

Board of Directors Meeting Summary

Wednesday, December 18, 2024

Held via Zoom, with no in-person option to attend.

Members/Alternates Present

Jeff Baker, Chair	Arapahoe County
Steve O’Dorisio	Adams County
Claire Levy	Boulder County
Shontel Lewis, Alternate	City and County of Denver
Adam Paul	City and County of Denver
Andy Kerr	Jefferson County
Sharon Davis, Alternate	City of Arvada
Angela Lawson	City of Aurora
Larry Vittum	Town of Bennett
Nicole Speer	City of Boulder
Greg Mills	City of Brighton
Deborah Mulvey	City of Castle Pines
Tammy Maurer	City of Centennial
Steve Douglas	City of Commerce City
Steve Conklin	City of Edgewater
Othoniel Sierra	City of Englewood
Emily Baer	Town of Erie
Lynette Kelsey	Town of Georgetown
Paul Haseman	City of Golden
Rachel Binkley	City of Glendale
George Lantz	Town of Greenwood Village
Chuck Harmon	City of Idaho Springs
Brian Wong	City of Lafayette
Jeslin Shahrezaei	City of Lakewood
Stephen Barr	City of Littleton
Kat Bristow	Town of Lochbuie
Marissa Harmon	City of Lone Tree
Judi Kern	City of Louisville
Colleen Whitlow	Town of Mead
Richard Kondo	City of Northglenn
John Diak	Town of Parker
Terrence Kelly	City of Sheridan
Justin Martinez	City of Thornton
Sarah Nurmela	City of Westminster
Bud Starker	City of Wheat Ridge
Darius Pakbaz	Colorado Department of Transportation
Bill Sirois	Regional Transportation District

Others Present: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, Melinda Stevens, Executive Assistant, DRCOG; Michele Riccio, Lucas Workman, Adams County; DJ Beckwith, Art Griffith, Douglas County; Mac Callison, Aurora; Jesse Carey, Denver; Kent Moorman, Thornton; Claire Carmelia, Westminster; Ed Bowditch, Jennifer Cassell, Bowditch & Cassell; John Gardocki, Colorado Department of Transportation; and DRCOG staff.

Chair Jeff Baker called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum present.

Move to approve agenda

Director **Chuck** Harmon **moved** to approve the agenda, with the amendment of removing agenda item #12: Crash Data Consortium Update. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Report of the Chair

Chair Baker wanted to remind directors that Statements of Interest to serve on the Executive Committee are due by close of business on December 20.

- Director Conklin reported that the Performance and Engagement Committee did not meet.
- Director Kondo reported the Finance and Budget Committee met prior to the meeting and approved three action items to allow the Executive Director to either extend a contract or authorize consulting services for two different transit corridor analyses.

Report of the Executive Director

- 2023-2024 Annual Audit: Executive Director Rex wanted to thank Jenny Hunnings and the entire Administration and Finance team for another clean audit.
- Local Planning Capacity Grant Program: The Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) has announced the third cycle for local capacity grants, which aim to support local governments in streamlining affordable housing development processes. The next application cycle opens on February 14 and closes on March 14, with an informational webinar on January 9.
- Regional Committees Solicitation: Staff will send out a survey to board members in early January 2025, to solicit members to serve on various regional committees.
- Decarbonize DRCOG Update: Robert Spotts has been appointed to manage this new program. Executive Director Rex wanted to thank Robert for his years of service at DRCOG and state his appreciation for taking on this new role.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Move to approve consent agenda

Director Shahrezaei **moved** to approve the consent agenda. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Items on the consent agenda included:

- Summary of the November 20, 2024 meeting
- 2025 Policy Statement on State Legislative Issues
- Livable Centers Small-Area Planning: FY 2025 Set-Aside Project Recommendations
- Innovative Mobility Set-Aside Project Selection
- Amendment to the 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program

Discussion of DRCOG’s Economic Development District Advisory Committee

Flo Raitano provided a brief summary of the proposed guidelines to directors. DRCOG developed a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in 2023 and was approved by the U.S. Economic Development Administration in February 2024. The Board gave approval to proceed with attainment of designation as an Economic Development District, at the September 2024 Board of Directors meeting. One of the requirements for attaining this designation is the establishment of an oversight or advisory committee that will assume responsibility for annual updates to the strategy and to help prioritize efforts to make progress on the numerous performance measures.

To manage this complex process, staff proposed to establish one new standing committee designed to provide transparent oversight, foster public engagement, and ensure accountability throughout. The proposed committee will also be instrumental in bringing together diverse perspectives and maintaining a strong focus on equity and the economy. [The Economic Development District Advisory Committee \(EDDAC\)](#) will provide policy oversight and recommendations to the DRCOG Board of Directors. It will serve as the forum for exploring technical issues and policy alternatives as well as updates to the strategy for recommendation to the DRCOG Board of Directors.

