

## Board of Directors Meeting Summary

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

### Members/Alternates Present

Jeff Baker, Chair  
Julie Duran Mullica  
Ashley Stolzmann, Alternate  
Austin Ward  
Rebecca Lloyd  
Adam Paul  
Kevin Flynn  
Susan Berumen  
Sharon Davis  
Alison Coombs  
Larry Vittum  
Nicole Speer  
Greg Mills  
Deborah Mulvey  
Tammy Maurer  
Zane Plsek  
Robert Eber  
Steve Douglas  
Steve Conklin  
Kim Wright  
Emily Baer  
Lynette Kelsey  
Rachel Binkley  
Lisa Vitry  
George Lantz  
Chuck Harmon  
Brian Wong  
Jeslin Shahrezaei  
Stephen Barr  
Kat Bristow  
Alecia Brown, Alternate  
Judi Kern  
Hollie Rogin  
Laura Dennis, Alternate  
Richard Kondo  
Justin Martinez  
Claire Carmelia  
Darius Pakbaz  
Bill Sirois

Arapahoe County  
Adams County  
Boulder County  
City and County of Broomfield  
Clear Creek County  
City and County of Denver  
City and County of Denver  
Gilpin County  
City of Arvada  
City of Aurora  
Town of Bennett  
City of Boulder  
City of Brighton  
City of Castle Pines  
City of Centennial  
City of Central  
City of Cherry Hills Village  
City of Commerce City  
City of Edgewater  
City of Englewood  
Town of Erie  
Town of Georgetown  
City of Glendale  
City of Golden  
City of Greenwood Village  
City of Idaho Springs  
City of Lafayette  
City of Lakewood  
City of Littleton  
Town of Lochbuie  
City of Lone Tree  
City of Louisville  
Town of Lyons  
Town of Mountain View  
City of Northglenn  
City of Thornton  
City of Westminster  
Colorado Department of Transportation  
Regional Transportation District

Others Present: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, Melinda Stevens, Executive Assistant, DRCOG; Janet Lundquist\*, Bryan Weimer, Arapahoe County; Cindy Copeland\*, Boulder County; DJ Beckwith\*, Mac Callison, Aurora; Royce Pindell, Bennett; Larry Strock, Lochbuie; Nichole Sterling\*, Nederland; Kent Moorman\*, Thornton; Ed Bowditch, Jennifer Cassell, Bowditch & Cassell; John Gardocki\*, Colorado Department of Transportation; Ronald Spalding, Randle Loeb, Citizens; and DRCOG staff.

\*Participated via Zoom

Chair Jeff Baker called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. with a quorum present.

The Chair noted new members and alternates: Zane Plesk, new member for the City of Central City; Lisa Vitry, new member for the City of Golden; and Paul Haseman, new alternate for the City of Golden.

### **Move to approve agenda**

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

### **Public Hearing on the Draft 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program**

Todd Cottrell presented an overview of the draft to the Directors. This hearing serves as the public comment period for the Federal Transit Administration Section 5307 Programs portion of the Regional Transportation District's (RTD) Program of Projects. The TIP outlines all federally and state-funded transportation projects in the Denver region over the next four years, encompassing initiatives by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), RTD, DRCOG, and local governments. The current draft includes 263 projects with a total funding of approximately \$2.1 billion, aligning with the objectives set forth in Metro Vision and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). DRCOG updates the TIP biennially, with major project selection calls every four years; the 2026–2029 TIP does not introduce new projects but carries forward those from the 2024–2027 TIP.

In compliance with federal air quality standards, the TIP must demonstrate that its projects will not lead to violations of pollutant thresholds. Given that the regionally significant projects remain unchanged from the previous TIP, no new air quality modeling was necessary; prior analyses confirm that all emission tests have been passed. Additionally, the TIP adheres to the state's Greenhouse Gas Transportation Planning Standard, meeting emission reduction requirements for all specified staging periods. Since all regionally significant projects in the TIP are already included in the current RTP, the TIP is in full compliance with both air quality and greenhouse gas regulations. The public comment period for these documents began on February 12 and concluded with this hearing on March 19. Subsequent steps will include a recommendation from the Transportation Advisory Committee on March 24, a recommendation from the Regional Transportation Committee on April 15, and final Board action at the April 16 meeting.

