

2025

Public Engagement
Annual Report

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Introduction

2025 offered numerous opportunities for the Denver Regional Council of Governments staff to connect with Denver metro residents and stakeholders through a wide range of programs and services, while continuing to enhance in-

person and virtual engagement efforts. This report provides a summary of those efforts.

Figure 1: Denver Regional Council of Governments public engagement activities for 2025





Image credit: Montbello Organizing Committee

303 ArtWay and Montbello Loop

These two northeast Denver community-developed projects have involved nearly a decade of planning between DRCOG, the Denver Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Trust for Public Land, Radian, Montbello Organizing Committee, and Toole Design. The formal advisory and leadership bodies — 303 ArtWay Steering Committee and Montbello Organizing Committee Policy Council — played a central role throughout the process.

Key 303 ArtWay engagement activities included:

- Project overview and alignment discussions with the steering committee.
- Tabling at the Dahlia Campus Fish Fry and Farmer's Market to share draft recommendations and gather feedback.
- Trade-off activities at Park Hill Day of

Legends and the steering committee meeting, where participants designed street cross-sections using cutouts representing sidewalks, bike lanes, parking, trees and travel lanes.

- Review and validation of refined recommendations and route changes with steering committee.

Key Montbello Loop engagement activities included:

- Montbello Policy Council meetings to share updates, discuss tradeoffs and gather feedback on draft recommendations.
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- Tabling and activities at Montbello Electric Bike Library, Heal the Hood, Back-to-School Night and Montbello 60th Anniversary/ Montbello Alive celebration to share Loop materials and gather feedback.
- Community voting on first-draft concepts hosted with Montbello Live and other local organizations, using engagement boards, sticker voting and facilitated discussions to highlight top-priority segments and crossings.

- Final feedback with Montbello Policy Council, Building Bright Futures youth program and Digital Navigation older adult classes to review near-final recommendations and phasing, confirm they reflected lived experience and refine implementation priorities.

Community input directly shaped the plans by informing route selection, design priorities, phasing strategies and funding approaches. Both projects are expected to have final recommendations in March 2026.

In 2025, the project website had 275 views from 161 visitors and three comments.



Image credit: DRCOG

92nd Avenue Corridor study

This study evaluates safety, access and mobility along 92nd Avenue between Federal Boulevard and Pecos Street. Led by DRCOG, the City of Federal Heights, Mead & Hunt, and Chickenango Marketing Solutions, the study completed two engagement phases in 2025.

Phase one began in March to identify priorities and gather feedback. Outreach included a pancake breakfast, an ice cream social at Holiday Hills Village, the Carstens Park Summer Social and an online survey resulting in 66 completed surveys. Residents emphasized concerns about safety, speeding, unsafe driving, narrow

sidewalks, poor lighting and unsafe pedestrian crossings.

Phase two was completed in September and introduced three design alternatives. A focus group gathered community leaders, residents and subject-matter experts to discuss challenges, funding realities and implementation strategies. The team held two pop-up events at Las Tortas and La Flor Michoacana. Feedback and 52 completed surveys reinforced safety as the top priority and highlighted concerns about unsafe turns, unclear signage and pedestrian access. Residents expressed mixed opinions

on roundabouts, medians and bike lanes, and suggested intersection upgrades such as signals near Holiday Hills and Elm Court and a right-turn lane at Pecos. Staff expect to finalize recommendations and complete the final plan in March 2026.

In 2025, the project website had 638 views from 289 visitors and 54 comments.

Active Transportation Plan

DRCOG's Active Transportation Plan is a guide for extending walking, bicycling and rolling to everyone in the Denver region. In May 2024, staff began developing the plan in collaboration with local governments, partners and stakeholders. The keystone is the three-part network of pedestrian focus areas, short-trip opportunity zones and regional active transportation corridors. The plan includes guidance, case-making tools, recommended actions and performance measures to track progress. The plan sets a roadmap to achieve targets, including zero traffic deaths and injuries by 2040, reduced transportation emissions, and support for healthy communities and a vibrant regional economy.

Between July 31 and September 2, DRCOG collected feedback on the draft plan, the Sidewalk Delivery Guide and the Building a Better Bicycle+ Program.

