

4th Infraday Mountain States June 4, 2025

*Shaping the Future of Mountain States Infrastructure
Through Innovation and Resilience*

**Mile High Station
2027 W Colfax Ave, Denver, CO 80204**



Welcome to Infraday Mountain States

Mile High Station – Denver, CO

Thank you for joining us today.

It means a lot to welcome you to Infraday Mountain States—and to do so in a place that tells a story about the past, present, and future of infrastructure in Colorado.

Mile High Station isn't just a venue. It was originally part of the Midwest Steel & Iron Works Company Complex, a cornerstone of Denver's industrial rise. Founded in 1893 and headquartered here at 25 Larimer Street for six decades, Midwest Steel was one of the region's oldest and largest metal fabricators. Their work helped shape communities across Colorado, Wyoming, and New Mexico—including bridges, buildings, and civic landmarks that still stand today.

The building you're in today once housed the company's steel fabrication shop and its Art Deco-style executive offices—designed in 1930 by architect Roland Linder. Inside, rivet forges and heavy machinery once forged the backbone of Western infrastructure. After closing in 1983, the complex sat quiet until being carefully restored and reopened as a gathering space in 2018. It's now listed on the National Register of Historic Places—and it's where we've chosen to hold this summit.

That choice was intentional. Because today we're talking about the next chapter of the very story that began here: How do we build smarter, faster, more resilient infrastructure for Colorado and the Mountain West?

Across today's sessions, we'll dive into the issues that matter: drought resilience and water reuse, AI and data in public planning, bus rapid transit, freight and rail strategy, grid modernization, affordable housing, and how public-private models can scale local impact. We'll hear from people who are not just thinking about these problems—but solving them every day.

I want to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who helped make this day possible—our speakers, moderators, and the local leaders who show up and put in the work. And to all of you here with us—thank you for being part of this community.

And finally, a big thank you to our partners—4M, Network Infrastructure Construction Co., Procure, STV, Ulteig, and WSP. Your continued support powers conversations like this and helps move the industry forward.

Let's make it a great day.

—Ken Bauco
CEO, Infraday

AGENDA

7:00 AM – Registration & Networking Breakfast

Kick off the day with coffee, networking, and connections with regional infrastructure leaders.

Morning Sessions

8:00 AM – Welcome & Opening Remarks

A look at the state of infrastructure, setting the stage for the day's discussions.

Presenter:

Zach Stone, Colorado Transportation Area Manager, **STV**

8:05 AM – Keynote Panel

The Future of Western U.S. Infrastructure: Priorities, Challenges, and Opportunities

- Expanding broadband access and closing the digital divide in rural and underserved communities
- Advancing smart city initiatives through public-private collaboration and cross-jurisdictional partnerships
- Planning and financing long-term water and wastewater infrastructure for climate resilience
- Leveraging integrated data, mobility, and infrastructure strategies to build connected, future-ready communities

Moderator:

Melanie Morgan Ward, Manager, Development Foresight and Infrastructure Readiness, **City of Centennial**

Panelists:

Cassie Bair, Vice President of Broadband Services, **35 Mile Foundation**

Joseph Rasmussen, Manager, Water & Wastewater Infrastructure Planning, **Colorado Springs Utilities**

Kurt Kowar, Director, Public Works & Utilities, **City of Louisville**

Tyler Svitak, Executive Director, **Colorado Smart Cities Alliance**

8:40 AM – Panel 1

Water & Drought Resilience: Ensuring Sustainable Resources for the Future

- Advancing rate structures and pricing strategies to promote conservation
- Research-driven innovations in water reuse, storage, and drought response
- Navigating federal priorities and funding for long-term water resilience

- Strengthening urban and regional partnerships to meet future water needs

Moderator:

Scott Esposito, Solution Architect, **Oracle**

Panelists:

Erin Foraker, Acting Program Manager, Research and Development, **Bureau of Reclamation**

Esther Vincent, Environmental Services Director, **Northern Water**

Fletcher Davis, Rates Manager, **Denver Water**

Russ Sands, Director of Local Climate Solutions, **Colorado Energy Office**

Sean Chambers, Director of Water & Sewer Utilities, **City of Greeley**

9:20 AM – Standalone Presentation

Presentation: Leadership Lessons in Public Sector Transformation

- Insights from managing three of the country's largest transportation systems: RTD, LA Metro and DEN.
- Infrastructure on national, state and local levels.