Chair Baker opened the public hearing at 6:46 p.m. There were no directors or members of the public to provide comments, so Chair Baker closed the public hearing at 6:48 p.m.

### **Report of the Chair**

- Director Kondo reported that the Performance and Engagement Committee met prior to the meeting and elected Austin Ward as Vice Chair of the committee and received a preview and draft agenda of this year's Board Retreat.

- Director Shahrezaei reported the Finance and Budget Committee met prior to the meeting and elected Adam Paul as Vice Chair of the committee and approved six contracts that were focused on a range of topics, including the building decarbonization program, the Commerce City community transportation plan, and a Multimodal-Supportive Local Development Standards Toolkit.

### Report of the Executive Director

- 2025 Board Retreat: The DRCOG Board Retreat is scheduled for April 11–12, beginning with a social and dinner at the Oxford Hotel featuring entertainment from Denver-based mentalists Anthem and Aria. The retreat continues on April 12 at DRCOG offices with a full agenda, including a luncheon keynote by new State Demographer Kate Watkins.
- 2025 Awards Celebration: The celebration will take place on August 27 at the Seawell Ballroom for the third consecutive year. Nominations for all categories, including the prestigious John V. Christen Award, are open through April 18. Members are encouraged to submit nominations and help secure sponsorships to meet the \$80,000 fundraising goal.
- Technical Assistance Panels: DRCOG continues its partnership with the Urban Land Institute (ULI), funding two communities annually for technical assistance panels on land use challenges. In 2024, Brighton and Englewood were selected, and interested communities can contact DRCOG to apply for future panels.

### Public Comment

Ronald Spalding expressed concern about House Bill 24-1313, which addresses housing and transit-oriented communities but poses negative impacts on Home Rule municipalities like Lafayette, Louisville, and Boulder. While appreciating DRCOG's opposition to the bill, he urged the board to organize a work session for affected cities to collaborate on addressing the bill's implications, and emphasized the need for increased legislative pressure or possible legal action to protect Home Rule authority.

Randle Loeb shared a plea for dignity, justice, and community support, highlighting the recent detention of his longtime colleague and immigration rights advocate, Jeanette Vizguerra, by ICE. He emphasized the need for local governments to protect all residents, citizens and immigrants alike, and expressed his desire to remain involved in future efforts for equity and compassion.

### Move to approve consent agenda

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

Items on the consent agenda included:

- Summary of the meeting February 19, 2025
- Amendment the Performance & Engagement Committees Appointments

**Discussion of legislative issues: Bills on which positions have previously been taken.**

Rich Mauro, along with Ed Bowditch and Jennifer Cassell, provided a status update on bills previously acted upon by the Board to the directors. Action on SB25-030 was requested by Director Lantz, to change the Board's position from amend to oppose.

Director Lantz **moved** a position of oppose for SB25-030. The motion was **seconded** and **failed** with 7 in favor, 22 opposed, and 8 abstentions.

**Discussion of legislative issues: New Bills for consideration and action.**

Rich Mauro, along with Ed Bowditch and Jennifer Cassell, provided an overview of new bills for consideration to the Board. There were originally two new bills regarding housing for discussion and action, but Mr. Mauro reported that prior to the meeting, House Bill 25-1261: Consumers Construction Defect Action was postponed indefinitely. The following bill was voted on by the Board:

- Housing bill
  - House Bill 25-1272 – Construction Defects & Middle Market Housing
    - Director Duran Mullica **moved** a position of support as amended. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** with 30 in favor and 7 abstentions.

**Regional Housing Needs Assessment and State Compliance Public Review.**

Zach Feldman provided an update on the assessment and its compliance to the Board. The Sustainable Housing Assistance Act (SB 2024-174) requires local and state housing needs assessments and action plans, and allows regional entities like DRCOG to submit a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) that local governments can use to meet compliance. DRCOG submitted its RHNA, originally approved by its Board in October 2024, to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and received conditional approval on February 26, 2025. To finalize compliance, DRCOG must provide supplemental data and facilitate a public review process with local governments, although the additional data does not alter the RHNA's core findings. These additions will be made available through the Denver Region Housing Needs Profiles interactive dashboard.

