

AGENDA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WEDNESDAY, January 18, 2023
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
VIDEO/WEB CONFERENCE
Denver, CO

1. 6:30 Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call and Introduction of New Members and Alternates
4. Move to Approve Agenda
5. 6:40 Report of the Chair
 - Report on Performance and Engagement Committee
 - Report on Finance and Budget Committee
6. 6:45 Report of the Executive Director
7. 6:50 Public Comment

Up to 45 minutes is allocated now for public comment and each speaker will be limited to 3 minutes. If there are additional requests from the public to address the Board, time will be allocated at the end of the meeting to complete public comment. The chair requests that there be no public comment on issues for which a prior public hearing has been held before this Board. Consent and action items will begin immediately after the last speaker.

CONSENT AGENDA

8. 7:00 Move to Approve Consent Agenda
 - i. Summary the December 21, 2022 meeting
(Attachment A)
 - ii. Designate Location for Posting Notices of Meetings
(Attachment B)
 - iii. Transportation Planning Framework
(Attachment C)

TIMES LISTED WITH EACH AGENDA ITEM ARE APPROXIMATE. IT IS REQUESTED THAT ALL CELL PHONES BE SILENCED DURING THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING. THANK YOU!

Persons in need of auxiliary aids or services, such as interpretation services or assisted listening devices, are asked to contact DRCOG at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting by calling (303) 480-6701.



ACTION ITEMS

9. 7:05 Discussion of the FY 2022 First Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Delays
(Attachment D) Todd Cottrell, Manager, Transportation Planning and Operations
10. 7:20 Discussion of the draft Legislative Principle Statement and the draft 2023 Policy Statement on State Legislative Issues
(Attachment E) Rich Mauro, Director, Legislative Affairs

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFINGS

11. 7:35 RTD Zero Fare for Better Air update
(Attachment F) Jacob Riger, Manager, Transportation Planning and Operations
12. 7:50 2023 legislative session preview of Colorado General Assembly
(Attachment G) Rich Mauro, Director, Legislative Affairs
13. 8:05 Regional Transportation Operations and Technology (RTO&T) Strategic Plan
(Attachment H) Greg MacKinnon, Manager, Transportation Planning and Operations

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

14. Annual Listing of Obligated Projects (ALOP)
(Attachment I) Josh Schwenk, Planner, Transportation Planning and Operations
15. Administrative Modifications to the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program
(Attachment J) Todd Cottrell, Manager, Transportation Planning and Operations
16. The Draft 2023 Policy Statement on Federal Legislative Issues.
(Attachment K) Rich Mauro, Director, Legislative Affairs
17. 8:20 Committee Reports
The Chair requests these reports be brief, reflect decisions made and information germane to the business of DRCOG
- A. Report from State Transportation Advisory Committee – Nicholas Williams
 - B. Report from Metro Mayors Caucus – Bud Starker
 - C. Report from Metro Area County Commissioners – Jeff Baker
 - D. Report from Advisory Committee on Aging – Jayla Sanchez-Warren
 - E. Report from Regional Air Quality Council – Doug Rex
 - F. Report from E-470 Authority – Deborah Mulvey
 - G. Report from CDOT – Rebecca White
 - H. Report from FasTracks – Brian Welch

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

18. Next Meeting – February 15, 2023
19. Other Matters by Members
20. 8:30 Adjourn

CALENDAR OF FUTURE MEETINGS

January 2023

4	Board Work Session	Canceled
17	Regional Transportation Committee	8:30 a.m.
18	Performance and Engagement Committee	5:00 p.m.
18	Finance and Budget Committee	5:30 p.m.
18	Board of Directors	6:30 p.m.
23	Transportation Advisory Committee	1:30 p.m.
27	Advisory Committee on Aging	11:00 a.m.

February 2023

1	Board Work Session	4:00 p.m.
14	Regional Transportation Committee	8:30 a.m.
15	Performance and Engagement Committee	5:00 p.m.
15	Finance and Budget Committee	5:30 p.m.
15	Board of Directors	6:30 p.m.
24	Advisory Committee on Aging	11:00 a.m.
27	Transportation Advisory Committee	1:30 p.m.

March 2023

1	Board Work Session	4:00 p.m.
14	Regional Transportation Committee	8:30 a.m.
15	Performance and Engagement Committee	5:00 p.m.
15	Finance and Budget Committee	5:30 p.m.
15	Board of Directors	6:30 p.m.
24	Advisory Committee on Aging	11:00 a.m.
27	Transportation Advisory Committee	1:30 p.m.

ATTACH A

SUMMARY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, December 21, 2022
Note: Meeting held virtually via Zoom

Members/Alternates Present

Kevin Flynn, Chair	City and County of Denver
Steve O’Dorisio	Adams County
Jeff Baker	Arapahoe County
Claire Levy	Boulder County
Austin Ward (Alternate)	City and County of Broomfield
Nicholas Williams	City and County of Denver
George Teal	Douglas County
Tracy Kraft-Tharp	Jefferson County
Larry Vittum	Town of Bennett
Nicole Speer	City of Boulder
Roger Hudson (Alternate)	City of Castle Pines
Tammy Mauer	City of Centennial
Steve Conklin	City of Edgewater
Josie Cockrell	Town of Foxfield
Lynette Kelsey	Town of Georgetown
Don Cameron (Alternate)	City of Golden
Chuck Harmon	Town of Idaho Springs
Rich Olver (Alternate)	City of Lakewood
Stephen Barr	City of Littleton
Wynne Shaw	City of Lone Tree
Gregg Oetting (Alternate)	Town of Lyons
Colleen Whitlow	Town of Mead
John Diak	Town of Parker
Jessica Sandgren	City of Thornton
Sarah Nurmela	City of Westminster

Others Present: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, Melinda Stevens, Executive Assistant, DRCOG; Kent Moorman, Thornton; Melinda Culley, Kelly PC; Jan Rowe, Danny Herrmann, CDOT; Randle Loeb, Ron Benioff, Citizens; and DRCOG staff.

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

The Chair noted new members and alternates: Larry Vittum, new member for the Town of Bennett.

Move to approve agenda

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

Report of the Chair

Chair Flynn wanted to thank all the directors for making the effort to attend this evening's meeting. Additionally, the chair asked that everyone keep the unhoused population in their thoughts and prayers as they try to receive shelter from the severe weather coming. The chair wanted to wish everyone a very happy holiday season.

Report of the Executive Director

- ED Rex wanted to thank the directors for their willingness to attend this meeting and thank them for their participation at the board work session regarding brainstorming housing solutions.
- Urban Land Institute of Colorado (ULI): There were two communities selected to for the upcoming Technical Advisory Panels and they were the City of Brighton and the City of Boulder.

Public Comment

Randle Loeb wanted to inform the Board how impressed he was by what jurisdictions were doing to protect the unhoused as the subzero storm was beginning to roll in.

Move to approve consent agenda

Director Vittum **moved** to approve the consent agenda. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** with 24 in favor and 1 abstention from Director Teal.

Items on the consent agenda included:

- Summary of the November 16, 2022 meeting

Discussion on the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Program

Executive Director Rex and Randy Arnold provided an overview of the program to the directors. Colorado voters approved Proposition 118, also known as the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) program in November 2020. FAMLI provides all Colorado workers access to paid leave to take care of themselves or their families during life circumstances. FAMLI will be available starting January 1, 2024 and contributions to the program are paid by the employee and the employer beginning January 1, 2023. The statute provides three options for local governments: Fully participate in FAMLI coverage, decline all participation, or decline employer participation. DRCOG is a local government due to its status as an association of local political subdivisions and as a regional planning commission. Staff has conducted an [analysis of DRCOG's existing benefits](#) and has concluded that the coverage for employees compares favorably to FAMLI. FAMLI does provide paid caregiver leave, which is not currently offered in our short-term disability plan. The course of action staff is recommending affords DRCOG employees the opportunity to determine if they would benefit from the additional caregiver leave offered by FAMLI and the option of electing or declining the coverage based on their own individual circumstances. DRCOG plans to assist employees who want to individually participate in FAMLI by voluntarily deducting and remitting the employee share of the premium (0.45% of wages) and corresponding wage data to the FAMLI Division every quarter.

Director Sandgren **moved** to adopt Resolution No.13, 2022, declaring DRCOG's decision to decline employer participation in the Colorado paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Program. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Director Cameron **moved** to include at the end of the third quarter, before open enrollment, that DRCOG staff return to the Board with a discussion of the caregiver coverage that they may offer. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Committee Reports

State Transportation Advisory Committee – Director Williams stated the committee met on December 1 and had two briefings on a new communication initiative and on some of the existing ones. STAC also received an update on State demographics from the demographers, as well as a CDOT budget update that included some redistribution of funds based on Federal changes. The main item for the meeting was an update on the Transportation Alternatives program.

Metro Mayors Caucus – There was no report.

Metro Area County Commissioners – Director Baker stated the commissioners had a combined meeting with MMC and MDHI on December 1 to have a discussion about shared-efforts towards meeting the region's housing needs.

Advisory Committee on Aging – There was no report.

Regional Air Quality Council – ED Rex stated the council met and approved the 2023 budget and work program and had a conversation about the State's consideration of the Ozone State Implementations Plan.

E-470 Authority – Director Diak stated that the authority approved the 2023 budget and voted to hold/freeze toll rates for 2023, with the caveat to come back in the first half of the year to revisit the need for any downward adjustments. They also approved a contract amendment for E-470's central maintenance facility.

Report from CDOT – There was no report.

Report on FasTracks – Director Welch provided an update via email that the Chair read to the Board:

- The NW Rail Peak Service Study continues to progress, with extensive ongoing engagement between RTD and corridor stakeholders;
- The judge in the *Denver Transit Partners LLC v. RTD* case intends to issue a final order by the end of the year;
- RTD has completed the first set of Subregional Service Council Meetings, which included a discussion of service planning basics and the new Call for Projects Partnership Program;
- The Zero Fare for Better Air report has been submitted to the Colorado Energy Office;
- Sales tax through October 2022 is 14 percent higher compared to 2021; and
- Ridership through October 2022 is 29 percent higher compared to 2021.

Board of Directors Meeting Summary

December 21, 2022

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Next meeting – **January 18, 2023**

Other matters by members

There were no other matters by members

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Kevin Flynn, Chair
Board of Directors
Denver Regional Council of Governments

ATTEST:

Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director

ATTACH B

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
303-480-6701 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Consent Agenda	8-ii

SUBJECT

This action is related to the location for posting notice of meetings.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

DRCOG staff recommends designating the reception area of the DRCOG offices as the official location for posting notices of meetings.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Notice of each regular and special meeting of the Board of Directors, each committee established by the Board, or those created as part of the approved committee structure of the Denver Regional Council of Governments, whether now existing or created in the future, should be posted in the reception area (which is a public place within the boundaries of DRCOG) of the offices of DRCOG located at 1001 17th Street, Suite 700, Denver, Colorado no less than twenty-four hours prior to the holding of the meeting. The posting shall include the time, date, and location of the meeting and shall, where possible, include specific agenda information.

This action implements SB 91-33.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to designate the location for posting notice of meetings as described.

ATTACHMENT

N/A

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at 303-480-6701 or drex@drcog.org; or Melinda Stevens, Division Assistant, at 303-480-6701 or mstevens@drcog.org.

ATTACH C

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or drex@drcoq.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Consent Agenda	8-iii

SUBJECT

Transportation Planning Framework

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends approval of the Transportation Planning Framework.

ACTION BY OTHERS

[December 19, 2022](#) – TAC recommended approval

[January 17, 2023](#) – RTC will make a recommendation

SUMMARY

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Denver region, DRCOG leads a [continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive](#) (3C) multimodal transportation planning process for the Denver region in cooperation with CDOT and RTD and numerous other stakeholders. DRCOG staff have been working with RTD and CDOT to update the *Transportation Planning in the Denver Region* document to respond to updated federal and state requirements and changes to each agency's planning process since the document was last updated in 2016. The document's purpose is to describe and demystify the Denver region's transportation planning process. Specifically, the document, now called the *Transportation Planning Framework*:

- describes the policies and procedures of the region's multimodal transportation planning process;
- details how the three partners (DRCOG, CDOT, RTD) cooperate in carrying out the process;
- identifies the key regional transportation planning products required by federal and state regulations and explains how the participants work to produce those products; and
- shows how the regional process integrates with individual processes of the three partners and interacts with local governments, air quality planning agencies, and other participants to accomplish transportation planning in the Denver region.

The draft *Framework* document (Attachment 1) has also been reviewed by the Agency Coordination Team and FHWA and FTA staff. Finally, DRCOG staff have significantly refreshed the document's graphic design and layout.

While not federally required, the *Framework* document integrates with the [Memorandum of Agreement \(MOA\) for Transportation Planning and Programming](#) between DRCOG, CDOT and RTD that further specifies how the three partner agencies work together. DRCOG staff has been working to update the Planning MOA which is anticipated to be executed shortly after adoption of the *Framework* document.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

[November 16, 2022](#) - Board Meeting

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to approve the *Transportation Planning Framework* document.

ATTACHMENTS

1. [Draft Transportation Planning Framework document](#)
2. Staff presentation

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at (303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org; or Matthew Helfant, Senior Transportation Planner, at 303-480-6731 or mhelfant@drcog.org.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

Board of Directors

January 2023

Matthew Helfant, AICP

WHAT IS THE FRAMEWORK?



- Formerly known as *The Prospectus*
- Provides details how regional transportation planning in the Denver region is conducted
- Outlines roles in continuing, cooperative & comprehensive (3C) process
 - DRCOG
 - CDOT
 - RTD



FRAMEWORK PURPOSE



- Describes policies and procedures
- Details how DRCOG, CDOT, & RTD cooperate
- Identifies key regional transportation planning products
- Shows how the regional planning process fits together with
 - Individual processes of each of the three partners
 - Local governments
 - Air quality conformity
- Referenced in Memorandum of Understanding for DRCOG, CDOT, & RTD

ELEMENTS



- Policy direction
 - Federal & state laws and regulations
- DRCOG committees & public & stakeholder engagement
- Planning process products
- Coordination with other transportation processes
 - CDOT- e.g., interchange approval
 - RTD- e.g., mid-term financial plan
 - FTA- e.g., capital investment program
 - DRCOG- e.g., DRCOG toll facilities review

HIGHLIGHTS OF NEW TOPICS SINCE LAST UPDATE



- Colorado greenhouse gas planning standard
 - Air quality conformity – Regional Transportation Plan & TIP
- Senate Bill 21-260
 - Disproportionally impacted communities
 - New sources of dedicated funding & new state enterprises
 - RTAs
- Front Range Passenger Rail District Board
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)
 - Performance based planning
 - Consideration for housing in transportation planning

MINOR CHANGES TO REFLECT COMMITTEE GUIDELINES UPDATE

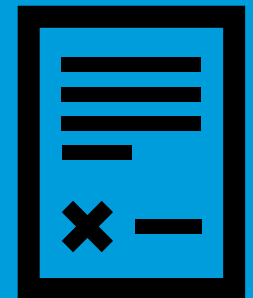


- DRCOG staff revised Framework section describing roles, responsibilities, & membership of TAC & RTC to be consistent with the proposed updated Committee Guidelines.
- Only change to the Framework document since the November TAC meeting.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA)



- Next step after adoption of Framework
- Defines specific roles & responsibilities of DRCOG, RTD, & CDOT for metropolitan transportation planning
- Requirement for obtaining federal transportation funds
- References specific roles and responsibilities documented in the Framework





Matthew Helfant, AICP
mhelfant@drcog.org

ATTACH D

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Action	9

SUBJECT

FY 2022 First Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project Delays

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends approval of proposed corrective actions regarding FY 2022 first year TIP project delays.

ACTION BY OTHERS

[December 19, 2022](#) – TAC recommended approval

[January 17, 2023](#) – RTC will make a recommendation

SUMMARY

Timely initiation of TIP projects and project phases is an important objective of the Board. Delays, regardless of the reason, tie up scarce federal funds that could have been programmed to other projects. The [Policies for TIP Program Development](#) document identifies expectations for project initiation and policy for addressing delays for TIP projects and project phases.

At the end of FY 2022, DRCOG staff reviewed the implementation status of DRCOG-selected projects and project phases with CDOT and RTD. DRCOG staff met with project sponsors to discuss the delays and identify action plans demonstrating the sponsor's commitment to timely initiation.

The TIP Project Delays Report for FY 2022 summarizes the reasons for each delay and actions proposed by sponsors to get the project or phase(s) initiated. The report includes DRCOG staff recommendations for committee and Board consideration.

PREVIOUS BOARD DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

NA

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to approve the actions proposed by DRCOG staff regarding Fiscal Year 2022 first year TIP project delays.

ATTACHMENT

TIP Project Delays Report for FY 2022

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at (303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org; or Todd Cottrell, Project and Program Delivery Manager, Transportation Planning and Operations Division at 303-480-6737 or tcottrell@drcog.org.

ATTACHMENT 1

TIP PROJECT DELAYS REPORT

End of Fiscal Year 2022

A. POLICY

The FY2022 TIP Project Delays Report reviews project phases of TIP projects originally funded out of two possible TIPs; the previous 2020-2023 TIP and the current 2022-2025 TIP. For the first-year delayed projects, the report is based on procedures established in the *Policies for TIP Program Development*, adopted January 19, 2022. The policy states that “a delay occurs when a project phase...has not been initiated in the identified year” and “if a delay is encountered (project phase being analyzed has not been initiated by September 30), DRCOG, along with CDOT or RTD, will discuss the project and the reasons for its delay with the sponsor. The result will be an action plan enforceable by CDOT/RTD, which will be reported to the DRCOG committees and Board.”

The objective of this delay policy is to minimize the number of projects delayed and improve the efficiency of spending DRCOG-allocated funds.

B. PROCESS

To implement the policy, the following steps were taken:

1. At the beginning of October (coinciding with the beginning of the new federal fiscal year), DRCOG staff requested CDOT and RTD to conduct a comprehensive review of all DRCOG-selected projects receiving TIP funds in FY2022.
2. CDOT and RTD reviewed all such project phases, identifying those that have not been initiated, and therefore delayed.
3. In late October, DRCOG staff notified first year delayed project/phase sponsors and requested a discussion regarding the delay. These projects are discussed in Section C.

A summary of each project delayed is included below.

FY22 First Year Delays Summary			
Project Sponsor	Project Name	Project Phase Delayed	Anticipated Initiation of Phase
1. Arapahoe County	Dry Creek Rd. Operational Improvements	Construction	June 2023
2. Arapahoe County	Inverness Dr. West Shared Path	Construction	February 2023
3. Aurora	Signal System Upgrade	Construction	March 2023
4. Boulder	28th St. BAT Lanes	Construction	December 2022
5. Boulder County	North Foothills Bikeway Feasibility Study	Design	March 2023
6. Broomfield	Transit Needs Assessment and Pilot Project	Study	July 2023
7. Castle Rock	SH-86/5th St. and Founders Pkwy/Ridge Rd Intersection Ops Imps	Construction	April 2023
8. Castle Rock	Downtown Pedestrian Lighting Improvements	Design	February 2023
9. CDOT Region 1	Traffic Camera Expansion	Procurement	December 2022
10. Commerce City	ATSPM System	No Longer Delayed	
11. Denver	Broadway Station and I-25 Safety and Access Improvements	No Longer Delayed	
12. Douglas County	ATSPM System	Construction	April 2023
13. Jefferson County	JC-73: SH-74 to Buffalo Park Rd Operational Improvements	Construction	May 2023
14. Littleton	Santa Fe Dr. and Mineral Ave. Operational Improvements	ROW	July 2023

ATTACHMENT 1

TIP PROJECT DELAYS REPORT

End of Fiscal Year 2022

FY22 First Year Delays Summary			
Project Sponsor	Project Name	Project Phase Delayed	Anticipated Initiation of Phase
15. Lochbuie	I-76 and Baseline Rd. Interchange Improvements	Project withdrawn and funds returned	
16. Lochbuie	Greenway Trail: CR-37 to Stagecoach Ave	Construction	April 2023
17. Longmont	St. Vrain Greenway, Phase 13: SH-119 to St. Vrain State Park	Construction	November 2023
18. Lyons	St. Vrain Trail Extension	Construction	July 2023
19. Lyons	US-36 Multimodal Improvements	Construction	January 2023
20. Parker	Parker Rd. Operational Improvements: Lincoln Ave. to Pine Ln.	Construction	February 2023
21. RTD	DU Station Bike Shelter	Procurement	March 2023
22. Thornton	Transit Study	No Longer Delayed	

C. FIRST-YEAR DELAY (FY2022) PROJECTS SEEKING APPROVAL TO CONTINUE

Project sponsors listed below with phases NOT initiated by July 1, 2023, will be delayed for a second year and project sponsors will need to appear before the DRCOG Board in to continue.

