

Board of Directors Meeting Summary

Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Members/Alternates Present

Jeff Baker, Chair	Arapahoe County
Steve O’Dorisio	Adams County
Claire Levy	Boulder County
Austin Ward	City and County of Broomfield
Kevin Flynn	City and County of Denver
Adam Paul	City and County of Denver
Andy Kerr	Jefferson County
Marie Mornis	Gilpin County
Larry Vittum*	Town of Bennet
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
Emily Baer	Town of Erie
Josie Cockrell*	Town of Foxfield
Lynette Kelsey*	Town of Georgetown
Rachel Binkley	City of Glendale
Lisa Vitry, Alternate	City of Golden
Brian Wong	City of Lafayette
Jeslin Shahrezaei	City of Lakewood
Stephen Barr	City of Littleton
Marissa Harmon	City of Lone Tree
Joan Peck	City of Longmont
Colleen Whitlow	Town of Mead
Richard Kondo	City of Northglenn
Terrence Kelly*	City of Sheridan
Claire Carmelia, Alternate	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*, Adams County; Bryan Weimer, Arapahoe County; DJ Beckwith*, Art Griffith*, Douglas County; Mac Callison, Aurora; Alecia Brown, Lone Tree; Kent Moorman*, Thornton; and DRCOG staff.

*Participated via Zoom

Chair Jeff Baker called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. with a quorum present.

Move to approve agenda

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

Report of the Chair

- Director Conklin reported that the Performance and Engagement Committee met prior to the meeting and had a continued discussion regarding Board Officer recruitment and selection considerations, which the committee will hope to finalize at a special meeting on November 6. The committee also received a recap of the 2024 DRCOG awards celebration.
- Director Kondo reported the Finance and Budget Committee met prior to the meeting and had a discussion on selecting a representative from Finance and Budget to the Nominating Committee, which they will take action on at their November meeting. They also approved two resolutions authorizing the Executive Director to:
 - negotiate and execute a contract with with TransitPlus and DemandTrans in an amount not to exceed \$545,950 for the period beginning on November 4, 2024 and ending on January 15, 2026.
 - accept an option letter from Colorado Department of Human Services to extend federal American Rescue Plan Act funds through June 30, 2025 for older adult services.

Report of the Executive Director

- Medicare Open Enrollment: Medicare Open Enrollment begins on November 6 and Executive Director Rex wanted to express his appreciation for the State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) team in AAA for all the work they do.
- DRCOG Website: DRCOG launched their new website a few months ago and recently received an award from the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts in the category of General Government Websites.
- GoTober: DRCOG's Way to Go program is halfway through the annual campaign to encourage people to try sustainable modes of transportation during the month of October. Executive Director Rex wanted to thank all jurisdictions for participating.
- Crystal Valley Interchange: The Crystal Valley Interchange groundbreaking event took place on September 26, which is a \$144 million dollar project that is expected to be fully complete by early 2027.
- East Colfax Bus Rapid Transit project: The East Colfax BRT groundbreaking event took place on October 4, which is a \$280 million dollar project that is expected to be completed by mid 2026.
- Regional Housing Needs Assessment: DRCOG presented the assessment to Cherry Hills Village Council on October 15 and offered to directors the opportunity for DRCOG to present the assessment to their jurisdictions as well.
- Environmental Protection Agency Decarbonization Grant: DRCOG found out earlier in the day that their grant agreement with the EPA had been approved.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Move to approve consent agenda

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

Items on the consent agenda included:

- Summary of the October 2, 2024 special meeting.

Discussion of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment

Sheila Lynch provided an overview of the assessment to directors. Metro Vision provides guidance on housing, with a vision that diverse housing options meet the needs of residents of all ages, incomes and abilities. DRCOG's Board of Directors considered the appropriate role and methods for pursuing regional housing work. Several meetings contributed to the pursuit of a Regional Housing Assessment to identify the scale and scope of the region's housing need and identify barriers to addressing housing in our region. In addition to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment report analyzing housing needs, a project team developed the Denver Region Housing Needs Profiles interactive dashboard, which allows users to explore housing need by regional submarket and local jurisdiction.

