

Finance and Budget Committee Meeting Summary

Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Meeting held via Microsoft Teams

Members Present

Jeslin Shahrezaei, Chair	City and County of Denver
Jeff Baker	Arapahoe County
Claire Levy	Boulder County
Adam Paul	City and County of Denver
Sharon Davis	Arvada
Alison Coombs	Aurora
Paul Haseman	Golden
Stephen Barr	Littleton
Marissa Harmon	Lone Tree
Neal Shah	Superior
Justin Martinez	Thornton

Others Present: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director; and DRCOG staff.

Chair Shahrezaei called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 p.m. with a quorum present.

Move to approve consent agenda

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

Items on the consent agenda included:

- Summary of the August 6, 2025 meeting.
- Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with the Colorado Department of Transportation to fund the objectives, activities and tasks outlined in the Fiscal Year 2026 and Fiscal Year 2027 Unified Planning Work Program.
- Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with the City of Denver to increase their staffing capacity, update and streamline their permit system, and conduct research on building decarbonization policies in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000 with a term ending September 14, 2029.
- Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with the City of Longmont to increase staff capacity by creating two new positions focused on reducing building-related climate pollution emissions through local building policy in an amount not to exceed \$900,000 with a term ending September 14, 2029.
- Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with the City of Westminster to increase their staffing capacity, enhance training, update planning tools and systems, and research embodied carbon all to accelerate building decarbonization, in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000 with a term ending September 14, 2029.

Discussion of a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with HNTB in an amount not to exceed \$899,200 for a period not to exceed 24 months from date of contract execution.

Jacob Riger provided a brief explanation of the contract to the committee. DRCOG recently received nearly \$1 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Build

America Bureau through its Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant program to accelerate pre-construction activities for five bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors in the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan. The grant will fund expert advisors to update project cost estimates, explore innovative funding and financing strategies, conduct legal and regulatory analysis, and advance planning and project development to prepare these corridors for implementation. Lessons learned will also inform future BRT projects. Following an RFP process that drew six strong proposals, a selection panel interviewed four shortlisted firms and ultimately recommended HNTB as the consulting firm for the grant-funded work.

Director Levy **moved** to approve **Resolution Number 48**, authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with HNTB in an amount not to exceed \$899,200 for a period not to exceed 24 months from date of contract execution. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Discussion of a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with Lionheart Places, LLC, to provide urban planning consulting services for DRCOG's Transit-Oriented Communities in the City of Arvada project in an amount not to exceed \$140,000 for a period of 12 months from the date of contract execution.

Max Monk provided an overview of the contract to the Directors. This program, with \$2.5 million allocated regionally, and \$1.25 million available in the first two years, helps enhance livability and multimodal connectivity in urban centers. Arvada's project will assess land use, housing diversity, and needs in transit areas to improve housing options and connectivity, informing future strategies for affordable and diverse housing along transit corridors. Following a request for proposals reviewed by DRCOG planning staff, contract staff, and Arvada's Community and Economic Planning Department, five proposals were received, three firms were interviewed, and Lionheart Places was recommended as the selected consultant.

Director Barr **moved** to approve **Resolution Number 49**, authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with Lionheart Places, LLC, to provide urban planning consulting services for DRCOG's Transit-Oriented Communities in the City of Arvada project in an amount not to exceed \$140,000 for a period of 12 months from the date of contract execution. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Discussion of a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with COHN Marketing to provide professional advertising and promotional services for the regional transportation demand management program (Way to Go) in an amount of \$900,000 annually with a term ending September 1, 2026. The Executive Director is authorized to negotiate renewal of the contract for two additional one-year terms upon satisfactory performance.

Noreen Smyth presented the contract to members. The Way to Go program, which aims to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips through education, outreach, and marketing, is funded at \$900,000 annually by DRCOG. These funds support major campaigns like Bike to Work Day and GoTober, develops creative assets, manages media placement, and reports on campaign effectiveness, all while raising awareness and generating employer leads for transportation benefits. As required by funding guidelines, an RFP was issued on June 25 and closed in late July, yielding 11 proposals. A review panel of DRCOG staff and a

Transportation Management Association partner scored the proposals, interviewed the top three agencies and ultimately recommended COHN Marketing based on their strong proposal and highest overall scores.