1. **Arapahoe County: Dry Creek Rd. Operational Improvements: I-25 to Inverness Dr. East (TIPID [2020-057](#))**

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- ROW and design delays

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Working to acquire ROW in three parcels, traffic signal design; working through project clearances
- Advertisement anticipated in June 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue

2. **Arapahoe County: Inverness Dr. West Shared Path (TIPID [2020-011](#))**

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Right-of-way delays; waiting on CDOT comments

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- ROW anticipated to be completed by December 2022
- Advertisement anticipated in February 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue

ATTACHMENT 1

TIP PROJECT DELAYS REPORT

End of Fiscal Year 2022

3. Aurora: Signal System Upgrade (TIPID [2016-004](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Longer than anticipated CDOT and FHWA clearance process

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Working on final CDOT, FHWA, and local clearances
- Advertisement is anticipated to be in March 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

4. Boulder: 28th St. BAT Lanes (TIPID [2020-085](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Coordination delays with an adjacent local project

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Final reviews held
- Advertisement anticipated in December 2022

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

5. Boulder County: North Foothills Bikeway Feasibility Study (TIPID [2020-077](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Design

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Project initially not assigned to the correct CDOT department causing the need for an IGA amendment

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- RFQ for design is out
- NTP anticipated for March 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

6. Broomfield: Transit Needs Assessment and Pilot Project (TIPID [2020-072](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Study

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- IGA still being developed with RTD
- Multiple delays since early 2020 (COVID, staffing, miscommunication)

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Broomfield to hand over final materials requested by RTD by January 2023
- IGA execution and study NTP anticipated by July 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue

ATTACHMENT 1

TIP PROJECT DELAYS REPORT

End of Fiscal Year 2022

7. **Castle Rock: SH-86/5th St. and Founders Pkwy/Ridge Rd Intersection Ops Imps (TIPID 2020-051)**

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Working through ROW and design issues, comments, final reviews

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Final package to CDOT in February 2023
- Advertisement anticipated in April 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

8. **Castle Rock: Castle Rock Downtown Pedestrian Lighting Improvements (TIPID 2020-077)**

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Design

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Delayed due to concerns on how to deliver the project (proceeding with design/bid/build)

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- IGA executed
- Design RFP anticipated for February 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

9. **CDOT Region 1: Traffic Camera Expansion (TIPID 2016-004)**

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Procurement

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Funding gap due to updated price agreement

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Purchase order anticipated to be released in December 2022

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

10. **Commerce City: ATSPM System (TIPID 2016-004)**

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Since October 1, the project has been advertised and therefore is no longer delayed.

11. **Denver: Broadway Station and I-25 Safety and Access Improvements (TIPID 2016-021)**

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Since October 1, the project has met all of the necessary steps and requirements to no longer be delayed (delivered/constructed with an alternative delivery method verses a traditional project advertisement)

ATTACHMENT 1

TIP PROJECT DELAYS REPORT

End of Fiscal Year 2022

12. Douglas County: ATSPM System (TIPIID [2016-004](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Equipment anticipated to be purchased needed to be adjusted, necessitating testing to ensure a good fit

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Working through final testing phase and final clearances
- Anticipate purchasing in April 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

13. Jefferson County: JC-73: SH-74 to Buffalo Park Rd Operational Improvements (TIPIID [2020-066](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Larger number of historical properties requiring additional clearances
- Complications with ROW and overall untimely plan reviews

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Final plans anticipated in December 2022
- Project advertisement anticipated for May 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

14. Littleton: Santa Fe Dr. and Mineral Ave. Operational Improvements (TIPIID [2020-060](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: ROW

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Developer changes at project location caused cascading issues with design, ROW, utilities, and cost

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Working through all issues with developer and CDOT
- ROW plans into CDOT anticipated by July 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

15. Lochbuie: I-76 and Baseline Rd. Interchange Improvements (TIPIID [2020-054](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Sponsor has canceled the project at this time due to cost escalations and nearby development changes. Funds to be redistributed by DRCOG for reprogramming.

ATTACHMENT 1

TIP PROJECT DELAYS REPORT

End of Fiscal Year 2022

16. Lochbuie: Greenway Trail: CR-37 to Stagecoach Ave (TIPIID [2020-028](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Overall slower process than anticipated and staff changes

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Final project reviews by January 2023
- Project advertisement anticipated for April 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

17. Longmont: St. Vrain Greenway, Phase 13: SH-119 to St. Vrain State Park (TIPIID [2020-027](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- ROW and environmental took longer to complete than originally anticipated
- Design and location changes due to project being located within a FEMA regulatory floodway

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Ongoing modeling to locate specific location(s) to place trail
- Project advertisement anticipated for November 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

18. Lyons: St. Vrain Trail Extension (TIPIID [2022-013](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Alignment conflict discovered in design and ROW process; cost increases

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Working through options for proper alignment and additional funding sources
- Project advertisement anticipated for July 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

19. Lyons: US-36 Multimodal Improvements (TIPIID [2022-014](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phase: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Final reviews took place in September

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Working through final approvals for anticipated advertisement in January 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

ATTACHMENT 1

TIP PROJECT DELAYS REPORT

End of Fiscal Year 2022

20. Parker: Parker Rd. Operational Improvements: Lincoln Ave. to Pine Ln. (TIPIID [2020-063](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phases: Construction

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Process took longer than anticipated

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Working through ROW, final design comments, IGA update for maintenance, and utility coordination
- Project advertisement anticipated in February 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

21. RTD: DU Station Bike Shelter (TIPIID [2020-077](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phases: Procurement

Reason Phase was not Initiated by 9/30/22:

- Staffing changes for both parties

Current Status, Plan to Initiate Phase:

- Working through invitation for bids process; anticipated to be released in March 2023

DRCOG Staff Recommendation:

- Approve the project to continue
-

22. Thornton: Transit Study (TIPIID [2020-077](#))

Delayed FY2022 Phases: Study

Since October 1, the study has kicked off and therefore is no longer delayed.

ATTACHE

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or drex@drcoq.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Action	10

SUBJECT

This item concerns Board approval of the draft legislative principle statement and the draft 2023 Policy Statement on State Legislative Issues.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Approval of legislative principle statement and 2023 Policy Statement on State Legislative, with amendments.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Each year, the Board adopts two policy statements on a range of specific state and federal legislative issues. These documents provide the DRCOG Board, staff and lobbyists with policy direction on legislative issues during the coming year. The *Draft 2023 Policy Statement on State Legislative Issues* was provided to Board members at the November Board meeting along with DRCOG's legislative principle statement for review.

DRCOG staff received comments on both the legislative principle statement and the state policy statement and have modified the draft documents to incorporate those suggestions (highlighted in yellow). All other revisions were proposed by DRCOG staff.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to approve DRCOG's legislative principle statement and the 2023 Policy Statement on State Legislative Issues

ATTACHMENTS

1. Legislative Principle Statement (with track changes)
2. Draft 2023 Policy Statement on State Legislative Issues (track changes)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Should you have any questions regarding the draft policy statement, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at (303) 480-6701, or drex@drcoq.org; or Rich Mauro, Director, Legislative Affairs at (303) 480-6778 or rmauro@drcoq.org.

PRINCIPLES GUIDING DRCOG LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

As adopted by the DRCOG Board of Directors December 1982
And revised February 17, 1988, January 16, 1991, ~~and January 17, 2001,~~ and
January 18, 2023

The Denver Regional Council of Governments' federal and state Legislative Program is defined by the character of the Denver region and the concerns of its local governments. The Denver region constitutes a unique area as distinguished from the rest of the state because its member governments comprise a large and highly urbanized population.

In the Denver region, the regional council, organized as a voluntary association of county and municipal governments, is the only regional spokesman for these entities. Due to DRCOG's regional character and local government orientation, the council is the appropriate forum for regionally focused legislative activity.

This self-imposed limitation to regional issues is reinforced by the activities of two-three other organizations, the Colorado Municipal League (CML) and Colorado Counties, Inc. (CCI), and Counties & Commissioners Acting Together (CCAT). As statewide associations of municipal and county governments respectively, their interests are correspondingly broad. As a consequence, they address the entire range of local government issues before the state legislature, state executive and regulatory agencies, and the federal government. Both associations generally avoid issues that are unique to an individual community or region.

In addition to regional issues, DRCOG is concerned with issues that affect the organization or its programs. The organization assumes the responsibility for identifying and promoting the regional interest in its various fields of planning and management to state and federal legislative and administrative bodies.

It is not the policy of the Legislative Program to address all legislative/administrative issues of interest to local governments generally. Support of or opposition to a bill or legislative funding measure will be given, and be subject to reassessment, according to the bill's or measure's consistency with DRCOG's adopted principles, policies and plans. Where appropriate, DRCOG will strive to collaborate with other organizations representing local government(s), such as CCI, CML, and CCAT.

DRCOG's legislative activity generally will be focused on the following types of issues:

1. Proposals that affect DRCOG as an agency or which would affect one or more of its programs.
- ~~2.~~ 2. Proposals of special significance to the Denver region.
- ~~3. Proposals that would have a unique effect upon local governments in this region.~~
- ~~3. Proposals that affect DRCOG as an agency or which would affect one or more of its programs.~~

POLICY STATEMENT ON STATE LEGISLATIVE ISSUES 2023

INTRODUCTION

This paper outlines the key state policy issues of the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG).

It identifies policy positions intended to inform the General Assembly, state executive branch officials and others as they develop and implement state policy on these issues. This policy statement guides state legislative positions and actions taken by the DRCOG Board, its staff and members during the coming year.

DRCOG is a membership organization of local elected officials representing 48 municipalities and nine counties in the Denver metro area. Under federal law, DRCOG serves as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) coordinating transportation planning with air quality goals and serves as the Area Agency on Aging in eight counties to aid the 60-plus population. Under state statutes DRCOG, as the regional planning commission, prepares and adopts a regional plan for the metro area and has regional responsibility for oversight of transit projects and certain state-sponsored and private toll-road projects.

As the designated council of governments, regional planning commission, area agency on aging, and metropolitan planning organization for the Denver region, DRCOG recognizes the important role it plays in building and maintaining an equitable region where all residents and communities can thrive. DRCOG acknowledges its role in ensuring our region remains a diverse network of vibrant, connected, lifelong communities.

REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Regional growth and development is of significant concern for metro area residents, policymakers and community leaders. The counties and municipalities of the Denver region have been advancing a shared aspirational vision of the future of the metro area for more than 60 years. Working together to make life better for our communities and residents, that vision has taken various forms over the years— most recently as a regional plan known as Metro Vision.

Metro Vision fulfills DRCOG's statutory duty to make and adopt a regional plan for the physical development of the region's territory. The plan remains advisory for a local jurisdiction unless its planning commission chooses to adopt it as its official advisory plan under Colorado Revised Statutes 30-28-106(2). The current Metro Vision plan was most recently adopted by DRCOG's board of directors on May 15, 2019.

Metro Vision guides DRCOG's work and establishes shared expectations with our region's many and various planning partners. The plan outlines broad outcomes,



objectives and initiatives established by the DRCOG board to make life better for the region's residents. Metro Vision is aspirational and long-range in focus, but it has historically served to inform nearer-term policies and initiatives.

The DRCOG board of directors recognizes that the success of the Metro Vision plan requires the coordinated efforts of local, state and federal governments; the business community; and other planning partners, including philanthropic and not-for-profit organizations.

DRCOG supports those efforts that contribute to the achievement of Metro Vision's regional outcomes and encourages state and regional entities to align their policies and investment decisions with Metro Vision and other regional agreements to advance shared objectives.

Metro Vision establishes 14 interrelated aspirational outcomes, which describe a future that DRCOG, local governments and its partners will work toward together. DRCOG may support or oppose legislative proposals based on their potential to impact the region's ability to achieve these outcomes and the associated performance measures, targets and action elements.

These Metro Vision outcomes are as follows:

Outcomes – An efficient and predictable development pattern

- The region is comprised of diverse, livable communities.
- Through a coordinated effort between DRCOG and local communities, new urban development occurs in an orderly and compact pattern within regionally designated areas.
- Connected urban centers and multimodal corridors throughout the region accommodate a growing share of the region's housing and employment.

Outcomes – A connected multimodal region

- The regional transportation system is well- connected and serves all modes of travel.
- The transportation system is safe, reliable and well-maintained.

Outcomes – A safe and resilient natural and built environment

- The region has clean water and air, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.
- The region values, protects and connects people to its diverse natural resource areas, open space, parks and trails.
- The region's working agricultural lands and activities contribute to a strong regional food system.
- The risk and effects of natural and human-created hazards is reduced.



Outcomes – Healthy, inclusive and livable communities

- The built and natural environment supports healthy and active choices.
- The region’s residents have expanded connections to health services.
- Diverse housing options meet the needs of residents of all ages, incomes and abilities.

Outcomes – A vibrant regional economy

- All residents have access to a range of transportation, employment, commerce, housing, educational, cultural and recreational opportunities.
- Investments in infrastructure and amenities allow people and businesses to thrive and prosper. Metro Vision also includes numerous objectives and strategic initiatives that identify areas for continuous improvements and specific voluntary opportunities that DRCOG and our many partners can consider. To help track the region’s progress toward our shared outcomes, the plan establishes a series of regional performance measures. **More information on the Metro Vision plan, including objectives and performance measures that may inform DRCOG’s position on legislative proposals can be found on the DRCOG website (metrovision.drcog.org).**

Transit-oriented development

The residents of the Denver metro area have made a significant financial commitment to expand the region’s rapid transit system. To maximize the benefit of this investment, the areas surrounding existing and future transit stations should be developed or redeveloped to include appropriate higher-density, mixed-use, pedestrian- and bicycle-oriented development that supports transit use.

DRCOG supports legislative initiatives that foster transit-oriented development, including but not limited to: a) providing the Regional Transportation District (RTD) with the ability to manage its park-and-ride facilities using best practices that help the region reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT); b) expanding the ability of RTD and local governments to enter into joint-development agreements; and c) protecting local authority to use tax-increment financing to leverage development in areas around transit stations.

Local land use authority and planning

Local comprehensive/master plans provide a framework for the exercise of local land use authority. They form the basis for local growth and development decisions.

DRCOG supports the use of comprehensive/master plans as the foundation for local land use decision-making.



Private property rights

DRCOG respects private property rights within a legal context that protects local land use authority and emphasizes that governmental actions often add value to private property. While acknowledging that there are concerns over a potential for inappropriate uses of that authority, DRCOG believes that U.S. Supreme Court decisions defining constitutional restrictions on local government regulation of private property are adequate to protect both public and private rights. When these restrictions are coupled with established precedents of the Colorado Supreme Court, protections accorded to landowners are reasonable, appropriate and balanced.

DRCOG opposes further restrictions on the ability of governmental entities to regulate private property for the benefit of the public and opposes takings and eminent domain legislation that goes beyond the existing rulings of the U.S. Supreme Court and the Colorado Supreme Court as an attempt to unconstitutionally restrict local land use authority.

Planning data and technical support

DRCOG recognizes the importance of unbiased, reliable and consistent data in effective local and regional planning and decision-making. DRCOG also collaborates with the state to provide a variety of planning and technical assistance services to small communities.

DRCOG encourages the General Assembly and state agencies to further support efforts that would provide local governments with planning tools, technical assistance and other resources needed to enhance local and regional decision-making.

DRCOG supports legislation that ensures readily available access to public data sets, including digital data, for use in planning analysis.

Housing

An adequate supply and mix of housing options continues to be a concern of local governments. Housing choices allow individuals and families to find desirable housing that is affordable and accessible in communities throughout the region, allowing them to stay in their community of choice as their economic or life circumstances change. A range of housing options across the region benefits both individuals and families and can improve the economic vitality and diversity of local communities.

DRCOG supports the following principles pertaining to the quality, quantity and affordability of housing in the Denver metro area:

- Policies and programs that support the private and public sectors in the creation and



maintenance of an adequate supply of affordable rental and ownership options and providing a variety of housing sizes and types integrated with the community to meet the needs of people of all ages, incomes, and abilities.

- Regional approaches to addressing the affordable housing issue that incentivize local efforts, particularly as they relate to preservation of existing affordable housing stock.
- An adequate supply of permanently affordable housing located near job and transit hubs and continued public- and private-sector support for such an effort.
- Increased state financial support for loan and grant programs for low- and moderate-income housing, including associated supportive services and programs that promote wellness, stability and access to opportunity.
- Collaboration among public and private entities, including efforts to develop loan programs and address the jobs-housing connections.
- Renters and homeowners (including manufactured home owners) have appropriate protections from discrimination and displacement. Policies should emphasize the rights of residents and minimize disparities in treatment under the law.
- Actions to provide more accessible and obtainable housing options for seniors.



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Federal and state laws and regulations establish a critical role for the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) in the transportation planning process. Congress has emphasized the importance of local government involvement, through the designated regional planning agency, in selecting projects and prioritizing funding for transportation.

DRCOG supports the process established between DRCOG, the Regional Transportation District (RTD) and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to address the following issues before final adoption of the Statewide Transportation Plan and will evaluate state legislative and administrative actions for consistency with this process, including:

- The fair and equitable distribution of estimated future transportation revenues and the range of certainty regarding estimated funding allocations.
- Rules and criteria for determining regional transportation project selection, including system preservation projects and immediate and future transportation priorities based on the Regional Transportation Plan.
- A dispute-resolution process to mediate disputes related to these requirements.

The synergy between transportation and land use affects the region's growth and development, use of transportation facilities and environmental quality. A coordinated approach between the state and regional transportation systems' planning efforts and local project development is crucial to ensure environmental compatibility, efficient system performance and cost-effective solutions. Although individual local governments can take actions to address these issues in their own jurisdictions, a regional approach to addressing them also is necessary.

DRCOG supports early and frequent consultations between state, regional and local agencies to coordinate regionwide system and project planning efforts, as well as to coordinate transportation, land use and air quality planning efforts and will evaluate state legislative and administrative actions for consistency with this policy.

Role of the MPO

The interdependence of transportation systems in metropolitan areas, particularly in the context of population growth and its demands on resources, necessitates a regional approach to transportation problem solving. As the MPO for the Denver metro area, DRCOG is responsible for planning, prioritizing and programming investments in the regional multimodal transportation system.

The role of the MPO and the importance of cooperation among transportation agencies are recognized in federal law and regulation. The MPO serves as the forum for collaborative decision-making on regional transportation issues and brings together



decision-makers from local governments, other regional agencies and state transportation agencies to consider strategic and innovative solutions. The critical role of the MPO needs to be recognized and supported at the state level.

DRCOG supports the following principles with regard to the role of the MPO:

- Transportation planning that is coordinated between DRCOG, CDOT, RTD and local communities, with each participating transportation agency's plan recognizing the region's priorities in the context of statewide transportation priorities.
- A strong role for MPOs placing them on equal footing with CDOT and regional transit agencies in selecting projects to be funded consistent with regional transportation plans to ensure that local, regional and state transportation needs are addressed in a coordinated and cooperative manner.
- Legislation that reinforces collaboration between state and regional transportation agencies and recognizes their respective roles, responsibilities and interests.
- Legislation to ensure that representation on the Transportation Commission reflects approximately equal populations based on the most recent population census.

Transportation financing

The region's long-term viability requires a built environment that includes effective and convenient transportation options that keep pace with growth and address the region's transportation, economic, and quality of life objectives. Colorado and the metro area need a revenue system that is reliable and sufficient to maintain the existing transportation system in good condition and to invest in the system to keep pace with population growth. Thus, enhancements to existing revenue sources and the enactment of new revenue sources are necessary.

DRCOG supports the following principles and actions to meet transportation financing needs:

- Increase funding for transportation to preserve the system, mitigate congestion, improve safety, and provide multi-modal options for people of all ages, incomes and abilities.
- **Allocate additional state funds to support urban transit services in the Denver region.**
- Reduce or eliminate off-the-top appropriations from the Highway Users Tax Fund.
- Allocate federal and state funds to achieve funding equity statewide based on justified needs (system preservation, congestion and multimodal options) and contribution to overall revenues.
- Re-examine state formulas and procedures to ensure an adequate amount of federal and state funds are made available to urbanized and metropolitan areas to relieve congestion, increase safety, and achieve and maintain air quality standards.
- Provide an appropriate share of new or increased revenues back to local



governments.

- Protect and expand the authority of regions to implement regional financing tools.
- Consider alternative revenue and financing mechanisms, such as road usage charges, and, under certain circumstances, tolling and congestion pricing of existing roadways.
- Consider the effects of land use decisions on transportation infrastructure needs.
- Where appropriate, support the use of managed lanes, including tolled express lanes, to help drivers reliably anticipate travel time on major corridors in the Denver metropolitan area. Retain the requirement that any road, highway or tolled lane within or affecting the Denver metro area be reviewed and approved by the DRCOG board for inclusion in the fiscally constrained regional transportation plan. Ensure toll receipts remain in the regional highway system that is being tolled.
- Allow toll receipts to be used for multimodal improvements and accumulated for system reconstruction.
- Consider revising the responsibilities for maintenance and supervision of the non-National Highway System portions of the current state highway system, subject to the condition that any devolution to local governments be accompanied by the funding necessary to avoid unfunded mandates and pursuant to review by, and consent of, affected local and regional agencies.

Multimodal transportation

Efforts to address transportation needs in the region must draw upon an array of transportation modes to reduce single-occupant vehicle trips and to provide a variety of transportation choices. DRCOG strongly believes multimodal travel options are imperative to preserve and enhance our quality of life.

DRCOG supports legislation that promotes efforts to fund, maintain and expand a multimodal transportation system. DRCOG also supports measures to improve safety for users of alternative modes, especially pedestrians and bicyclists.