DRCOG plans to launch a Regional Housing Strategy in November 2024. Staff requested the Board of Directors to accept the Regional Housing Assessment as a guide for DRCOG's future housing planning, strategy, and action. This acceptance would acknowledge the assessment as a tool for understanding the regional housing need and barriers to addressing that need that DRCOG will undertake in the next phase of a Regional Housing Strategy. The context of state laws has evolved since DRCOG started this work over three years ago. DRCOG will continue to monitor the implementation of the Sustainable Affordable Housing Assistance Act and work toward making this assessment a resource for local governments as they pursue compliance with state laws.

Director Speer **moved** to accept the Regional Housing Needs Assessment as a guide for future housing planning, strategy and action. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Discussion of revisions to DRCOG's "Committee Policy, Guidelines, and Descriptions" document to establish oversight of DRCOG's building decarbonization program.

Robert Spotts presented the revised guidelines to the Board. DRCOG was awarded a \$199.7 million grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to fund a regional initiative aimed at transforming the building sector across the Denver region. The program's implementation will involve the distribution of millions of dollars to various stakeholders. DRCOG staff proposed the establishment of a new committee structure designed to provide transparent oversight, foster public engagement, and ensure accountability throughout the program's lifecycle. The committees will include local government officials, community leaders, environmental advocates, industry experts, and representatives from underserved communities.

The Regional Building Decarbonization Oversight Committee (RBD-OC) will provide policy oversight and recommendations to the DRCOG Board of Directors. The Regional Building Decarbonization Technical Committee (RBD-TC) will be the forum for exploring technical issues and policy alternatives for recommendation to the RBD-OC and DRCOG Board of Directors. The committees include representatives from a wide range of stakeholders, including local government officials, community leaders, environmental advocates, industry experts, and representatives from underserved communities.

Director Barr **moved** to approve amendments to DRCOG’s “Committee Policy, Guidelines, and Descriptions” to add two standing committees to oversee and advise the Regional Building Decarbonization Program. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Discussion on the selection of representatives to serve on the Regional Decarbonization Oversight Committee

Chair Baker and Executive Director Rex began the discussion on selecting representatives to the new committee. An email was sent to Board members on September 30, 2024, asking that those interested in serving on the Advisory Committee respond by the end of the day on Friday, October 4. Seven Board members responded:

1. Stephen Barr – City of Littleton
2. Emily Baer – Town of Erie
3. Steve Douglas – City of Commerce City
4. Claire Levy – Boulder County
5. Rich Kondo – City of Northglenn
6. Nicole Speer – City of Boulder
7. Brian Wong – City of Lafayette

Chair Baker opened nominations from the floor to the directors for any additional candidates to be considered.

Director Kerr **moved** to close nominations from the floor. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Out of the seven candidates, the Board was asked to participate in a ballot vote to elect four members to serve on the committee and the remaining three candidates would serve as alternates.

Director Mills **moved** to select Stephen Barr, Steve Douglas, Rich Kondo, and Brian Wong to serve as members and Emily Baer, Claire Levy, and Nicole Speer to serve as alternates on the Regional Decarbonization Oversight Committee. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** with 28 in favor and 1 opposed.

Director Sharezaei wanted to state for the record that she felt there was a lack of gender diversity, since all four elected members were men.

Regional Bus Rapid Transit Update

Jacob Riger provided an update on the project to the directors. The Regional Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Partnership was established to address common funding, implementation, and coordination obstacles. This partnership brought together multiple agencies to guide

planning and implementation efforts for several BRT corridors at different planning and project development stages. Additionally, this partnership is responsible for executing the regional BRT network outlined in DRCOG's 2050 RTP, CDOT's 10-Year Plan, and corresponding local plans. The region has committed to implementing eleven BRT corridors by 2050, and five of them by 2030, to help meet the region's mobility, equity, and other goals, as well as to help meet federal air quality conformity and state transportation greenhouse gas emission reduction requirements. Senior staff from the participating agencies met monthly to lead the regional BRT network implementation and to coordinate the work of individual BRT corridor planning and project development efforts. The partnership is currently addressing the following three major issues:

- Developing a comprehensive and innovative funding and financing strategy for the "remaining" BRT corridors (see below).
- Defining the various components and elements of BRT and how those characteristics (design standards) should be consistent across the entire system as well as accounting for the unique context of each corridor.
- Leveraging resources and efficiencies across multiple BRT corridors and projects, and evolving the Partnership's efforts, structure, and activities to support its work over time.

