



Community Planning & Permitting

Courthouse Annex • 2045 13th Street • Boulder, Colorado 80302

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 471 • Boulder, Colorado 80306

303-441-3930 • www.BoulderCounty.gov

Nederland EcoPass Public Improvement District Advisory Committee (NEPPIDAC) 2024 Summary

Committee Members

- Vera Schulte-Pelkum (through February 2024)
- Susie Gallaudet
- Gene Smith
- Andrew Bliss
- Tom Mahowald (reappointed August 2024, term through 2028)
- Tierney Maris
- One vacancy throughout the year (recruitment ongoing)

Town of Nederland Staff

- Miranda Fisher
- Peter Cacek

Boulder County Staff

- Alex Hyde-Wright
- Landon Hilliard

Key Decisions of NEPPIDAC

During 2024, NEPPIDAC focused on guiding the transition to RTD's mobile account-based system, preparing the new District Employee EcoPass Program authorized by voters in 2023, addressing service gaps on the RTD NB route, and strengthening communication with residents and businesses. The committee also advanced administrative processes, engaged in membership recruitment, and explored future transit-supportive investments.

1. Managing the Mobile / Account-Based EcoPass Transition

The shift to RTD's MyRide mobile system continued to be a major undertaking. Many residents expressed discomfort with mobile-only passes, prompting Town and County staff to support the distribution of physical MyRide cards wherever possible.

Key transition issues included:

- inconsistent information from RTD staff
- lack of card stock
- difficulty reaching RTD for technical support

To address these challenges, NEPPIDAC directed staff to:

- establish a clear communication channel with RTD
- create FAQs and outreach materials, including flyers for the library
- hold enrollment events (e.g., January 31 event with 26 participants)
- continue direct resident support at Town Hall

RTD's Zero Fare for Youth program (through August 2024) temporarily reduced the need for youth EcoPasses but introduced questions regarding ridership tracking and future impacts on pricing.

2. Budget Amendments and 2025 Budget Planning

With the successful passage of the 2023 ballot measure, 2024 property tax revenue increased to \$214,331. The EcoPass contract price for residents dropped to \$56,093—about \$30,000 less than in 2023—due to lower ridership and fare structure changes.

NEPPIDAC approved:

- a \$1,500 increase to the printing and mailing budget (passed 3-0)
- acknowledgment of the need for additional outreach funds for the new employee program
- the 2025 recommended budget (passed 4-0), contingent on coordination with the Town regarding administration fees and future use of the growing fund balance for community-beneficial projects (e.g., service improvements, bus stop connectivity)

3. Launching the District Employee EcoPass Program

Following voter approval in November 2023, NEPPIDAC devoted significant time to preparing the new employee EcoPass program scheduled to launch by September–November 2024.

Program development highlights:

- Staff drafted enrollment materials, employer headcount tools, and data tracking/audit systems.
- Expected program size: up to 3,000 employees (much fewer expected in the first year).

- Eldora Mountain Ski Resort (approx. 700 seasonal employees) identified as the largest employer and a priority for early outreach and enrollment events.

Key policy discussions included:

- whether and how to charge large employers a financial contribution
- managing seasonal pass expirations
- determining whether employers or employees provide verification
- integrating the program with business engagement through the DDA, Chamber, and local networks

Concerns raised: existing NB service limits capacity for Eldora-bound traffic and could be strained by expanded employee ridership.

4. Addressing RTD NB Service Gaps and Pursuing Supplemental Service

A recurring theme in 2024 was the need to improve service frequency and reliability on the NB route, particularly weekend access to Eldora and weekday alignment with Nederland Middle-Senior School.

Actions and discussions:

- NEPPIDAC unanimously supported submitting the “Supplementing the NB Route” grant request to the RTD Partnership Program (Approved 4-0), although RTD later deemed it ineligible because added NB service is already included in the RTD System Optimization Plan.
- RTD indicated additional NB service may be implemented as early as May 2025, pending public comment and Board approval.
- The committee explored future grant opportunities, including a Town–Eldora winter shuttle demonstration project.
- Public comments throughout the year reinforced the need for more frequent service and safer winter operations.

5. Committee Membership and Recruitment

With Vera Schulte-Pelkum term-limited in February 2024 after a decade of service, NEPPIDAC initiated recruitment for a new member.

Recruitment efforts included:

- announcements via Town newsletters, social media, the Boulder County vacancies portal, and flyers at local gathering spots
- outreach to frequent riders (e.g., Betty Bass) and community leaders
- encouragement for business representation on the committee

Tom Mahowald was reappointed in August 2024 to a new four-year term, restoring the committee to near full membership.

6. Strengthening Community Engagement and Communications

Throughout 2024, NEPPIDAC emphasized better communication with riders and employers.

Efforts included:

- website updates, social media posts (including NedHeads), and promotion at the Library and Community Center
- review and refinement of new EcoPass flyers
- discussion of press releases and potential editorial pieces for the Daily Camera and Mountain-Ear
- emphasis on explaining program benefits and the “no silo” approach, integrating EcoPass with Mountain Rides, Volunteer Driver Program, Colorado CarShare, and other regional mobility services

7. Transit Service, Shuttle Concepts, and Long-Term Mobility Planning

Committee members discussed several long-term mobility priorities:

- a potential Town–Eldora shuttle for residents
- increasing capacity on the Boulder–Eldora shuttle
- improving real-time bus information and Wi-Fi
- exploring sheltered waiting areas at Nederland Park-n-Ride
- incorporating bus stop upgrades and first-last mile connections into the Nederland Transportation Master Plan
- addressing winter reliability concerns (e.g., chain use, driver training, NB operations in icy canyon conditions)

Conclusion

Across 2024, NEPPIDAC navigated a complex transition to RTD’s account-based fare system, prepared the first-ever District Employee EcoPass Program, evaluated transit service gaps, and improved communication with residents and businesses. The committee strengthened administrative capacity, supported budget stability, and helped position the Nederland EcoPass Program for expanded access and long-term sustainability. The year laid crucial groundwork for program changes launching in late 2024 and service improvements anticipated in 2025.