DRCOG supports funding for programs that provide transportation for access to jobs for low-income workers who cannot afford to live near where they work, and for safe routes to schools.

Transportation demand management

Transportation demand management programs, projects and services can help reduce congestion and improve air quality by decreasing the amount of automobile traffic, especially during high-demand periods. DRCOG sees transportation demand management as an important element of the region's long-range growth management and transportation planning strategy.



DRCOG supports state investment in regional programs that promote transportation demand management efforts, including:

- Coordinated regionwide efforts (Way to Go) that promote and encourage adoption of non-single- occupant-vehicle (non-SOV) travel options.
- Active transportation to encourage healthier travel choices, including bicycling and walking.
- Public transportation, including buses, light rail and commuter trains and bus rapid transit.
- Telecommuting, flextime, compressed work weeks and other changes to normal work patterns to avoid peak traffic conditions.
- Carpooling, vanpooling and other forms of ridesharing including the underlying technologies to facilitate matches.
- Encouraging parents to use carpools for taking students to school and infrastructure that facilitates these transportation options.
- Non-automobile infrastructure investments by the state, counties and cities.
- Employer promotion of alternative mode use by employees.
- Coordination of transportation alternatives wherever traffic congestion occurs, such as at schools, large retail shopping centers and in connection with sporting or cultural events or major transportation infrastructure construction.
- Incentives to individuals who use alternative modes.

Transportation system management and operations

Efforts to promote the effective day-to-day operational management of the freeway and arterial road systems and transit facilities are important to making the best use of existing transportation investments.

DRCOG supports efforts that enhance the efficient use of roadways and transit facilities, including collaborative programs for incident management and intelligent transportation systems.

DRCOG supports efforts that improve or expand situational awareness for transportation operators and supports their ability to both effectively manage transportation systems and distribute real-time traveler information.

Safety

DRCOG's board-adopted *Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero* plan establishes a goal to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries on the transportation system with a proactive, preventive approach. The board will consider investments through the



Transportation Improvement Program to improve the safety and security of the transportation system.

DRCOG supports efforts to improve the safety of the traveling public – drivers, transit riders, pedestrians and bicyclists.

DRCOG supports efforts to increase transportation funding to create a reliable, dedicated funding stream for safety projects; require motorcycle drivers and passengers to wear helmets; and maintain ability to use safety cameras as an enforcement technique, including red-light running and speeding.

Transportation for older adults and vulnerable populations

Access to transportation is critical for **the health and independence of** older adults and individuals with disabilities, low incomes, veterans and other vulnerable populations. Transportation allows people to obtain health care, food and to maintain and increase social, family and other life-sustaining relationships. DRCOG promotes the concept of regional cooperation and coordination among counties and local service providers to most effectively use the limited resources available for transportation for older adults and other vulnerable populations. **DRCOG supports the following:**

- A system that:
 - Ensures more and better service is provided to older adults and vulnerable populations.
 - Reduces administrative and service duplication.
 - Increases coordination among funding sources, providers, jurisdictions and trips.
 - Efficiently uses taxpayer dollars to provide life-sustaining mobility.
- Increased state funding for **general and Medicaid transportation services and especially transportation services for older adults and other vulnerable populations above the Medicaid eligibility threshold.**



OLDER ADULTS & INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

As the designated Area Agency on Aging (under the federal Older Americans Act) for Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin and Jefferson counties, DRCOG advocates, plans, funds and coordinates the provision of services for older adults. DRCOG also has been designated as an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) under the Affordable Care Act and in that capacity is charged with providing a coordinated and streamlined access point to long-term care services and supports for adults age 60 and over or age 18 and over living with a disability, and their caregivers. As an advocate for older adults, individuals with disabilities, veterans and their caregivers, DRCOG works with various agencies, groups and individuals to support state legislation, regulations and programs to meet their needs. DRCOG also provides the direct services of a long-term care ombudsman and information, referral and assistance.

In performing these roles, DRCOG supports the following:

Planning and delivery of services

The federal Older Americans Act and the state Older Coloradans Act mandate critical roles for area agencies on aging: planning and developing programs and services to meet the needs of older adults; advocating for and representing the issues and concerns of older adults; and distributing federal and state funds to service providers. As an ADRC, DRCOG is directed to provide older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers with information and assistance about available resources and options counseling. DRCOG works with the state, other government agencies, consumers, service providers, private and nonprofit organizations, and foundations to identify needs for services and then brings the parties together to determine the preferred approaches to address these needs.

DRCOG supports:

- State legislative and regulatory provisions reinforcing collaboration between the state and area agencies on aging and respecting their respective roles, capabilities and interests, consistent with state and federal laws.
- Collaboration and partnerships to better meet the service needs of older adults consistent with DRCOG's responsibilities as an Area Agency on Aging and an ADRC.
- Collaboration in the exploration of partnerships to provide access to area agency on aging and other community-based services through public and private health insurance benefits and health care engagement programs that would be coordinated with the area agencies on aging across the state to provide cost effective community-based services.
- The establishment of local "community care hubs" with locally controlled funds



created to support community well-being and efforts that improve health outcomes and reduce the cost of health care.

Funding

Colorado and the Denver metro area face serious funding shortages related to economically and socially needy older adults, individuals with disabilities and their caregivers in the region. Regional and statewide assessments show that existing revenue sources are insufficient to meet current needs for services such as home modifications, meals, transportation to medical appointments and health promotion. Thus, enhancements to existing sources and development of more reliable sources are necessary.

DRCOG supports:

- Increased funding for programs and exploration of programs providing services to older adults, individuals with disabilities, veterans and their caregivers, especially services that support individuals continuing to live independently in their homes and communities, including efforts to improve data collection and analysis of cost effectiveness.
- Efforts to use state funds for programs that provide prescription drugs more efficiently and effectively, including efforts to increase pricing transparency and reduce the costs of purchasing such prescription drugs to enable associated programs to better serve their growing caseloads
- Increasing the appropriations to the State Funding for Senior Services line item in the Long Bill. This includes increasing the continuing appropriation to the Older Coloradans Cash Fund, as well as any additional state general fund monies that might become available. DRCOG specifically supports a stable, long-term funding source that increases to meet the growing need for services, which would provide a level of funding certainty that would improve yearly program planning for needed services.
- Action by the General Assembly to fully fund the required share to match federal funds available to the state through the Older Americans Act, including the National Family Caregiver Support Program, so as not to require an increase in the required local share. Such state or local shares or matches should not be required to come from existing program funds. Similarly, increases in federal funding should not be offset with reductions in state funds.
- Distributing State Funding for Senior Services monies, including the Older Coloradans Cash Fund, using the existing structure created to administer Older Americans Act funds. DRCOG also supports the equitable distribution of federal and state funds to area agencies on aging based on the needs and contribution of each



region.

- Re-examination of state procedures and distribution formulas for federal and state funds to ensure adequate funds are available to urbanized areas to meet the needs of older adults.

Long-term care

Older adults receiving long-term care services, including those living in long-term care communities (such as nursing homes and assisted living facilities) and those enrolled in the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) are some of the most vulnerable members of the regional community. As the operator of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program for the region, DRCOG is an advocate for the rights of residents and quality of care for those in long-term care communities and participants in PACE.

Ongoing conditions of already critically low staffing in long term care, exacerbated by COVID-19 pandemic, have resulted in increased complaints from residents regarding delayed care of medical needs, symptoms left unattended, and abuse. Poor quality of care alters quality of life for residents and can leave a lasting impact on their lives, making the ombudsman program more essential than ever.

DRCOG supports efforts to improve the quality of care and consumer protections for older adults and their caregivers and, in particular, legislation strengthening the role of the long-term care ombudsman and PACE ombudsman as resident and consumer advocates. DRCOG urges the state, when making decisions regarding funding for long-term care programs, to structure such funding to protect the quality of care for residents and participants, including funding for optimal ombudsman staffing.

Housing

Available, affordable and accessible housing is a particular concern of older adults and individuals with disabilities, who mostly live on fixed incomes. However, an equally critical concern is the ability to live independently as part of the larger community. As individuals age or experience disability, the availability of in-home and related services that enable them to remain in their homes becomes increasingly important. Growing evidence indicates older adults and individuals with disabilities are healthier and require fewer costly services when they have affordable and accessible housing choices, are provided with the ability to age in place, remain connected to the community and its networks, and have access to long-term care.

DRCOG supports:

- Increased funding and regulatory changes that improve the availability of supportive services, while maintaining consumer protections for clients and family caregivers.
- Property tax relief to help reduce a tax liability that especially burdens low-income



seniors and older adults on fixed incomes.

- Policies, programs and services that preserve existing affordable housing stock, promote access to a variety of housing options in diverse geographic locations, and provide consumer protections that enable older adults and individuals with disabilities to age in place.

Driver safety and older adults

As individuals age, their ability to drive safely may diminish. However, DRCOG is concerned that addressing this issue solely based on age imposes undue hardships on older residents who can drive safely. When older residents are not allowed to drive, the availability of transportation for medical appointments, grocery shopping and social activities is essential for seniors to maintain independence.

DRCOG supports functional assessments of driving ability rather than age cut-off as the basis for imposing limitations on driving by individuals. DRCOG supports adequate funding for providing transportation services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities.



ENVIRONMENT

Air quality and climate

Air quality affects all residents of the region and continues to be a concern. The region fails to meet current federal standards for ozone and more stringent standards are expected to be established by the Environmental Protection Agency. Meeting a more aggressive ozone standard will require continuous efforts from many parties. Surface transportation also contributes to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the region is subject to state requirements to achieve certain GHG emission reductions.

DRCOG supports:

- Efforts to reduce emissions from all sources sufficient to meet federal air quality standards.
- Transportation and land use strategies that improve air quality in the region.
- Alternative fuel sources and clean-burning technology and provision of infrastructure and services for alternative fuels.
- Incentives for purchasing high fuel economy or alternative fuel vehicles or for accelerated retirement of inefficient or high-polluting personal, commercial or fleet vehicles that are beyond repair.
- Offering services, including incentives that encourage and facilitate the use of alternative modes of travel.
- Examination of the potential of select speed limit reductions.

Water supply

An adequate, dependable supply of water is necessary for urban, agriculture, recreation and open-space priorities both in the Denver metro area and throughout the state. Metro Vision calls for maximizing the wise use of water resources through efficient land development and other strategies.

DRCOG supports:

- Collaborative efforts among local governments, water providers and other stakeholders to promote water conservation.
- Data collection and research to increase understanding of the link between land development and water demand, and best practices to promote the efficient use of water resources across the region.
- Water resource planning, management and development within the existing constitutional framework and pursuant to the basin roundtables process established in the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act (HB 05-1177), in which interbasin compacts are negotiated for the equitable distribution of the state's waters.



- Water reuse as one component in efforts to meet water supply needs and thus supports efforts to facilitate the reuse of water consistent with Colorado's constitutional water rights system.
- Policies and practices that, consistent with local government authority, protect Colorado's water resources.
- The development of Colorado's Water Plan that emphasizes conservation, storage, drought mitigation and streamlining of the regulatory processes, aligns the state's various water efforts and provides a benchmark for future collaboration in addressing Colorado's water supply needs.

Open space

Open space resources available to citizens in the Denver metro area are important to our quality of life.

DRCOG supports:

- Planning, acquisition, protection and preservation of open space resources.
- Increasing funding for open space preservation.
- Great Outdoors Colorado and other efforts advancing major land acquisitions along the Front Range that link open spaces in the metro area to protect canyons and river corridors, the mountain backdrop and prominent geographic features, freestanding community buffer areas, and the east metro plains.



INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Intergovernmental cooperation

The state government, local governments and regional agencies all provide critical services and implement programs for the benefit of Colorado residents. Legislative bodies and executive agencies at each level should respect the roles and responsibilities of the others.

DRCOG supports building consensus among state, local and regional entities in developing and implementing new and existing programs and improved approaches to planning and service provision.

Shared services

Many of the services provided by local governments to their residents are also provided by neighboring communities. To address related coordination and funding concerns, local governments have entered into agreements with each other and with DRCOG for shared-service delivery.

DRCOG encourages local governments to enter into shared-services agreements and supports efforts to ensure such agreements are honored and endorsed by the state.

State-regional relations

As the state's policy issues become more complex, it is evident that the solutions are not one-size-fits-all. The Denver metro area has made significant progress in developing collaborative solutions and decision-making processes for several complex issues with which it has been confronted — especially in the related areas of growth and transportation. As the regional planning commission, the metropolitan planning organization for transportation, and the Area Agency on Aging, DRCOG is in a unique position to convene parties of interest on intergovernmental issues, provide the necessary forum for their resolution and facilitate a negotiated outcome.

In recognition of the importance of regionalism, it is an appropriate role for DRCOG to act as a facilitator of regional approaches. Consequently, it is appropriate for state agencies to ensure that actions they take affecting the region are consistent with regionally derived solutions and the adopted Metro Vision plan.

Regional service delivery

The state plays an important role in the funding of public services and programs administered at the regional and local levels. When making such funding and programmatic decisions, it is appropriate for state agencies and the General Assembly



to give consideration to which programs are most appropriately implemented at the local and regional level. State administration of federal programs can be problematic for local governments, as state agencies tend to be more removed from clients and less responsive to their needs. On the other hand, individual local governments may lack the resources to achieve desired efficiencies and cost-effectiveness. Also, some programs are most appropriately and effectively addressed at the regional level. The collaborative partnerships typical of regional approaches can provide the critical mass of users and clients for services or programs to be cost-effective.

DRCOG urges the state, when making funding and programmatic decisions, including creating new programs or changing existing programs, to consider the following principles:

- Use existing local or regional service delivery systems wherever practical.
- Ensure a consultative process among federal, state and local governments and regional councils before making changes to services currently being delivered at the local or regional level.
- Ensure existing levels of services are maintained and adequate administrative funds are provided to implementing agencies.
- Ensure the state treats the continuity of service delivery as a key principle guiding any actions to create new programs or revise existing programs by respecting the local and regional programs already in existence.

ATTACH F

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Informational Briefing	11

SUBJECT

RTD Zero Fare for Better Air update.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

[Colorado Senate Bill 22-180](#) established the Zero Air for Better Air initiative that RTD and other transit agencies around the state participated in during August 2022. The goal of the initiative was to help reduce ground level ozone by providing funding to subsidize free transit service for at least 30 days during the summer ozone season. During August 2022, fares were free on the entire RTD system. RTD was allocated \$11 million per year for two years, with a required 20% local match.

RTD found that overall ridership increased 22% from July 2022, with much of the August ridership retained in September 2022. For context, August ridership has averaged 2%-12% higher than July ridership between 2016 and 2021.

At the January Board meeting, RTD will provide an overview of the Zero Fare for Better Air initiative including ridership, customer survey results, and an impact analysis.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

RTD presentation

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at (303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org; or Jacob Riger, Multimodal Transportation Planning Manager, at 303-480-6751 or jriger@drcog.org.



**We Make Lives Better
Through Connections.**

Zero Fare for Better Air

Charlie Stanfield

Planning Project Manager



Ozone Season Free Transit Grant Program

SB22-180 established the Ozone Season Free Transit Grant Program, which provides funding to provide free transit services for at least 30 days during the ozone season (June 1 – August 31).



State of
COLORADO



\$3 million per year for 2 years



\$11 million per year for 2 years,
20% local match required

Planning

Anticipated additional needs during Zero Fare for Better Air:



Additional cleaning of vehicles and facilities due to increased use



Additional security



Increases to rail capacity

ZERO FARE for Better Air

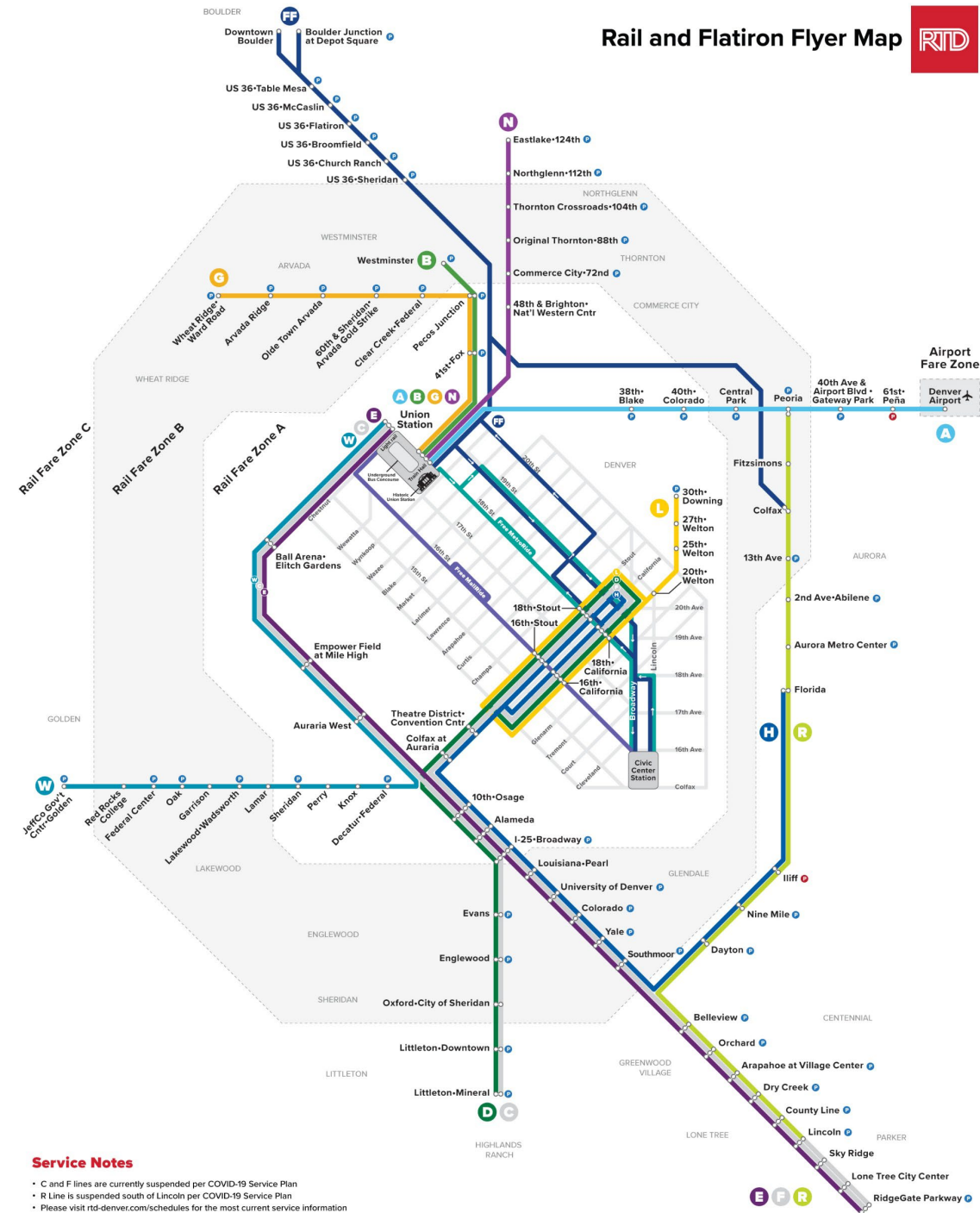
August 2022



RTD

Services Provided

- 10 rail lines
- Over 100 bus routes
- 24 FlexRide areas
- Complementary paratransit



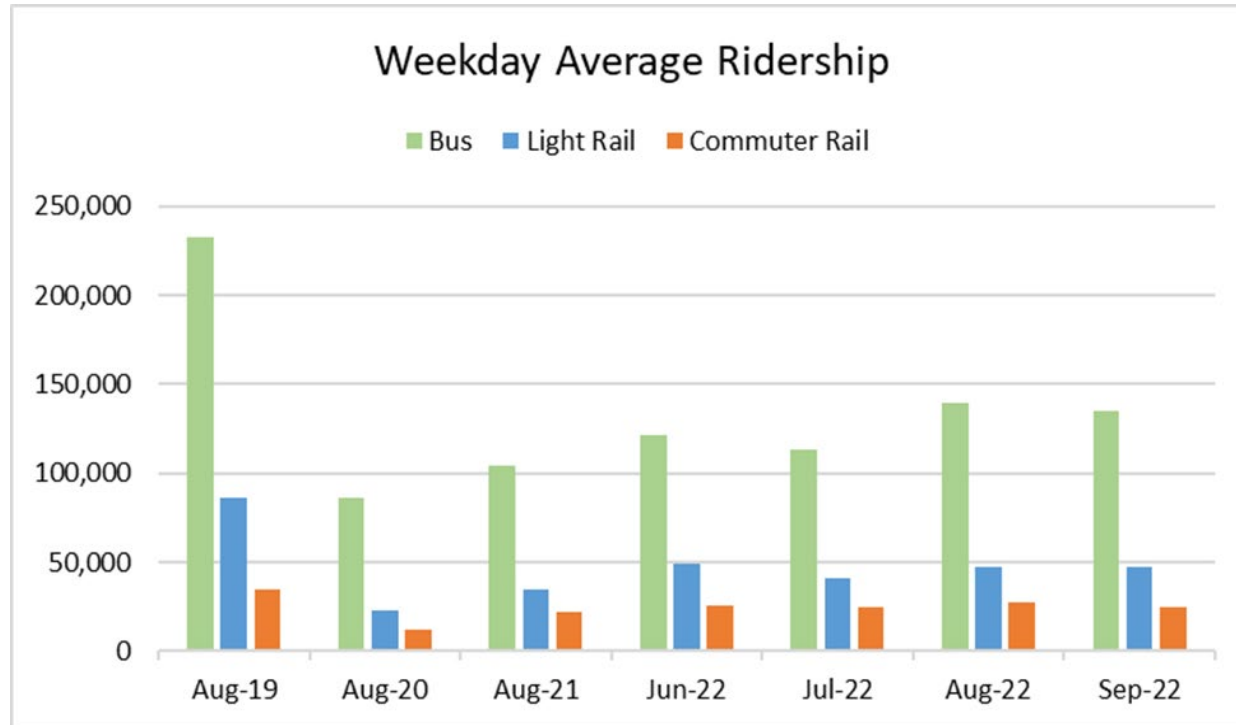
Service Notes

- C and F lines are currently suspended per COVID-19 Service Plan
- R Line is suspended south of Lincoln per COVID-19 Service Plan
- Please visit rtd-denver.com/schedules for the most current service information