Director Starker **moved** to approve DRCOG’s Economic Development District Advisory Committee, including an amendment under Economic Development interests to read “Up to 4 representatives of organizations serving low-income and/or disadvantaged communities as their primary audience.” The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Discussion of Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) First Year Delays.

Brad Williams provided [a summary of projects with first year delays](#) to the Board. To implement the Board-adopted policy regarding first year delays, the following steps were taken:

1. At the beginning of October (coinciding with the beginning of the new federal fiscal year), staff requested Colorado Department of Transportation, or CDOT, and the Regional Transportation District, or RTD, to conduct a comprehensive review of all DRCOG-selected projects receiving TIP funds in FY 2024.
2. CDOT and RTD reviewed all such project phases, identifying those that have not been initiated, and therefore delayed.
3. In mid-October, DRCOG staff notified first year delayed project/phase sponsors and requested a discussion regarding the delay.

Director Speer **moved** to approve staff’s recommendation to continue each project. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

2023 Annual Report on Roadway Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region

Max Monk presented an overview of the annual report to directors. The United States Department of Transportation requires all metropolitan planning organizations serving large populations to undertake a Congestion Management Process to monitor the evolution of

congestion in the region. DRCOG conforms to this requirement through a process comprised of two components: the calculation of congestion measurements for roadways in the region and the presentation of data within an annual report on traffic congestion. This process began in 2006 and continues in perpetuity. The 2023 report highlighted the following statistics:

- Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reached pre-pandemic levels, with a 1% increase from 2022, despite population growth of 85,000. By 2050, VMT is projected to grow by 42%, leading to increased congestion costs, with over one-third of lane miles expected to be congested for 3+ hours.
- Transit ridership, though rebounding, remains below 2019 levels, especially after the temporary boost from free fare programs.
- Shared micro-mobility has seen significant growth, tripling in ridership.
- Telework continues to influence travel behavior, with residential growth continuing despite changing work patterns.

2050 Regional Transportation Plan Scenario Planning

Alvan-Bidal Sanchez provided an overview of scenario planning analysis activities to the directors. For the major update to the Regional Transportation Plan, staff are interested in completing a new scenario analysis to further refine the investment priorities identified in the 2050 RTP. At the December Board Work Session meeting, staff provided a recap of the 2020 scenario planning analysis results, discussed the latest population and employment forecasts for the region, and sought feedback from members on the most important topics impacting transportation and land use in the region. The following themes were identified:

- Growing older adult population and associated changes in needs and priorities (housing, healthcare, transportation).
- Increasing disruptions and environmental impacts from climate change on the region's infrastructure (transportation, housing, power)
- Continued proliferation of new technologies (artificial intelligence, automation, autonomous/connected/electric vehicles).
- Staying power of post-COVID trends (work from home, home delivery, e-commerce).

Next steps will include defining potential scenarios, begin modeling and testing, and then share results with committees and the Board.

Committee Reports

State Transportation Advisory Committee

There was no report.

Metro Mayors Caucus

There was no report.

Metro Area County Commissioners

There was no report.

Advisory Committee on Aging

Jayla Sanchez-Warren stated the committee met and received a presentation on Senate Bill 40 regarding state funding for senior services, a legislative update on the Governor's budget, and a talk on the Colorado Commission on Aging's advocacy efforts. Additionally, the transportation voucher program was discussed, highlighting new contractors, expanded service areas, and a waiting list due to funding challenges despite increased demand.

Regional Air Quality Council

Executive Director Rex reported the December 6 meeting focused on administrative items, including approval of the RAQC budget and work program for 2025, discussions about a legislative engagement policy, and the RAQC bylaws and employee handbook.

E-470 Authority

Director Mulvey stated the Board met and passed resolutions to thank Commissioners Chaz Tedesco and Bill Holen for their service. There were discussions on contract amendments, a budget overview, snow removal, and a decision not to raise toll rates.

Report from CDOT

Darius Pakbaz reported that the Transportation Commission discussed a rate change for the State Infrastructure Bank based on the federal rate, a resolution for the Burnham Yard East Line Easement, and a new \$17 million funding program from the Non-Attainment Enterprise to support communities in reducing environmental impacts and encouraging non-occupancy vehicle travel.

Report from RTD

Bill Sirois reported that the RTD Board adopted a \$1.2 billion budget for 2025, focusing on increased services, workforce needs, and state of good repair projects. Additionally, they finalized a phased transition plan to zero emissions and announced a free transit fare for New Year's Eve, along with a report showing nearly double the youth ridership due to the zero-fare youth program.

Next meeting – January 15, 2025

Other matters by members

There were no other matters by members.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Jeff Baker, Chair
Board of Directors
Denver Regional Council of Governments

ATTEST:

Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director