



Weld County Mobility Council

# **“Transit In Our Community”**

**Forum & Coordination Survey Report**

**September 2010**



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# Introduction

## Mobility Coordination and the North Front Range MPO

Federal transportation legislation enacted in 2005, mandated that “a plan be developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers” to improve coordination of transportation services.

The North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO), an association of 15 local governments working together to improve regional transportation and air quality, developed a Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan to ensure a consistent and integrated approach across the region.

The planning process included setting goals, identifying outcomes, developing strategies and building a family of transportation services. The Coordinated Plan can be found at [www.nfrmpo.org](http://www.nfrmpo.org)

## Weld County Mobility Council

The Weld County Mobility Council (WCMC) was established in June 2008 and represents both transit and human service agencies. Forming a mobility council in Weld County was a strategy identified in the coordinated plan to ensure agency participation in implementing mobility coordination goals.

The WCMC vision statement is to “Create a safe, customer-focused transportation network that offers seamless opportunities for all individuals in Weld County.” The WCMC meets monthly to discuss provider issues and mobility opportunities. The WCMC is made up of representatives of 12 agencies including two transit providers, one citizen group and nine human service agencies.

## June 2010 Survey

The survey was conducted to help identify the greatest transportation needs in Weld County. 28 human service agencies and transit providers responded to the survey and provided basic information about the services they provide along with agency transportation needs.

# Introduction

## June 2010 Survey(continued)

The survey provided a picture of transportation need in Weld County and provides the framework for a database and resource guide of information about transportation and human services available in Weld County.

The 28 agencies, through their participation in the survey, helped to further the goal of expanded information sharing and agency involvement. The survey results represent an important step towards the goal of better utilization of existing services.

## September 9<sup>th</sup> Forum

The Weld County Mobility Council (WCMC) developed a mobility coordination action plan at the 2009 Easter Seals/Project Action Accessible Community Transportation Institute in Washington, D.C. in July 2009. The institute hosted a team of four mobility council members and the mobility coordinator to join 14 other team applicants from around the country.

The action plan focus is "Creating partnerships to foster travel independence for transit customers through increased community awareness, education and travel training, which emphasizes community transit need and customer demand."

The action plan had three primary components including:

- Outreach and Community Awareness
- Travel Training
- Focus on Transit Sustainability

All three are being worked on through various projects and activities. The forum helped to gather input regarding transit sustainability and created public awareness of the issues facing transit in Weld County.



# September 2010 Forum

## Forum Summary



The Weld County Mobility Council (WCMC) held a “Transit In Our Community” forum on September 9, 2010. The forum brought members of the public, transit and human service providers and elected officials together and helped the WCMC to work on their goal of reaching out to the community to get their input and ideas regarding transit need.

Approximately 90 people were in attendance at the forum which was hosted by the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO) on behalf of the WCMC.

Another goal of the forum was to educate and inform the community about issues and ideas that affect transit delivery, funding and service. Terry Rosapep, of the Federal Transit Agency, Jennifer Finch of the Colorado Department of Transportation and Elena Wilken of the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies offered their perspectives and insights on transit issues from a federal, state and Colorado transit agency perspective.

Terry J. Rosapep, Regional Administrator for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region 8 oversees the FTA's planning, operating, and capital programs in the States of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, & Wyoming.

Terry spoke to FTA investments in transit systems that are now 20 to 30 years old in parts of the West and as some of those systems expand, maintenance issues aren't always being addressed, causing safety concerns.

He stated that bringing the country's transit systems to minimum standards could cost as much as \$80 billion which would create a huge backlog that is a national funding issue.



Jennifer Finch, Division Director of Transportation Development with the Colorado Department of Transportation is responsible for planning issues affecting the state's economy, developing statewide transportation plans, modal programs and environmental programs, and research.



**Jennifer Finch**  
Director, Transportation  
Development Director CDOT



**Elena Wilken**  
Executive Director, CASTA

She spoke of the 2009 FASTER legislation which created an ongoing fund in 2009, for transit projects. Additionally, the state has \$5 million earmarked for grants to local transit & rail and another \$10 million in grants for state transit programs. Combined with the newly formed CDOT Division of Rail and Transit she sees great opportunities for transit in Colorado.

