



Environmental Services
222 Laporte Ave
PO Box 580
Fort Collins, CO 80522
970-221-6600
fcgov.com

DATE: March 8, 2022
TO: Mayor and City Councilmembers
FROM: Air Quality Advisory Board; Chair, Karen Artell
RE: **EPA Community Monitoring Grant Application – AQAB Letter of Support**

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

The Fort Collins Air Quality Advisory Board (AQAB) is pleased to provide this letter of collaboration in support of your proposal to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) entitled “Enhancing Monitoring of Air Toxics and Air Quality Education in Underserved Communities in Northern Colorado.” We understand EPA’s objective in issuing these awards is to enable disproportionately impacted communities to monitor air quality and to promote monitoring partnerships. We appreciate your efforts in engaging regional partners, the plan to monitor air emissions in disproportionately affected communities and establishing easily understood educational materials for the public to motivate actions that improve air quality.

The AQAB, established in 1995, advises the Fort Collins City Council regarding policies, plans, and programs to improve and maintain the City’s air quality. The AQAB meets monthly. The AQAB is particularly interested in the environmental justice focus of the City’s proposal. We appreciate the opportunity to increase regional efforts related to air emissions monitoring, outreach, and education for disproportionately impacted communities. AQAB members bring varied interests and backgrounds to the Board, including communication science and research, meteorology and air quality forecasting, atmospheric science, climate impacts, air quality monitoring, transportation planning and public health.

Fort Collins and Larimer County are situated in northern Colorado. Colorado is a major oil and gas producing state. Much of the oil and gas production is along the front range east of the Rocky Mountains and close to cities, communities and homes. Fort Collins is up against the Rocky Mountain foothills and part of the Denver Metro North Front Range ozone non-attainment area. The area is in serious non-attainment for ozone and soon to be downgraded to severe non-attainment. VOCs and NOx from oil and gas wells to the east of the County are carried by local winds to the west and up against the foothills. The Fort Collins West ozone monitor has some of the highest ozone readings in Colorado. Currently, there is no monitoring of VOCS, including air toxics and ozone precursors, from local and regional sources that contribute to health impacts.



In addition to regional oil and gas impacts, disproportionately affected community members are more likely to live near industrial areas and heavily trafficked streets. This adds to the community members' negative health outcomes related to these air pollutants.

The Fort Collins City Council has established priorities that include improving the City's air quality and advancing regionalism. The AQAB supports these priorities. Air emissions know no boundaries which makes addressing the issue of poor air quality particularly suited to a regional effort. The EPA Enhanced Monitoring Grant contributes to these priorities with partners that include the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), CSU, our County Health Department and possibly Weld County to the east and other County municipalities and the establishment of a regional air quality advisory group.

The AQAB is committed to the success of the project and offers its expertise in the following areas for the duration of the grant performance period:

- Participate on the Air Quality Monitoring Advisory Group that will be created to assist in the design, planning and performance of the project.
- Advise Fort Collins City Council on development of effective policy based on grant outcomes.
- Advise on development and distribution of education and outreach materials, providing critical feedback on communication strategies based on expertise, community knowledge and insight.

If awarded by the EPA, we look forward to working with you as the project moves forward.