Director Martinez **moved** to approve **Resolution Number 50**, authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with COHN Marketing to provide professional advertising and promotional services for the regional transportation demand management program (Way to Go) in an amount of \$900,000 annually with a term ending September 1, 2026. The Executive Director is authorized to negotiate renewal of the contract for two additional one-year terms upon satisfactory performance. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Discussion of a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with Colorado Statewide Sheet Metal Workers' Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee to deliver a series of HVAC & heat pump trainings to young adults for the building decarbonization program in an amount not to exceed \$900,000 through October 16, 2027.

Clay McCombe provided a broad overview of the contract to the committee. This workforce development contract is designed to address the urgent need for young adults to enter the HVAC trades, which are critical to achieving building decarbonization goals but face a rapidly aging workforce. With \$900,000 allocated, DRCOG issued an RFP and received four proposals, interviewing two finalists. The review panel, ultimately selected the Colorado Statewide Sheet Metal Workers Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (JATC), a partnership between Denver's Sheet Metal Union Smart 9 and the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors of North America (SMACNA).

JATC was chosen for its strong record in registered apprenticeships, experience with HVAC and heat pump training, and most importantly, its direct pipeline into union jobs with contractors eager to hire. Under the contract, JATC will deliver 10 trainings, each 80 hours long, using the HVAC Excellence curriculum that provides graduates with an "Employment Ready" certificate. With 15 students per class, the program is expected to prepare 150 young adults for stable, well-paying careers in HVAC, ensuring that the training directly leads to meaningful employment opportunities and supports long-term workforce and decarbonization goals.

Director Haseman **moved** to approve **Resolution Number 51**, authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with Colorado Statewide Sheet Metal Workers' Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee to deliver a series of HVAC & heat pump trainings to young adults for the building decarbonization program in an amount not to exceed \$900,000 through October 16, 2027. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Discussion of a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with Mi Casa Resource Center to deliver a series of multilingual HVAC & heat pump trainings for the building decarbonization program in an amount not to exceed \$900,000 through October 16, 2027.

Devon Reifsneider explained the contract and its relation to the Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (JATC) contract. This sister program to the young adult HVAC workforce initiative will be a \$900,000, two-year contract with Mi Casa Resource Center to

deliver 10 cohorts of HVAC and heat pump training, serving 150 participants, with a focus on multilingual speakers, particularly Spanish. Mi Casa will provide translated training materials and bilingual career coaching, partnering with Red Rocks Community College, Front Range Community College, and Blue Sky Training to deliver industry-recognized HVAC and heat pump installation training. The program's goal is to connect graduates with bilingual contractors to better serve Spanish-speaking households, expanding workforce diversity while supporting building decarbonization goals. Mi Casa was selected for its longstanding expertise with Spanish-speaking communities in Denver since 1976, its experience addressing workforce barriers for underrepresented groups, and its strong training partnerships.

Director Barr **moved** to approve **Resolution Number 52**, authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with Mi Casa Resource Center to deliver a series of multilingual HVAC & heat pump trainings for the building decarbonization program in an amount not to exceed \$900,000 through October 16, 2027. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

DRCOG Member Contributions/TIP Fee Update

Executive Director Rex provided the update to the committee. Since July, staff has refined a proposal to restructure DRCOG member contributions by reducing dues about 40–50%, raising the minimum from \$600 to \$1,000, and introducing a new TIP fee on Surface Transportation Block Grant and CMAQ projects. The local match for TIP projects would drop from 20% to 18.5% to accommodate the TIP fee and additional federal funds would be included back on the TIP project in order to keep it financially whole.

The pilot is planned to begin July 1, 2026, aligning with DRCOG's new fiscal year, and would run for two years to test feasibility. Over the winter, staff will work with state and local partners to design the fee collection process, followed by a spring review through DRCOG's MPO committees before final board action. Though implementing this within an active TIP will require coordination with CDOT and new agreements, future TIP cycles would streamline fee collection by invoicing member governments at the time of project approval.

Report of the Chair

There was no report.

Report of the Executive Director

Executive Director Rex noted that the September Board meeting is canceled due to no urgent items.

Next meeting – October 1, 2025

Other matters by members

There were no other matters by members.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:04 p.m.