that younger people who prefer reliable transit over owning a car
- The Front Range could lose its ability to be economically competitive as most cities/regions this size have passenger rail service or are planning to have one
- Provides overview of transportation options and costs associated with them for Front Range Corridor which include expanding Bustang services, an extension of the commuter rail with RTD services and a high-speed rail service option.
- Discussion of the creation of Mobility hubs in Loveland and along the Front Range which buses now stop at. These Mobility hubs also service as a precursor investment for eventual passenger rail stops.
- Overview of 2018 accomplishments including funding sources and staffing timeline
- Current Commission Activities overview
  - Includes working with other states
  - Communication sub-committee created
  - CDOT Metro Quest Survey—weigh in let opinions be known
- Overview of the elements required for a rail passenger service development plan
  - Develop purpose and need
  - Stakeholder engagement
  - Look at feasible alignments
  - Know where the different mobility hubs will be
  - Cost-Benefit-Analysis
  - Potential service operator
  - What does governance look like—November 2020 could be on the ballot
  - be known
- Overview of the principles for rail mobility
  - Need to preserve Rights of Way corridor
  - To justify new Front Range Passenger Rail the selected outcome should have
    - Competitive peak hour travel times
    - Volume of riders large enough that a stream of 50 passenger buses isn't enough
    - Conditions which prevent expansion of bus service in a managed lane from being an effective solution.
    - Connectivity to transit is critical to success
    - Need options different from driving and parking options

### **Paul Williamson**

- Hypothesis: Advanced Transportation Innovation fosters improved quality of life
- Elements of innovation
  - Dissatisfaction with SQ
  - Open mindedness and caring
  - Knowledge of all variables
  - Leadership versus followership
  - Sustainable plan—because of energy crisis
  - Community interaction
  - New term implementation
    - See massive studies and spending on transportation with nothing happening

- Overview of Sustainable Plan they are pursuing:
  - Operational model—need public, private and non-profit cooperation
  - Community based—in all transportation
    - Safety, connectivity and economic development
    - IGA
    - Community Opportunity Centers
  - Cost model—what are we going to do and what does it cost
    - Non-tax model
    - Video on Sky Tran—1/10 the cost of any other transportation system
    - Idea is to use a revenue bond and work with private investors to pay for this transportation system
  - Using advanced technology sustainability means improving health, environment, impact and scalability.
    - Consider how Skytran could be deployed using the existing Rights of Way where possible
    - Up to date standards with sustainable energy
    - Skytran video can be found here: <https://www.skytran.com/>

#### Comments/ Q&A:

- Discussion around the feasibility of either a passenger rail system or skytran system :
  - Randy discusses that it is not a matter of feasibility for the passenger rail system, the question is what decisions are made; i.e. will people vote for it and be willing to pay for it.
  - Right of Way continues to be very important in both the discussion of passenger rail and Skytran technology.
- Question about what community engagement has been like in promoting the Skytran and if there has been concern about obstructing views:
  - Paul mentions that there has been some concern about obstructing views, but like anything else, people get adjusted to what is around them (i.e. the train going through Fort Collins)
  - Paul reiterates that the overwhelming benefits of Skytran tends to override objections to visual impact
- Question raised about current legislation that could affect ability to move forward with Skytran and if there has been any pushback from Oil and Gas industry or car industry on the future of transportation:
  - Skytran technology is so new that there is no legislation currently that could hinder it and RTD has been very supportive
  - Passenger rail and Skytran are viewed as complimentary projects and there hoping for a continued collaborative and cooperative relationship
- Discussion around the importance of using existing Right of Way for transportation needs.
- When developing Skytran, discussion on if there will be a demonstration project soon to illustrate proof of concept.
  - There is need for funding as demonstration projects are being developed
  - Importance of local community interest since there is little involvement or interest at the state and federal levels of government

- Discussion about how the technology has matured; questions of viability and scalability to meet different community needs.
- Community member comments on the importance of connection to other communities and the importance of keeping our region mobile if we are trying to ensure that jobs, people employers, etc., are in the Fort Collins community.
  - Be cognizant of transit in our community and keeping people mobile.
- Discussion on mobility index. Becky notes that performance measures used by NFRMPO can be used to start a mobility index.
- Question on what it means to preserve Right of Way
  - Randy clarifies that while exploring transportation options, they are not looking at greenfield. Rather, they are looking at alignment with existing freight railways and Right of Way.
  - Goal is to take advantage of existing development and Right of Way.
  - Bob Briggs mentions that Right of Way is a critical issue for everything There is a need for Right of Way to be separate from the road system.
- Conversations happening at the NFRMPO include looking at membership of different communities across the region, discussion about aligning transportation goals and aligning Right of Way. There is also need for a feasibility study when exploring future options

**5:30-5:45 Futures topics and Welcoming New Committee Members**

*Mayor Wade Troxell*

- Welcome the new committee members, provided an overview of potential Futures topics

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**Additional Discussion: None**

*Meeting adjourned by Wade Troxell at 5:38 pm.*