

Correspondence and comments on draft Metro Vision plan from member governments – received after public comment period

1. Arapahoe County Board of County Commissioners (letter – 12/29/2016)
2. Douglas County Board of Commissioners (letter – 12/5/2016)
3. Douglas County – Summary of comments (12/28/2016)
4. Sean McCartney, City of Westminster (letter – 11/28/2016)



ARAPAHOE COUNTY
COLORADO'S FIRST

Board of County Commissioners

5334 South Prince Street
Littleton, Colorado 80120-1136
Phone: 303-795-4630
Fax: 303-738-7894
TDD: 303-795-4644
www.arapahoegov.com
commissioners@arapahoegov.com

December 29, 2016

NANCY A. DOTY
District 1

Via U.S. Mail and email to: bcalvert@drcog.org

NANCY N. SHARPE
District 2

Denver Regional Council of Governments
1290 Broadway, Suite 100
Denver, Colorado 80203

ROD BOCKENFELD
District 3

Attention: Brad Calvert

NANCY JACKSON
District 4

Re: Metro Vision draft plan

BILL L. HOLEN
District 5

Dear Mr. Calvert:

Please be advised that after review of the Metro Vision plan, public review draft dated September 22, 2016, the Board of County Commissioners of Arapahoe County ("the Board") is unable to fully support the draft plan in its present form. Although the Board appreciates all of the hard work that has gone into the creation of this draft plan, and much of the draft plan is acceptable, the Board believes that a number of issues need to be adequately addressed before it can support approval of the plan. The issues of primary concern to the Board are described as follows:

- The draft plan lacks clarity on how the elements of the plan are or may be linked to a scoring system that could impact a local government's ability to qualify for federal transportation funds allocated through DRCOG, as the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), for projects included in the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). While many of the components of the plan appear to be aspirational, the Board is concerned that TIP funding decisions will be used as a way to enforce strict compliance with the components of the plan.
- The draft plan does not address the current uncertainty regarding UGB/A. For example, the draft plan does not address municipal annexations of undeveloped land or provide a process for allocation of UGB/A between cities and counties following annexation in a manner which encourages city and county cooperation over development of such lands. The current system provides no incentive for cities to enter into an agreement with the counties.
- The draft plan needs to acknowledge that new urban centers may be created and provide a mechanism for including them in the plan. Within Arapahoe County, the urban centers are for the most part already developed. There is limited land available for new development within such centers and redevelopment is expensive. Moreover, the cost of new housing in urban centers is ever increasing. As such, the market reality for Arapahoe County is that development will occur in suburban and more rural areas where the costs are lower.

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- Arapahoe County is seeing this in developments along the I-70 corridor and in places like Bennett, Byers, and Strasburg. The Metro Vision plan needs to acknowledge these realities and make allowance for sensible development in such suburban and rural areas.
- The draft plan has too many outcomes to effectively track, and too many of the performance measures for implementation include prescriptive language (such as "adopt") rather than terminology that encourages working toward implementation in broad terms that allow flexibility based on conditions within a community.
- The draft plan fails to recognize the inability of local government to control or pay for some of the elements identified for urban centers, such as transit corridors established by RTD and locations of hospitals and major medical facilities.
- The draft plan language suggests a focus more on what is good for urban centers than for a diverse county, such as Arapahoe County with its mix of urban, suburban and rural areas, and the plan needs to allow for the differences between the jurisdictions governing such development. The plan loses the distinctions between goals and ability to achieve those goals. Arapahoe County needs the flexibility to make the decisions that are best for the citizens of Arapahoe County.

Please let us know if you have any questions about this letter. We look forward to discussing these issues with the staff and the cities and counties involved in DRCOG in the future.

Sincerely,

Arapahoe County Board of County Commissioners



Nancy Doty, Chair

cc: Board of County Commissioners
Dave Schmit, Director Public Works and Development
Jan Yeckes, Planning Division Manager
Bryan Weimer, Transportation Division Manager

December 5, 2016

Brad Calvert
Regional Planning and Development Director
Denver Regional Council of Governments
1290 Broadway St. Suite 100
Denver, CO 80203-5606

Dear Mr. Calvert:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the Metro Vision Plan update.