Costs

ZFBA Funding and How It was Used	Approved Grant Amount	Incurred Expenses
Expenses Submitted to the State for Reimbursement		
Forgone Fare Revenue	\$9,267,964	\$9,267,964
Additional Rail Operations	\$1,172,036	\$576,205
Marketing and PR (incurred on or after July 26, 2022)	\$250,000	\$188,231.23
Security and Cleaning	\$60,000	N/A
Impact Assessment and Reporting	\$100,000	\$100,000
Subtotal of Reimbursable Expenses*	\$10,850,000.00	\$10,132,400.23
Non-Reimbursable Expenses Incurred by RTD		
Marketing and PR (incurred before July 26, 2022)	N/A	\$50,938.04
Customer Survey (outside of grant scope)	N/A	\$149,000
Subtotal of Non-Reimbursable Expenses		\$199,938.04
Grand Total of Expenses Incurred		\$10,332,338.27

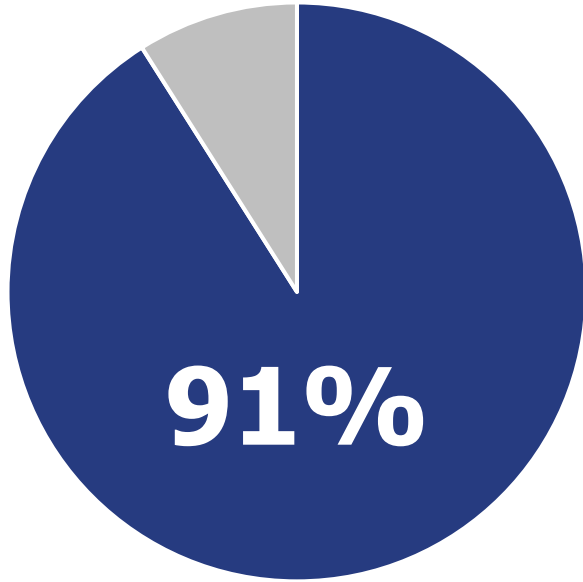
Ridership



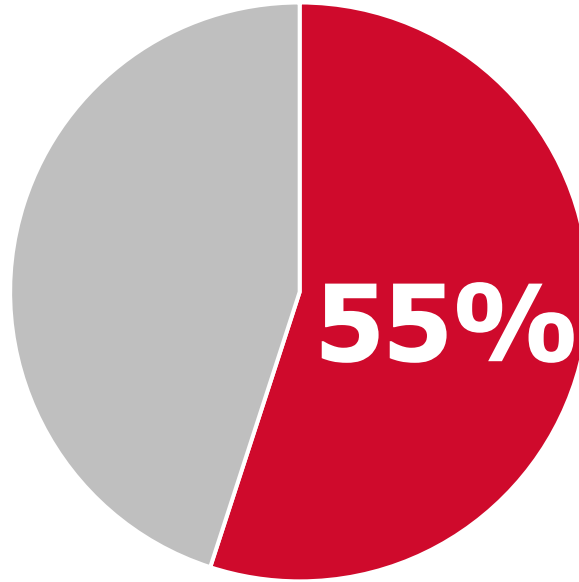
- Overall ridership increased 22%* from July 2022
- Much was retained in September 2022

**Between 2016 and 2021, August ridership was between 2% and 12% higher than July ridership*

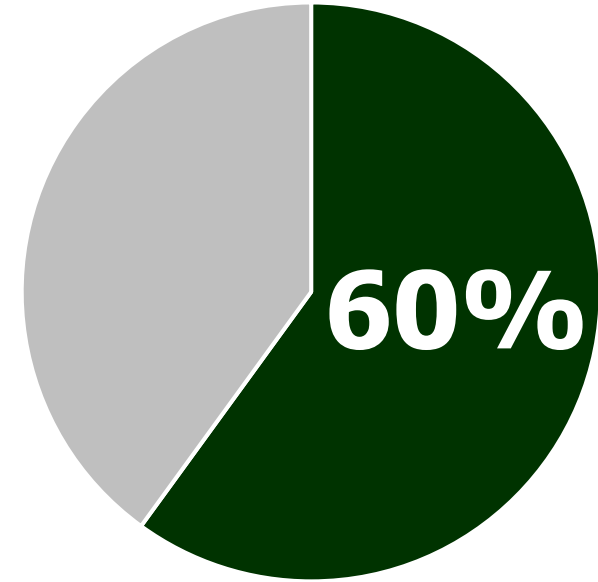
Customer Survey



of respondents
previously used RTD



of respondents
increased usage during
ZFBA



of respondents
motivated by cost

Impact Analysis

- Regular transit ridership increased, but catalysts are unclear.
- RTD absorbed the increased ridership without substantial increases in service.
- No major increase in quality of life/crime incidents.
- Extensive use of paratransit services may have significant cost implications.
- Impacts to air quality are difficult to quantify.





**We Make Lives Better
Through Connections.**

Thank you!

Charlie Stanfield, Planning Project Manager

charlie.stanfield@rtd-denver.com

January 11, 2023

ATTACH G

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
303-480-6701 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Informational Briefing	12

SUBJECT

2023 legislative session preview of the Colorado General Assembly.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

The 2023 Session of the Colorado General Assembly convened on January 9. DRCOG's lobbyists Ed Bowditch and Jennifer Cassell will provide a brief overview of what to expect during the session.

In the event there are bills of interest to DRCOG introduced in the legislature after the January Board agenda is published, an addendum will be emailed to Board members with staff comments and staff recommended positions by the end of the day on Monday, January 16 for possible action (per current Board policy).

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

2023 Colorado Legislative Session Outlook

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Should you have any questions regarding legislative bills, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director at 303-480-6747 or drex@drcog.org; or Rich Mauro, Director, Legislative Affairs at 303-480-6778 or rmauro@drcog.org.



2023 Legislative Session Outlook

The November, 2022 election increased Democratic control of the State Capitol: Governor Polis was re-elected, the Democrats gained 5 seats in the House (for a majority of 46-19), and 2 seats in the Senate (for a majority of 23-12). The turnover in the House is particularly noteworthy – there are 31 new members of the 65-member chamber. The Senate will have institutional knowledge with many newly elected members (except 2) transitioning from the House.

With regards to ballot measures: Colorado voters cut the income tax rate from 4.55% to 4.40% and approved a dedicated General Fund transfer for affordable housing. These measures will not impact the current state budget (because of the TABOR refunds), but will cause a strain on future state budgets once the refunds are gone. The voters also reduced the tax exemption for wealthy individuals in order to provide “free lunch for all” to K-12 students.

The 2023 regular session will convene on Monday, January 9, and meet through May 8, 2023. Governor Polis and the Democratic majority have stated that making Colorado more affordable is their top priority. Their stated goal is to reduce everyday costs for Colorado citizens in regards to housing, childcare, education, and other areas. The Democratic majorities will be led by a diverse group of legislators as the legislature is becoming more reflective of Colorado’s changing demographics.

Major Issues

1. Budget. The state General Fund revenues are slowing, and there will not be much additional budgetary space to establish new programs in FY 2023-24. Also, in the last two years the legislature allocated significant federal relief dollars and these funds are gone. The state is still facing large TABOR refunds – in FY 2022-23, the state is projected to exceed its TABOR cap by \$2.6 billion, with refunds of \$1.5 billion and \$1.4 billion in the next two years. The legislature will debate the form of refunds – flat checks (similar to the \$750 per person checks that were issued in August 2022) or tax credits based on income brackets. This will lead to a larger conversation on fiscal policy as a whole.

2. Criminal Justice. Criminal justice reform will remain at the forefront of issues this session, as new members of the legislature campaigned on these issues. Rising crime rates will lead legislators to have serious conversations about public safety and law enforcement accountability. This will include revisiting of auto theft penalties and creating new gun control measures. Still, some of the Democrats will be hesitant to create new felonies and criminalize behaviors that can target disadvantaged communities.
3. Affordable Housing/Land Use. Making housing more affordable in the state will be a top priority for the legislature. After the passage of Proposition 123 (which dedicates a portion of the General Fund to affordable housing), the legislature will have to determine how exactly to allocate those funds. Will new programs or new restrictions be put in place? A lot is yet to be determined. A proposal coming from the Governor's Office to modify local zoning ordinances in order to increase density and encourage the development of multi-family units has been in the works for months. Details are unknown at this point, but it could usurp local control and allow the state some say in land use decisions. Meanwhile, renters' rights legislation will be a topic as legislators try to find ways to decrease evictions. We will see a measure to allow local governments to cap rents as a way to make rental units more affordable.
4. Education. The discussions around K-12 surround possible modifications to the School Finance Act, though with little "new" money it is difficult to make substantive changes. Also, many legislators will want to consider school accountability changes. The recently released audit of the school accountability system did little to quell the concerns of many in the K-12 community.
5. Environment. As the Front Range's air quality worsens, legislators will be looking for ways to reduce emissions. This could include electrifying equipment used in the energy, oil and gas, and transportation sectors. We will likely see incentives offered to industry and consumers to change behaviors as a way to help reach targets for the state, but this is always contingent on what the pinch point is to afford these behavior changes. Certainly this will be a hot topic as many legislators mention the environment as a top priority.
6. Wildfires. Colorado continues to experience annual wildfires – and these occur throughout the year. More legislation is expected to address the wildfire issue, including the increasing difficulty of many to obtain homeowners' insurance. The idea of the state providing an affordable option for homeowners insurance is up for consideration – but questions remain on how the state would afford this and if private insurers could remain in the marketplace.
7. Property Tax. Last year we saw legislation that temporarily decreased residential and non-residential property tax assessment rates. While Colorado homeowners enjoy some of the lowest property taxes in the nation, citizens are feeling like they are paying more due to rapidly rising home values in certain areas of the state. In addition, commercial property owners are disproportionately paying much higher rates. Various strategies will be discussed on how to address this.
8. Water. Colorado has a long-term water gap – but also current water supplies cannot meet current demand in many communities. The legislature will continue to discuss options for more storage, conservation efforts, and closely follow negotiations on our interstate water compacts.
9. COVID Recovery. Finally, the state will continue to consider the longer-term impact of COVID. This will include discussions on learning loss in K-12, drops in college enrollment on many campuses, changes in employee retention and remote work, and availability and affordability of child care. Also of critical importance will be the review of the new programs and expansion of programs that occurred because of the one-time COVID relief dollars as certain industries and individuals will continue to have a need for these relief programs.

It will likely be an interesting session come January 9. Questions remain on how the Democrats will handle the largest majority ever held by any political party. Will they remain united? Similarly, how will the Republicans respond given their small number at the Capitol, what is their role? Buckle up for the next 120 days!

ATTACH H

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Informational Briefing	13

SUBJECT

Regional Transportation Operations and Technology (RTO&T) Strategic Plan

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

N/A

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

DRCOG, working with stakeholders from across the region, has developed a draft *Regional Transportation Operations & Technology Strategic Plan*. The purpose of the plan is to guide the DRCOG region's near-term efforts to deploy technology tools and coordinated system procedures for the multimodal transportation system. These efforts will assist transportation operations staff in serving daily travel demands across the region.

The plan envisions transportation systems serving all travel modes across the DRCOG region that are interconnected and collaboratively operated, managed, and maintained to optimize safe, reliable, and efficient travel for all system users, contributing to the region's economic prosperity and high quality of life. Ten objectives lay out the desired improvements to be monitored and measured to ensure progress towards meeting the vision.

This is an aspirational plan that provides guidance for the implementation of operational infrastructure and services to further strengthen the connections between transportation systems and improve the reliability of travel across the region. There are three main sections in the plan:

1. Current State of Regional Transportation Operations – A summary description of general responsibilities of the transportation system agencies across the region and the infrastructure they operate and maintain. Because of the complexity of multiple systems, services and stakeholders, the description is arranged into natural focus areas relevant to daily real-time transportation management.
2. Regional Transportation Operations Needs – An analysis comparing the current state of regional transportation operations against the plan's vision, goals, and objectives. Generally, it is evident that operations are not well-connected between jurisdictions, agencies, and travel modes. New strategies, processes and tools are needed to facilitate coordination between stakeholders to achieve the outcomes envisioned in the DRCOG Metro Vision Plan and the Mobility Choice Blueprint.

3. Action Plan – A list of initiatives organized into three groups: primary, secondary, and tertiary. The primary initiatives are critical to establishing the desired regional framework for operations data sharing upon which the secondary and tertiary initiatives can build.

This plan also provides guidance for the development of the upcoming call-for-projects for the RTO&T Set-Aside scheduled for early 2023.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

1. [Draft Strategic Plan](#)
2. Staff presentation

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at (303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org; or Greg MacKinnon, Transportation Operations Program Manager, at 303 480-5633 or gmackinnon@drcog.org.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS & TECHNOLOGY (RTO&T) STRATEGIC PLAN

Board of Directors

January 2023

Steve Cook, DRCOG
Greg MacKinnon, DRCOG

WHAT IS RTO&T?



- **Regional:** multiple agencies/jurisdictions and users/customers
- **Transportation:** multimodal facilities and services
- **Operations:** day-to-day real time and performance analytics
- **Technology:** established and emerging

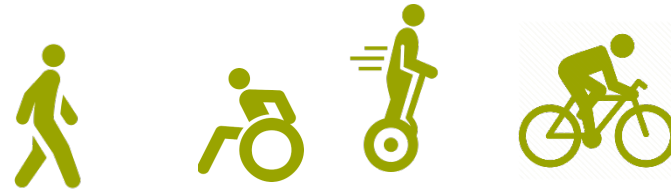
WHY RTO&T?



Grand Total: 15 million person-trips



13 million person-trips
in motor vehicles



2 million pedestrian/bicycle trips



10 million vehicle trips
(86 mil. VMT)
(1.5 mil. CV trips)
(4 mil. gallons fuel)



200 crashes, 6 serious
injuries or fatalities



250,000+ hours of extra
congestion delay

REGION'S 2022 TECHNOLOGY FOUNDATION



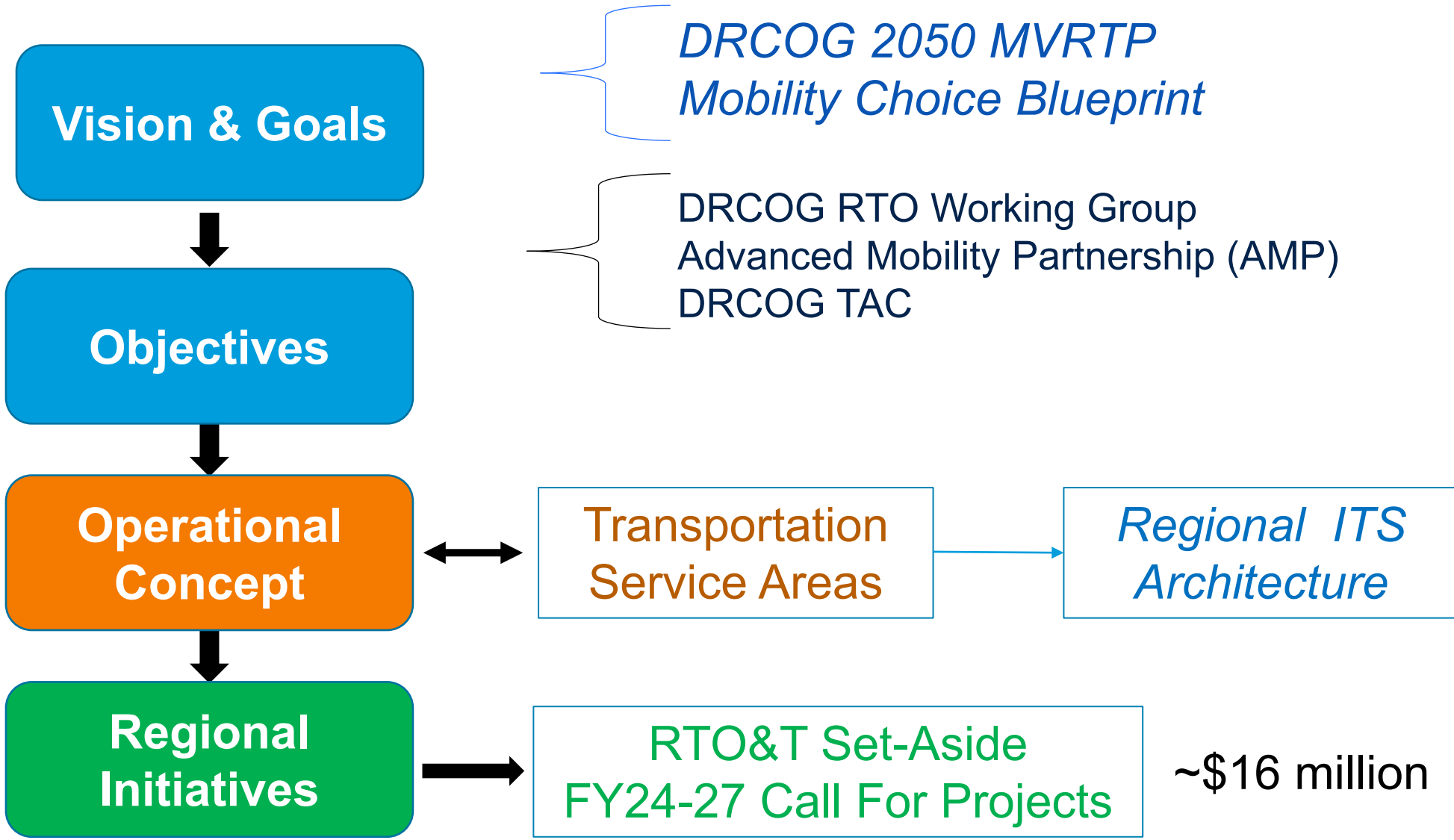
- ~4,000 signalized intersections; ~86% connected to control system
- 136,000 bus and rail service miles provided by RTD everyday
- Automatic vehicle location (AVL) devices on > 1,000 RTD vehicles
- ~1,700 traffic cameras
- Hundreds of miles of fiber optic networking
- Nearly 200 intersections with bicycle detection



RTO&T STRATEGIC PLAN – GUIDING ELEMENTS



Strategic Plan



RTO&T VISION



Transportation systems, serving all travel modes across the DRCOG region, are interconnected, and collaboratively operated, managed, and maintained to optimize safe, reliable, and efficient travel for all system users, contributing to the region's economic prosperity and high quality of life.