Elena Wilken, is the Executive Director of the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA) which is an association representing over 70 Colorado transit agencies, as well as local governments, planning organizations, and industry partners. She shared information on some current ballot issues that could affect transit and that at least 50 percent of transit trips in Colorado are commuters, with 25 percent of those riders saying transit was there only way to get to work.

She said a "silver tsunami" is coming as the baby boomers age and rely on public transportation. In Greeley, by 2035, 18% of the population will be over age 65 and the population of those over age 75 will double.



**Kevin Thompson**  
Chair, WCMC

She pointed out that transit systems are finding creative operating solutions as in Greeley which cut costs by running smaller buses on Sundays rather than "hauling out a huge bus to move people around,". The current question facing communities about transit is "how much transit is right for our community?"



## Weld County Mobility Council Forum Summary

Combined, the three speakers shared a picture of funding concerns that touch on safety, funding longevity and how to deal with the areas changing demographics. The speakers also offered a positive viewpoint and encouragement regarding the future of transit planning and projects in Colorado through new transit funding and the newly formed Transit and Rail Division along with creative solutions to funding shortfalls.

Following the presentations, the forum participants reviewed maps of the Greeley-Evans area and Weld County. Participants used dots to mark specific areas on the maps where they felt new transit services are needed or where existing services should be expanded.

The maps show a wide range of areas where service is desired that are currently not being served. The maps have been combined and present a picture of need for planners to consider.

The next segment of the symposium offered participants an opportunity to learn more about and comment on five different topics including:

- ▶ Transit Need
- ▶ Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) Issues
- ▶ Travel Training
- ▶ Transit Funding
- ▶ The Highway 85 Corridor

The comments collected at the individual roundtable discussions are listed in the on pages 12 – 15 of this report.

The comments will provide the mobility council with valuable insight into what needs to be addressed in order to implement effective mobility coordination strategies.