The Board of Douglas County Commissioners, in conjunction with Douglas County staff, has reviewed the proposed plan and finds that the 'visionary aspect' of the document has been transformed into more of a 'call to action' with the update.

The proposed plan includes a large number of strategic initiatives that are labeled voluntary; however, the language used suggests a directive tone. For example: using phrases such as, "Local and regional initiatives will limit new development..." connotes direct impact and implies greater influence over local land use planning.


While Metro Vision 2040 includes narrative celebrating the uniqueness of every community, it also includes language that negates this concept. Most of the objectives support funding development within the Urban Growth Boundary/Area (UGB/A) or promote urban character at the expense of other development patterns. While the plan is characterized as an aspirational plan, Metro Vision policies have historically been utilized to create Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) criteria. This is of concern for Douglas County as it is not clear how many of the plan objectives will later be implemented through either the TIP process or an updated UGB/A allocation process.

In the past, Douglas County has supported Metro Vision, however it appears that this updated version is no longer 'aspirational' and includes policy language that may be used in a regulatory manner through other mechanisms. Therefore, the Board of Douglas County Commissioners cannot support the current 2040 Metro Vision Public Review Draft, (Released September 22, 2016).

Sincerely,

BOARD OF DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


David A. Weaver


Roger A. Partridge


Jill E. Repella

cc: Douglas J. DeBord, Douglas County Manager
Terence T. Quinn, AICP, Director of Community Development

David A. Weaver
Commissioner District I

Roger A. Partridge
Commissioner District II

Jill E. Repella
Commissioner District III

Douglas County Comments

Topic	Commenter	Comment
Theme: An Efficient and Predictable Development Pattern	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 3, update the Mile High Compact process
Theme: An Efficient and Predictable Development Pattern	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 10, rewrite the third sentence of the last paragraph as, "Because this theme focuses largely on regional planning and growth management issues...."
Urban Growth/Area (UGB/A)	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 15, Douglas County understands revisions are being made to this section
Urban Growth/Area (UGB/A)	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 15, Rewrite Outcome 2 as, "New urban development occurs within the urban extent of the region."
Urban Growth/Area (UGB/A)	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 17, rewrite the second supporting objective for Regional Objective 2 as, "Encourage funding to serve areas..."
Urban Centers	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 22, rewrite the first supporting objective for Regional Objective 3 as, "Support public/private investment..."
Urban Centers	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 22, rewrite the second supporting objective for Regional Objective 3 as, "Encourage transit service and ridership...."
Theme: A Connected Multimodal Region	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 28, on the first four supporting objectives of Regional Objective 4, replace, "improve" with, "Support investments to".

Theme: A Connected Multimodal Region	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 32, on the last two supporting objectives of Regional Objective 5, replace, “improve” with, “Support investments to”.
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 38, rewrite the third supporting objective for Regional Objective 6a as, “Support efforts to improve the fuel economy...”
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 38, rewrite the first supporting objective for Regional Objective 6b as, “Support collaboration with local and.....”
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 38, rewrite the second supporting objective for Regional Objective 6b as, “Promote public awareness of.....”
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 42, rewrite the supporting objective for Regional Objective 7a as, “Support protection and restoration of natural.....”
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 42, rewrite the first supporting objective for Regional Objective 7b as, “Support efforts to improve multimodal linkages to and....”
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 45, rewrite the first supporting objective for Regional Objective 8 as, “Support the conservation of significant...”

Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 45, rewrite the second supporting objective for Regional Objective 8 as, "Promote access to healthy...."
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 45, rewrite the third supporting objective for Regional Objective 8 as, "Support efforts that may increase the efficiency...."
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 48, rewrite the second sentence of Regional Objective 9a's objective commentary as, "Local and regional initiatives discourage new development...."
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 48, rewrite the first supporting objective for Regional Objective 9a as, "Support development of open space...."
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 48, rewrite the second supporting objective for Regional Objective 9a as, "Discourage new development in areas...."
Theme: A Safe and Resilient Natural and Built Environment	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 48, rewrite the second supporting objective for Regional Objective 9b as, "Support interagency..."
Theme: Healthy, Inclusive and Livable Communities	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 55, rewrite the first sentence of Regional Objective 10's objective commentary as, "The region will support opportunities for residents to lead healthy...."
Theme: Healthy, Inclusive and Livable Communities	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 55, rewrite the first supporting objective for Regional Objective 10 as, "Support safe and convenient active transportation...."