RTO&T GOALS



Safe Operations	Efficient, Seamless Travel	Trip Travel Time Reliability	Equitable Access	Environmental Sustainability
Physical and technological improvements and intentional operations management deployed to both reduce crashes and achieve zero fatalities.	Interconnected systems across jurisdictions and modes are actively and cooperatively managed to optimize operator situational awareness, provide accurate and timely traveler information, and allow collaborative transportation systems operation.	Multimodal travel times are monitored in real-time and operations are managed to limit disruptions affecting travel time reliability.	People of all ages, abilities, languages, backgrounds, and incomes have access to safe and reliable mobility options.	Apply technology, service and operations that reduce energy consumption, improved air quality, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

RTO&T OBJECTIVES



- Improve safety and reduce crashes, fatalities and injuries
- Improve transit operations performance
- Improve operator and traveler decision making capabilities
- Improve air quality and reduce transportation-related emissions
- Increase trip time reliability for all travelers

RTO&T OBJECTIVES (CONT)



- Minimize traveler delay due to system operations and disruptions
- Maximize operations infrastructure reliability and availability
- Reduce average incident duration and disruption
- Reduce occurrence of secondary incidents
- Reduce emergency responder struck-by incidents

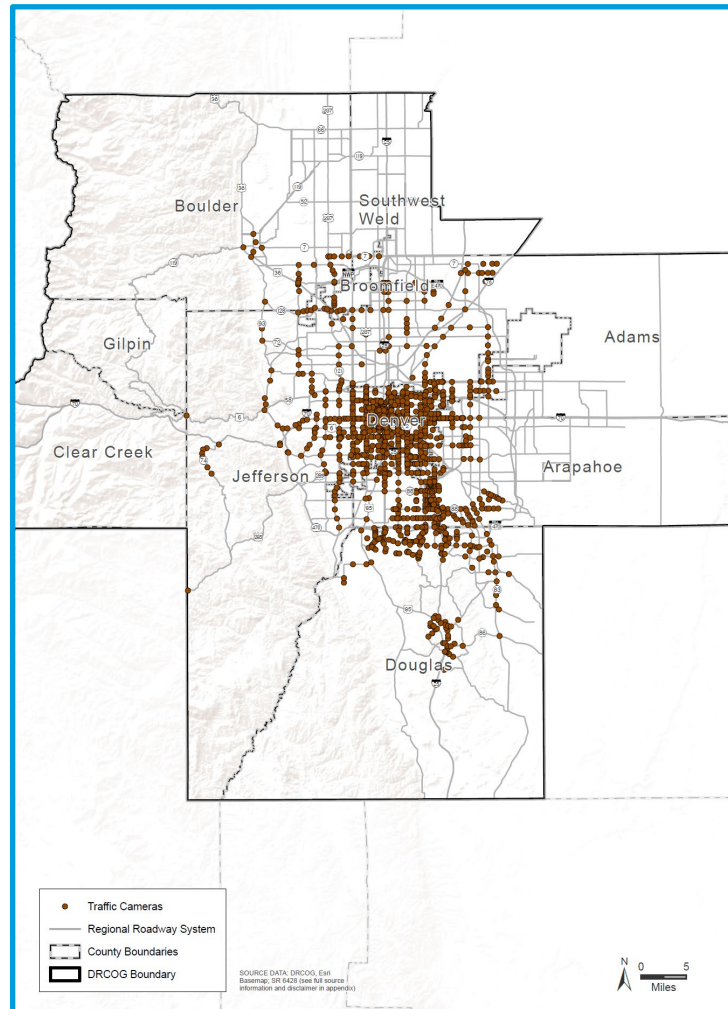


RTO&T CURRENT STATUS AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

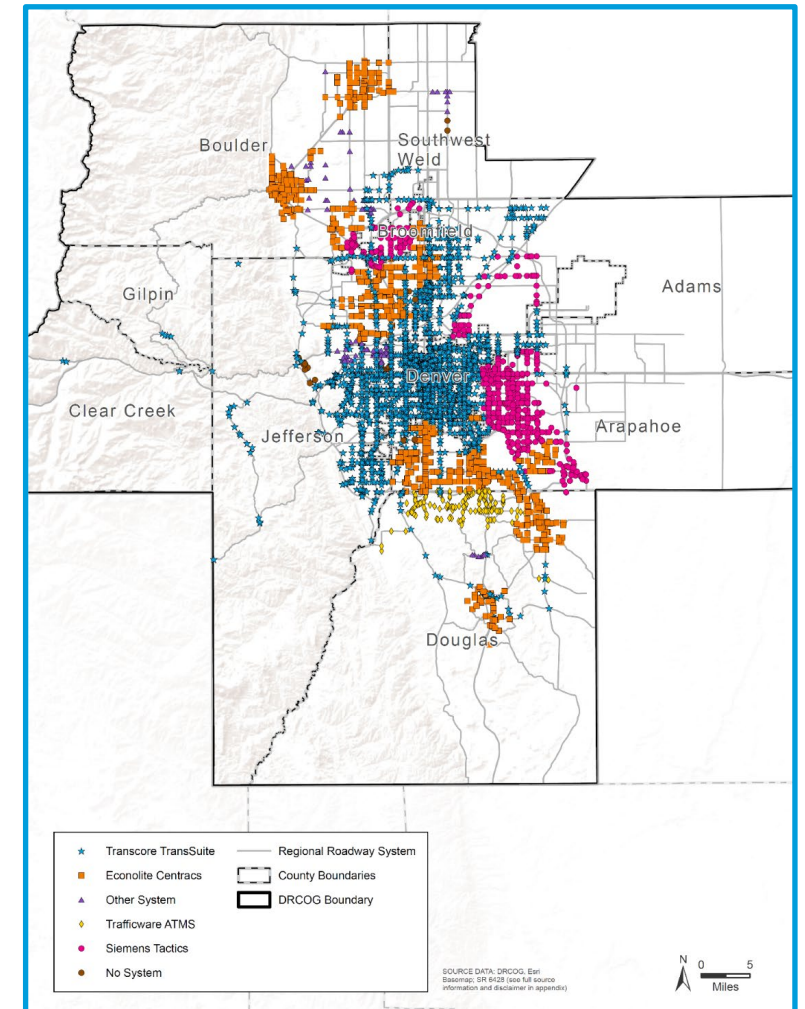


- Inventory of current infrastructure, services, gaps, needs

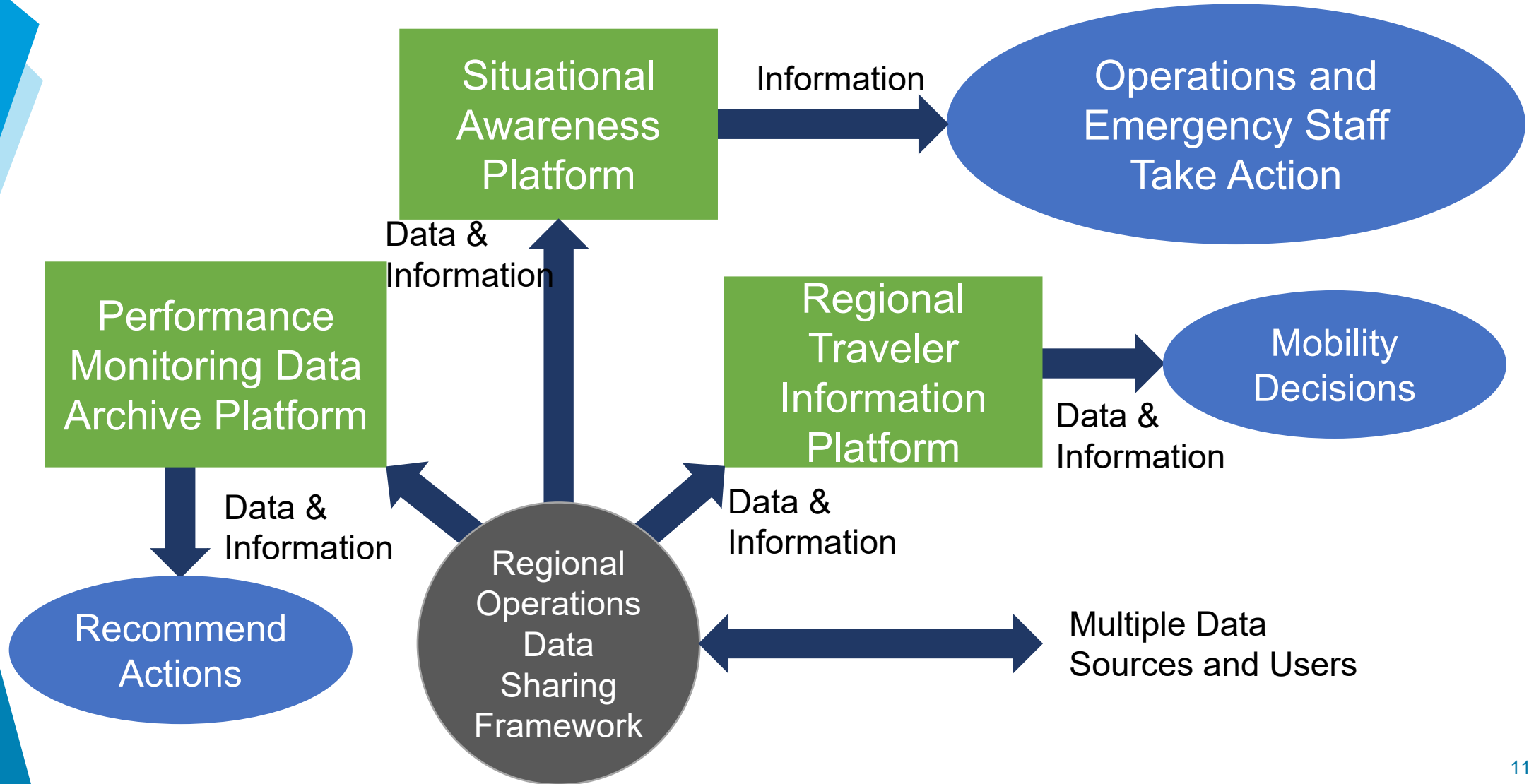
Examples: Arterial traffic cameras



Traffic signal systems



DATA & INFORMATION SHARING FRAMEWORK



RTO&T NEAR-TERM INITIATIVES



- Primary:
 - Situational awareness platform
 - Camera control sharing
 - Expand travel data collection and surveillance systems
 - Performance measures data platform
 - Strategies and processes to collaboratively manage operations
 - Traffic incident management operating procedures
 - Transit signal priority optimization procedures

RTO&T NEAR-TERM INITIATIVES



- Secondary:
 - Evacuation planning
 - Coordinate traveler information messaging
 - Work zone monitoring and coordination
 - Safety technology applications
- Tertiary:
 - Regional Multimodal Traveler Information Platform
 - Multimodal trip planner and payment system
 - Transportation Demand Management related support
 - Continuity of operations plans

CONCLUSIONS



- Real-time data is essential to operate, manage and maintain a safe and reliable transportation system
- Collaborative and integrated management approaches are needed
- Technology is a tool, not the answer
- Varying capabilities and needs by jurisdiction
- Regional management needed for key initiatives
- DRCOG has a key role and can assist with monitoring operations performance indicators

ATTACH I

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Informational Item	14

SUBJECT

Annual Listing of Obligated Projects (ALOP)

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

No action requested. This item is for information only.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Federal law requires metropolitan planning organizations to produce for public review an annual listing of projects that receive federal funding obligation. The enclosed report lists all transportation projects in the Denver region that received obligations of federal funds in federal Fiscal Year 2022 (October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022).

A net total of \$392.8 million of federal funds was obligated in FY 2022 for 91 transportation projects throughout the region.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

FY 2022 Annual Listing of Federally Obligated Projects

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at (303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org; or Josh Schwenk, Planner, Transportation Planning and Operations Division at 303-480-6771 or jschwenk@drcog.org.

Annual listing of federally obligated projects

Fiscal year 2022

Oct. 1, 2021 –
Sept. 30, 2022

Purpose of this Report

The federal metropolitan transportation planning statute states:

“In metropolitan planning areas, on an annual basis, no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, the State, public transportation operator(s), and the MPO(s) shall cooperatively develop a listing of projects (including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) for which funds under 23 U.S.C. or 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 were obligated in the preceding program year.”¹

The Federal Highway Administration defines obligation as the federal government’s legal commitment (promise) to pay or reimburse states or other entities for the federal share of a project’s eligible costs. Thus, an obligated project is one that has been approved by the federal government for reimbursement, though not necessarily reimbursed yet. Obligated projects were not necessarily initiated or completed during this year. The obligated project cost reflected in this report also may not equal final project cost.

This report responds to the directive set forth in statute. It lists all federally-funded transportation projects in the Denver region that were obligated in federal fiscal year 2022 (October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022).

Background

The Denver Regional Council of Governments ([DRCOG](#)), an association of 58 local governments in the Denver metro area, promotes a regional perspective towards the metropolitan area’s most pressing issues and addresses those issues through cooperative local government action. The DRCOG region includes Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Clear Creek, Douglas, Gilpin, Jefferson, and southwest Weld counties, plus the City and County of Broomfield and the City and County of Denver.

DRCOG is the Metropolitan Planning Organization ([MPO](#)) for Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson counties, and portions of Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, and Weld counties. Federal transportation legislation requires, as a condition for spending federal highway or transit funds in urbanized areas, the designation of an MPO. The MPO has responsibility for planning, programming, and coordinating federal investments. The DRCOG MPO process creates a partnership among state, local government, and transit operators in providing transportation improvements.

DRCOG represents the perspectives of its local government members, while coordinating its planning efforts with the Colorado Department of Transportation ([CDOT](#)), the Regional Transportation District ([RTD](#)), the Regional Air Quality Council ([RAQC](#)), the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment ([CDPHE](#)), the Federal Highway Administration ([FHWA](#)), and the Federal Transit Administration ([FTA](#)). DRCOG develops its positions by working with elected officials, staff from local governments and the above agencies, and the public through a committee system where the various issues are discussed, and recommendations are made. Current committees include the [Regional Transportation Committee](#) and the [Transportation Advisory Committee](#). Working groups are also created and appointed, as need dictates.

Regional Transportation Plan

DRCOG develops a minimum 20-year regional transportation plan ([RTP](#)), called the 2050 Metro Vision RTP. The RTP is an element of the region’s [Metro Vision](#) plan. The RTP includes the needed transportation system and the fiscally-constrained RTP. The fiscally-constrained RTP, required by federal law, identifies the multimodal transportation system that can be achieved over a minimum 20-year planning horizon with the reasonably available financial resources over that time. Federal law requires the fiscally-constrained plan to be updated at least every four years to validate air quality conformity.

Some types of projects (roadway capacity and rapid transit) must be included in the fiscally-constrained portion of an adopted conforming RTP before they can be selected for Transportation Improvement Program funding.

¹ [23 U.S.C. 450.334 \(a\)](#)

Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program ([TIP](#)) is the adopted list of surface transportation (public transit, roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, air quality, congestion management, etc.) projects and studies that will receive federal or state transportation funds in the near future. The TIP also includes the projects in the DRCOG area that are defined as regionally significant, regardless of funding type. The TIP implements the fiscally-constrained RTP.

The TIP covering FY2022 is the FY 2022-2025 TIP and was adopted on April 21, 2021. It has been amended regularly since adoption. Some of the projects in this obligation report are from previous TIPs.

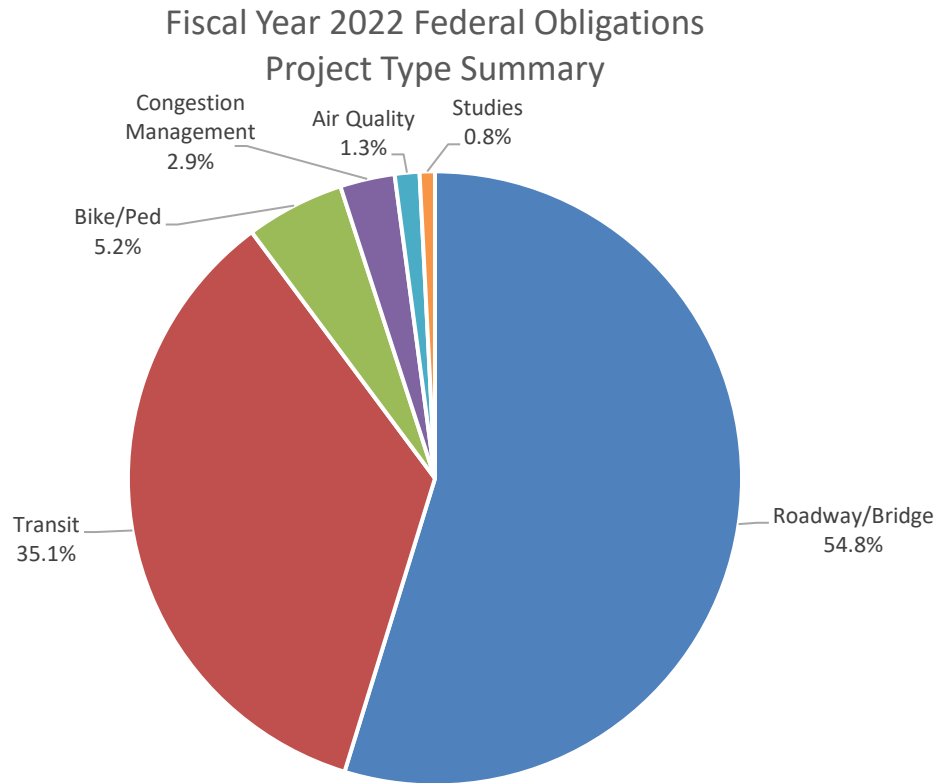
Public Involvement

DRCOG aims to proactively engage the public in the regional transportation planning process and embraces federal requirements that MPOs provide the public with complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and early and continuing involvement in developing the RTP, TIP, and other products. DRCOG's public involvement strategies include presenting information and educating the public, continuously soliciting public input, helping information flow between the public and decision makers, and considering and responding to public concerns.

Summary of Obligated Projects

A net total of \$392.8 million was obligated in FY2022 on 91 transportation projects. Some statistics regarding the FY2022 obligations include:

- \$215.1 million (54.8%) for roadway/bridge projects, \$137.7 million (35.1%) for transit projects, \$20.4 million (5.2%) for bicycle and pedestrian projects², \$11.3 million (2.9%) for congestion management projects, \$5.1 million (1.3%) for other air quality projects, and \$3.1 million (0.8%) for studies. The chart below illustrates these percentages:



Obligation Report

This report is organized by TIP project sponsor. Information shown about each project includes:

- TIP Sponsor lists the agency that is financially responsible for the TIP project
- Project Name
- TIP Identification (TIP ID) is a unique number given to each project selected for inclusion into a DRCOG TIP
- Funding Type identifies the program that funds the project, according to the CDOT classification
- Obligations is the sum of all the obligations that occurred for that particular TIP project in FY2022
- B/P indicates if bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure is part of the project
- Total Cost lists the total project cost in the TIP for the lifecycle of the project, regardless of the particular TIP cycle
- Federal Total lists the total amount of federal transportation funds awarded in the most recent TIP that the project was active (may or may not be the currently adopted FY 2022-2025 TIP)
- Total Federal Funds Remaining lists the programmed federal transportation funds in the current FY 2022-2025 TIP that are remaining for the project.

² Stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian projects only. Calculation does not include other projects with a bicycle/pedestrian element.

With federal funding being the focus of this obligation report, obligations of local or state funds are not presented herein. Non-federal funding would be included within the Total Cost column as part of the total overall project cost. For the purposes of this report in FY2022, federal funding was distributed through the following funding categories:

- Bridge (On-System and Off-System) funds are for the replacement, rehabilitation, and widening of any public bridge, either on the state highway system or on locally maintained roadways.
- BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) grants fund road, rail, transit, and port projects that achieve national objectives. This program was previously known as Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER).
- CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality) can fund projects that reduce transportation-related emissions in non-attainment and maintenance areas for ozone, carbon monoxide, and small particulate matter.
- Federal Emergency funds pay for reconstruction or replacement of damaged highways and bridges following natural disasters such as wildfires, storms, and floods.
- Freight funds improve the efficient movement of freight on the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN).
- INFRA (Infrastructure for Rebuilding America) funds multimodal freight and highway projects of national or regional significance to improve safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of freight and people.
- NHPP (National Highway Performance Program) funds improvements to the condition and performance of the National Highway System to help ensure progress toward achieving the federal performance targets.
- RAMP (Responsible Acceleration of Maintenance & Partnerships) program accelerates funding for projects on the state highway system and transit projects. It is a CDOT program, but the funds depicted in this report are from federal sources only.
- Safety funds are typically used for projects that reduce the number and severity of crashes. It is a CDOT program, but the funds depicted in this report are from federal sources only.
- Section 5307 funds capital, maintenance, operations, and planning assistance for mass transportation in urbanized areas.
- Section 5309, or New Starts, funds capital investments in fixed guideway transit, including heavy rail, commuter rail, light rail, streetcars, and bus rapid transit.
- Section 5310 funds capital assistance grants to private nonprofit organizations to serve the transportation needs of elderly people and individuals with disabilities.
- Section 5311 funds capital and operating assistance grants for transit service in non-urbanized areas.
- Section 5337, or State of Good Repair funds, intend to repair and upgrade rail transit systems and high-intensity bus transit systems that use high-occupancy vehicle lanes.
- STBG (Surface Transportation Block Grant) is a flexible funding category typically used to fund roadway reconstruction, roadway operational improvements, roadway widening, new roadway, new interchanges, interchange reconstruction, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, and studies. Additional STBG-Pandemic funds were provided to both the state and DRCOG region to assist in recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- TIFIA (Transportation Infrastructure & Finance Innovation Act) provides federal credit assistance to nationally or regionally significant surface transportation projects, including highway, transit, and rail. The program is designed to fill market gaps and leverage substantial private co-investment by providing projects with supplemental or subordinate debt.
- Transportation Alternatives funds such projects as bicycle/pedestrian projects, historic preservation projects, environmental mitigation projects, landscaping and beautification projects, and conversion of rails-to-trails projects. The projects must relate to surface transportation.

This report also contains deobligations, depicted with (). Deobligation occurs when the obligation is returned to the federal government. Deobligation can occur for several reasons, including:

- Bids come in at a lower amount than the obligation amount for a project. After the project bid is accepted, the remaining funds are returned and shown as a negative obligation.
- Advanced construction projects (where the sponsor first pays the cost and is reimbursed later) often result in a deobligation because first the project must be obligated and then deobligated when the sponsor agrees to pay the

costs of the project. The project is then finally obligated again when it is time for the federal government to reimburse the sponsor.

- A project phase is closed out, causing the remaining funds to be deobligated out of that phase. This must happen before the funds can be obligated into another phase for the same project³.
- After a project is complete and all bills are paid, any remaining obligation authority is returned to the federal government and is shown as a deobligation. Project closeouts can sometimes take place many years after the project was actually completed.

