

Attachment A
Meeting Summary
Regional Transportation Committee
Tuesday, December 17, 2024
Virtual Meeting Only – Hosted on Zoom

Members (or Voting Alternates) Present:

Debra Johnson	Regional Transportation District
Troy Whitmore (Alternate)	Regional Transportation District
Vince Buzek	Regional Transportation District
Michael Guzman	Regional Transportation District
Yessica Holguin	Colorado Department of Transportation
Shelley Cook	Colorado Department of Transportation
Karen Stuart	Colorado Department of Transportation
Eula Adams (Alternate)	Colorado Department of Transportation
Colleen Whitlow (Vice Chair)	Denver Regional Council of Governments
Randy Weil	Denver Regional Council of Governments
Doug Rex	Denver Regional Council of Governments
Deborah Mulvey (Alternate)	Denver Regional Council of Governments
Greg Mills	Denver Regional Council of Governments
Jeff Kullman	Michael Baker International
Erin Clark	Denver Housing Authority
Mike Silverstein	Regional Air Quality Council
Skyler McKinley	Auto Club Group

Additional Alternates Present:

Ron Papsdorf (Alternate)	Denver Regional Council of Governments
Bill Sirois (Alternate)	Regional Transportation District
Darius Pakbaz (Alternate)	Colorado Department of Transportation

Public: Dee Beckwith, Alison Cutting

DRCOG staff: Jacob Riger, Cam Kennedy, Josh Schwenk, Brad Williams, Max Monk, Aaron Villere, Carolyn Klamm, Sheila Lynch, Kaitlyn Service, Robert Spotts, Alvan-Bidal Sanchez, Todd Cottrell, Ala Alnawaiseh, Emily Lindsey

Call to Order

Vice Chair Colleen Whitlow called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

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The summary was accepted.

Consent Items

Commissioner Shelley Cook moved to recommend the consent agenda; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Items on the consent agenda:

- Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) First Year Delays
- Amendment to the 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program

Action Items

Innovative Mobility Set-Aside Project Selection

Emily Lindsey, Active and Emerging Mobility Program Manager, discussed that a total of \$4 million is available over the four-year period including fiscal years 2024 through 2027. Staff conducted the first solicitation of Innovative Mobility Set-Aside project proposals through letters of interest submissions from September 5, 2024, through October 15, 2024. A total of 16 projects were submitted for consideration. Each proposed project included an estimated budget. A selection committee reviewed the applications, and seven projects are recommended for funding this cycle. Staff will work with project sponsors to develop detailed scopes of work, determine the expertise required, and finalize budgets during the procurement phase.

Director Skyler McKinley moved to recommend to the Board of Directors funding seven Innovative Mobility Set-Aside projects, as recommended by the selection committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Livable Centers Small-Area Planning: Fiscal Year 2025 Set-Aside Project Recommendations

Kaitlyn Service, Program Manager, discussed that DRCOG conducted a call for letters of interest from August 14 to October 16, 2024, to identify Livable Centers Small-Area Planning projects for the first cycle of the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program set-aside funding. Twelve letters of interest were submitted. The seven recommended projects align closely with the program's goals and demonstrate a clear connection to the criteria outlined for selection. The remaining five projects were not recommended because they either did not meet key alignment criteria, proposed ineligible expenses, or were determined to be a better fit for other set-aside programs.

Director Michael Guzman moved to recommend to the Board of Directors funding seven Livable Centers Small-Area Planning projects, as recommended by the selection committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Discussion Items

2050 Regional Transportation Plan Scenario Planning

Alvan-Bidal Sanchez, Regional Transportation Planning Program Manager, informed the committee that the major themes identified over the last several months from internal and external feedback include:

- 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).

Director Mike Silverstein inquired about analysis for home deliveries and how delivery services might affect travel patterns and vehicle miles traveled. Mr. Sanchez stated that the upcoming freight plan update helps address this issue. He elaborated that the scenario planning analysis to be conducted as part of the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan is another tool to explore this topic.

