

*BROOMFIELD CITY COUNCIL TRAINING AND TRAVEL REPORT*



**Council Member Denny McCloskey**

**March 2, 2013-March 14, 2013**

**ANNUAL NACO & NLC CONFERENCE**

**ANNUAL BROOMFIELD LOBBY DAY**

**TOTAL NACO COSTS: \$1897.70**

NACo registration: \$490.00

HOTEL COSTS: \$784.32

AIR COST: \$227.38

PER DIEM: \$396.00

**TOTAL NLC COSTS: \$1837.69**

NLC Registration \$400.00

HOTEL COSTS: \$784.32

AIR COST: \$227.37

PER DIEM: \$426.00

The City and County of Broomfield has multiple legislative requests of our Colorado Delegation. I continue the strategy of using Broomfield specific needs tied to both NACO and NLC national issues. This maximizes the message for our citizens, and promotes the City and County of Broomfield as a leader in forming the message delivered to our Congressmen and Senators each year. It also affords a direct contact with each Congressman's and Senator's Chief of Staff and Legislative Aide. Over decades this partnership with NACO and NLC has helped move projects forward for the City and County of Broomfield. Economic development has always favored locations that maintain congressional relationships and have superior transportation and education systems. With the added element of Colorado's vistas and lifestyle, we continue to see our name on the short list for relocation and start-ups. We can't let degradation of our Congressional relationships, infrastructure utilities, and competitive education systems change our winning equation.

**NACo** Lobby priorities support the largest focus for Broomfield this year is to ensure funds allocated and approved for the US 36 BRT project and the Phase Two of 120th Avenue connection continue at a level to keep the projects moving in spite of the sequestration now in effect. Regionally the City and County of Broomfield has led in the effort to complete the Fastracks system as promised, and in a timely and fiscally responsible manner. This project is the largest in the nation, and Federal support will be a continuing need for this multi-year project. Long-range issues of sensible entitlement reform and rail partnership are crucial for success. Urban transit, in lieu of endless capacity (continuing to add additional highway lanes—COSTS: average “free”way interchange \$250 million—average overpass \$5.8 million per lane mile—“free”way” 6.1 per lane mile) that does not include right of way, EA or EIS, and condemnation requirement--preserves statewide dollars for our hundreds of center lane miles of rural roads and bridges. The continued underfunding of heavy truck

damage accelerates system degradation. Presently there is a significant effort to increase the size and weight of these trucks that will deepen the problem and add more safety concerns. Air traffic is near capacity and loses money on flights under 500 miles. To understand the true cost of flight, check the minor airport flight costs. Even at those prices, overall system costs are not being covered. The NAM (North Area Mobility Study) will help determine next steps, and we want our Federal Delegation to be aware of the need for continued Federal dollars to address equitable investment in the metro area. MAP-21 has a Buy America requirement that is appropriate, but may be overreaching in that it indicates complimentary projects not obligated by Federal funds may need to track the American expenses. There is no state or local system to do so at present, and we do not want additional funds diverted from actual projects to create a separate tracking system. Senator Bennet's reassignment to Finance will help keep mechanisms to bring private capital into our much needed infrastructure projects. (such as TIFIA, TIGER, etc)

Other areas of concern: Port challenges include the need to deepen many existing ports to handle the supersize shipping vessels anticipated after the widened Panama Canal opens. A significant effort is being made to move inspection costs for shipped freight to be paid at point of embarkation, not arrival. US citizens are additionally subsidizing these costs unnecessarily. Deep water ports on Gulf of Mexico shore will alter shipping patterns. Presently 60% of West Coast freight is bound for locations east of the Mississippi River on our west-east interstates (I-10,40,80...70 isn't as impacted due to the mountain travel cost. However I-25 will certainly be impacted with new south-north shipping corridors.) There is a concern that our deep water western ports at LA and Long Beach that don't need dredging, however, the Harbor Tax is collected evenly at all ports. They are asking to use funds collected at their ports to do other needed infrastructure work. This is similar to the Colorado state legislation to create a fund for parking facilities at RTD park n rides. There is no language to keep

the \$\$ collected in one corridor from flowing to another. We are not in favor of that inequity either. Informing our Senators of that is useful since they may not be aware of how funds are used in the system back in Colorado, and specifically, Broomfield.