The table also identifies which projects contain elements improving pedestrian and/or bicycling infrastructure. In some cases, this is a pedestrian and bicycle-only project (reflected in the previous pie chart). In most circumstances, the pedestrian and bicycle components are part of a larger project. Since deobligations by definition are not current “investments,” their bicycle/pedestrian applicability is shown as not applicable (N/A).

Descriptions of the projects that are contained in this report can be found within the TIP documents, which are available at <https://drcog.org/planning-great-region/transportation-planning/transportation-improvement-program> or by using the searchable online database of transportation projects in the MPO area, [TRIPS](#). The table below is based on records obtained from CDOT and RTD, as DRCOG does not directly participate in the obligation process.

³ This report does not include the project phases.

TIP Sponsor	Project Name	TIP ID	Funding Type	Obligations	B/P	Total Cost	Federal Total	Federal Funds Remaining
Arapahoe County	Dry Creek Rd. Operational Improvements: I-25 to Inverness Dr. East	2020-057	CMAQ	\$339,528	Yes	\$4,520,000	\$1,665,000	\$0
Arapahoe County	I-25 and Dry Creek Rd. SB On-Ramp Operational Improvements	2020-058	CMAQ	\$151,833	No	\$2,000,000	\$1,380,000	\$0
Arapahoe County	US-85 PEL Study: C-470 to I-25	2020-006	STBG	\$223,250	No	\$3,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$0
Aurora	13th Ave. Corridor Multimodal Mobility Study	2020-069	STBG	\$290,000	Yes	\$500,000	\$295,000	\$0
Aurora	23rd Ave. Bike/Ped Path at Fitzsimons Station	2016-018	STBG	\$391,000	Yes	\$1,866,000	\$1,492,000	\$0
Aurora	I-70 and Picadilly: New Interchange	2020-091	BUILD	\$25,000,000	No	\$67,215,000	\$25,000,000	\$0
Aurora	Nine Mile Station Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge over Parker Rd.	2020-010	STBG	\$6,001,000	Yes	\$7,400,000	\$6,001,000	\$0
Aurora	Toll Gate Creek Trail: Chambers Rd to Montview Blvd	2016-016	CMAQ	\$800,000	Yes	\$7,105,000	\$5,683,000	\$0
Bennett	SH-79 and I-70 Interchange Eastbound Ramp Improvements	2020-053	CMAQ	\$1,162,165	No	\$2,200,000	\$1,163,000	\$0
Boulder	30th St and Colorado Ave Bike/Ped Underpass	2016-035	CMAQ	\$1,950,000	Yes	\$16,050,000	\$4,750,000	\$0
Boulder County	71st St. Multimodal Pathway Connection: Winchester to Idylwild Trail	2016-030	Transportation Alternatives	\$528,331	Yes	\$1,075,000	\$860,000	\$0
Boulder County	SH-119 Bikeway: Boulder to Longmont	2020-013	STBG	\$1,006,000	Yes	\$9,358,000	\$8,266,000	\$7,160,000
Boulder County	Williams Fork Trail Multi-use Path: 63rd St. to Twin Lakes Rd.	2016-052	Transportation Alternatives	\$273,583	Yes	\$1,420,000	\$632,000	\$0
Broomfield	Active Transportation Wayfinding Pilot	2020-020	STBG	\$223,550	Yes	\$350,000	\$280,000	\$0
Broomfield	Broomfield FlexRide	2020-076	CMAQ	\$360,000	No	\$1,800,000	\$1,080,000	\$720,000
Broomfield	Industrial Ln. & Nickel St./Commerce St. Intersection Operational Improvements	2020-050	STBG	\$320,000	No	\$1,619,000	\$1,295,000	\$975,000
Broomfield	Industrial Ln. Bikeway Phase 2	2020-019	STBG	\$114,000	Yes	\$3,501,000	\$2,800,000	\$2,186,000
Broomfield	Midway Blvd. Multimodal Corridor Action Plan	2020-044	STBG	\$315,565	Yes	\$500,000	\$400,000	\$0
Broomfield	SH-7 Corridor Multimodal Improvements - Preconstruction	2020-007	STBG	\$5,000,000	Yes	\$19,447,000	\$11,013,000	\$3,813,000
Broomfield	US-287/120th Ave. Multimodal & Safety Study	2020-071	STBG	\$280,000	Yes	\$600,000	\$480,000	\$0
Broomfield	US-36 Bike-N-Ride Shelters, Amenities, Operations, and Marketing	2020-018	STBG	\$73,515	Yes	\$650,000	\$608,000	\$44,000
Castle Rock	I-25/Crystal Valley Pkwy Interchange: Preconstruction Activities	2020-097	BUILD	\$5,400,000	No	\$12,000,000	\$5,400,000	\$0
Castle Rock	SH-86/5th St. and Founders Pkwy./Ridge Rd. Intersection Operational Improvements	2020-051	CMAQ	\$397,614	Yes	\$6,500,000	\$3,925,000	\$0

TIP Sponsor	Project Name	TIP ID	Funding Type	Obligations	B/P	Total Cost	Federal Total	Federal Funds Remaining
CDOT	Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (FTA 5310 - CDOT)	2012-107	Section 5310	\$179,625	No	\$36,398,000	\$1,371,000	\$0
CDOT	I-25 and Alameda Ave. Operational Improvements: Valley Highway Phase 2.0	2020-061	STBG	\$24,102,000	Yes	\$30,000,000	\$24,000,000	\$0
CDOT	Safe Routes to School Pool	2007-144	STBG	\$604,395	Yes	\$8,034,000	\$1,401,000	\$0
CDOT	Transit Operating and Capital (FTA 5311)	2016-065	Section 5311	\$888,095	No	\$7,849,000	\$4,816,000	\$2,480,000
CDOT Region 1	C-470: Wadsworth to I-70	2018-010	NHPP	\$170,290	No	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	Federal Blvd: 6th to Howard Widening	2012-111	STBG	\$3,506,085	Yes	\$29,203,000	\$23,363,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	I-25 Capacity Improvements: Castle Rock to El Paso County Line	2018-014	INFRA	\$10,331,521	No	\$356,200,000	\$76,150,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	I-25: 120th Ave to E-470 Managed Lanes	2016-055	TIFIA	\$101,792	No	\$121,477,000	\$55,764,000	\$28,430,000
CDOT Region 1	I-70 Escape Ramp	2022-019	Freight	\$120,000	No	\$27,600,000	\$4,600,000	\$4,100,000
CDOT Region 1	I-70 Noise Walls	2020-098	STBG-Pandemic	(\$20,165)	No	\$35,800,000	\$9,700,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	Region 1 Bridge Off-System Pool	2007-079	Bridge Off-System	\$680,517	No	\$6,028,000	\$753,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	Region 1 Bridge On-System Pool	2007-078	Bridge On-System	\$7,727,529	No	\$74,000,000	\$74,000,000	\$49,000,000
CDOT Region 1	Region 1 FASTER Pool	2008-076	Safety	\$2,306,508	No	\$238,563,000	\$238,563,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	Region 1 Hazard Elimination Pool	2007-073	Safety	\$16,160,268	No	\$64,000,000	\$64,000,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	Region 1 ITS Pool	2016-056	STBG	\$3,694,297	No	\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	Region 1 Surface Treatment Pool	2007-096	NHPP	\$50,637,281	No	\$173,030,000	\$173,030,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	Region 1 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Pool	2018-002	Transportation Alternatives	\$830,126	Yes	\$16,736,000	\$3,367,000	\$1,682,000
CDOT Region 1	Safer Main Streets Pool	2020-087	STBG	\$626,520	Yes	\$98,269,000	\$17,500,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	US-6: Wadsworth Blvd. Interchange Reconstruction	2005-072	STBG	\$1,639,150	Yes	\$102,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$0
CDOT Region 1	US-85 (Vasquez Blvd) Operational Improvements: E. 52nd Ave. to E. 64th Ave.	2018-009	Freight	\$1,777,117	No	\$12,000,000	\$4,750,000	\$3,450,000
CDOT Region 1	US-85: Cook Ranch Rd. to Meadows Pkwy. Widening	2001-154	STBG	\$17,639,952	No	\$132,002,000	\$26,362,000	\$0
CDOT Region 4	Region 4 2013 Flood-Related Projects Pool	2012-116	Federal Emergency	\$5,679,940	No	\$278,335,000	\$58,000,000	\$0

TIP Sponsor	Project Name	TIP ID	Funding Type	Obligations	B/P	Total Cost	Federal Total	Federal Funds Remaining
CDOT Region 4	Region 4 Bridge On-System Pool	2007-133	Bridge On-System	\$996,472	No	\$14,000,000	\$9,936,000	\$7,452,000
CDOT Region 4	Region 4 Hazard Elimination Pool	2007-094	Safety	\$8,478,937	No	\$27,400,000	\$20,000,000	\$0
CDOT Region 4	Region 4 Non-Regionally Significant RPP Pool	2012-121	STBG	\$564,521	No	\$15,392,000	\$9,000,000	\$0
CDOT Region 4	Region 4 RAMP Project Pool	2012-109	RAMP	\$3,522,682	No	\$13,986,000	\$4,598,000	\$0
CDOT Region 4	Region 4 Surface Treatment Pool	2007-095	Safety	\$170,520	No	\$38,400,000	\$31,400,000	\$0
CDOT Region 4	SH-119 Corridor Safety/Mobility Operational Improvements	2020-081	STBG-Pandemic	\$253,120	Yes	\$39,876,000	\$3,200,000	\$0
CDOT Region 4	SH-52 PEL Study: SH-119 to I-76	2020-075	STBG	\$1,170,261	No	\$2,500,000	\$1,250,000	\$0
Commerce City	US-85/120th Ave. Interchange: Preconstruction Activities	2020-031	STBG	\$4,659,187	No	\$12,600,000	\$2,100,000	\$0
Denver	Broadway Station and I-25 Safety and Access Improvements	2016-021	STBG	\$2,623,515	No	\$89,422,000	\$16,925,000	\$0
DRCOG	Community Mobility Planning and Implementation Set-Aside	2020-077	STBG	\$571,530	Yes	\$7,310,000	\$2,476,000	\$1,226,000
DRCOG	Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (FTA 5310 - DRCOG)	2022-025	Section 5310	\$1,361,531	No	\$9,820,000	\$7,043,000	\$5,243,000
DRCOG	Regional TDM Program: Way to Go	2012-064	CMAQ	\$112,791	No	\$9,417,000	\$4,817,000	\$0
DRCOG	Regional TDM Set-Aside: Partnerships and Non-Infrastructure Projects	1999-097	CMAQ	\$1,209,367	Yes	\$15,219,000	\$2,500,000	\$800,000
DRCOG	Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside	2016-004	CMAQ	\$5,870,771	No	\$50,800,000	\$11,275,000	\$5,303,000
Englewood	Oxford Ave. Pedestrian Bridge	2020-012	STBG	\$264,000	Yes	\$2,000,000	\$1,600,000	\$0
Erie	Traffic Signalization: Erie Pkwy. and WCR-7	2020-067	STBG-Pandemic DRCOG Region	\$425,600	No	\$600,000	\$480,000	\$0
Golden	US-40 Complete Streets: Violet St. to I-70	2020-026	STBG	\$980,000	Yes	\$18,600,000	\$7,810,000	\$5,310,000
Golden	US-6/Heritage Rd. Interchange: Preconstruction Activities	2020-037	STBG	\$2,300,000	No	\$4,000,000	\$2,400,000	\$0
Jefferson County	Jefferson County Bike Master Plan Update	2020-074	Transportation Alternatives	\$130,000	Yes	\$275,000	\$200,000	\$0
Lafayette	East Lafayette Multimodal Path Connection: Commerce Ct to Lafayette Park-n-Ride	2016-029	STBG	\$478,160	Yes	\$10,359,000	\$2,199,000	\$0
Lafayette	SH-7 and 119th St. Intersection Improvements	2020-042	STBG-Pandemic	\$1,805,000	No	\$12,053,000	\$1,805,000	\$0
Lakewood	Alameda Ave Bikepath Reconstruct: Kipling to Allison	2008-016	STBG	\$9,660	Yes	\$625,000	\$375,000	\$0

TIP Sponsor	Project Name	TIP ID	Funding Type	Obligations	B/P	Total Cost	Federal Total	Federal Funds Remaining
Lakewood	Sheridan Blvd Multiuse Path: W. 6th Ave to W. 10th Ave	2016-061	Transportation Alternatives	\$157,061	Yes	\$1,000,000	\$400,000	\$0
Littleton	Santa Fe Dr. and Mineral Ave. Operational Improvements	2020-060	CMAQ	\$1,005,480	No	\$11,441,000	\$7,652,000	\$6,366,000
Lone Tree	I-25/Lincoln Ave. Traffic and Mobility Improvements	2020-062	STBG	\$800,000	No	\$8,500,000	\$3,500,000	\$2,650,000
Longmont	Coffman St. Busway	2020-083	CMAQ	\$364,537	No	\$6,900,000	\$5,520,000	\$4,920,000
Longmont	Longmont 1st and Emery Quiet Zone	2016-070	STBG	\$328,808	No	\$1,956,000	\$1,553,000	\$0
Longmont	SH-66 Improvements: Hover St. to Main St.	2020-038	STBG	\$204,750	No	\$650,000	\$450,000	\$0
Louisville	SH-42 Multimodal Improvements: Empire Rd./Lock St. to SH-7 - Preconstruction Activities	2020-040	STBG	\$350,000	Yes	\$8,500,000	\$3,550,000	\$3,200,000
Louisville	South Boulder Rd. At-Grade Crossing Improvements	2020-043	STBG	\$161,443	Yes	\$1,433,000	\$1,003,000	\$0
Lyons	St. Vrain Trail Extension	2022-013	STBG-Pandemic DRCOG Region	\$172,483	Yes	\$1,200,000	\$1,048,000	\$0
Lyons	US-36 Multimodal Improvements	2022-014	STBG-Pandemic DRCOG Region	\$425,860	Yes	\$2,701,000	\$2,154,000	\$0
Nederland	Downtown ADA Sidewalk Connections	2020-015	STBG	\$53,996	Yes	\$1,550,000	\$150,000	\$0
Northglenn	120th Ave. Operational Improvements: Washington St. to west of York St.	2020-055	CMAQ	\$360,282	Yes	\$13,461,000	\$8,581,000	\$1,684,000
R A Q C	Air Quality Improvements Set-Aside	2016-002	CMAQ	\$4,674,474	No	\$16,530,000	\$13,110,000	\$0
R A Q C	Ozone State Implementation Plan (SIP) Modeling Study	2016-058	STBG	\$432,407	No	\$1,500,000	\$1,200,000	\$0
R T D	FasTracks Southeast Corridor Extension: Lincoln Ave. to RidgeGate Pkwy.	2007-059	Section 5309 New Starts	(\$6,720,549)	No	\$233,390,000	\$93,928,000	\$0
R T D	Micro Transit Service & Mobility Options: North I-25 Area	2020-045	CMAQ	(\$78,000)	No	\$2,000,000	\$763,000	\$388,000
R T D	RTD Bus Purchases	2016-063	CMAQ	(\$112,792)	No	\$5,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$1,000,000
R T D	RTD Preventive Maintenance: Transit Vehicle Overhaul and Maintenance	1997-084	Section 5307	\$124,265,941	No	\$590,000,000	\$417,600,000	\$219,100,000
R T D	State of Good Repair	1999-052	Section 5337 State of Good Repair	\$17,379,449	No	\$140,130,000	\$76,900,000	\$58,500,000
Superior	US-36 Bikeway Extension: Superior to Broomfield	2020-017	Transportation Alternatives	\$752,168	Yes	\$1,312,000	\$1,049,000	\$0
Thornton	104th Ave. Widening: Colorado Blvd. to US-85 Preconstruction Activities	2020-033	STBG	\$200,000	Yes	\$2,000,000	\$1,600,000	\$0
University of Colorado-Boulder	19th Street Trail and Bridge: Boulder Creek Trail to CU Main Campus	2016-073	CMAQ	\$508,880	Yes	\$7,598,000	\$4,037,000	\$0
Westminster	Sheridan Blvd. Multimodal Improvements	2020-039	CMAQ	\$3,047,362	Yes	\$8,500,000	\$5,500,000	\$0

TIP Sponsor	Project Name	TIP ID	Funding Type	Obligations	B/P	Total Cost	Federal Total	Federal Funds Remaining
Wheat Ridge	Wadsworth Blvd. Operations and Widening: 35th Ave. to I-70	2016-020	STBG-Pandemic DRCOG Region	\$6,140,454	Yes	\$57,909,000	\$32,160,000	\$1,600,000
Grand Total of Obligations				\$392,815,896				



Denver Regional Council of Governments
1001 17th St. Suite 700
Denver, CO 80202

drcog.org
303-455-1000

ATTACH J

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Informational Item	15

SUBJECT

January administrative modifications to the *2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program*.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

No action requested. This item is for information.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Per the DRCOG Board-adopted [Policies for TIP Program Development](#), administrative modifications to the [2022-2025 TIP](#) are reviewed and processed by staff. Administrative modifications represent revisions to TIP projects that do not require formal action by the DRCOG Board.

After the Board is informed of the administrative modifications, the TIP adjustments are processed and posted on the [DRCOG 2022-2025 TIP web page](#). Then they are emailed to the TIP Notification List, which includes members of the Transportation Advisory Committee, the Regional Transportation Committee, TIP project sponsors, staff of various federal and state agencies, and other interested parties.

The January 2023 administrative modifications are listed and described in the attachment. Highlighted items in the attachment depict project revisions.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

2022-2025 TIP Administrative Modifications (January 2023)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at (303) 480-6701 or drex@drcog.org; or Todd Cottrell, Programming and Project Delivery Program Manager, at (303) 480-6737 or tcottrell@drcog.org.

ATTACHMENT 1

To: TIP Notification List
From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
Subject: **January 2023 Administrative Modifications to the 2022-2025
Transportation Improvement Program**
Date: January 18, 2023

SUMMARY

- Per the DRCOG Board-adopted [Policies for TIP Program Development](#), Administrative Modifications to the [2022-2025 TIP](#) are reviewed and processed by staff before being presented to the DRCOG Board as an informational item. They are then emailed to the TIP Notification List and posted on the [DRCOG 2022-2025 TIP web page](#). Administrative Modifications represent minor changes to TIP projects not defined as “regionally significant changes” for air quality conformity findings or per CDOT definition.
- The TIP Notification List includes the members of the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee, the Regional Transportation Committee, TIP project sponsors, staff of various federal and state agencies, and other interested parties. If you wish to be removed from the TIP Notification List, please contact Josh Schwenk at jschwenk@drcog.org.
- The projects included in these Administrative Modifications are listed below. The attached describes these modifications, with highlighted items depicting project revisions.

PROJECTS TO BE MODIFIED

TIP ID#	Sponsor	Title	Reason for Amendment	New/Removed Funding	Internal Funding Shifts
2008-028	CDOT Region 4	Region 4 Bridge Off-System Pool	Add one new pool project	Add \$513,000 federal Bridge Off- System	N/A
2018-011	CDOT Region 1	R1 Permanent Water Quality Pool	Add one new pool project	Add \$1,249,000 – state Permanent Water Quality	N/A

2008-028: Add \$513,000 in federal Bridge Off-System funding and add one new pool project

Existing Project

Title: **Region 4 Bridge Off-System Pool**

Project Type: **Bridge**

TIP-ID: **2008-028**

STIP-ID: **SR46601**

Open to Public:

Sponsor: **CDOT Region 4**

Project Scope

Bridge Off-System Pool funds off-system bridge projects throughout CDOT Region 4 (Boulder and SW Weld Counties).



Affected County(ies)
Boulder
Weld

Performance Measures	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bridge Condition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Congestion
<input type="checkbox"/>	Freight Reliability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pavement Condition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transit Assets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transit Safety
<input type="checkbox"/>	Travel Time Reliability

All pool project funding depicts federal and/or state funding only.

Facility Name	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)	Facility Name (Cont)	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)	Facility Name (Cont)	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)
WCR 34 - Mead (FY22)		\$160						
Amounts in \$1,000s	Prior Funding	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Future Funding	Total Funding	
Federal (BRO)		\$160	\$0	\$0	\$0			
State		\$40	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Local		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Total	\$0	\$200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200	

Revised Project Listing and Funding Table

Facility Name	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)	Facility Name (Cont)	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)	Facility Name (Cont)	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)
WCR 34 - Mead (FY22)		\$160	120th St. over Coal Creek (FY23)		\$513			
Amounts in \$1,000s	Prior Funding	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Future Funding	Total Funding	
Federal (BRO)		\$160	\$513	\$0	\$0			
State		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Local		\$40	\$128	\$0	\$0			
Total	\$0	\$200	\$641	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$841	

2018-011: Add \$1,249,000 in state Permanent Water Quality funds and add one new pool project

Existing Project

Title: **R1 Permanent Water Quality Pool**

Project Type: **Other Enhancement Projects**

TIP-ID: **2018-011**

STIP-ID:

Open to Public:

Sponsor: **CDOT Region 1**

Project Scope

CDOT R1 pool for permanent water quality projects.