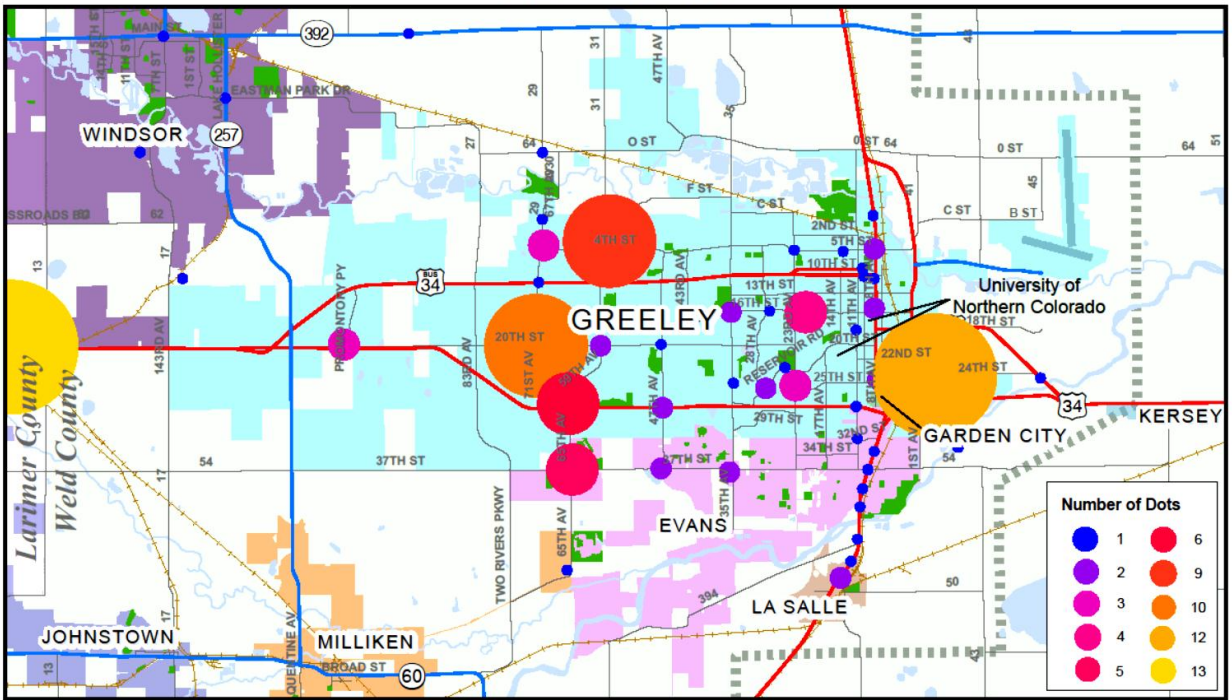


# Forum Discussions and Input

# Forum Transit Need Map



## Greeley Number of Dots Placed


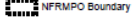


## Transit Need Maps

The transit need maps are the result of citizen input at the September 9<sup>th</sup> forum. Participants were given dots to locate areas on the map that they felt needed transit services. Mobility Council members were on hand to offer assistance if needed.

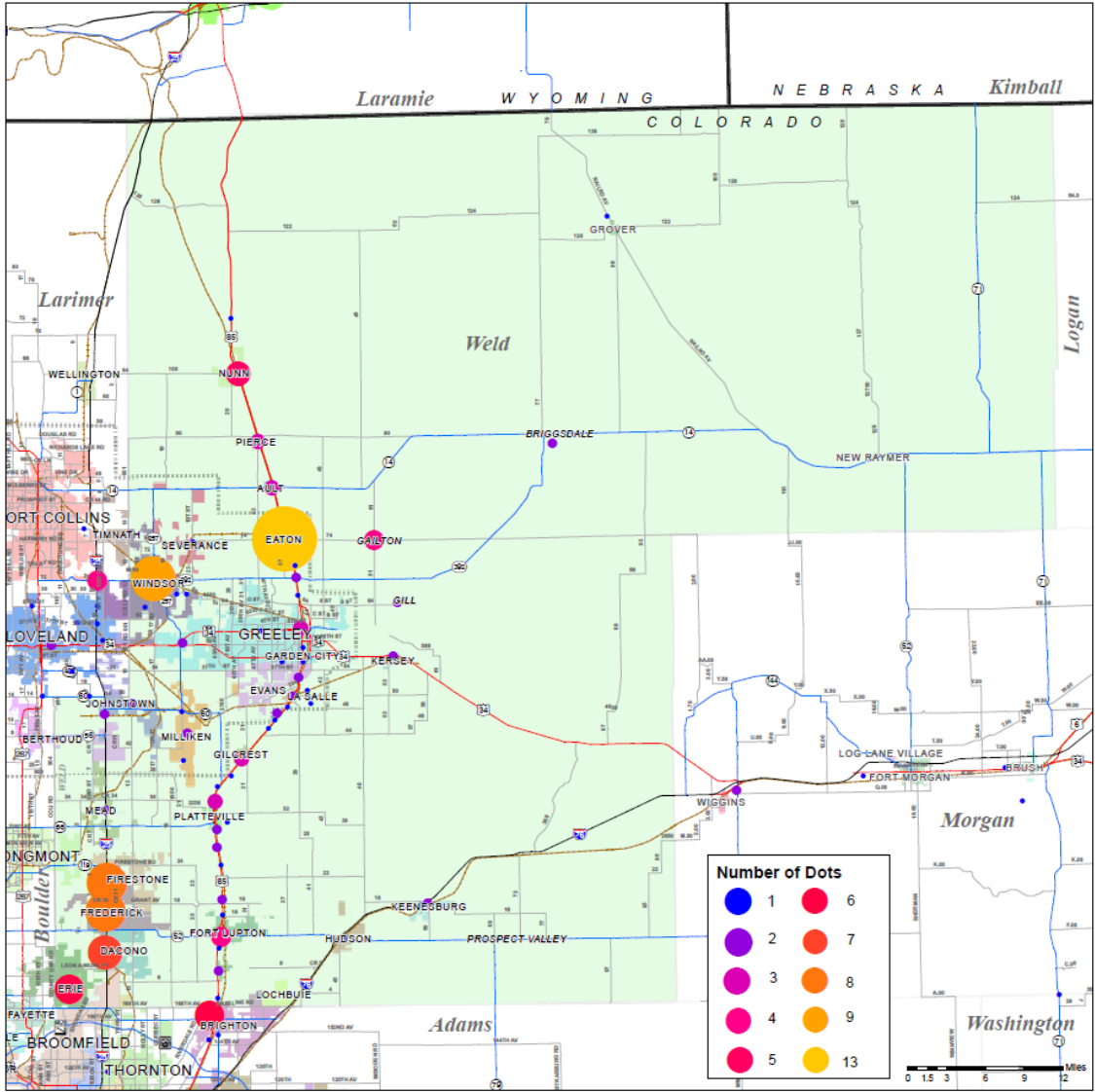
Both the Greeley map and the Weld County map (page 23) reflect a need for transit at key intersections and communities within Weld County but also a desire to go outside of Weld County to points west and south.