Theme: Healthy, Inclusive and Livable Communities	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 55, rewrite the second supporting objective for Regional Objective 10 as, "Support efforts to expand the regional...."
Theme: Healthy, Inclusive and Livable Communities	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 58, rewrite the third supporting objective for Regional Objective 11 as, "Support the locations of health services...."
Theme: Healthy, Inclusive and Livable Communities	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 62, rewrite the first sentence of Regional Objective 12's objective commentary as, "The region will encourage efforts that increase the housing stock for current and future...."
Theme: Healthy, Inclusive and Livable Communities	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 62, rewrite the first supporting objective for Regional Objective 12 as, "Support efforts to increase the regional supply of housing..."
Theme: A Vibrant Regional Economy	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 68, rewrite Regional Objective 13's objective commentary as, "The region will support efforts to reduce critical health, education, income and opportunity disparities in neighborhoods and communities. The region will capitalize on community, local, regional, and state amenities by promoting reliable transportation connections to key destinations. Local and regional initiatives support infrastructure investments by encouraging new housing and employment in centers accessible by transit."
Theme: A Vibrant Regional Economy	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 68, rewrite the first supporting objective for Regional Objective 13 as, "Support efforts to improve the flow of people....."
Theme: A Vibrant Regional Economy	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 68, rewrite the second supporting objective for Regional Objective 13 as, "Support improvements in access for traditionally...."
Theme: A Vibrant Regional Economy	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 68, rewrite the third supporting objective for Regional Objective 13 as, "Support improvements in access to and from the region's....."

Data and Performance Measures	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 2, Re-write the second sentence of the last paragraph as, “Metro Vision Outcomes, Objectives, and Measures are not intended to judge the performance of individual jurisdictions or projects. Local governments will determine how and when to apply the tenets of Metro Vision based on local conditions and aspirations. No standalone Outcome, Objective, or Measure will be utilized as project funding criteria in the future, but rather the implementation of Metro Vision will consider the diversity of community values and the unique ways jurisdictions contribute to the vibrancy of the region.”
Data and Performance Measures	Douglas County (Rider)	Pg. 7, “How Can We Achieve the Outcomes? – Regional Objectives and Strategic Initiatives” Rewrite the first sentence of the second paragraph as, “To equip local government and partners to support these outcomes.....”



WESTMINSTER

11/28/16

Mr. Brad Calvert, Director of Regional Planning and Development

Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

1290 Broadway #100

Denver, CO 80203

City of Westminster
Department of
Community Development

4800 West 92nd Avenue
Westminster, Colorado
80031

303-658-2400
FAX 303-706-3922

Re: DRCOG Metro Vision 2040 – Letter of Endorsement

Dear Brad,

Please accept this letter as The City of Westminster's endorsement for DRCOG's Metro Vision 2040 Plan (Plan). The continued coordination between the City of Westminster and DRCOG is evident in many of the objectives described in the Plan. Staff believes there is a close relationship between the Plan and our 2013 Comprehensive Plan and 2016 Strategic Plan, which establish the vision of the City of Westminster.

The City of Westminster's vision states "Westminster is the next Urban Center of the Colorado Front Range. It is a vibrant inclusive, creative and well-connected City. People choose Westminster because it is a dynamic community with distinct neighborhoods, quality educational opportunities and a resilient local economy that includes: a spectrum of jobs, diverse, integrated housing; shopping, cultural, entertainment, and restaurant options. It embraces the outdoors and is one of the most sustainable cities in America." Many of these same ideals are echoed throughout the Plan.

We appreciate the opportunity to have been a part of this extensive outreach process and thank you for presenting this document to our City Council at their 11/21/16 Study Session. Your presentation resulted in a generous dialogue which gave our City Council a better understanding of the elements of the Plan and the outreach process.

We will continue to provide DRCOG as much information as possible to ensure all of our combined efforts will continue to result in an engaged and coordinated



region. Please feel free to reach out to the City of Westminster for any assistance you might need, and we will continue to do the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean McCartney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Sean McCartney

Principal Planner

City of Westminster