The DRCOG Board of Directors will vote on the final plan adoption in January 2026.

In 2025, the project website had 2,057 views from 935 visitors and 77 comments.

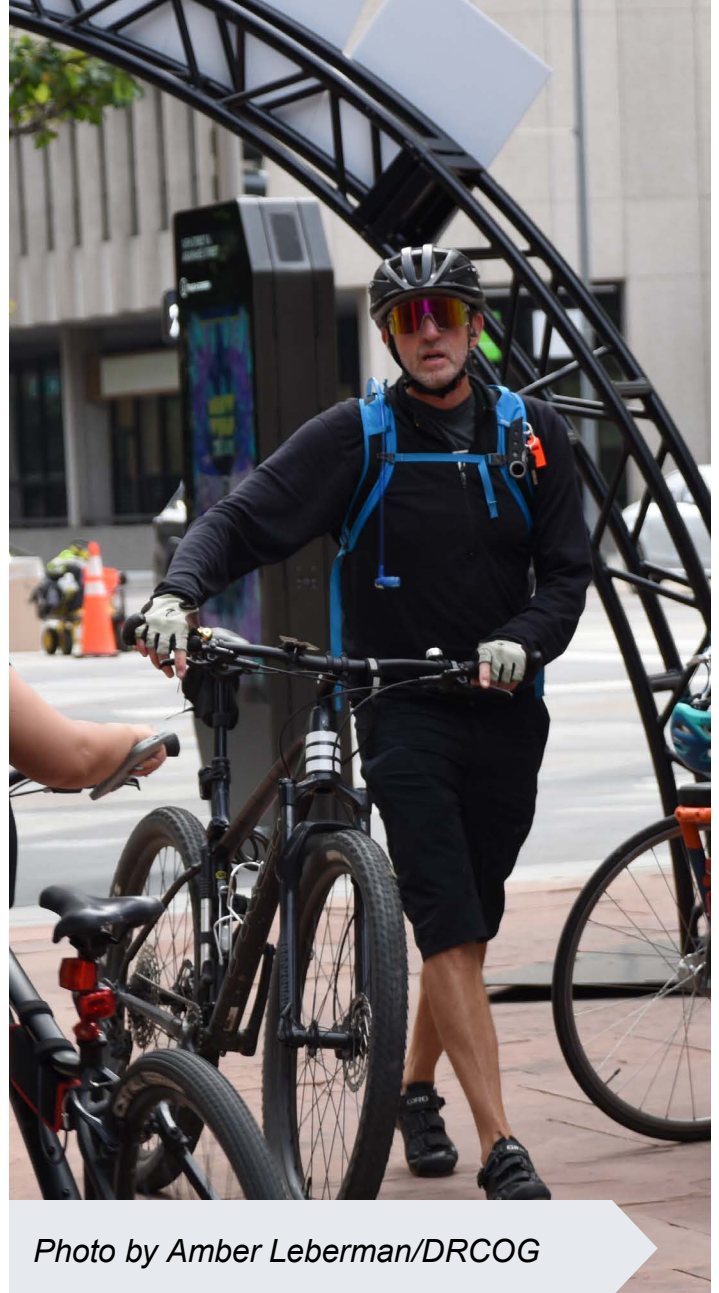


Photo by Amber Leberman/DRCOG

Area Agency on Aging



Photo by Jessica Hughes/DRCOG

Community outreach is a core and mandated service of the Area Agency on Aging, commonly known as AAA, and a critical way to connect older adults and caregivers to the information and support they need. Outreach efforts focus on education, resource navigation, direct services such as application assistance and gathering meaningful community input to inform planning and service delivery.

The AAA intentionally targets underserved and priority populations, including family caregivers, individuals living in the Eastern Plains and mountain communities, county councils on aging, minority communities, immigrants and

refugees, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with low incomes, and veterans. In addition, staff regularly engage with community-based contractors and government agencies to strengthen partnerships, improve coordination and expand access to services.

In 2025, the AAA conducted 313 outreach events, reaching 2,638 individuals across the region. These events raise awareness of available services, reduce barriers to access and ensure that community voices, especially those from historically underrepresented populations, are heard and reflected in the AAA programs and priorities.