# Forum Transit Need Map

 Railroad  
 NFRMPO Boundary  
 Multi-CDMMP/County/2019/04/20/ForumMap  
 Prepared by: 05/20/19  
 Date: 9/2/2019

 Interstate  
 U.S. Highway  
 State Highway

## Weld County Number of Dots Placed



# Weld County Mobility Council Forum Roundtable Comments

## **Roundtable Topic: Transit Need**

### Service Needs

- Communication – Public Information – Need more outreach to public. (example – lack of communication with 34Xpress)
- More buses in order to accommodate more frequency of service. More hours of service especially nights and weekends
- Grid System – current system winds around and can be confusing. Might provide greater coverage.
- More specialized service for low income & elderly. Employment transportation that is similar to service several years ago.
- Free fare days – to encourage new ridership; offer “perk” for current riders
- Discount service for students
- More bicycle capacity on buses – perhaps add racks on back of bus as well
- More input from drivers - those who are “in the field” to improve service

### Geographic Area Need

- Hill & Park area (west area of town)
- Bittersweet Park area
- Eastern Plains – (for mental health services)
- West of I-25 for medical – bring back 34Xpress





### **Roundtable Topic: Transit Need (continued)**

#### Paratransit Need

- Too much variation in pick-up and drop-off times
- Need to accommodate more people on each paratransit vehicle
- More wheelchair capacity
- Lower fares/sliding fee

### **Roundtable Topic: Americans With Disabilities Act (A.D.A.)**

#### Needs -

- Additional Weld County Transit services including -
  - Denver International Airport
  - Brighton
  - Budweiser Events Center
  - Loveland medical facilities
- More access to County and City services and amenities including education, medical, movies, shopping, dining, events centers (stock show, Union Colony, etc.)

#### Issues -

- Increasing percentage of aging population – Shelters
- Not enough hours of service – evening access to amenities difficult

#### Improvements -

- Better infrastructure including: Curb Cuts - Lighting - Pull outs  
Bus Stop upgrades (concrete, grass, maintained benches)  
& Snow removal

# Weld County Mobility Council Forum Roundtable Comments

## **Roundtable Topic: Travel Training**

### Basics

- Needs assessment of clients/riders
- Driver – Client relationships need to be established
- Combo service training so that clients who are new to paratransit are trained as well as clients moving from paratransit to fixed route service
- Transition period from paratransit to fixed route service
- Number One Concern – Safety

### Best Venue

- Organizations that can serve new clients or that have a variety of new and regular clients
- Senior citizen organizations – senior centers
- Organizations that serve the disabled

### 2011 Focus

- Consistency in training is critical for success
- More “Train the Trainer” education is needed
- More agencies need to participate in travel training program

## **Roundtable Topic: Transit Funding**

### Issues -

- Not enough funding – city, state, federal
- Potential loss of operating funds in 2012
- Duplication of services

### Solutions –

- Regional Planning/Regional transit authority
- More attention to Rail solutions
- Support Hwy 85 Coalition
- Reduced cost passes for high school students and younger
- Integrate public and private funding – similar to UNC/GET structure. Possibilities include Vestes, Owens, Illinois, Swift or other large corps.
- Partner with churches on specialized transit trips
- 100 Bus Coalition – Might benefit Greeley transit. Research and support at local level is needed

