



IDDEAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES SUMMARY

Date: 03/24/2026

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Location: Virtual (Go to the [IDDEAS Advisory Council website](#) to see meeting recordings)

Summary:

- Council received a report out from the Housing subcommittee, reviewed and approved a new subcommittee proposal by Seth (Justice System Transitions), and called for its membership, and called for membership for the Bridges Subcommittee.
- The group listened to presentations from Disability Law Colorado and REVEL who provided an overview on their IDDEAS funded mini grant awards.
- The meeting was interpreted into Spanish by Yamila Zayat with the Translation & Interpreting Center of Denver. All content originally presented in Spanish (and interpreted into English during the meeting) is not available in the audio recording posted on the IDDEAS website and is therefore described in detail within the meeting minutes.

Discussion topics for next meeting:

- IAC Recruitment.



IDDEAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

3/24/2026 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Attendance:

1. Alexa Gagner
2. Brian Be
3. Jessica Raichle
4. Alicia Cooper
5. Seth Grove
6. Adriana Delatorre
7. Julissa Soto
8. Stefanie Gross
9. Kizzly Blue (non-voting member)

Guests:

9

Absent:

1. Chris Patton
2. Michelle Dumay
3. Molly Mason

DHS Staff:

- Michaela Hennig
- Jordan Mulholland
- Lynn Kutner
- Tom Gamache
- Whitney Nettleton
- Annie Bagatsing
- Robert Wolf

I. Call to Order

Meeting began at 1:16. Alexa motioned to begin, seconded by Jessica.

II. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Jessica motioned to approve minutes with Seth seconding. 5 members voted yes and 1 abstained.

III. Council Updates

Brian Be shared about project Photo Voice at the University of Denver.

Michaela requested that all updates be shared at IAC meeting versus email. If it is an update that's coming from an organization that you're personally affiliated with, please make sure that those updates remain related to the benefit of the entire I/DD community and shared during updates in these meetings. This is so that information will be captured in the minutes and sent out to everyone so that there's written note of it. Email exchanges should be reserved for the purposes of scheduling meetings and providing follow up materials.

CAC Updates: Seth shared the February 17th meeting included a presentation from Becky Mershawn with the TACT program. TACT supports young adults—mainly ages 18 to 21, but also older adults—in finding competitive employment in the trades. They partner closely with DPS transition programs and offer weekend classes, summer programs, mobile trainings, and job coaching. The program continues to grow, now works with about 70 employer partners, and has an 83% job-placement success rate. They currently have a waitlist, and more information is available at www.buildwithtact.org. Additional updates included other programs Mill Levy supports such as DVR (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation) for job coaching while individuals wait for DVR services, as DVR has recently added a waitlist. The meeting also included a listening session where community concerns were raised, especially around Medicaid cuts, the permanent removal of community connector services, and fears within the Latino community about personal information being shared, which has led some families to pull children out of services.

IV. Breathing in Uncertainty

Jessica shared concern about reductions in pay and caregiver shortages with a lot of uncertainty, her heart is with everyone feeling those uncertainties. She said “Shout out to the caregivers out there and for sticking with us.” Stefanie echoed that sentiment and appreciated Jessica lifting that up.

Stefanie Gross recognized there is a lot of burnout in the community and will be offering free classes to community and caregivers at Yoga Center of Denver.

V. Break

VI. Subcommittees

Housing Subcommittee Report out – Brian and Jessica provided the report out for the meeting. During the subcommittee meeting, group members walked through and completed a survey developed by DHS. The survey asked participants to rate the importance of a wide range of housing features—location, amenities, supports, and design elements that could benefit residents with I/DD. Participants shared that many questions were difficult to answer because most features felt universally important. For example, smart-home features like automated thermostats might be essential for some people but unnecessary or even difficult for others. The group emphasized prioritizing universal design that maximizes flexibility so each resident can adjust their environment to their own needs. Jessica highlighted the importance of visual supports for navigation, while others noted that additional senses—like sound and smell—are often overlooked. The group discussed how auditory cues or intentional landscaping scents (lavender, chamomile, citrus) could help with orientation or emotional regulation, especially for people with sensory sensitivities or disabilities such as vision impairments or PTSD. Overall, the main takeaway was that housing for people with IDD should prioritize individualized options within flexible, universally designed environments, rather than rigid, one-size-fits-all features.



Bridges Subcommittee - there was a call for membership for this subcommittee of which was created during the January Council meeting. Seth and Adriana joined the subcommittee. Seth reported no conflict of interest. Adriana stated (as interpreted): "A conflict, no. I think the idea is good and depends who is carrying it out and would like to drive this to the community in a transparent way."

New subcommittee proposal - The "Justice System Transitions" proposal was submitted by Seth on the topic of individuals who are incarcerated going through the incompetency process. The objective would be to explore the potential of establishing temporary care settings that are automatically available upon release from jail where care can be provided and needs of these individuals can be evaluated while more permanent care solutions are pending approval. Alicia motioned to approve subcommittee and Jessica seconded. 5 voted yes, zero no's. Alicia, Brian Be, and Seth agreed to join the subcommittee and reported no conflicts of interest.

Adriana asked (as interpreted): "I just wanted to ask if this is the only subcommittee for now?" Michaela explained that we now have three (3) subcommittees: Housing, Bridges, and Justice System Transitions

VII. VOICES Presentations

Bob Mook from Disability Law Colorado presented on their mini grant award, which helped them expand advocacy resources and develop educational tools on disability rights for the I/DD community. One of their trainings funded by this mini grant was held in partnership with El Grupo Vida. Adriana asked (as interpreted): "When was the focus group conducted and where and what were the ages?" Bob shared it was held in October in Denver with a diverse age range" Adriana said: "I was waiting for this information and was aware focus group was happening but wasn't sure where to find the information." Bob said he would have to connect with El Grupo Vida to discuss this further. Adriana shared "I am a member of El Grupo Vida and I am surprised I wasn't informed when it was happening."

Becky Winkler with REVEL presented on their mini grant award, which helped them facilitate music and art programming for people with I/DD who come to their center.

VIII. Public Comment

Alicia read the public from Tyler Horton: Taking a roll in helping change our community. Having developmental disabilities would be a good feeling to be apart of something that's meaningfull and bringing good to the community and our local people, friends and family. Starting a couple things that they could help with. For our water systems, even recommended recycle donations. Which could generate more resources for professional help. Or even a community building where they could all have a place to educated and grow with a hired team on staff. Even fun activities they could do. Making changes in something big. Makes changes in them that could bring happiness and even more programs that lead



to more resources opening in the future. Which would better the community with them being apart of it. Betters them and betters our knowledge on steps to take for future involvement.

IX. Forecasting next meeting

The next meeting will be held on May 19, one week early to avoid Memorial break.

X. Adjournment

Alicia motioned to adjourn, and Jessica seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:01 pm by a vote of 5 of 5 participating members.

IDDEAS Advisory Council sessions are recorded; recordings are usually available upon request. Please contact DHS's IDDEAS program with any clarifying questions related to these minutes by emailing IDDEAS@Denvergov.org. Recordings and other information can be found at the [IDDEAS webpage](#).