Awards celebration

Under the theme “Innovate, Collaborate, Elevate,” the 2025 DRCOG awards celebration recognized individuals, projects, programs and collaborations that have elevated the quality of life for many of the region’s residents.

The August 27 celebration, emceed by 9News consumer reporter Steve Staeger, honored 18 winners across four award categories: Metro Vision Awards, Distinguished Service Awards, Way to Go Awards and the John V. Christensen Memorial Award.



Photo by Jessica Hughes/DRCOG



Image credit: DRCOG

Brighton Core City Circulation Plan

DRCOG is leading this study with the City of Brighton as part of DRCOG's Community Based Transportation Planning Program. It was selected because it identifies specific mobility needs for historically marginalized communities and seeks to develop community-informed solutions. This plan seeks to improve transportation options and safety on Bridge Street, and to enhance access to Brighton's historic downtown. This 13-month study will evaluate improvements to all travel modes along the corridor to support mobility and expand travel options that enable people to safely access jobs, goods, services and destinations. Plan goals include prioritizing safety, providing more space for active transportation, improving street crossings, ensuring reliable access

to destinations and creating an inviting street with lighting and landscaping.

Staff commenced the study in March and began three phases of public engagement: reviewing existing conditions and visioning (from March to May), evaluating project elements and alternatives (from May to August), and developing the corridor plan (from August to December). The team conducted three surveys — one for each phase — with a total of 197 respondents. There were also 46 comments from an online mapping activity. The final plan is expected to be completed in December 2026.

In 2025, the project website had 1,507 views from 820 visitors and 245 comments.



Photo by Nicole Lovato/DRCOG

Civic Academy

Through an annual seven-week course, the Civic Academy introduces participants to important regional issues like transportation, economic vitality, housing and civic engagement. Each year, DRCOG adds more civically informed and active metro-area residents to the more than 1,000 Civic Academy alumni.

Staff kicked off the 2025 Civic Academy on September 30. Participants learned from

local experts about regional issues such as transportation, affordable housing, food access and community building. Participants created individual action plans for a project or initiative to implement in their community. On November 11, the 26 participants shared their action plans and received completion certificates. The next Civic Academy is expected to start in fall 2026.

