



# Community Planning & Permitting

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## Memo to Board of County Commissioners

**TO:** Boulder County Board of County Commissioners, Sitting as the Board of Directors for the Nederland EcoPass District

**FROM:** Alex Hyde-Wright, Regional Multimodal Planning Division Manager, Community Planning & Permitting- Transportation Planning Division

**RE:** Use of Nederland EcoPass District Funds for Supplemental Transit Service

**DATE:** January 9, 2025

### Action Requested:

Approval to use \$27,000 in previously budgeted Nederland EcoPass District funds for supplemental bus service connecting the Town of Nederland and the City of Boulder

### Background:

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) operates the route NB between the Town of Nederland and the City of Boulder via Boulder Canyon Dr (CO 119). This route provides the only transit service between the greater Nederland area and Boulder, and is a critical connection between Boulder County's mountain communities and the jobs, education, healthcare and other essential services located in Boulder and the rest of the urbanized Denver metro area. To fulfill the obligations of its contract with the union representing its bus operators to provide adequate layover and rest time at the end of each trip, RTD has had to make some recent changes to the NB schedule adjusting trip times.

These schedule changes have had some unintended consequences for passengers desiring to ride transit between Nederland and Boulder, and county staff have received a number of messages from the public this winter. To supplement the RTD NB service, Boulder County staff are requesting to use \$27,000 in previously budgeted Nederland EcoPass District funds to operate an extra weekday afternoon round trip during the January 2025 RTD "runboard", the schedule period between January 19 and mid-May, mimicking the RTD route NB and providing an additional travel option for our mountain residents.

The Nederland EcoPass District is funded by a voter-approved property tax, with the most recent vote in November 2023 extending the property tax through the end of 2033. The Board of County Commissioners serve as the Board of Directors for this District and are advised by an appointed

advisory committee of four District residents and one representative from the Town of Nederland Board of Trustees.

Use of the District's funds for this purpose has been recommended (5-0) to the Commissioners by the Nederland EcoPass District Advisory Committee at its December 18, 2024 meeting.

Use of the District's funds for this purpose is explicitly permitted in resolutions previously adopted by the Commissioners. Resolution 2013-80, which was adopted by the Commissioners as part of the original November 2013 ballot measure, states that "if funding permits after all the costs of providing an Eco Pass to permanent residents in the district are paid, remaining revenues may pay for additional or expanded transit service hours of existing bus routes, or transit related amenities."

Resolution 23-001, which was adopted by the Commissioners as part of the November 2023 ballot measure asking voters to extend the tax, states that "The Board desires to expand the purposes to which revenues remaining after all the costs of providing an EcoPass to District residents are paid to include administering and funding a separate EcoPass program for non-resident employees of employers operating within the District so that remaining revenues may be used to pay for additional or expanded transit service hours of existing bus routes, or transit related amenities".

The approved 2025 budget for the Nederland EcoPass District includes funding for the resident EcoPass program, and the non-resident employee EcoPass program, the latter of which is costing \$28,440 less than budgeted. Approval would not impact continuation of either of those programs.

Approval of reallocating \$27,000 for supplemental bus service will keep the District within its approved \$102,506 budget for 2025, and would not even impact its \$107,493 budgeted contribution to fund balance in 2025, or its \$317,215 2024 projected year-end fund balance.