# Weld County Mobility Council Forum Roundtable Comments

## **Roundtable Topic: Highway 85 Corridor**

### Connections Needed

- Service between Brighton and Greeley
- Driving Hwy 85 or I-25 undesirable
- Service between Greeley and Eaton
- Smaller towns (LaSalle, Severance, etc.) need service between Greeley and Brighton
- Senior/possibly paratransit service needed between Greeley and smaller towns on Hwy 85

### Employment Issues

- Night shifts at Swift not being served.
- Increased bus fares are an issue
- High number of City of Greeley employees live outside of Greeley
- No way to connect to RTD from Greeley
- No transit service to Windsor
- No employment transportation for smaller communities to Greeley
- Johnstown and Milliken should connect to Berthoud to make FLEX connection

### Future Needs

- Plan for local connections
- Park & Rides
- Pull outs, accessibility for the disabled
- Shelters
- Light signals for bus stops
- Acceleration and Deceleration lanes





# June 2010 Coordination Survey



# Weld County Mobility Council Coordination Survey Results

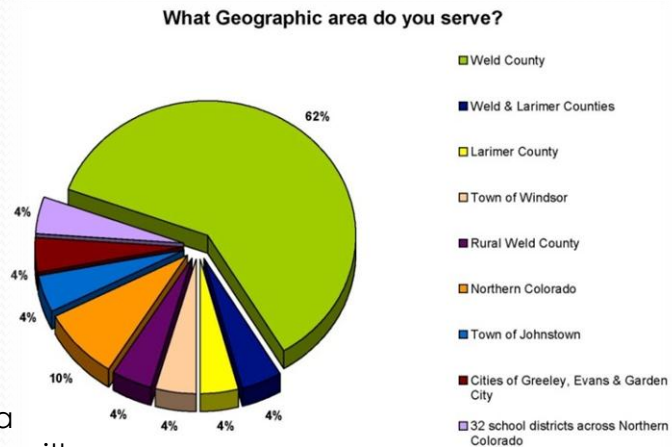
Thirty-two questions covering client transportation needs, agency transportation services and costs along with future transportation needs were covered in the survey.

Responses indicated that most agencies are unable to provide the range of mobility options needed to accommodate their clients. The majority of respondents have one or more eligibility requirements for their services, cover a large geographic area of Weld County with their services and over 75% have clients with specialized transportation needs.

A majority of survey respondents expressed a willingness to coordinate with other agencies and explore options including a one-call center for improving transportation services in Weld County.

Overall, the survey created a picture of transportation need that needs to be explored. A large percentage of agencies are struggling to provide core services and transportation often represents a challenge in service delivery.

An overview of the survey responses are provided on the following pages (18 & 19). For further details of the survey visit the mobility coordination page at [www.nfrmpo.org](http://www.nfrmpo.org)



# Weld County Mobility Council Coordination Survey Results

The coordination survey was completed by 28 human service agencies and transit providers and provided basic information about the services they provide along with agency transportation needs.

**Agency Category**

Non-profit Private	50%
For-Profit Public	4%
Other	46%

**Does Your Agency Have Eligibility Requirements?**

Yes	75%
No	25%

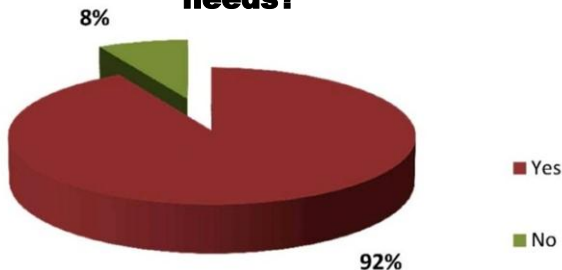
**Does agency provide, purchase or reimburse for transportation?**

Does not provide, purchase or reimburse for transportation	58%
Provides trips to medical, nutrition, education or other services	42%

