

Board of Directors Meeting Summary

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

Members/Alternates Present

Jeff Baker, Chair
Julie Duran Mullica
Austin Ward
Adam Paul
Kevin Flynn
Andy Kerr
Sharon Davis
Alison Coombs
Ryan Schuhard*, Alternate
Greg Mills
Deborah Mulvey
Tammy Maurer
Steve Douglas*
Steve Conklin
Emily Baer
Georgia Koefed
Rachel Binkley
Lisa Vitry
Chuck Harmon
Brian Wong
Isabel Cruz, Alternate
Stephen Barr
Larry Strock, Alternate
Alecia Brown*, Alternate
Judi Kern
Hollie Rogin
Colleen Whitlow
Angela Bernhardt
Nicole Sterling*
Richard Kondo
Eric Franzen, Alternate
Mike Foster, Alternate
Justin Martinez
Sarah Nurmella
Bud Starker
Darius Pakbaz
Bill Sirois

Arapahoe County
Adams County
City and County of Broomfield
City and County of Denver
City and County of Denver
Jefferson County
City of Arvada
City of Aurora
City of Boulder
City of Brighton
City of Castle Pines
City of Centennial
City of Commerce City
City of Edgewater
Town of Erie
Town of Georgetown
City of Glendale
City of Golden
City of Idaho Springs
City of Lafayette
City of Lakewood
City of Littleton
Town of Lochbuie
City of Lone Tree
City of Louisville
Town of Lyons
Town of Mead
Town of Morrison
Town of Nederland
City of Northglenn
Town of Parker
Town of Superior
City of Thornton
City of Westminster
City of Wheat Ridge
Colorado Department of Transportation
Regional Transportation District

Others Present: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, Melinda Stevens, Executive Assistant, DRCOG; Michele Riccio*, Adams County; Art Griffith*, Douglas County; Mac Callison, Aurora; Kathleen Bailey*, Mountain View; Kent Moorman*, Thornton; Jordan Rudel*, John Gardocki*, Colorado Department of Transportation; Chris Nevitt, Front Range Passenger Rail; Lisa Kaufman, The Governor's Office; Bradley Miler*, Citizen; and DRCOG staff

*Participated via Zoom

Chair Jeff Baker called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with a quorum present.

Move to approve agenda

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

Front Range Passenger Rail and Joint Service Update

Jacob Riger introduced Chris Nevitt, Chair of the Front Range Passenger Rail District Board, to begin the conversation of the rail update. The district, which was created by the state legislature in 2021, is empowered to plan, finance, and operate passenger rail service across the Front Range, and to propose a tax measure for public approval. The board includes representatives from regional councils of governments, CDOT, freight railroads, Amtrak, RTD, and neighboring states. beyond.

The FRPR is not local transit but intercity rail designed to complement local systems and serve as a “force multiplier” for regional mobility. The project will use existing freight corridors and conventional rail technology for faster, cost-effective delivery, targeting initial service by 2029 with nine core stations and future extensions to Trinidad, Wyoming, and New Mexico. The upcoming Service Development Plan will outline phased implementation and position the district to pursue federal funding.

Lisa Kaufman, Senior Strategic Advisor to Governor Polis, was introduced to outline the state’s efforts to advance passenger rail initiatives, focusing on both the Mountain Rail and Joint Service projects. She described how the state successfully renegotiated a new 25-year access agreement with Union Pacific for the Moffat Tunnel allowing Colorado to operate up to three daily round trips from Denver to Winter Park, Craig, and Steamboat Springs while Union Pacific continues covering operations and maintenance. The first phase, a Denver-to-Granby year-round Amtrak service, is planned to launch by late 2026, with additional routes to follow. Kaufman emphasized that these achievements demonstrate how fast, collaborative negotiation and flexible procurement can deliver results that historically take years, positioning Colorado as a national model for innovative rail access agreements.

