

October 2, 2026

Dear Denver City Council Members,

We are writing on behalf of the organizations listed below to express our serious concerns about the ongoing misappropriation of the Transportation and Mobility Special Revenue Fund (T&M SRF) in the Mayor's proposed 2027 budget. **We strongly urge you not only to pursue amendments to the 2027 budget, but to also amend the ordinance that established the T&M SRF to restore, protect, and further clarify the fund's original purpose in future budget years.**

In 2021, Denver doubled parking meter rates and created the T&M SRF to invest the incremental revenue – about \$15 million annually – in pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and Vision Zero safety improvements. As intended, this new revenue significantly increased funding for multimodal safe streets capital projects, totaling \$23 million in the city's 2022 budget, including both T&M SRF and other revenue sources. While this amount is still well below the investment the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI) estimates is needed to achieve the street safety and mobility goals established in the Denver Moves Everyone plan, it represented a significant step in the right direction.

In more recent years, however, the Johnston Administration has increasingly drifted from the T&M SRF's original purpose. **Instead of funding safer, more accessible streets, millions have been redirected to unrelated uses. This misappropriation is particularly disturbing when traffic deaths in Denver are at record highs.** Ninety-four of our neighbors were killed and hundreds more were injured in 2025 in crashes that were predictable and preventable. As of October 1 of this year, **49 more people have been killed on Denver streets, and we expect this number [to rapidly climb](#) in the fall and winter months unless our elected officials act with urgency**

Importantly for allocating public dollars in accordance with our shared values and the intended purpose of the T&M SRF, of those killed this year, **18 were neighbors walking or using a bicycle.** People moving outside of a car continue to be overrepresented in traffic fatalities. Reversing this deadly trend requires meaningful investment in street designs that effectively reduce dangerous traffic speeds and prevent violent crashes in the first place.

Yet in the city's 2026 budget, \$8.4 million – more than half the T&M SRF – was allocated for parking operations. **None of the fund was allocated for multimodal safe streets capital projects.** The Johnston Administration claimed this was necessary because budget shortfalls required DOTI to take over the parking ticket appeals system that had previously been managed through the court system. This justification is hard to square, however, with the fact that the Mayor's proposed 2027 budget removes \$6 million of unused funds "that rolled from 2025 to 2026" from the T&M SRF budget, and the proposed 2027 T&M SRF budget "only includes new revenue." **Why was this \$6 million not spent on multimodal safe streets capital projects as originally intended?**

Even more concerning, **the Mayor's proposed 2027 budget once again allocates \$8.9 million of the T&M SRF to parking operations, and only \$1 million to multimodal safe streets capital projects.** At the same time, the budget assumes a \$2.2 million increase in general fund revenues driven by a new third-hour parking option that began August 14 in downtown Denver, LoHi and the Broadway corridor, and an increase in the daily parking meter bagging fee from \$25 to \$50. **None of this new parking-related revenue is allocated to either safe streets improvements or covering the cost of parking operations.**

Meanwhile, funding for pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and safe streets capital projects remains unacceptably low – a combined total of only \$7.5 million from the T&M SRF and other sources in the proposed 2027 budget. This is far below the high mark of more than \$23 million set in the city's 2022 budget, and an alarming step backward for Denver while people continue to be killed and seriously injured on our roads.

The budget should reflect our city's values. The Mayor's proposed budget is completely at odds with Denver's stated commitment to Vision Zero and the goal of providing safe, healthy, sustainable transportation options for all residents – particularly the most vulnerable people on our streets, including children, older adults, and people with disabilities. City Council must act to correct this failure. We call on you to:

Amend the 2027 budget

- Fund parking operations from sources other than the T&M SRF, including the \$2.2 M in new parking-related revenues that would go into the general fund under the Mayor's proposal.
- Reallocate the \$8.9 million for parking operations in the T&M SRF budget to pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and safe streets capital projects.

Amend the T&M SRF ordinance to enact the following key reforms:

- **Align investments with adopted plans:** Require funds to support implementation of the Vision Zero Action Plan, Safe Routes to School Action Plan, and Denver Moves Bikes, Pedestrians & Trails, and Transit plans.
- **Prioritize infrastructure:** Invest at least 50% in capital projects.
- **Protect the fund:** Prohibit transfers to the General Fund and require year-to-year rollover.
- **Add accountability mechanisms:** Require DOTI to present proposed uses of the fund for review and approval to the DOTI Advisory Board on an annual basis.
- **Define clear rules:** Specify allowable and non-allowable uses in the ordinance.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. We stand ready to support your actions to better align Denver's budget with our values.

Sincerely,

Jill Locantore, Executive Director, Denver Streets Partnership

Rob Toftness, Co-founder, Denver Bicycle Lobby

Cody Bryan, Co-lead, Greater Denver Transit

Alejandra X. Castañeda, Co-organizer, Denver Metro Denver, Pedestrian Dignity

Robert Greer, Steering Committee Member, YIMBY Denver