Director Guzman encouraged this plan to look at alternative approaches to accessing networks for public transit. For example, buses and trains need to be able to accommodate more people of varying mobilities such as aging adults who can't climb stairs to board a bus or move quickly to get on a train.

2023 Annual Report on Roadway Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region

Max Monk, Assistant Planner, discussed key findings from the annual report which addressed the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel behavior as well as vehicle miles traveled in 2023. Noteworthy developments include the average number of shared micromobility trips per day have more than tripled since before the pandemic. Additionally, daily vehicle miles traveled are projected to grow 42% by 2050 and the cost of congestion in the region is expected to increase by 123% between 2023 and 2050.

Director Michael Guzman inquired about the definition of the Central Business District. Mr. Monk replied that is defined as downtown Denver. Executive Director Doug Rex added that the downtown area is roughly bounded by the South Platte River to the north and west, 20th Street to the northeast, the State Capitol to the south, and Speer Boulevard to the west.

Mr. Bill Sirois asked how the downtown Denver population is defined - does it include tourists and people attending conventions? Mr. Monk replied that the data is from people residing in zip code 80202 based on the census, so only people living in that area of Denver.

Commissioner Yessica Holguin inquired if the information showing the benefit of RTD's Zero Fare for Better Air could be presented to the legislature to share the positive benefits of that initiative. General Manager/CEO Debra Johnson that RTD is very much aware of the positive impact of the program. When RTD engages with the legislature, its staff has presented the results of this program as well as the current Zero Fare for Youth program, which is set to continue at least through December 2026. The youth program has resulted in a decline in truancy rates at Denver Public Schools and both the youth program and the larger Zero Fare for Better Air program have resulted in increased ridership. Mr. Sirois added that between September 2023 – September 2024, there was a 91% increase in youth ridership because of this program.

Administrative Items

Member Comment/Other Matters

- Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Report

Commissioner Eula Adams stated Commissioner Jim Kelly attended his last Transportation Commission meeting in November and with his resignation, the governor has appointed Cecil Gutierrez to fill the position through 2027. Commissioner Cook stated that at this week's Transportation Commission meeting, Burnham Yard will be discussed, including an action item to purchase an easement on the east side of the property. This will allow for the eventual grade-separation of three at-grade railroad crossings. Mr. Darius Pakbaz stated that the Nonattainment Area Air Pollution Mitigation Enterprise has a funding call for projects for the Community Clean Transportation Assistance Program.

- Regional Transportation District (RTD) Report

General Manager/CEO Debra Johnson stated that the RTD Board on December 3 adopted the 2025 budget which focuses on increased levels of service, additional hiring efforts, and preventative maintenance. On December 13, RTD received its Facilities Blueprint and Fleet Transition Plan, which is an 18-month review regarding alternative fuels. Once again, RTD has partnered with Coors so RTD customers can celebrate New Year's Eve responsibly with zero fare between 7 P.M. through 7 A.M. January 1. Director Guzman discussed the significance of the upcoming Transit Equity Day on February 4 and noted that in mid-January, service changes will come into effect and there will be an increase in service in different parts of the region.

- Regional Air Quality Control (RAQC) Report

Director Silverstein stated that RAQC is kicking off an intensive effort to look at indirect sources of air pollution. Information is available on the RAQC website, and he encouraged everyone to participate in the upcoming discussions to develop recommendations for reducing emissions from indirect sources, which are generated from large activities or facilities that attract or generate trips, such as large warehouse complexes, shopping areas, and recreational facilities.

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Director Randy Weil took the opportunity to thank RTC for the incredible discussions and collaborative environment he has witnessed over the years, as today was his last meeting since he is term-limited. Vice Chair Whitlow thanked Director Weil for his many years of service and wished him the best.

Next Meeting – January 14, 2024

Adjournment

There were no additional comments and the meeting adjourned at 9:46 a.m.