Of the eleven designated BRT corridors, two are entering construction (East Colfax BRT and CO-119 BRT) and two are in the federal project development National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process (Federal Boulevard BRT and Colorado Boulevard BRT). DRCOG recently completed a "first steps" corridor study for the Alameda BRT corridor, and is about to initiate a federally compliant Alternatives Analysis study for the East Colfax Extension BRT project. DRCOG also recently received a United States Department of Transportation Build America Bureau Innovative Finance and Asset Concession grant on behalf of the Partnership to accelerate planning and project development work on several of the remaining BRT corridors.

Public Engagement Plan Update

Kellsie Forfar-Jones presented updates on the plan to the Board. DRCOG's public engagement plan was originally adopted in 2019 and amended in 2021. The plan serves as a guidebook for staff. It is a written declaration of DRCOG's principles of public engagement and documents the actions carried out by DRCOG to ensure that opportunities exist for the public to be involved in DRCOG's processes and decision making. The plan ensures that DRCOG seeks early and ongoing input from people and organizations throughout the region, is responsive, and addresses ideas and concerns raised. Since the 2021 amendment, DRCOG has developed new plans and programs, refined existing strategies and explored equitable engagement strategies. The update is planned to include:

- Information on virtual strategies enhanced following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Evaluation of piloted innovative public engagement strategies.
- Additional content regarding requirements and engagement techniques for the Regional Planning and Development division and the Area Agency on Aging.
- Minor revisions to increase readability and usability.

Committee Reports

State Transportation Advisory Committee

Director O’Dorisio stated the committee elected Gary Beedy as Chair and Holly Williams as Vice Chair of the committee. The committee also received an update from CDOT staff on the Strategic Highway Safety Plan and the 2050 Statewide Plan.

Metro Mayors Caucus

Director Conklin stated the caucus met on October 2 and received a Front Range Passenger Rail update, a presentation from Govern for America, and a presentation from Connect for Health.

Metro Area County Commissioners

Executive Director Rex reported the commissioners met on September 27 and met with staff from the Governor’s Office to discuss their priorities for 2024-2025.

Advisory Committee on Aging

There was no report.

Regional Air Quality Council

Executive Director Rex reported the council met on October 1 and received a presentation and had a discussion regarding the Control Strategy Concept. They also received a presentation on the 2024 RTD Ballot Measure.

E-470 Authority

Director Mulvey stated the Board met and considered multiple contract amendments. They also had a budget workshop in advance of consideration for the annual budget.

Report from CDOT

Darius Pakbaz reported that the US 50 Bridge project is complete and open to traffic, though some work remains on the middle bridge. The Transportation Commission met earlier in the day and had workshops that covered the Fiscal Year 2026 budget, the Bridge and Tunnel Enterprise budget, updates on the Mountain Rail project, and a presentation from the audit division, with further action scheduled for the following day.

Report from RTD

Bill Sirois stated that the RTD Board is considering significant service increases for January, with public meetings scheduled for the 21st and 23rd, and comments can be sent to Servicechange@rtd-denver.com. Additionally, four blocks of the 16th Street Mall are now open, shuttles have started running, and the downtown rail replacement project was completed early, with trains now operating in the downtown area.

Next meeting – November 20, 2024

Other matters by members

Director Flynn stated the movie, The Order, based on a book he co-authored, would be screening at the Denver Film Festival in the Ellie Caulkins Opera House on November 8.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

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

ATTEST:

Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director