The Governor remains fully committed to the broader Front Range Passenger Rail vision, from Fort Collins to Trinidad, but Joint Service represents the first, “starter” phase designed to use existing infrastructure and funding to demonstrate success by 2029. She noted significant challenges: CDOT’s limited rail staffing, voter skepticism of large rail investments, and the complexities of multi-agency coordination. However, new state revenue streams, rental car and oil-and-gas fees, combined with RTD’s strengthened financial position, provide a foundation for progress. The legislature has now required RTD, CDOT, and the Front Range Passenger Rail District to collaborate under one operator and one access agreement to ensure efficiency and cost control. Negotiations with BNSF are underway, aiming for a term sheet by December and a full agreement by January 2026.

Report of the Chair

- Director Kondo reported that the Performance and Engagement Committee met prior to the meeting and received a debrief on the awards celebration that took place on August 27. They also elected Deborah Mulvey to the Nominating Committee.
- Executive Director Rex reported the Finance and Budget Committee met and elected Sharon Davis to the Nominating Committee. They also approved five

resolutions for contracts and received a briefing on contract thresholds that require the committee's approval.

Report of the Executive Director

- Fall 2025 Meeting Schedule: The November 19th business meeting will be replaced with a special virtual meeting on November 5th. Both the December work session and the December 17th business meetings will be held virtually.
- Power Ahead Colorado (Carbon Pollution Reduction Grants): Municipalities and counties must submit Power Ahead Colorado grant applications by October 31 to secure funding for energy code and sustainability projects.
- Oversight Committee Updates: Leadership transitions were announced for the Power Ahead Colorado Oversight Committee: Vice Chair Kondo will assume the chair position, and Emily Baer will become a new DRCOG representative.
- 2025 Civic Academy: The 2025 Civic Academy began with strong participation and engagement from DRCOG leaders in its opening panel. Rex thanked directors Kondo, Shahrezaei, Whitlow for their attendance.
- Recognition of Outgoing Board Members: Several outgoing or term-limited members were honored for their service, including Mayor Bud Starker (Wheat Ridge), Stephen Barr (Littleton), Tammy Maurer (Centennial), Brian Wong, and Mayor Joan Peck, with gratitude expressed for their dedication and contributions to DRCOG.

Public Comment

There were no comments.

Move to approve consent agenda

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

Items on the consent agenda included:

- Summary of the meeting August 20, 2025
- Amendments to the 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program
- Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside

Selection of representative to Nominating Committee.

Executive Director Rex presented this item to the committee. The Nominating Committee consists of member representatives from the Performance & Engagement Committee, the Finance & Budget Committee, the Board, a member selected by the Board Chair, the Immediate Past Chair of the Board, and a Board member representing the City and County of Denver. At the January meeting each year, the Nominating Committee shall present to the Board nominations for Executive Committee members to be elected at the February meeting.

Chair Baker opened up nominations from the floor at 7:50 p.m. Director Cruz nominated Nicole Speer to serve on the Nominating Committee. There were no other nominations.

Director Cruz **moved** to select Nicole Speer of the Board of Directors to the Nominating Committee. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Transportation Improvement Program – Programming Year Adjustments.

Jacob Riger presented an outline of the adjustments to the Directors. The adjustments to the upcoming Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will better align with federal requirements and the updated 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Because the RTP underwent a major update in 2022 to meet new greenhouse gas compliance rules, resetting the federal four-year update cycle, the current TIP schedule no longer matches the RTP timeline. To fix this, staff recommended shifting the next TIP cycle from FY 2028 - 2031 to FY 2029 - 2032, ensuring the updated RTP is adopted before new TIP project selections begin. This revised schedule would start policy discussions in 2026, project calls in 2027, and public review and adoption in 2028. To address the one-year funding gap for FY 2028, DRCOG proposes three actions: continue existing set-aside programs at current levels (\$11.5M), backfill federal funding sources to maintain project stability (\$26M), and roll over the remaining \$48M into the 2029 - 2032 TIP to expand project opportunities. The proposal, unanimously supported by both the Transportation Advisory Committee and the Regional Transportation Committee, seeks approval to formally adopt these timeline and funding adjustments.

