



## From the Director's Desk

### Project THOR and the Middle Mile Network

In June, NWCCOG, alongside Regions 10 and 9, and our Broadband team, sat down with the [Colorado Broadband Office \(CBO\)](#) and the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) to get some clarity on the future of middle mile broadband in Colorado. We needed to understand the state's role moving forward, especially in terms of funding and managing the middle mile infrastructure and the Regional Broadband Director (RBD) positions that DOLA has been partially funding.



With Brandy Reitter now at the helm of the CBO, the agency has shifted gears, focusing on federal funding distribution. But there's more—the CBO recently gained the green light to take on middle mile broadband and absorb CDOT's fiber leasing program. As NWCCOG's Project THOR and similar initiatives have grown, Nate Walowitz and the team have been working hard to figure out what comes next, including how the state might get involved.

The big surprise at the meeting came when Brandy announced that the CBO would be issuing an RFP for a consultant to help structure and operate a state broadband network, **with Project THOR playing a central role**. The transition could start as soon as 2026, with NWCCOG expected to be right in the thick of it. While there hasn't been a formal announcement from the state yet, we're holding off on putting out a press release until we have the full picture. This development puts other regional broadband projects on hold, but we're thrilled that Project THOR, a project we've nurtured from the ground up, is poised to become a flagship for the state's broadband future.

For over a decade, DOLA has been a crucial partner, funding broadband technical assistance at NWCCOG and playing a significant role in projects like Project THOR. This support has solidified NWCCOG's leadership in broadband infrastructure across Northwest Colorado.

If you're interested in more details, our presentation from the meeting is available upon request.

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Executive Director - NWCCOG

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## Expanding EV Charging Access Across Northwest Colorado

Interstate 70	US Route 82	US Route 34	US Route 40
Major east-west, transcontinental interstate highway, the western section of which crosses through the rural resort towns in Summit County and Eagle County before proceeding west through Garfield and Pitkin Counties west toward the Utah border.	85.3-mile-long principal transportation artery the Roaring Fork Valley on the CO Western Slope, beginning at I-70 and US-6 in Glenwood Springs southeast past Carbondale, El Jebel, and Basalt and on to the jobs and tourism center of Aspen.	The northwestern portion of this 260-mile road that spans across northern Colorado begins at US Route 40 in Granby and continues through Grand Lake to the Rocky Mountain National Park.	Through northwest CO, joins the county seats of Craig, Steamboat Springs and Hot Sulphur Springs to the Rocky Mountains. South from Granby, U.S. 40 ascends through Winter Park across Berthoud Pass at an elevation of 11,315 feet to Empire and I-70.

Jonathan Godes and Dana Wood with NWCCOG, in partnership with Ashley Badesch of Sustainable Strategies, Dan Blanchard and Austin Tyra with Winn-Marion, and a powerhouse of rural communities are leading a bid for \$20 million in [US Department of Transportation \(USDOT\) Charging & Fueling Infrastructure grant](#) funds. This funding will be used to deploy electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure at 26 sites (proposed in the above graphic) across seven rural counties in northwest Colorado. These sites are strategically located along four Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs), which are essential routes for building out the nation's electrified highways.

While Colorado ranks fifth in the nation for EV adoption, rural communities in the northwest region lag behind due to several challenges. These include a lack of fast-charging infrastructure, difficult terrain, long commutes, cold temperatures, and frequent road closures that force drivers to take longer detours. Workers commuting 45+ miles each way to resort towns like Aspen, Steamboat Springs, and Vail are interested in EVs but fear that current infrastructure and climate conditions make ownership impractical. High housing costs also mean that many hospitality workers live in multifamily housing without access to in-home charging. Visitors to these popular resort areas share similar concerns about EV range and charging availability, particularly when traveling from Denver.

To tackle these barriers, NWCCOG and participating communities have proposed EV charging sites that will address the needs of residents, commuters, visitors, and freight carriers alike. All proposed sites are within five miles of the four federally designated AFCs and aim to support the broader goal of a fully electrified highway network. The project will also supplement existing funds from the [NEVI Formula Program](#) to fill critical gaps in fast-charging infrastructure.

The proposed sites meet criteria for both the USDOT's AFC Category and the Community Category of funding. They include a mix of DC fast chargers and Level 2 chargers, strategically located near multifamily housing, low-income neighborhoods, and multimodal transportation hubs. These sites have been vetted for project readiness and are aligned with local, regional, and state EV infrastructure plans. NWCCOG will select a private sector charge point operator to handle the installation, operation, and maintenance of the charging stations, ensuring they are safe and accessible for public use. By enabling broader EV adoption, this project will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a region already feeling the effects of climate change.

Counties Involved:

Summit County, Eagle County, Garfield County, Pitkin County, Grand County, Moffat County, and Routt County.

The application will be submitted on August 28, 2024, with funding notifications in November 2024.

For more information, please contact Jonathan Godes, NWCCOG Regional Grants Coordinator, at [jgodes@nwccog.org](mailto:jgodes@nwccog.org) or 970-379-4248.

# Register for the RTCC Summit!

## Innovating Mobility for Inclusive and Sustainable Transportation

The Summit will focus on innovations in transportation, the role of transit in community building, and the importance of inclusivity and sustainability in mobility solutions.

Register today using the QR code below or this [link!](#)



**Regional Transit Coordinating Council  
(RTCC) Summit**

September 12, 2024  
9am-3pm  
Frisco Community and Senior Center

**Keynote** Margaret Bowes, i70 Coalition

**Panel 1** Bustang and Bustang Outrider  
Transit Trivia

**Panel 2** Transit and Mobility for All  
Featuring Transit organizations from La Junta, Lone Tree, Summit County, and Boulder County

Group Discussion and New Ideas:  
• NEMT and Service Impacts  
• Mountain to Rail Project

Register Here!



**Northwest Colorado**  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COUNCIL

## COG Quirks: From Living Room Intervals to the Podium

Back in June, our Fiscal Director, Becky Walter (on the left in the photo) tackled the Firecracker 50 mile mountain bike race...SOLO. (Yes, there's a duo option where each person races a 25-mile lap, but Becky is not one to take the easy way out.) This was her second go at the full 50, but her first time with a coach—who just so happens to be a good friend who knows her cycling abilities inside and out. With about 10 hours of training per week over two months, Becky powered through her coach's structured workouts. She would've loved to train even more, but let's face it—life's a balancing act. Big shoutout to her partner for enduring those 9PM interval workouts in the living room!

The biggest challenge? Little French on lap two. If you've



ever faced that climb, you know the struggle is real. Becky was convinced she had lost loads of time there and had dropped to the back of the pack. Little did she know she was actually in a podium position! The mental game was the toughest—when your brain says you're tired, your body is all too eager to agree. But Becky dug deep, pushed through, and the payoff was totally worth it. All those living room intervals really did the trick! Congrats on your 3rd place finish, Becky!

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