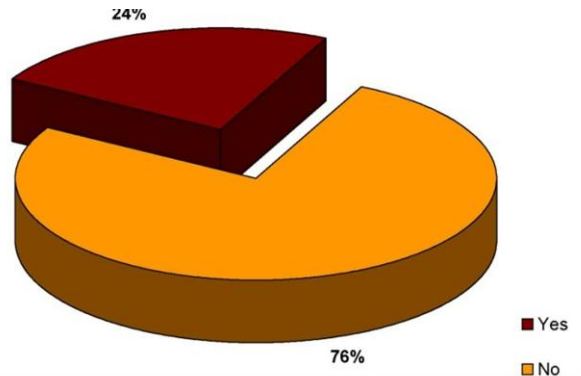
**Does your agency charge fares or request contributions for transportation?**

No	78%
Yes	22%

**Do your clients have specialized transportation needs?**



**Is your agency able to meet those needs?**



# Weld County Mobility Council Coordination Survey Results

## Would you like to see more agency coordination of client transportation in Weld County?

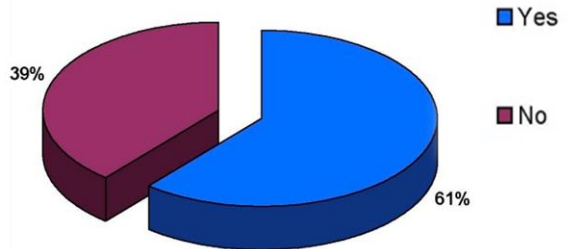
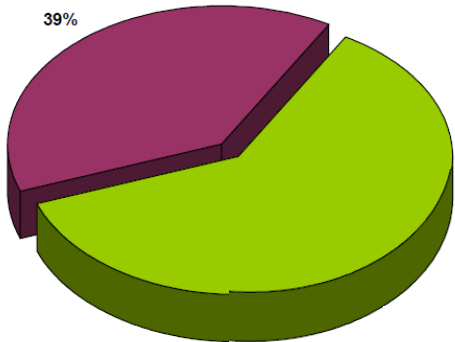
Yes 75%  
No 25%

## Would your agency be interested in volunteering time or dedicating resources towards agency coordination?

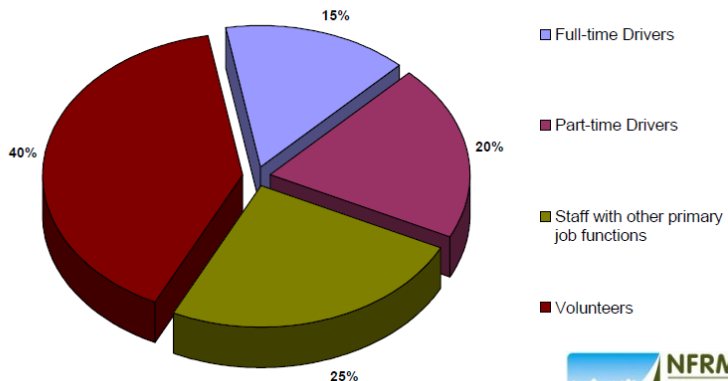
Yes 75%  
No 25%

## Are there specific locations that need more client transportation services?

Are you having problems in getting clients to your site or services?



## If your agency has vehicles, who operates them?

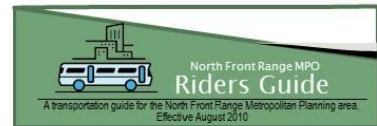


# Engaging the Public & Helping Citizens with their Mobility Needs

## Outreach to the Public

Printed outreach materials, a NFRMPO mobility coordination webpage and presentations to Weld County boards, commissions, private sector organizations and citizen groups are on-going and kept up to date based on the activities of the Weld County Mobility Council (WCMC) and the NFRMPO Mobility Coordinator.

A new publication intended to help citizens with their transit needs is the NFRMPO Riders Guide. The guide was created to assist people with their transportation needs and to further the mobility coordination goals of the Mobility Councils.



The guide features listings, general service details and contact information for each service. Available on buses and at various locations around the region the guide is another tool to help citizens with their transportation needs.

## Support for Transit and Advocating for Change

The WCMC welcomes input and ideas from the public and invites anyone with an interest in transportation issues to attend their meetings. Additionally, they keep informed of current issues that affect human service transportation and actively support and endorse programs and policies that assist transit dependent populations.