Presenter:

Phillip Washington, Chief Executive Officer, **Denver International Airport**

9:50 AM – Panel 2

Bus Rapid Transit in Colorado: Expanding Access, Efficiency, and Regional Impact

- Deploying BRT to address congestion, equity, and first-last mile gaps
- Coordinating across municipalities to plan, fund, and implement corridor projects
- Integrating BRT with existing mobility networks and transit-oriented development
- Measuring success: ridership growth, emissions reduction, and economic outcomes

Moderator:

Zach Stone, Colorado Transportation Area Manager, **STV**

Panelists:

Amy Ford, Executive Director, Department of Transportation & Infrastructure, **City and County of Denver**

Chris Nicholson, Director — District A, Board of Directors, **RTD**

Jacob Riger, Manager, Multimodal Transportation Planning, Transportation Planning and Operations,

Denver Regional Council of Governments

Ryan Noles, Bus Rapid Transit Program Manager Region 1, **CDOT**

10:30 AM – Morning Networking Break (20 Min)

10:50 AM – Standalone Presentation

Presentation: Rebuilding a Mile of Main Street: Lessons from the 16th Street Mall Project

Denver's iconic 16th Street Mall is undergoing one of the most ambitious and transformative infrastructure projects in the city's history. Molly Veldkamp will take attendees behind the scenes of this multi-year, multi-stakeholder initiative to revitalize a crucial public corridor that supports economic activity, transit access, tourism, and civic life.

This session will explore the complexity of reconstructing a highly visible and heavily used pedestrian/transit mall while maintaining day-to-day operations, public confidence, and long-term design integrity.

Presenter:

Molly Veldkamp, Program Manager, Stakeholder Engagement & Strategic Communications, **City and County of Denver**

11:10 AM – Panel 3

AI & Data in Infrastructure: Modernizing Public Sector Planning and Delivery

- Applying AI and data analytics to optimize infrastructure operations, safety, and asset performance
- Enhancing public sector project management through digital design and intelligent systems
- Securing critical infrastructure using AI-driven threat detection and response tools
- Building modern data architecture to support scalable, ethical, and transparent government decision-making

Moderator:

Joe Eberly, Vice President of Strategy & Growth, **4M Analytics**

Panelists:

Doug Oates, Manager, Office of Project Management, **Colorado State Patrol**

Jeff Franklin, Sr. Strategic Program Manager, Department of Transportation & Infrastructure, **City and County of Denver**

Robert Whetsel, Associate Director for Data Architecture, **FDA**

Trent Thompson, Security Operations Center Manager, **Denver International Airport**

11:50 AM – Panel 4

Energy Infrastructure: Grid Modernization & Renewable Expansion

- Bridging local government, utility, and private sector roles in grid modernization
- Integrating emergency management into energy resilience planning
- Advancing renewable generation, storage, and transmission in rapidly growing regions
- Public-private approaches to scaling energy infrastructure and meeting decarbonization goals

Moderator:

Brian Balkus, Senior Strategy Director, **MasTec Clean Energy & Infrastructure**

Panelists:

Brett Cavanagh, Director - Oil & Gas Energy, **Weld County Government**

Jan Kulmann, SVP & COO, **United Power & Mayor, City of Thornton**

Matthew Mueller, Executive Director - Emergency Management, **City and County of Denver**

Mikaela Schlesinger, Project Manager, **National Renewable Energy Laboratory**

12:30 PM – Panel 5

Housing & Urban Development: Solving the Affordability Crisis

- Aligning local infrastructure planning with housing opportunity and affordability goals
- Regional approaches to workforce and seasonal housing in resort and urban areas
- Leveraging public-private collaboration to deliver community-scale housing solutions
- Integrating land use, transit, and planning to create equitable, connected neighborhoods

Moderator:

Natalie Stiffler, Transportation Lead, Colorado, Senior Vice President, **WSP**

Panelists:

Adam Lyons, Deputy Director of Housing Opportunity, **City & County of Denver**

Jason Dietz, Director of Housing, **Town of Vail**

Sarah Pulliam, Housing & Community Development Manager, **City of Aurora**

Kristin Hyser, Executive Director, **Broomfield Housing Alliance**

Roshana Floyd, Planning Manager, **City of Lone Tree, CO**

1:10 PM – Networking Lunch (1 Hour)

Afternoon Sessions

2:10 PM – Standalone Presentation

Presentation: Making an IMPACT: Colorado Energy Office Launches First-of-its-kind Policy Accelerator Program

Colorado Energy Office is offering a total of \$50 million in funding through the Local Implementation, Mitigation, and Policy Action Accelerator (IMPACT Accelerator) Grant Program to support local and Tribal governments with policy adoption to build local resilience, reduce emissions, and advance other state priorities, such as improved air quality. Attendees will gain an understanding of how the program is promoting policy adoption in four categories (Buildings, Land Use, Transportation, and Waste) and creating long-lasting and durable impacts for communities.