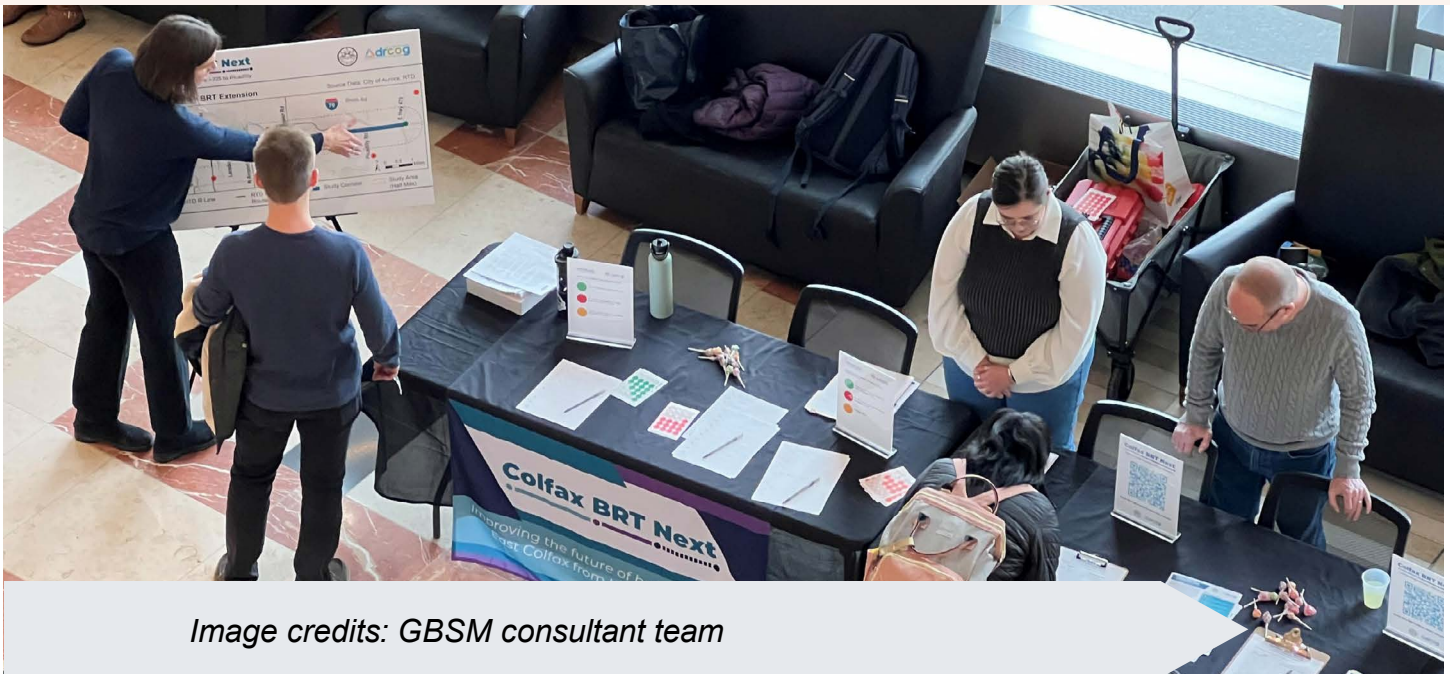


Image credits: GBSM consultant team

Colfax Bus Rapid Transit Next study

In late 2024, DRCOG kicked off the Colfax Bus Rapid Transit, commonly known as BRT, Next study in partnership with the City of Aurora, Arapahoe and Adams counties, the Regional Transportation District, and the Colorado Department of Transportation. The study will identify future bus rapid transit options serving East Colfax Avenue between I-225 and Picadilly/E-470. Starting in February 2025, the project team has been active in the community, sharing information and getting thoughts on what matters most for improving travel along the East Colfax stretch. The team reached out

to the community and stakeholders through the project website, surveys, webinars, open houses, emails, flyers and focus groups, and continued this engagement through January 2026. The team will use this input, along with technical analysis, to shape a recommended alternative. The study is scheduled for completion in spring 2026 and will outline the next steps for funding and implementation.

In 2025, the project website had 3,891 views from 1,775 visitors and 185 comments.

Commerce City Microtransit study

In June, DRCOG staff kicked off a study to identify microtransit solutions for everyone living or traveling in the City of Commerce City's core, where many people lack dependable transportation. The study also examines the feasibility of connections to the northern front range. Commerce City applied for the Regional Transportation District Partnership Grant for a microtransit pilot in 2025 but decided to conclude this study before launching a pilot, enabling more robust community engagement and analysis to ensure success.

In the first phase of engagement from August to October, the project team reached out to the public online and in person to understand current travel experiences and identify potential solutions. The team will continue meeting with the public in the second phase of engagement in 2026, from February through April, to finalize transportation recommendations and the implementation plan, with the final plan expected to be completed in spring 2026.

In 2025, the project website had 395 views, 197 visitors and 139 comments.



Photo by Jessica Hughes/DRCOG

Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan update

As the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the Denver region, DRCOG develops the plan to guide the region's investments in the multimodal transportation system. The plan is typically updated every four years and amended as needed to ensure its content remains relevant and reflects current trends, needs and priorities. DRCOG staff, working with regional partners and local governments, are currently leading the process

of updating the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan.

In October, DRCOG staff received 133 candidate project submissions for the 2026 update to the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan. Staff worked with a regional review panel and planning staff from the Colorado Department of Transportation and the Regional Transportation District to review submissions, including a draft

financial plan, and to create a recommended list of project and program investment priorities. The DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee approved the list of recommended investment priorities on December 15, with minor revisions to the cost and staging periods of a handful of projects. The DRCOG Regional Transportation Committee and DRCOG Board of Directors will vote on the recommended investment priorities for the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan in January 2026.

The team reached out to the public and stakeholders online and in person throughout the process. Staff attended 14 large and small community events across DRCOG's 10 counties in 2025, exchanging with more than 5,500 event attendees. Staff also presented at stakeholder group meetings and convened a youth advisory panel and civic advisory group. Participants submitted comments about the project list, responded to the online survey and attended a meeting to share input.

In 2025, the project website had 1,400 views, 782 visitors and 326 survey submissions.