Affected County(ies)
Adams
Arapahoe
Broomfield
Denver
Douglas
Jefferson

Performance Measures	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bridge Condition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Congestion
<input type="checkbox"/>	Freight Reliability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pavement Condition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transit Assets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transit Safety
<input type="checkbox"/>	Travel Time Reliability

All pool project funding depicts federal and/or state funding only.

Facility Name	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)	Facility Name (Cont)	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)	Facility Name (Cont)	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)
Engineer's Lake Trailhead	74th Ave adjacent to the South Platte River	\$99	Littleton Skunk Hollow Regional Water Quality Facility	Design for 2300 ft of NB Santa Fe Drive	\$60			
Federal Blvd	Green infrastructure/Water Quality Facilities	\$1,995	I-76 Water Quality Facilities	York St. to Dahlia St.	\$1,640			
Amounts in \$1,000s	Prior Funding	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Future Funding	Total Funding	
Federal		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
State (Water Qlty)		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	\$0			
Local		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Total	\$4,397	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,397	

Revised Project Listing and Funding Table

Facility Name	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)	Facility Name (Cont)	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)	Facility Name (Cont)	Start-At and End-At	Cost (1,000s)
Engineer's Lake Trailhead	74th Ave adjacent to the South Platte River	\$99	Littleton Skunk Hollow Regional Water Quality Facility	Design for 2300 ft of NB Santa Fe Drive	\$60	I-25 and SH-7 Mobility Hub	\$14,000 in Leg-Transit funding in TIP# 2020-100	\$1,249
Federal Blvd	Green infrastructure/Water Quality Facilities	\$1,995	I-76 Water Quality Facilities	York St. to Dahlia St.	\$1,640			
Amounts in \$1,000s	Prior Funding	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Future Funding	Total Funding	
Federal		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
State (Water Qlty)		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,249	\$0			
Local		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Total	\$4,397	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,249	\$0	\$0	\$9,646	

ATTACH K

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or drex@drcoq.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
January 18, 2023	Informational Item	16

SUBJECT

This item concerns transmittal of the *Draft 2023 Policy Statement on Federal Legislative Issues*.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

No action is requested. This item is provided for information only.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

Each year, the Board adopts two policy statements on a range of specific state and federal legislative issues. These documents provide the DRCOG Board, staff and lobbyists with policy direction on legislative issues during the coming year.

The *Draft 2023 Policy Statement on Federal Legislative Issues* is provided now to give Board members and their staff sufficient time to review its contents before the Board considers and acts on the document at its February 15, 2023 meeting. Staff have proposed a few changes to the introduction, and the aging and transportation sections, essentially to delete outdated language and to revise existing language to reflect new conditions.

If you have suggested changes to the draft, you are encouraged to contact staff prior to February 6, 2023. Action to approve the document will be requested at the February Board meeting.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

Draft 2023 Policy Statement on Federal Legislative Issues (with track changes)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Should you have any questions regarding the draft policy statement, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at (303) 480-6701, or drex@drcoq.org; or Rich Mauro, Senior Policy and Legislative Analyst, at (303) 480-6778 or rmauro@drcoq.org.

2023 POLICY STATEMENT ON STATE LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

INTRODUCTION

This paper outlines the key federal policy issues of the Denver Regional Council of Governments. It identifies policy positions intended to inform the Colorado congressional delegation, Congress, federal and state executive branch officials, and others as they develop and implement national policy on these issues. This policy statement guides DRCOG's federal legislative positions and actions during the coming year.

DRCOG is a membership organization of local elected officials representing 48 municipalities and nine counties in the Denver metro area. ~~DRCOG is a membership organization of more than 50 cities, towns and counties in the Denver metropolitan area.~~ Under federal law, ~~it~~ DRCOG serves as the Area Agency on Aging for eight counties to aid the 60-and-older population and the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) to coordinate transportation planning with air quality goals. Under state statutes DRCOG, as the regional planning commission, prepares and adopts a regional plan for the metro area. ~~Under state statutes, DRCOG is a regional planning commission, responsible for preparing a regional plan for the development of the metro area.~~

As the designated council of governments, regional planning commission, area agency on aging, and metropolitan planning organization for the Denver region, DRCOG recognizes the important role it plays in building and maintaining an equitable region where all residents and communities can thrive. DRCOG acknowledges its role in ensuring our region remains a diverse network of vibrant, connected, lifelong communities.

REGIONAL PLANNING

Comprehensive planning and land use. Although comprehensive planning and land use are primarily matters for local determination and regional coordination, the federal government can play a supportive role in encouraging local and regional efforts through funding, technical assistance and other incentives. DRCOG's Metro Vision plan



represents a shared regional vision for creating sustainable, livable communities that allow people of all ages, incomes and abilities to succeed. Metro Vision further recognizes that the success of the region's visionary plan requires the coordinated efforts of local, state and federal governments; the business community; and other planning partners, including philanthropic and not-for-profit organizations.

Metro Vision guides DRCOG's work and establishes shared expectations with our region's many and various planning partners. The plan outlines broad outcomes, objectives and initiatives established by the DRCOG Board to make life better for the region's residents. Achieving Metro Vision goals requires coordinated investment in a wide range of planning and implementation activities that transcend traditional funding categories. **DRCOG supports those efforts that help the region achieve the shared outcomes described in Metro Vision and encourages federal entities to align their policies and investment decisions to advance regionally determined objectives where appropriate.**

DRCOG's Metro Vision plan emerged from a collaborative process that spanned more than four years. During this time, DRCOG's policy committees, member governments, partner agencies, regional stakeholders and the community at large worked together to create a shared vision for action for shaping the future of the Denver metro area. The plan's shared vision of the future is captured in five overarching themes and 14 inter-related aspirational outcomes, which describe a future that DRCOG, local Governments and partners will work toward together. DRCOG may support or oppose legislative proposals that affect the ability of the region to achieve these outcomes and the associated performance measures and targets.

Outcomes: Efficient and predictable development pattern

- The region is comprised of diverse, livable communities.
- Through a coordinated effort between DRCOG and local communities, new urban development occurs in an orderly and compact pattern within regionally designated areas.
- Connected urban centers and multimodal corridors accommodate a growing share of the region's housing and employment.



Outcomes: A connected multimodal region

- The regional transportation system is well-connected and serves all modes of travel.
- The transportation system is safe, reliable and well-maintained.

Outcomes: A safe and resilient built and natural environment

- The region has clean water and air, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.
- The region values, protects and connects people to its diverse natural resource areas, open space, parks and trails.
- The region's working agricultural lands and activities contribute to a strong regional food system.
- The risk and effects of natural and human-created hazards is reduced.

Outcomes: Healthy, inclusive and livable communities

- The built and natural environment supports healthy and active choices.
- The region's residents have expanded connections to health services.
- Diverse housing options meet the needs of residents of all ages, incomes and abilities.

Outcomes: A vibrant regional economy

- All residents have access to a range of transportation, employment, commerce, housing, educational, cultural and recreational opportunities.
- Investments in infrastructure and amenities allow people and businesses to thrive and prosper.

DRCOG further urges Congress to consider the following in support of local and regional planning:

- DRCOG supports improving the coordination of housing, community development, transportation, energy, and environmental policy in the United States; coordinating federal policies and investments to promote sustainable development; and encouraging comprehensive regional planning for livable communities.
- DRCOG supports federal policies and investments that help local



governments and the private sector develop successful urban centers, including transit station areas.

- DRCOG supports federal funding, regulatory support and other incentives to bolster local and regional efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing, including housing suitable for fixed-income older adults. Additionally, DRCOG supports effective means to create and maintain supportive services for residents in affordable housing communities.
- **DRCOG supports efforts to promote affordable housing options by:**
 - Promoting policies and programs that support the creation and maintenance of an adequate supply of affordable rental and ownership options integrated with the community to meet the needs of people of all ages, incomes, and abilities. This should include expansion of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, a critical tool for supporting private investment in the production and preservation of affordable housing in the state of Colorado and throughout the country, and efforts to strengthen communities through investments in transportation, economic opportunities, education, health services and other amenities that promote opportunity.
 - Ensuring that renters and homeowners (including manufactured-home owners) have appropriate protections from discrimination and displacement. Policies should emphasize the rights of residents and minimize disparities in treatment under the law, while balancing the rights of property owners.
 - Ensuring that policies, programs and other actions that affect land use and housing support the private and public sectors in providing a variety of housing sizes and types for people of all ages, incomes and abilities.
- Federal agencies and elected officials should respect and support local and regional plans and land use authority. This includes ensuring funding decisions and the siting of federal and other facilities are consistent with those plans and respect local and regional land use authority. Federal agencies and elected officials also should ensure maximum local and regional participation in those decisions.
- The federal government should protect open space, including natural habitats, by fully funding the land conservation, preservation and infrastructure improvement trust fund programs and providing new incentives for land



conservation and outdoor recreation opportunities.

- Federal investments in local and regional data and information programs help DRCOG deliver improved information, tools and services for local and regional planning and decision-making. DRCOG supports continued funding for these programs and legislation that requires local, regional and state governments to proactively share digital data with the public.



OLDER ADULTS

Older Americans Act reauthorization

DRCOG has been the designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the metro area under the auspices of the federal Older Americans Act since 1973. In this capacity, DRCOG is responsible for planning and advocating for the needs of the region's older residents, as well as for providing a broad array of services and programs.

Congress reauthorized the Older Americans Act in 2020. Since the last full reauthorization (2016), the challenges to communities, states and the nation presented by the aging of the population have continued to accelerate across the U.S. but particularly in Colorado.

This critical national issue has continued to put pressure on services, especially the need for more tailored in-home and community-based services, the need for more focused prevention programs, the need for consumer advocacy in long-term care facilities, and increased support for family caregivers. After nearly 10 years of advocacy leadership by DRCOG and all members of the Colorado congressional delegation, the 2020 reauthorization finally addressed the funding imbalances in the existing Older Americans Act funding formula. The so-called "hold harmless" provision now will be phased out with Colorado (and DRCOG) already seeing significantly adjusted increases in funding. **It is critical for older adults across the DRCOG area to not have these federal funds offset by reductions in state funding as significant backlogs in providing services currently exist and DRCOG is being asked to provide unprecedented levels of support to older adults in response to COVID-19. DRCOG further adopts the following principles for current implementation and future reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.**

Eliminate obsolete funding provisions in the Older Americans Act

The population data used in the funding formula will need to be updated again after the 2020 census. Using the most up-to-date population numbers is critical so that all states receive the full distribution to which they are entitled under the Older Americans Act.



Encourage meaningful coordination with other systems and programs

The Administration on Aging should adopt rules and regulations incorporating the following specific concerns:

- Require states, area agencies on aging, Medicaid long-term care agencies and other relevant entities to continue efforts to better coordinate regional and statewide planning of services and programs for seniors.
- Coordinate all federal programs and planning processes that serve older adults, such as Older Americans Act, Medicaid, Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and Section 202 housing programs.
- Establish new policy and program guidelines to improve coordination and optimize all public and private benefits, services and resources aimed at promoting elder economic security.
- Remove institutional barriers to the coordination of elderly and disabled transportation services by providing the flexibility to allow trips for elderly and non-elderly disabled persons and for meal, medical and personal services to be served by the same provider using a combination of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Transportation funding.
- Avoid shifting the cost burden from cash-strapped programs such as Medicaid to the Older Americans Act programs, simply to bail out those programs.
- Strengthen the collaboration between the area agencies on aging and federal, state and local governments with community-based organizations and national organizations that work with diverse older adults by providing resources, including funding research, programs and training to more effectively respond to changing demographics and target services to those most in need.

Establish a federal services identification database for senior services

To better provide coordinated services to seniors, DRCOG supports the creation of a federal database which will summarize all care that a patient is receiving regardless of which federal agency is providing the care. Currently, DRCOG has no ability to understand the complete umbrella of services a patient is receiving because there is no way to access information about that patient outside of the information that DRCOG has. This data sharing will allow the Area Agency on



Aging to better shape and provide services for aging adults.

Maximize flexibility in use of Older Americans Act funds

Most federal funding provided to state and local entities under the federal Older Americans Act is specifically earmarked to particular services. Although all of the Older Americans Act-funded services, such as meals and transportation, are critically important, the area agencies on aging, local governments and service providers are in the best position to assess the specific needs in the local areas.

Funding flexibility to meet local needs has been particularly important to the success of the Aging Network in Colorado in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Increased flexibility in the use of program funds would allow area agencies on aging to better meet the needs of older adults.**

- Simplify rules and regulations to allow better coordination of senior services thus enabling area agencies on aging and service providers to more efficiently and effectively use federal funds to address local priorities. This could include the consolidation of certain funding categories to improve administration of the affected programs. For example, the Title III C-1 congregate meal and Title III C-2 home-delivered meal programs could be merged.
- Create flexibility in state- and federally specified allotments of Older Americans Act funds allowing area agencies on aging to use regional priorities to determine funding distributions at the local level, consistent with the goals of the act.
- Set required local match at 10 percent and required state match at 5 percent across all programs of the Older Americans Act. Currently, required local and state funding match percentages vary widely. For example, state/local match for the National Family Caregiver Support Program is 25 percent, while the Nutrition and Supportive Services Programs require a 15 percent state/local match. In some cases, states can completely opt out of providing a state match, as with the National Family Caregiver Support Program.
- Congress and the administration should, in consultation with the states and area agencies on aging, implement the lessons learned from the experience with the pandemic on an ongoing basis.



Fund aging-related planning for local communities

The 2006 reauthorization established new requirements for area agencies on aging to broaden their planning efforts beyond service needs to include senior-friendly community planning to promote livable communities for all ages but did not include funds for this new mandate. **To ensure these requirements are met, Congress must appropriate funds for state, regional and local collaboration, planning, community capacity-building and technical assistance. This should include funds for conducting analyses of the strengths and needs of seniors in a given area.**

Increase federal funding for Older Americans Act programs

The funding provided through the Older Americans Act has proved critical in maintaining a quality standard of living for many of the nation's older adults. For years, however, Older Americans Act funding has not kept pace with inflation or the growing population of individuals eligible for services. Yet, demand by at-risk older adults in need of supportive services has risen and will continue to rise with the growth of the aging population. This long-term gap in funding translates to greater numbers of older adults and family caregivers with unmet needs and increasing pressures on state and local agencies, service providers and families. Meanwhile, waiting lists for Older Americans Act-funded services, such as Meals on Wheels, rides to medical appointments and in-home care, have burgeoned throughout the country.

Compounding these problems, the coming expiration of pandemic relief funding and financial pressures on other programs that provide services to seniors, such as Medicare and Medicaid, have led to reductions in the services provided by those programs, and a related increase in demands on Older Americans Act programs. ~~Both in fiscal year 2020 and the upcoming fiscal year 2021 and fiscal year 2022 budget cycles, COVID-19 will put enormous budget pressures on the Health and Human Services budget both within the administration and the congressional budget process. It is critical DRCOG advocate to ensure COVID-19 does not adversely affect the dollars appropriated to the states for Older Americans Act Programs.~~ At the same time, there are proposals for addressing the nation's long-term debt that actually would result in significant cuts in funding for these programs.



Funding cuts, such as those in the Budget Control Act of 2011 under sequestration, have had devastating consequences for vulnerable older adults in the metro area and across Colorado. Congress should fund the Older Americans Act adequately now and into the future in preparation for the aging of the baby boomers. **DRCOG specifically supports:**

- A balanced approach to addressing the nation's budget deficits and long-term debt.
- Any approach must protect those older adults in greatest social and economic need by fairly balancing increased revenues and targeted spending reductions and taking no actions that increase economic vulnerability or poverty.
- Significant annual increases in the overall funding for the Older Americans Act programs, which are necessary to catch up with the lag in historical funding. DRCOG supports the position of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, which is advocating total funding for Older Americans Act be increased to at least the inflation- and population-adjusted 2010 levels to restore the service capacity of Older Americans Act programs, with special attention to Title III B Supportive Services, Title III E National Family Caregiver Support Program and Title VII State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program, as these programs have had no relief from the sequester.
- Future authorized appropriations at levels adequate to fund all identified needs but at least commensurate with the rates of growth in inflation and the economically and socially needy older population. Congress also should change budget rules to allow credit for discretionary programs that save money in mandatory programs.
- In general, priority for funding should be given to those Older Americans Act programs and services that:
 - Emphasize assisting clients to live in their homes as long and as independently as possible.
 - Support evidence-based health and wellness programs.
 - Bridge the gap between community services and health care through programs that promote care transitions and care coordination and encourage community-based service delivery models, including broader experimentation with



Accountable Health Communities to integrate social needs in the delivery of health services and the establishment of local community care hubs.

- Increase the funding for family caregiver support services (including training, respite care, counseling, and information and assistance) and the continued distribution of these monies through area agencies on aging, which are important to address the growing needs of families who provide extensive care to their loved ones.
- Increase funding for Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs, which are necessary to improve the ability to respond to complaints and safeguard residents' rights.

Provide a path for private sector investment in Older Americans Act services

As part of the Older Americans Act reauthorization, as well as other federal programs like Medicare Advantage Plans, Congress has allowed for area agencies on aging, outside of the Older Americans Act, to engage in private pay, integrated care and other arrangements to expand services. **Congress and the administration should incentivize such activities, including funding demonstration projects and evaluations of the benefits of community-based services in improving health care outcomes and reducing care costs.**

Long-term care facility quality of care

Older adults living in long-term care communities (i.e., nursing homes and assisted living) are some of the most vulnerable members of society. As the Long-Term Care Ombudsman for the region, DRCOG is an advocate for the rights of residents in long-term care communities and for improvement in the quality of care in such facilities. The quality of care provided by long-term care facilities is an ongoing concern to facility residents, their families, local governments and resident advocates. **DRCOG supports increases in consumer protections for older adults and their caregivers and, in particular, strengthening the role of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman as a resident/consumer advocate and reimbursement for long-term care communities structured to enhance the quality of care for residents. DRCOG believes the following issues require particular**



attention by Congress and federal agencies.

- Federal regulations designed to ensure the quality of care in long-term care facilities are not fully enforced, largely due to inadequate staffing levels in state enforcement agencies. There also are several actions that could be added to the regulations to improve enforcement. These include increased inspections and penalties on long-term care facilities failing to comply with regulations. DRCOG supports such improved enforcement of long-term care regulations and an increase in funding for enforcement actions.
- Most complaints investigated by DRCOG ombudsmen are traceable to staffing issues in the long-term care facilities. The inability to maintain adequate staffing is a critical concern that negatively impacts long-term care facility quality of service. DRCOG supports federal legislation, policies and programs to improve the quality of service in long-term care facilities, including setting minimum staffing levels and providing financial and technical assistance for the recruitment, training and retention of long-term care facility employees.
- Nursing home transparency is an ongoing issue in advocacy for the rights of residents. Occasionally legislation has been proposed to enhance families' access to information about the quality of care in nursing homes and improve the government's ability to ensure quality care and a better-trained staff in those facilities. DRCOG supports legislation that includes stronger disclosure of ownership and control of facilities, better oversight of quality of care indicators, improved consumer information, and an enhanced complaint and penalty process.

Fund the Elder Justice Act

This legislation provides critical protection for residents living in nursing homes and assisted living; provides needed resources and coordination to address the problem of elder abuse; and includes increased funding for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program. The Elder Justice Act sets out a comprehensive approach to preventing and combating elder abuse, neglect, exploitation and self-neglect.

DRCOG supports full funding and implementation of the Elder Justice Act, consistent with the following principles:



- Provide a stronger and more coordinated federal response to promote elder justice.
- Increase federal support to states and communities for elder justice activities.
- Provide funding and training support to adult protection programs.
- Improve consumer protection by requiring the reporting of crimes by nursing facilities or employees and communication of consumer rights information.
- Provide new funding to improve ombudsman capacity and training, and for training of health department surveyors investigating allegations of abuse.

Other health and community services

There are numerous other health and home care issues not covered under the Older Americans Act. In general, the following policies address concerns regarding consumer protection, access to treatment and access to services that increase independence. DRCOG believes it is appropriate for federal legislation, regulations and policies to promote access to health care coverage and the integration of long-term care into a continuum of medical and non-medical services, including health promotion and disease prevention.

