



Building Regional Connections at the August RTCC Meeting

At the recent Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) meeting, partnerships were a major theme. Co-Chair Sam Guarino noted, *"With the inherently regional nature of transportation challenges within the NWCCOG, having the group of transportation experts that is the RTCC together in one room to work on and review potential solutions is vital to our future successes. Whether it be filling gaps in our services, bringing options to transit deserts, or considering innovations such as microtransit, electric buses, and carshare apps, this regional approach is our best way forward."*

We heard from [RideNoCo](#) on their regional mobility website, which is inspiring elements of our forthcoming Transportation Hub webpage that will be hosted on NWCCOG's site this fall. Updates also included the success of the new [On-Demand ride service](#) in Glenwood Springs, RFTA's progress on electric bus integration, and [TreadShare's](#) expanding carpooling app. Snowmass Village is the newest TreadShare partner, and agencies from Eagle, Summit, Grand, Routt, Moffat, and Jackson counties were invited to consider joining a regional approach. We have a unique opportunity to scale regional carpooling by applying for [CDOT's Transportation Demand Management \(TDM\)](#) grant this fall for \$50K. We're pleased to report that since the meeting, Summit Stage has committed to being part of the regional application.



The 2026 CDOT 5310 grant, which funds the majority of the Mobility Program ([RTCC and IMTPR](#)), was submitted on July 14th for a total ask of \$126,218.40, including a 20% local match of \$31,554.60. Values memos on the importance of the RTCC and project updates to date went out to 8 local partners (3 of which are new) in June requesting a total match of \$67,000. This is a \$37,000 increase over last year to give the RTCC greater flexibility in funding projects, in addition to the match requirement. This collaborative match not only fulfills the requirement but strengthens our ability to secure and leverage state funds for impactful mobility projects.

Transit expansion continues to be on the horizon. Summit Stage is pursuing [Clean Transit Energy \(CTE\)/SB230](#) funding for a commuter bus between Silverthorne and Kremmling while working toward the creation of a Summit County RTA, potentially linking Alma, Fairplay, Leadville, and Kremmling, with a ballot initiative targeted for November 2026. In Steamboat Springs, a November 2025 ballot question will ask voters to form an RTA with Craig, Hayden, Oak Creek, Yampa, and Routt County. This step won't include funding but will set the stage for a future funding measure.

We also celebrated [Basalt's innovative public/private partnership with ValleyOrtho at View Hospital](#) to sustain its Basalt Connect microtransit service and highlighted the launch of the [Two Rivers Connect app](#) in the Roaring Fork Valley. The Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership is also

interested in being a part of this effort to coordinate services and offer transportation alternatives for communities further down valley.

From ballot initiatives to technology pilots, the August 6th meeting in Frisco reinforced RTCC's role as the regional connector—aligning funding, fostering partnerships, and tackling shared challenges to improve transportation for veterans, older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income residents across our seven counties. We're proud of the progress we've made together and the commitments our partners have shown. Co-Chair Mary Harlan commented *"The interconnectedness of our mountain communities runs deep. Living in the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys we've learned that connecting people to food, medical services, social services, job opportunities, education, and recreation at times requires many miles and hours of travel just within these valleys. Robust rural transportation options, whether it be by bike, carshare, public transit, on-demand shuttles, or train, are essential. Working on projects with the RTCC directly impacts our transportation network across multiple mountain regions increasing positive economic, social, and environmental outcomes while decreasing our dependency on single occupancy vehicles."*

Congratulations to all who are helping us build momentum for better mobility in Northwest Colorado. Thanks to the RTCC Co-Chairs, Sam Guarino, Director of Snowmass Village Transit, and Mary Harlan, Mobility Coordinator for RFTA, for facilitating the meeting. Highlights from these projects will also be shared at the next NWCCOG Council meeting on September 18th.

The next RTCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 5th from 9:00–11:30 a.m. on [Zoom](#).

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Project THOR Proves Critical During the Lee Fire in Rio Blanco County



When the Lee Fire ignited near Meeker in early August, Rio Blanco County quickly became the center of a major firefighting effort. By August 6, Governor Polis had activated Colorado National Guard resources as the fire grew explosively and operations intensified. The sudden influx of fire crews and equipment placed unexpected strain on the county's communications systems.

At the request of Rio Blanco County, NWCCOG's Broadband Program stepped in to help. Leveraging the flexibility built into Project THOR's network architecture, staff were able to immediately expand Rio Blanco County's broadband connection

from 10G to 40G, ensuring that the fire camp and county operations had the bandwidth needed to support incident response.

That same day, the Elk Fire created another test for local infrastructure when flames damaged fiber optic cables connecting Meeker to the south, disrupting many incumbent providers' services. Thanks to Project THOR's resilient design, Rio Blanco County's internet, cell phone, and public safety traffic were automatically rerouted across alternate connections. Service continued seamlessly for fire crews, emergency personnel, and residents—without interruption. Fiber connections to the south of Meeker were finally restored on Saturday, August 16th late afternoon.

This incident highlights the vital role of regional collaboration and infrastructure investment. Project THOR's resiliency and scalability not only keep communities connected day to day but also prove indispensable in times of crisis.

Vintage Attends USAgging Conference

Vintage Director, Erin, attended the USAgging conference in Chicago in July. This Conference has become the country's largest gathering of local leaders in aging well at home. Each year, more than 1,400 Area Agencies on Aging, tribal aging programs, federal, state and local leaders in aging, home and community-

based services and caregiving attend from across the nation.

Erin's favorite presentation was from Dr. Ken Dychtwald, North America's foremost visionary and original thinker regarding the lifestyle, marketing, health care, economic and workforce implications of the age wave.



Comment on the Draft CDOT Plans



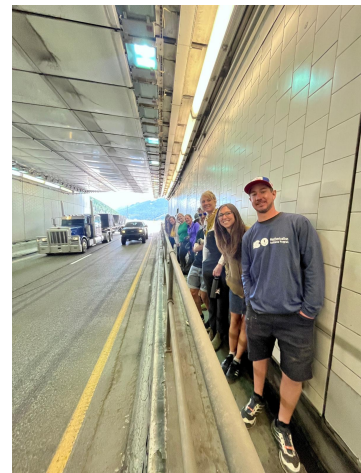
The public comment period for the Statewide and Regional Transit Plans are currently ongoing through the month of August. You can access the drafts and comment forms here:

[Draft 2050 Regional Transit Plans](#)

[Draft 2050 Statewide Transit Plan](#)

NWCCOG Staff Visit Eisenhower Tunnels

On July 23rd, the NWCCOG crew took a field trip to the Eisenhower-Johnson Memorial Tunnels. CDOT staff gave us a behind-the-scenes tour of the control rooms, safety systems, and the incredible operations that keep the longest mountain tunnel in the Interstate system running smoothly. From giant fans to tunnel trivia, we came away with a new appreciation for what it takes to keep cars (and people!) moving safely under the Continental Divide. Big thanks to CDOT for the unforgettable adventure!



Upcoming Board Meetings

Thursday, September 18, 2025 –TBD Roaring Fork Valley area, tours TBD

Full Council & EDD Board Annual Planning Meeting

Primary Agenda Items: Approve August 2025 meeting minutes, strategic planning for 2026; EDD Board meeting

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