Image credit: DRCOG

Pecos Corridor Study

This 12-month study began in March and is led by DRCOG in partnership with Adams County. The goal of the study is to develop a long-term vision and safety recommendations for travel along Pecos Street from 62nd Parkway to 84th Avenue. Staff expect to finalize recommendations and complete the plan in March 2026.

Phase one engagement from July to August included the formation of a paid community advisory committee and the following activities:

- Yard signs in four locations.
- Project flyers were distributed to eight businesses.
- Organic social media posts.
- Community advisory committee meeting with 10 attendees.
- Three in-person focus groups, totaling 45 attendees.
- Two pop-up events where the team spoke with approximately 80 people.
- 192 completed surveys and 40 comments.

Phase two engagement from September to October included:

- Community advisory committee meeting with nine attendees.
- 12 in-person engagement events, including pop-ups and door-to-door outreach, reaching 165 people.
- Organic and one boosted social media post.
- 492 online and in-person surveys completed.
- In 2025, the project website had 3,888 views, 2,648 visitors and 581 comments.

Power Ahead Colorado

Power Ahead Colorado is a five-year federally funded program designed to improve air quality and public health by reducing the environmental impact of the building sector, the region's largest source of end-use greenhouse gas emissions.

The program will support the adoption of high-efficiency heat pumps and energy-efficient home upgrades by providing advising services, financial incentives and targeted assistance for low-income households. Power Ahead Colorado also includes investments in workforce development, education and local government policy coordination to help advance the region's transition to cleaner, more efficient buildings.



Photo by Emily Loker/DRCOG

In 2025, staff initiated a competitive request for proposal process to identify a community engagement vendor to support development of the program's engagement strategy. Following review and selection, DRCOG contracted with Kearns & West to lead engagement activities. Work began in late 2025 and included initiating the development of a comprehensive community engagement plan to guide outreach, participation and coordination across the region.

A key focus of this initial phase was designing the structure for a community-based organization grant program. This structure will help ensure that trusted local organizations are resourced

to support outreach and engagement activities, especially in communities that are historically underserved or disproportionately affected by poor air quality and high energy burdens. The community-based organization grant program, and other engagement activities will coincide with the program launch in 2026.



Photo by Nicole Lovato/DRCOG

Public Engagement Plan

DRCOG staff updated the existing Public Engagement Plan, which was finalized and presented to the Board of Directors in 2025. Since the adoption in 2019 and the amendment in 2021, DRCOG has developed new plans and programs, refined existing strategies and explored equitable engagement strategies. Staff initiated

the update over the summer and conducted outreach to internal and external stakeholders. Stakeholders and the public had the opportunity to review and comment on the updated plan.

In 2025, the project website had 436 views from 228 visitors and 15 comments.

Regional Housing Strategy

Following the DRCOG Board of Directors acceptance and the Colorado Department of Local Affairs approval of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment in October 2024, staff began sharing the process for local governments to participate in this guide for future housing planning, strategy and action. This allows local governments in the DRCOG region to comply with the state law's housing needs assessment requirement if they participate in the regional assessment. DRCOG hosted a webinar to share the process for local governments to indicate their participation in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment from July through September 2025. DRCOG also conducted individual outreach efforts and hosted office hours to share the process with local governments before the September 2025 deadline. In total, 36 member governments submitted comments to participate in the regional assessment.

In 2025, staff launched the DRCOG Regional Housing Strategy, which builds upon the Regional Housing Needs Assessment to develop a coordinated, data-driven approach to address shared housing challenges across the Denver region. It focuses on aligning local policies, community needs and regional goals around housing affordability and connectivity. The goal is to identify where regional collaboration can

lead to meaningful action and to learn from each community about local initiatives making a difference. Staff are engaging with a steering committee and advisory group throughout the process, as well as planning and housing staff from DRCOG's member jurisdictions and other housing stakeholders within the Denver region.

Staff have begun collaborating with local governments participating in the assessment. In December 2025, DRCOG began collaborating with the City of Arvada for the Arvada Livable Centers in Transit-Oriented Communities assessment. The team began an investigative phase that will continue through March 2026, with initial public engagement to identify what is important to the public and stakeholders. Starting in March 2026, the team will conduct public engagement and begin developing strategies to balance neighborhood needs with community priorities. The assessment is expected to be completed and compiled into an actionable final report in July 2026.