Presenters:

Ari Moledina, Program Manager - Local Government Climate Solutions, **Colorado Energy Office**
Russ Sands, Director - Local Government Climate Solutions, **Colorado Energy Office**

2:30 PM – Panel 6

Freight, Logistics & Rail: Strengthening Regional Supply Chains

- Aligning public infrastructure projects with Class I rail priorities to improve coordination, safety, and delivery timelines
- Advancing state-led passenger rail planning through federal funding, stakeholder engagement, and multimodal integration
- Balancing freight and passenger rail operations to support regional mobility and economic development
- Leveraging technical expertise, permitting strategies, and partnerships to modernize and expand rail infrastructure

Moderator:

Lucas Frahm, Sr. Program Manager, Rail & Transportation, **EXP**

Panelists:

Amber Stoffels, Mgr I Industry & Public Project, **Union Pacific Railroad**
Maux Sullivan, Assistant Director, Passenger Rail, **Colorado Department of Transportation**
Rafer Nichols, Manager Public Projects II, **BNSF Railway**

3:00 PM – Panel 7

Public-Private Partnerships: Maximizing Investment in Infrastructure

- Exploring new P3 models across transportation, energy, libraries, and public finance
- Leveraging data and policy research to guide infrastructure investment decisions
- Structuring clean energy financing tools through public-private collaboration
- Aligning local government priorities with state-level P3 strategy and financial innovation

Moderator:

Natrice Bryant, Strategic Advisor, **WSP**

Panelists:

Ben Stein, Transportation Fellow, **Common Sense Institute Colorado**

Jason Bonanno, EDMD, **CO New Energy Improvement District**

Matthew Hортt, Executive Director, **High Plains Library District**

Nicole Doheny, Chief Financial Officer, **City and County of Denver**

Tom Kurek, Director of Public Private Partnerships, **State of Colorado**

3:40 PM – Afternoon Networking Break (20 Min)

4:00 PM – Panel 8

Infrastructure Development in Challenging Terrain

- Expanding broadband and telecom infrastructure in rural and underserved communities
- Balancing local transportation priorities with long-term infrastructure planning
- Navigating regulatory processes for telecom and traffic engineering projects
- Collaborative approaches between municipalities, utilities, and state agencies

Moderator:

Scott Wendland, President, **NICX**

Panelists:

Daryl Branson, Telecom Programs Section Chief, **Colorado Public Utilities Commission**

Melanie Colletti, Digital Access & Empowerment Manager, The Office of the Future of Work, **Colorado**

Department of Labor and Employment

Michael Koslow, City Traffic Engineer, **City of Arvada**

Scott Zurn, Owner and CEO, **Level Engineering & Architecture**

4:40 PM – Panel 9

Airports & Aviation: Expanding Capacity & Innovation

- Modernizing the National Airspace System through data, infrastructure, and operational innovation
- Integrating automation and advanced mobility into airport and aviation planning
- Using analytics to enhance airport operations, safety, and the passenger experience
- Aligning federal investment with local and regional aviation infrastructure priorities

Moderator:

Patrick McCollom, Vice President, Senior Aviation Program Manager, **STV**

Panelists:

Marisa Walker, Executive Vice President of Infrastructure & Sustainability, **Institute of Automated Mobility (IAM)**

Morven McCrindle, Chief Commercial Officer (CCO), **JET Infrastructure**

Scott Lashmit, US Aviation Manager, **Cyberhawk**

5:20 PM – Standalone Presentation

Presentation: Scaling Digital Project Delivery for Small/Medium Sized Local Agencies: An Integrated Approach

The City of Greeley is integrating their Planning, Design, Construction Management, Asset Management, and Public Space Management processes in a geospatially oriented environment to know what, where and when infrastructure is planned, designed, constructed, and As-built. With up-to 60% of infrastructure funding measures not passing, it is critical to engage openly with citizen through transparent and real-time updates such as integration with web maps and 311 systems to build trust. Focusing on FAIR Principles, Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable, learn how the City utilizes ESRI, Autodesk, Sitenotes, and Trimble products for two-way communication between systems to provide better project control tracking and deliver better value.

Presenter:

Steven Younkin, Deputy Chief Engineer, **City of Greeley**

5:40 PM – Closing Remarks & Networking Reception

A chance to unwind, discuss key takeaways, and connect with industry leaders over drinks.