

Professional Bio
Rick M. Garcia, MPA
Public Policy/Business Development

Rick M. Garcia is a seasoned leader with years of experience in community, economic development and affordable housing policy implementation which spans federal, state and local governments. Rick has served in various senior appointed and elected positions over his 30 plus years of community and public service. He most recently served from 2019 through 2023 as Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, a cabinet post in the administration of Governor Jared Polis. In 2018, Rick was a visiting adjunct faculty member in the urban policy and planning department at Hunter College in the City University of New York.

Rick previously served as President Obama's appointed Regional Administrator of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) where he was the administration's liaison to six western states' Tribal Nations, governors, county commissioners and mayors. While serving as HUD's regional administrator Mr. Garcia was a designated senior advisor to the HUD Secretary on the implementation and rollout of the Sustainable Communities Initiative planning and infrastructure grant program within the western mountain region.

During Rick's two terms as an elected city of Denver councilmember he focused on reforming the city's zoning ordinances and land use codes to align policies with the metro-region's new transit rail corridors to promote increase ridership and higher density housing development. Additionally, he was an elected Regional Transportation District (RTD) board director for a four-year term and helped to guide the formation of the region's successful construction of the Fastrack's program.

Rick began his early career in economic development with the Pueblo Economic Development Corporation and the Denver Economic Development Corporation and also worked for a national private commercial real estate and retail developer.

Rick is a Senior Fellow at the National Civic League which provides national expertise to support local disaster relief, economic development, and affordable and sustainable housing efforts to member jurisdictions and has previously served as an officer and board chair of the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), board member of the Trust for Public Land, Denver Public Library Commission, Latino Research and Policy Center at the University of Colorado and board member and past chair of the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority.

He earned his Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree from Harvard's Kennedy School and holds a BA in business administration from Columbia College.