Regional Multimodal Freight Plan update

DRCOG is updating its Regional Multimodal Freight Plan, which will guide freight planning and infrastructure investment in the Denver area. Planning for safe, efficient and sustainable freight and goods movement throughout the Denver region is an essential part of the transportation planning process. DRCOG is collaborating with local communities, state and federal partners, freight industries, and other key stakeholders to develop an updated plan. In 2025, the project team engaged stakeholders and the public in multiple ways, including:

- One stakeholder engagement survey with 33 submissions.
- Two project steering committee meetings.
- Two State Freight Advisory Committee presentations and project updates.

- One-on-one engagement and feedback meetings with Jefferson County, the City of Commerce City, and the City and County of Denver.

In 2025, the project website had 91 views and 61 visitors.



Image credit: DRCOG

Sheridan Corridor Safety Study

DRCOG initiated the Sheridan Corridor Safety Study to make travel safer for all users, whether they are driving, riding transit, walking or rolling. Focused on the Sheridan Boulevard between Interstate 76 to the north and U.S. Route 285 to the south, the study is a partnership between DRCOG, the Colorado Department of Transportation, the City and County of Denver, Lakewood, Edgewater, Wheat Ridge, Mountain View, Adams County and Jefferson County.

Robust community engagement was divided into three phases: safety issue identification in the spring, review of draft recommendations in the fall and final plan distribution in winter. The project team reached more than 3,500 people through

digital engagement on the project website and more than 600 people at 24 in-person events along the corridor. Engagement included creating three interactive maps on the project website for issue identification and feedback collection on recommendations, attending community meetings and festivals along the corridor, hosting five focus groups in partnership with three nonprofit organizations, conducting pop-up outreach at transit stops and libraries, creating a text messaging campaign to 12,700 people and hosting a civic advisory committee.

In 2025, the project website had 6,514 views from 2,994 visitors with 372 comments.



Photo by JR Goodwin/DRCOG

Way to Go

Way to Go is a federally funded program that reduces traffic congestion and improves air quality by reducing single-occupant vehicle use. In addition to regionwide marketing, which reaches millions of residents, program staff conduct outreach to both communities and employers.

Staff participated in numerous community and tabling events, like the Mile High Society for Human Resource Management annual conference and the first Denver Bike Fest community event. Additionally, Way to Go staff collaborated with Denver7 to provide bike safety

information to the public. They also participated in Foxy's Mobile Market to highlight the Regional Transportation District transit access. Staff hosted employer events at locations including the Martin/Martin, Inc. headquarters in Golden, organized a carpool social at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, and hosted a sign-up event with Davis Partnership Architects.

Through its annual Go-Tober campaign, staff collaborated directly with employers who competed against similarly sized companies to promote commuting alternatives and challenge employees to explore new commute options.

In 2025, 87 organizations participated, with 1,323 total participants tracking 32,829 non-solo driving trips totaling 279,739 miles. More than 3,000 cyclists participated in the Winter Bike to Work Day event on February 14, an annual event organized by DRCOG's Way to Go team. Organizations throughout the region hosted nearly 100 rider appreciation stations for visitors to pick up hot drinks, breakfast and free giveaway items from event supporters. An estimated 14,000 commuters across the Denver region left their cars at home and bicycled to work on June 25 for Bike to Work Day. 239 organizations hosted rider appreciation stations across the state, welcoming riders with food, drinks, smiles and giveaways. 600 employers and local governments took part in the fun by participating in the Bike to Work Day Business Challenge.

Looking ahead to 2026

DRCOG staff anticipate several engagement opportunities in 2026, including but not limited to: Power Ahead Colorado program, Livable Centers Small-Area Planning program, Coordinated Transit Plan Update for human service transportation, Regional Multimodal Freight Plan, Florida Avenue corridor study, Built to Move toolkit for multimodal development standards, Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan update, Speer/Leetsdale/Parker Bus Rapid Transit Alternatives Analysis, and Regional Housing Needs Assessment studies. Staff will continue to support the annual Civic Academy, winter and summer Bike to Work Day events, and Go-Tober.