Local governments intending to use DRCOG's RHNA must publicly review it in a governing body meeting, provide comment to DRCOG, and ensure those comments are submitted to DOLA. Without this public review, jurisdictions will not be able to rely on the regional RHNA for state compliance. To support this effort, DRCOG has developed a detailed outreach plan, which includes informational materials, a public comment form, and a timeline for jurisdictions to follow. The outreach effort will run from April through July 2025 and includes direct support from DRCOG staff, regional meetings, and a final comment submission deadline of July 31, 2025.

**2026-2027 Unified Planning Work Program Kickoff.**

Ron Papsdorf and Josh Schwenk provided an overview of the program to the Board. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a critical document that outlines the metropolitan transportation planning activities conducted by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). It

serves as a tool for scheduling, budgeting, and monitoring planning tasks, ensuring compliance with federal regulations and maintaining eligibility for federal funding. The UPWP details major activities, assigns responsibilities, sets timelines, and specifies funding sources for each task. It also addresses federal planning factors such as economic vitality, safety, security, accessibility, environmental protection, integration, system management, preservation, resiliency, and tourism enhancement.

DRCOG staff have initiated the development of the 2026–2027 UPWP, covering the period from October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2027. This new UPWP will continue many activities from the current cycle, including the Regional Transportation Plan update, Transportation Improvement Program policy updates, Vision Zero safety initiatives, and support for local transportation and land use coordination. Given new state constraints on carryover funds, the total budget is expected to be comparable to the current two-year cycle, as DRCOG draws down its reserve balances. Staff is seeking input on priorities and ideas for the upcoming UPWP to address ongoing and emerging issues such as population changes, aging demographics, transportation technology advancements, greenhouse gas emissions, and multimodal safety.

## **Committee Reports**

### **State Transportation Advisory Committee**

Ron Papsdorf stated at the March 6 meeting CDOT presented an overview of its statewide travel model and greenhouse gas emission estimation methods. The primary action item was recommending approval of CDOT's FY 2025–2026 final budget, which includes cuts due to state budget constraints, though local government funding will be preserved, and the committee voted to support the proposed budget.

### **Metro Mayors Caucus**

Director Conklin reported the caucus hasn't held a full meeting recently, but its committees remain active. It continues to take positions on legislation, and the Mayor's Leadership Academy recently celebrated its latest graduating class.

### **Metro Area County Commissioners**

Executive Director Rex stated the commissioners met on February 28 and had guest speaker Heidi Williams, Metro Mayors Caucus Executive Director, present an overview of HB25-1272 on construction defects and middle housing. Additionally, the MACC received a letter of appreciation from the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative recognizing their efforts on homelessness.

### **Advisory Committee on Aging**

There was no report.

### **Regional Air Quality Council**

Executive Director Rex reported at the March 7 meeting, members received legislative updates and began detailed work on chapters of the next State Implementation Plan, which will require significant effort before submission to the Legislature next year.

**E-470 Authority**

Director Mulvey stated the authority met and discussed advancing the Sable interchange project, addressing toll-related text phishing scams through in-depth investigation, planning the Transportation Safety Foundation fundraiser on June 20, and reviewing results from a communications and customer service survey.

**Report from CDOT**

Darius Pakbaz reported that at their recent workshop, the Transportation Commission discussed the use of funds and joint efforts with the Colorado Transportation Investment Office on exploring Northwest passenger rail, reviewed the proposed final budget, and received updates on the bridge and tunnel enterprise, planning efforts, and the Safe Routes to School program. The Commission will also host a series of statewide town halls and Region 1 will conduct county meetings this summer as part of the ongoing transportation planning process.

**Report from RTD**

Bill Sirois reported that Transit Employee Appreciation Day was celebrated on March 18 to recognize the hard work of frontline transit operators. Additional updates included a temporary detour on the Mall Shuttle near Civic Center next week due to Broadway construction, and an upcoming board vote on the May service change, which will include further service increases.

**Next meeting – April 16, 2025**

**Other matters by members**

There were no other matters by members.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

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

ATTEST:

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Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director