Director Mills **moved** to table this item to the next business meeting, which is November 5th. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** with 33 in favor and 2 abstentions.

Regional Transportation District Finishing FasTracks Report.

Jacob Riger invited Bill Sirois to provide an overview of the report to the Board. The report highlights a need for continued coordination with state partners as updated figures and assumptions evolve. Originally approved by voters in 2004, FasTracks is about 75% complete, but major corridors like Northwest Rail, North Metro, Southwest, and Central extensions remain unfinished. The agency's analysis, based on 2019 cost estimates without new design work, shows significant cost increases of 70–90% and limited fiscal capacity due to restricted reserves, debt limits, and growing asset replacement needs. While some state funding from recent legislation (SB24-230 and SB24-184) and potential grants may provide partial support, federal funding options appear limited, leaving an estimated \$1.2 billion shortfall across remaining projects. RTD concluded that new revenue sources and stronger collaboration, particularly through the Front Range Passenger Rail partnership, are essential to advance the program. Updated designs, refined cost estimates, and legislative engagement will continue through November, with the final report due to the legislature before Thanksgiving.

Multimodal Supportive Local Development Toolkit.

Cole Neder presented an overview of the toolkit to the Board. The Built to Move project aims to help local governments better integrate land use and transportation planning to create safer, more connected, and multimodal communities. The toolkit addresses current challenges such as coordination between land use and transportation, the absence of regional design guidance for different community contexts, and limited staff capacity to adopt best practices. It will include a typology framework applicable to urban, suburban, and rural areas; case studies of successful multimodal developments; and practical design standards and templates for local use. Extensive stakeholder engagement is central to the project, including focus groups with member governments and a developer roundtable to

ensure real-world relevance. The project timeline projects the implementation and dissemination of the toolkit by mid-2026.

Committee Reports

State Transportation Advisory Committee

Director Ward reported at its September 4 meeting, STAC recommended adoption of CDOT's 2050 Statewide Transportation Plan and received presentations on CDOT's Fixing Rural Roads and Poor Interstates initiatives and the updated Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

Metro Mayors Caucus

Director Starker stated at the October 1 Metro Mayors Caucus meeting, members received presentations on cybersecurity awareness, Proposition 123 housing funding, DRCOG's housing study, and regional land use coordination among partner organizations. Director Starker also noted this was his final DRCOG meeting, expressing gratitude to the board and staff for an enriching eight-year tenure.

Metro Area County Commissioners

There was no report.

Advisory Committee on Aging

Jayla Sanchez-Warren reported the committee heard an update from the Ombudsman Program about rising care issues in nursing homes, such as staffing shortages, medication errors, and violence, especially as younger residents with behavioral, mental health, or addiction challenges, and aging prisoners, are increasingly being placed alongside older adults, creating serious safety and welfare concerns across the region.

Regional Air Quality Council

Executive Director Rex stated at their October 3 meeting, the council welcomed new member Judi Kern, continued discussions on the draft control strategy blueprint, and celebrated the region's first "clean" ozone season since 2009 under the 2008 standard, a positive milestone.

E-470 Authority

Director Mulvey stated members held a budget workshop focused on its strategic plan, emphasizing improved customer service and bringing more contract work in-house, and participated in the International Bridge, Tunnel, and Toll Association Conference, where key topics included interstate toll interoperability and user-funded models for infrastructure and climate initiatives.

Report from CDOT

Director Pakbaz stated the Transportation Commission met in Glenwood Springs after traveling by train to review CDOT's FY27 budget, with a reminder to watch for snowplows as winter approaches.

Report from RTD

Director Sirois reported the downtown rail replacement project's first phase will close the Kalamath section near Auraria for a week starting Sunday, with completion expected by Thanksgiving. RTD also celebrated the reopening of 16th Street and the full return of shuttle service along the corridor.

Next meeting – November 5, 2025

Other matters by members

There were no other matters by members.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

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

ATTEST:

Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director