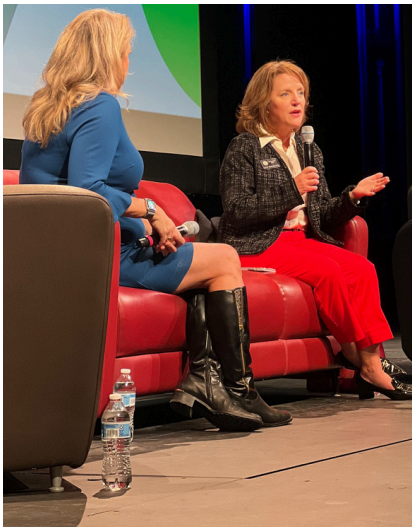


AC-REP Legislative Preview Breakfast Wrap Up

Between a budget deficit of close to \$1 Billion, a lack of housing affordability and challenges related to transportation, workforce, and environmental policy, the 2025 legislative session will prove to be interesting. AC-REP's 2025 Legislative Preview provided an opportunity for members of the Greater Adams County Region's business community to hear priorities from a handful of Adams County elected officials including: Senators Dafna Michaelson Jenet and Kyle Mullica, Representatives Shannon Bird and Manny Rutinel, and Adams County Commissioner-elect Julie Mullica. Below is a summary of the main takeaways:



Lisa Hough, AC-REP sits down with Rep. Shannon Bird

State Budget

Representative Bird, Vice Chair of the Joint Budget Committee (JBC), gave a brief overview of the main causes of the budget deficit and the priorities that committee will focus on funding. The JBC is tasked with balancing the statewide budget – a large undertaking this upcoming year given the forecasted budget shortfall. One of the two main sources of strain Representative Bird identified was funding Medicaid, the other is how the state is collecting tax revenue as constrained by the requirements of the Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR). Representative Bird reinforced the JBC will focus on “working within their means” by funding key areas including K-12 Education, keeping Medicaid afloat and available to the population that needs it, as well as investing in higher education.

Housing Affordability

Both Representative Bird and Senator Mullica stressed the need to address housing affordability in an innovative fashion. Representative Bird is working on a bill to reform construction defect litigation and asked for the Adams County business community to lean in to the conversation by calling local legislators to provide input. Multiple legislators reinforced the reason we face significant affordability issues locally and statewide is a lack of supply and increased demand for middle-income housing, like condominiums. Representative Bird's bill seeks to reform the laws that are hindering housing development and impacting consumers' experiences. Senator Mullica highlighted innovative ways companies are addressing housing development in Adams County specifically – with the modular home manufacturers based in Aurora.



Left to Right: BAPP Co-Chairs: Curtis Rueter and Nicole Milo; Lisa Hough, AC-REP CEO



Transportation and Environment

While there is a budget shortfall, transportation funding is critical to maintaining our region’s infrastructure. As Senator Mullica stressed, our region is home to hardworking, blue-collar workers who utilize the transportation network frequently, and need to be able to rely on a functioning highway network. He suggested that any conversations around transportation investments should include both highways and transit and that we shouldn’t lose sight of the latter. Both he and Representative Rutinel stressed the importance of the ways we can work together on policy that protects our climate and provides the right form of transportation for our communities.



BAPP Co-Chairs: Curtis Reuter and Nicole Milo; moderate conversation with Sen. Kyle Mullica and Rep. Manny Rutinel.



Adams County priorities

Commissioner-Elect Julie Mullica discussed leading from a place of partnership and community. She recognized the concerns around state budget issues, especially as they impact public health. Since Adams County now has several programs and responsibilities with its own Health Department, she wants to ensure programs continue to receive funding to support our region.

As a long-term resident of Adams County, she also shared an excitement to continue learning more about the variety of innovative and creative businesses across the county. She hopes to include more stakeholders in the process of governing and looks forward to working together with AC-REP to support economic vitality for everyone.



We’d like to thank our Business Advocacy and Public Policy Committee (BAPP) for helping us put together the Legislative Preview event. As mentioned by both the legislators in attendance and Adams County Commissioner-elect Mullica, it’s incredibly important for our business leaders to lean in and engage on public policy conversations. If you’re interested in learning more about BAPP and getting involved with more of these types of conversations, please reach out to Lisa Hough at lisa.hough@ac-rep.org.