Recent endorsements include support for a cooperative planning effort along the Highway 85 Corridor, the Greeley – Evans Citizen Transit Committee Report to the Greeley and Evans City Council's, support for transit improvements funded with federal ARRA funds and funding recommendations for the regional Transportation Demand Management Plan.

# Collaborative Projects

## Fostering Mobility Coordination in Weld County

### Travel Training

Work on the travel training component of the action plan is on-going with the goal of training point persons (i.e. individuals from human service agencies, citizen commissions and transit agencies) so that the WCMC can do two things - train clients at the human service agency level AND to establish a travel training program in Greeley.

The top four compelling factors for a travel training program are –

- Increase independence for transit users
- Maximum existing resources
- Funding available for funding and implementation
- The senior “wave” - long-range goal to set up special transit opportunities after travel training

Two Weld County area individuals have attended and received certificates of training at Easter Seals Project Action (ESPA) Introduction to Travel Training Course which is in Denver, CO April 27, 28 & 29 2010. The ESPA Introduction to Travel Training is an intensive three-day course with classroom and field instruction. The travel trainers received a toolkit with resources ready to use and have successfully trained multiple individuals to use the fixed route transit system. In the case of one agency’s training, several individuals have been able to secure jobs due to their newfound autonomy and self-sufficiency.

### Volunteer Driver Program

Volunteer driver programs are organized to assist and support older adults, their family members & friends with transportation challenges. Volunteer programs aide public transit agencies and other community transportation services in providing service to this growing segment of the population.

The WCMC and Senior Resource Services (SRS) have partnered to expand the existing SRS volunteer driver program which serves a large portion of Weld County. The partnership in its first three months exceeded service projections and has grown over 37%.

The SRS program helps to distribute the demand for transit services in Greeley, Evans and Weld County and does so at no cost to the transit agencies or the public through SRS volunteer efforts.

# Next Steps

## Moving Ahead with the WCMC Goals

Work on the coordination goals that are in the Coordinated Plan along with those that were developed at the Washington D.C Transportation Institute by the WCMC team is well underway. The work will continue and the survey & forum have provided transit need information for the Greeley, Evans and Weld County areas that will help the WCMC in moving forward with their goals.

Specifically, the knowledge that was gained from the guest speakers Mr. Rosapep, Ms. Finch and Ms. Wilken along with citizen and agency input on areas of transit need, gaps in services and ideas for the future will be used to shape the future advocacy and planning efforts of the WCMC.

Emphasis on community outreach and awareness will be given a higher priority in 2011 with the mobility coordinator focusing on reaching larger civic groups, private communities and businesses in the Weld County area,

The focus on transit sustainability will also be on-going in 2011. Communicating on to decision makers the importance of transit based on ridership & census data and geographic information along with input and ideas from citizens & human service agencies will be done on a regular basis.

## WCMC Meeting Schedule

The Weld County Mobility Council meets monthly on the fourth Tuesday of every month. The meetings are open to the public with opportunity for public comment at the beginning of each meeting.

**Greeley Recreation Center, Room 102  
651 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Greeley  
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm**

**The current month's meeting agenda is posted one week prior  
to each meeting at [www.nfrmpo.org](http://www.nfrmpo.org)**

# Weld County Mobility Council 2010 Member Roster

**American Council for the Blind**

Kathryn Johnson

**Area Agency on Aging**

TBD

**Colorado Department of Labor and Employment,  
Veterans Department**

Kristi Cronin

**Connections for Independent Living**

Beth Danielson

**Envision**

Mary Lu Walton

**Greeley Center for Independence**

Kathy Van Soest

**Greeley-Evans Transit Services (GET)**

Brad Patterson, Alt - John Lee

**North Range Behavioral Health**

Kevin Thompson

**Sunrise Community Health**

Debra Scott

**Senior Resource Services**

DeeAnn Groves

**Weld Advocacy Network on Disability (WAND)**

Brad Taylor

**Weld County Public Works Department**

Elizabeth Relford

**Weld County Transit**

Toby Taylor

The “Transit In Our Community” Forum was hosted by the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization on behalf of the Weld County Mobility Council.



For further information visit

[www.nfrmpo.org](http://www.nfrmpo.org)