- **Enhancing health and security of older adults.** The Affordable Care Act contains several provisions regarding older adults and their ability to stay healthy and age in the community. These include provisions for aging and disability resource centers, prevention and wellness programs, care transitions and coordination, and efforts to rebalance the long-term care system relative to institutional and community care. The area agencies on aging are positioned to play a key role in implementing these provisions. **DRCOG urges Congress and federal agencies to recognize the full potential of the Aging Network and use area agencies on aging in implementing these Affordable Care Act provisions.**
- **Avoid institutional care.** Home- and community- based services are critical components in the continuum of care for the elderly and disabled and are more



cost-efficient than services in institutions, particularly with regard to rural areas and for minority populations. Adequate reimbursements to providers are necessary to offset the costs of providing these important services. **DRCOG supports increased funding of home- and community-based care programs and higher Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements.**

- **Prescription medication.** Older adults typically require more medication than younger people. Even with the adoption of a prescription drug benefit under Medicare, the high cost of prescription medication will continue to be a financial hardship for many older adults and federal programs.
 - DRCOG supports increased prescription drug pricing transparency.
 - DRCOG supports revisions to the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit to simplify the application process and coverage offered, as well as cap out-of-pocket costs and address the gaps in coverage to provide a more comprehensive prescription medication benefit for all beneficiaries.
 - DRCOG supports allowing the federal government to negotiate prescription drug prices for patients using Medicare, Medicaid and other federal programs to lower cost to these critical federal programs.
 - DRCOG also encourages the federal government to provide additional funding for area agencies on aging to provide public education, counseling and enrollment assistance for citizens about the Medicare drug program.
- **Patients' rights.** Enforceable federal protections in areas including access to care, quality assurance, patient information, grievances and appeals, the doctor-patient relationship and physician treatment decisions are necessary to ensure that quality health care and other services are available to all. **DRCOG supports legislation to protect consumers in managed care plans and other health coverage.**
- **Housing.** The ability to afford to live in a residence independently is a concern of older adults, especially those on fixed incomes. As the Denver metro area has grown and developed, the shortage of affordable housing has become an even more important concern. **DRCOG supports policies and programs designed**



to support older adults, especially those of low- and moderate-income, and persons with disabilities to live independently in the residence of their choice. This includes policies and programs to:

- Encourage the delivery of home- and community-based supportive services to assist older people and persons with disabilities in maintaining independence and actively engaging in their community.
- Improve home design to promote independence and aging in place, including home modification and repair, appropriate design features in new and rehabilitated housing (through principles such as universal design, visitability, inclusive home design and energy efficiency), and the use of innovative home products.
- Ensure that policies and funding for housing assistance and preservation programs continue to support residents who choose to remain in their homes as they age and that low- and moderate-income households have access to well-designed, safe, decent, affordable and accessible housing integrated throughout well-designed communities.
- Promote financial security of housing assets to support the availability of affordable homeownership options, safeguard home equity and promote the innovative use of housing assets to maintain and improve the independence and quality of life of older people.



TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an essential component of multidimensional efforts to advance economic development, industry growth and competitiveness; reduce the nation's dependency on fossil fuels; increase job access and mobility; and create communities having a high quality of life for people of all ages, incomes and abilities.

Funding

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)-authorized National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission, which released a congressionally mandated report in January of 2008, called for interim investments of at least \$225 billion annually over the next 50 years at all levels of government. The February 2009 report of the National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission set up under SAFETEA-LU estimated we need to invest at least \$200 billion per year at all levels of government to maintain and improve our highways and transit systems. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was signed into law on Nov. 15, 2021. The act makes a significant investment in infrastructure and includes the federal transportation authorization for fiscal year 2022 through fiscal year 2026. While the act boosts federal transportation spending over the previous FAST Act levels, federal transportation investments will remain significantly below the needs identified in 2008 and 2009. **DRCOG supports the funding principles adopted by the National Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing Commission, which includes developing a funding and financing framework that:**

- Supports a goal of enhancing mobility and accessibility for users of the transportation system.
- Generates sufficient resources to meet national investment needs on a sustainable basis with the aim of closing the funding gap.
- Causes users and all beneficiaries to bear the full cost of using the transportation system to the greatest extent possible.
- Encourages efficient investment in the transportation system.
- Incorporates equity considerations, including but not limited to geography, equity



across income groups, population growth, and revenue generation.

- Synchronizes with other broad public policy objectives (and may include energy independence, environmental protection, and workforce housing).

As Congress and the U.S. Department of Transportation consider additional transportation issues and rulemaking for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, DRCOG will evaluate each for consistency with the following policies.

- DRCOG supports an energy-efficient, environmentally sustainable, multimodal transportation system that ensures America's economic competitiveness and supports livable communities for its residents.
- DRCOG supports providing additional transportation revenues to accomplish this vision.
- Any new or increased sources of funding should be distributed through existing funding formulas with the greatest possible share going directly to local areas to decide how it will be spent.
- Maintain transportation program's use of contract authority, allowing states to advance money for multiyear construction projects.
- While supporting a shift to national performance standards and goals, consideration must be given to equity issues (geographic/return on dollar).
- Continue and expand funding for transportation projects that improve air quality.
- ~~If Congress brings back~~ should include a number of safeguards before earmarking transportation funds or ~~modifies-modifying~~ any discretionary programs, ~~a number of safeguards should be included~~: ensure transparency of the earmarking process; fully fund each phase of an earmarked project (no partial funding earmarks should be approved); do not reduce formula funds that would affect projects already in an approved Transportation Improvement Program.
- Provide full-year appropriations at the start of the federal fiscal year to the level of the authorization. Limit the use of short-term continuing resolutions and rescissions. These tactics reduce the flow of or cut into formula funds and negatively impact fiscal constraint, responsible planning, implementation of



federal requirements and project continuity.

DRCOG supports both short- and long-term federal funding policies to provide additional investment in the nation's infrastructure.

Short-term

- Boost the federal gas tax (at minimum, to restore the purchasing power of the Highway Trust Fund) and other existing Highway Trust Fund revenue.
- Index the federal gas tax to inflation.
- Reduce federal obstacles to options available to states and localities such as tolling, congestion pricing and public-private partnerships.
- Further expand current federal credit programs.

Long-term

- Carbon tax or trading programs (if Congress implements such a program) should ensure transportation activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions receive a proportionate share of any new revenue generated by such programs.
- Transition to a new, more direct user-based system such as a road usage charge. This includes:
 - An aggressive research, development and demonstration program to address issues such as privacy rights, program administration, costs, revenues, partnerships with states and localities, and interplay with national policy objectives such as reducing vehicle miles traveled and congestion.
 - A national public education program.
 - A national pilot program

Multimodal solutions

Addressing the nation's transportation challenges requires investment in a comprehensive, multifaceted approach. The nation will need to implement multi-modal alternatives to provide congestion relief, improve air quality, reduce household transportation costs and increase independence for people unable to drive because of age, income or ability. DRCOG's Metro Vision plan includes targets for reducing vehicle



miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions per capita, traffic fatalities, traffic congestion and single-occupant vehicle mode share.

Transit is an essential part of the metropolitan transportation system. Implementation of the Denver region's transit system is a high priority for DRCOG. Unfortunately, cost increases and revenue decreases forced the Regional Transportation District and DRCOG to remove some corridors from the fiscally constrained 2040 Regional Transportation Plan. DRCOG recognizes the importance of making transit-supportive improvements to bus and rail corridors throughout the region. The metro area has made a significant commitment of local resources for the regional transit system.

DRCOG supports adding multimodal transportation capacity appropriate to meet national and regional objectives.

- Maintain and expand funding programs that allow states and planning regions to develop, fund and implement integrated transportation solutions should be maintained and expanded. In addition, transportation funding must allow flexibility to address the multimodal, energy and environmental needs of individual urban areas.
- Establish national performance objectives and measures for increasing access and mobility for people of all ages, incomes and abilities should be established in addition to those for traffic congestion.
- Permit flexibility to allow each state and region to decide how to best make investments to show progress toward national safety, mobility and accessibility goals.
- Expand the National Freight Strategic Plan to include all major modes of freight transport including rail, water and air to better enable informed decision-making about efficient, long-distance freight movement.

DRCOG urges Congress and the administration to take the following actions in support of transit in the Denver region:

- Continue the federal investment for transit and multimodal projects in the Denver region.
- Provide dedicated sources of revenue and increased funding for bus rapid transit and rail new starts programs.



- Support federal funding for the Front Range Passenger Rail project through a direct appropriation or increased funding to the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) for the project.
- Continue to provide federal funding for the Fas- Tracks corridors (over time this could include corridors that have had to be removed from the fiscally constrained regional transportation plan).
- Clarify with regard to transit-oriented developments that up to a half-mile from an existing or proposed transit station, parking and transportation infrastructure, transit-oriented development planning, land acquisition and a project or program that supports compact, mixed-use, mixed-income, bicycle/pedestrian friendly development are eligible for federal transportation funding and require that this clarification be incorporated in funding program decisions, and work to identify additional sources of funding.
- Incorporate the Partnership for Sustainable Communities' livability principles into federal policy and investment decisions.
- Improve transportation services for older adults and individuals with disabilities by giving states added flexibility in utilizing their federal funds; enhancing the planning and coordination process; providing technical assistance; and promoting innovative community programs.
- Designate the "Rocky Mountain Corridor" (from Cheyenne, Wyoming, through Colorado to Albuquerque, New Mexico, and the Interstate 70 corridor from Denver International Airport to the Utah border) and the Western Regional Alliance high-speed rail network (to provide high-speed rail connections between Denver, Salt Lake City, Reno, Las Vegas, and Phoenix) as High-Speed Rail Corridors. This action would identify them as having potential for high-speed rail activity and enable these corridors to receive federal funds that might become available for corridor studies of high-speed rail options, development of plans for high-speed rail infrastructure, construction of high-speed rail facilities and highway/rail grade crossing safety improvements.

Metropolitan mobility

Metropolitan areas account for nearly 865.7 percent of the U.S. population and ~~more-~~



~~than~~around 90 percent of employment, income, and production of goods and services (source: U.S. Conference of Mayors, Jan~~Sept.~~ 2030, 2016~~2019~~). Growing congestion and reduced travel reliability, along with deteriorating infrastructure, threaten the ability of regions and the nation to compete globally. Metropolitan areas must play a stronger role in the nation's transportation programs, both in the authority to direct investment and demonstrate accountability for the system's performance.

DRCOG supports actions that minimize the barriers to the use of alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle and encourage changes to normal work patterns to avoid peak traffic conditions. DRCOG also supports efforts to provide incentives to employers, schools, rideshare agencies, and individuals to encourage alternative transportation use.

DRCOG supports transportation legislation that addresses metropolitan mobility and accessibility issues, specifically with consideration for the following:

- Enable major metropolitan areas to establish and implement overarching plans for mobility and accessibility with focus on:
 - Increased accessibility, modal choices and seamless transfers.
 - Elimination of traffic chokepoints and reduction of severe traffic congestion.
 - Strategies that manage transportation demand, provide transit service and implement nonmotorized methods of travel.
 - Strategies for accommodating inter-regional movement of people and goods within and through the metropolitan areas.
 - Fostering livable communities for people of all ages, incomes and abilities.
 - Promoting the urban infrastructure necessary to support high-density development around transit.
- Performance metrics that extend beyond existing traffic congestion and motor vehicle emissions measures and consider vehicle miles traveled. reduction, economic development, environmental sustainability, global competitiveness, accessibility, etc.

Energy efficiency and environmental sustainability

Transportation plays a key role in achieving energy independence and



addressing some of the nation's environmental concerns. In the United States today, more than 60 percent of every barrel of oil is used by the transportation sector, and transportation sources accounted for 26 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2016 (source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency website). The competitiveness of our economy, the health of our citizens and the strength of our national security depend on reducing our reliance on and consumption of fossil fuels.

DRCOG supports strategies to reduce fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions by the transportation sector.

- Expand investment in research and development for alternative fuels, new clean fuel technologies, more efficient vehicles and new ideas and technologies for transporting people and goods.
- Incentivize rapid conversion to more fuel-efficient and lower-emission vehicles or retrofits.
- Increase incentives for environmentally friendly replacement transportation fuels.
- Incentivize regions to more closely link land use and transportation infrastructure to reduce transportation energy consumption, increase nonvehicle transportation options and reduce vehicle miles traveled, through techniques including scenario planning and investments in projects that improve accessibility.
- Add public transit projects that enhance mobility, convenience and/or reliability to the exempt project list for Clean Air Act purposes; these types of improvements increase in importance in situations where conformity cannot be attained.

Project delivery and planning

The scope and complexity of transportation planning has increased significantly, including new performance-based planning requirements, rapidly changing vehicle technology, and changing job access and mobility needs. Efforts to streamline project planning and delivery are important but must be balanced against appropriate levels of regional and local coordination and environmental assessment.

DRCOG supports the following policies that promote efficiency, stability and



reliability of funding, project delivery and planning:

- Allow metropolitan planning organizations to directly contract with subrecipients for non-infra- structure projects using federal funds.
- Continue to streamline project delivery and National Environmental Policy Act processes without compromising environmental or public participation values.
- Enhance and strengthen the cooperative, collaborative partnerships required under current legislation with all transportation planning partners
- Support publication and dissemination of performance measurement results and analyses and widespread distribution of, and education about, the conditions of the transportation system.
- Increase the authority of metropolitan planning organizations to employ solutions at the regional level and provide regions and local governments the direct authority, flexibility, and funding to create a safe and efficient transportation system.
- Provide maximum flexibility so that comparatively minor changes to the planned or programmed highway and transit network do not require a full air quality conformity analysis at taxpayer expense.

DRCOG supports clarifying and enhancing the role of the metropolitan planning organization.

- The metropolitan planning process establishes a cooperative, continuous and comprehensive framework for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas. In many cases, MPOs provide the only regional, multimodal transportation plans that link transportation to land use, growth and air quality. Through the MPO process, local governments, in cooperation and collaboration with state and local transit operators, determine the best mix of transportation investments to meet the long-term transportation needs of a metropolitan area.

This important role must be strengthened to make metropolitan transportation planning successful.

- The FAST Act requires adequate regional financial forecasts be developed with the cooperation and collaboration of the state, MPO and public transit agency for use in preparing transportation plans. However, “collaboration, cooperation and consultation” are poorly defined in the context of developing such financial



forecasts. States are given wide discretion in how and when those estimates of revenues are to be provided and allowing for various interpretations of the regulations. **DRCOG supports:**

- Expanding regulations to require all three entities (DRCOG, the Regional Transportation District and the Colorado Department of Transportation) to agree upon procedures governing the projection of future revenue estimates.
 - Requiring all three agencies to agree upon distribution of estimated revenues.
 - Establishing an external appeals process to the U.S. Department of Transportation if there is disagreement among the parties regarding estimate procedures and revenues.
- **The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act strengthened consultation requirements for Surface Transportation Block Grant funds that are allocated to areas based on population. DRCOG supports:**
 - Expanding current regulations to require all three entities to agree upon procedures governing project selection and prioritization for transportation planning and there should be consequences for not following these procedures.
 - As part of the normal memorandum of agreement between an MPO, state Department of Transportation and local transit agency, requiring the three entities to cooperatively establish a process for addressing project cost overruns.
 - Requiring revenue suballocation to transportation management areas (MPOs representing populations greater than 200,000) to be based on the total population within the MPO boundary.
 - Establishing a population-based air quality severity formula for suballocating Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds within a state and requiring suballocation of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds to non-attainment MPOs representing populations greater than 200,000 on the basis of the total populations within the MPO boundary.



ENVIRONMENT

- **Water Conservation.** Water is a particularly scarce resource in the Denver region and the western United States, and a key consideration in planning for future growth and development. Recognizing this fact, the DRCOG Board of Directors added a water conservation element to Metro Vision, the Denver region's long-range plan for growth. The element calls on the region to maximize the wise use of limited water resources through efficient land development and other strategies, and establishes a goal of reducing regional per capita water consumption. **DRCOG therefore supports federal policies and investments that contribute to local and regional water conservation**
- **Water quality.** Local governments in the Denver region face increasingly complex water quality challenges in an environment unique to the arid West but without the resources to respond to them appropriately. Reauthorization of the Clean Water Act could provide local governments and regional water quality planning agencies the additional planning, financing and regulatory tools needed to address our growing water quality challenges. **As the legislative process proceeds in these areas, there are a number of issues of concern to DRCOG that Congress can address.**
- **Integrated planning.** DRCOG supports an integrated approach to water quality, tying together the management of point sources, nonpoint sources and stormwater through the involvement of the various stakeholders.
- **Regional planning.** The Clean Water Act recognizes the importance of planning to address the challenges associated with both point and nonpoint source pollution. The regional planning provided for in the act is even more critical, given the growing emphasis on watershed approaches. **Congress should maintain and strengthen the regional planning process as the key component of the watershed approach. The planning funds provided under section 604(b) need to be increased to assist responsible parties in meeting the expanding responsibilities that accompany implementation of a watershed planning and management approach.**
- **Infrastructure funding.** Colorado and the nation are at a critical juncture regarding water and waste-water infrastructure. There are significant needs for

new treatment plants and upgrades to existing plants. Local governments already shoulder a significant portion of water and wastewater capital investment. **Increased funding for infrastructure investment as well as the provision of greater flexibility of these funds will allow states and local governments to determine the best use, according to local prioritization of needs.**

- **Good Samaritan protection.** Abandoned and inactive mines present a serious risk to the quality of nearby water supplies. Lack of adequate funding for reclamation and the potential liability for good Samaritans are serious obstacles that have prevented cleanup of many of these sites. DRCOG supports federal funding for reclamation activities. DRCOG also supports legislation encouraging federal, state, tribal and local governments, as well as mining companies and nonprofit groups that have no prior ownership or responsibility for an abandoned mine, to clean up an abandoned or inactive mining site by granting them liability protections under several environmental statutes, including the Clean Water Act.
- **Superfund.** DRCOG is concerned that a number of Superfund issues have become serious problems in recent years while the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) has been awaiting reauthorization. **DRCOG urges Congress to address the following issues individually or as part of a comprehensive reauthorization.**
 - **Liability protection.** Under current law and regulation, parties interested in cleaning up a Superfund site may decide not to pursue remediation efforts for fear of being held liable for preexisting problems. Lengthy cleanup delays have occurred in our region and elsewhere while parties litigate over responsibility. DRCOG supports federal funding for cleanup activities. **DRCOG supports legislation and regulations encouraging parties that have had no prior ownership or responsibility for a site to clean up the site by granting them liability protections under several environmental statutes, including the Superfund law. DRCOG also supports limiting liability when a party has complied with applicable environmental laws at the time of disposal to further the goal of timely and cost-effective cleanup of Superfund sites.**



- **Community participation.** Local governments often face significant community and neighborhood concerns regarding contaminated sites. Public involvement in the assessment, planning and cleanup for such sites is an important aspect of efforts to bring these sites to a safe condition. **Provisions that assist local governments in establishing and funding formal mechanisms for citizens to participate in the cleanup and land-use decision-making process are appropriate and necessary.**
- **Funding for cleanup.** DRCOG is concerned that the federal government not reduce its commitment to assist with clean-up and redevelopment of these sites. **DRCOG supports the creation of new mechanisms to fund cleanup to the extent they are sufficient to make significant progress toward the act's goals. Allocation of cleanup costs among responsible parties should be according to the proportion of contamination caused by each.**
- **Health risk criteria.** The safety and health of populations exposed to pollution associated with Superfund sites is a primary concern related to potential redevelopment. Health risk-based criteria are necessary to guide these efforts. **These criteria must reflect the intended reuse of a site and the risks to special populations including children, the elderly and those already disproportionately exposed to pollution. Risk-based standards specific to Superfund clean-up are needed to promote redevelopment of contaminated sites while protecting human health and the environment.**
- **Brownfields.** Redevelopment of brownfields is important for economic development and environmental and public health and safety in many areas within the Denver region. This is a specific issue related to CERCLA that is of particular significance and should be pursued separately, if inaction on the Superfund reauthorization continues. There are approximately 250 brownfields, former industrial and commercial sites, in both urban and rural areas throughout the Denver region. The redevelopment of brownfields is consistent with RCOG's Metro Vision, which supports infill and redevelopment within the region. **DRCOG supports federal actions including increased funding to encourage the redevelopment of brownfields. DRCOG urges Congress to prioritize funding for projects that go beyond remediation**



and redevelopment of individual sites to focus on broader planning and economic development efforts, such as projects that incorporate brownfield remediation and redevelopment into larger infill development efforts.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Intergovernmental cooperation. All levels of government – federal, state, local and regional – play an important role in providing critical services and implementing programs for the benefit of their residents. Legislative bodies and executive agencies at the federal and state levels should respect the roles and responsibilities of local governments and regional entities. DRCOG supports cooperation among federal, state, local and regional entities in developing and implementing new programs and improved approaches to service provision.

Federal/regional relations. The region is the nexus of local, state and federal issues and economic activities. DRCOG convenes parties of interest on intergovernmental issues, providing the necessary forum for their resolution, and facilitating a negotiated outcome. **DRCOG urges Congress, when new legislation is proposed and existing legislation is reauthorized, to identify and use regional agencies as critical partners in the implementation of such legislation, including the planning for and delivery of services.**

Regional service delivery. The federal government plays an important role in setting standards and priorities for the funding of public services and programs administered at the state, regional and local levels. **When making such funding and programmatic decisions, it is essential to consider the most appropriate level of government for delivery of such public services.**

State administration of federal programs can be problematic for local governments, as state agencies tend to be more removed from clients and less responsive to their needs. On the other hand, individual local governments may lack the resources to achieve the desired efficiencies and cost-effectiveness. Further, some programs, such as transportation, air quality and water quality, that address issues crossing local political boundaries, are most appropriately and effectively addressed at the regional level. Regional programs also often benefit from economies of scale.

The collaborative partnerships of regional approaches can provide more cost-effective services and programs for users and clients. **DRCOG urges Congress to use existing regional service delivery systems.**



Principles for implementation. New programs or changes to existing programs must at least maintain the existing level of services and provide adequate administrative funds for implementation. Otherwise, there is a shift in responsibility without adequate funds for the services to be provided or programs administered. As such, it is important to treat the continuity of service delivery as a key principle guiding any actions to create new programs or revise existing programs. **A consultative process among the federal, state, local and regional agencies must be in place before any changes are made to services currently being delivered at local or regional levels.**