Much of the Federal county concern is around our Forest Health and Disaster Response to forest fires. Our watershed is of concern in this issue. The slurry bombers are reaching the end of their useable life, and replacement of over half ahead of this coming fire season is crucial. The issue of tax free Municipal Bonds is part of the grand bargain attempt. Our Senators and metropolitan Congressman get this, but may not be able to hold them to zero. There seemed to be broad support for the Marketplace Fairness/Remote Shippers bill. Finally it has not been held up as a “new” tax. Freight rail is seeking assistance from the Federal government to arc many metropolitan areas. We asked that the local governments (cities & counties) have the first option at any available right of way that may be vacated. For our North West Rail, it may be the only reasonable solution. We are being asked to support a county commissioner be appointed to be a member of the new National Freight Advisory Committee. I will put forward a resolution of support for James Healy as the choice from the Transportation and Transit Steering Committees.

**Quick facts:** Overall accidents down 70% fatalities, 80% collisions, suicide/intoxicated single deaths 50% trespass—around barriers/fence; locomotives now have onboard cameras to address the cost of unnecessary litigation; 2 ½ complete train loads @ day on main line to Wal-Mart. 80,000 lb truck pays 80% of its Federal cost/50% of its state cost (less in Colorado since we are on the low side of State collected fuel tax); Removal of heavy trucks would extend highway life by 50 years; [www.envisionfreight.com](http://www.envisionfreight.com)

**This Congressional Convention of NLC** includes several areas of focus. Clearly there is overlap in the specific areas, however my

focus has remained on infrastructure policy, mechanisms, and financing. Below is the area I spent my efforts for the City and County of Broomfield. At council meetings I emphasized the specific areas of chairing the National Transit Steering Committee and leading on change to existing policy as TIS member. All transportation modes remain dependent on funds outside their direct funding mechanisms and include the need to tap general funds. (Present Map-21 spends down 10 years of revenue.) All modes are in significant stress when considering the immediate challenges of the next decade. The Colorado group of Mayors and Council are in support of the Marketplace Fairness Act and Tax Free Municipal Bonds. It seems that there is much broader support this year as nationally Congress has heard from cities and towns that these are two of the few tools available to blunt the effects of the fiscal downturn, now increased by the sequester. In the case of the Tax Free Municipal Bonds issue, we pointed out that it would be the first time the Feds have taxed Locals directly for this funding of infrastructure. The progress on Comprehensive Immigration Reform is finally getting traction to the point where this will likely result in a plan, not a fruitless debate. The emerging agreement since last year includes the “Dreamers” who were dependents fully raised and educated in America. It also includes those receiving American college degrees while on VISA a pathway to stay and contribute to American economy rather than being forced to leave and return to their homeland to be our competitors. (We lose both ways.)

**City and County Broomfield Lobby Day** emphasized our specific transportation projects and our interest in an Applied Science and Research Park. In particular we encouraged Senator Bennet for his leadership to encourage creating innovative financing mechanisms (TIGER, TIFIA, PPP) etc.—especially in this time of nothing but CR’s (continuing resolutions) since 2005 from Federal level (our state has done little to address cost-revenue in the same period).

A source of needed revenue to both Cities and Counties over the last decade is addressed in the **National Marketplace Fairness Act (Remote Shippers)**. The earlier state-by-state approach didn't make sense and carved out special advantages for certain states. Local businesses can't afford to support local government costs while online, out of state retailers contribute nothing to daily wear on infrastructure. The Colorado Delegation largely supports this uniform, national approach. This year it finally has bi-partisan support. Similarly, the continuation of Tax Free Municipal Bonds are one of the few local government mechanisms available for needed local infrastructure projects. Although our delegation is largely supportive, especially our Senators are aware that there may be a slight rise as part of the elusive "grand bargain" that is still being negotiated. We appreciate that both of our Senators are engaged in this process instead of waiting for others to move forward. Mobility and economic update plans seemed to have specific support from our CD-2 Congressman Jared Polis, and our Senators, Mark Udall and Michael Bennet. We also met with Congressman Ed Perlmutter, largely because of the ongoing Jefferson Parkway Project and the North Line of Fastracks, which is in his district, but will affect our long range plans for Broomfield. Good to have his enthusiasm and energy on our side.

NLC

Feel free to contact me with issues, comments, and concerns—the same message I regularly offer to others on council and staff.

Check NACo and NLC websites as well as BNSF and UP.

In directly speaking to EVERY one of our nine member Federal Delegation , not a one thinks that the sequester is anything but a boneheaded way of dealing with our deficit, and that it will likely make our fiscal situation worse, while carelessly harming the most fragile citizens. Nothing better than an extended personal conversation and handshake with those we elected to represent us.