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Denver Wants to Create an Office for Public-Private Partnerships, and City Council Fears Being Cut Out of the Process.

Denver Mayor Michael Hancock wants to create an office within city government that will screen, vet and shepherd public-private partnerships related to major city projects, like the redevelopment of the National Western Center and the Denver Center for the Performing Arts — and other projects the city might not even have anticipated yet.

Under the proposal, City Council would get to set the broad parameters of deals, but contracts would be finalized at the administrative level.

The effort is causing major concerns among some City Council members about what authority they'll give up if the idea goes forward. That concern is only exacerbated as they debate the contract for the Great Hall renovations at Denver International Airport, a public-private partnership that will see Ferrovial and its development partners get paid as much as \$1.8 billion over a 34-year period for a \$650 million to \$770 million project.

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Erica Meltzer covers government and politics. She's worked for newspapers in Colorado, Arizona and Illinois and once won a First Amendment Award by showing up in the wrong place at the wrong time. She served in the Peace Corps in Paraguay and can swear fluently in Guarani. She gets emotional about public libraries. Contact Erica Meltzer at 303-502-2802, emeltzer@denverite.com or [@meltzere](#). View all posts by Erica Meltzer