

**Executive Committee**

Jeff Baker Chair	Colleen Whitlow Vice Chair	Richard Kondo Secretary	Jeslin Shahrezaei Treasurer	Steve Conklin Immediate Past Chair	Douglas W. Rex Executive Director
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**Agenda**  
**Board Work Session**  
**Wednesday, February 4, 2026**  
**4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.**  
**Video/Web Conference**  
**Denver, CO**

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1. Call to order
2. Public Comment  
Up to 15 minutes is allocated now for public comment and each speaker will be limited to 3 minutes. If there are additional requests from the public to address the Board, time will be allocated at the end of the meeting for public comment but shall be limited to an additional 15 minutes. The chair requests that there be no public comment on issues for which a prior public hearing has been held before this Board.
3. Summary of the October 10, 2025, Board Work Session (Attachment A)
4. Status of the Power Ahead Colorado Program (Attachment B) Robert Spotts, Manager, Power Ahead Colorado
5. Area Agency on Aging Update (Attachment C) Jayla Sanchez-Warren, Director, Area Agency on Aging
6. Adjourn

**ATTACH A**

## **Board Work Session Summary**

Wednesday, October 1, 2025

Meeting held via Zoom

### **Members/Alternates Present**

Colleen Whitlow, Chair

Jeff Baker

Adam Paul

Andy Kerr

Sharon Davis

Nicole Speer

Deborah Mulvey

Tim Dietz

Tammy Maurer

Steve Douglas

Steve Conklin

Emily Baer

Raymond Byrd

Chuck Harmon

Brian Wong

Jeslin Shahrezaei

Marissa Harmon

Alecia Brown

Joan Peck

Judi Kern

Kathleen Bailey

Laura Dennis

Richard Kondo

John Diak

Justin Martinez

Sarah Nurmela

Bud Starker

Rachel Hultin

Town of Mead

Arapahoe County

City and County of Denver

Jefferson County

City of Arvada

City of Boulder

City of Castle Pines

Town of Castle Rock

City of Centennial

City of Commerce City

City of Edgewater

Town of Erie

Town of Firestone

Town of Idaho Springs

City of Lafayette

City of Lakewood

City of Lone Tree

City of Lone Tree

City of Longmont

City of Louisville

Town of Mountain View

Town of Mountain View

City of Northglenn

Town of Parker

City of Thornton

City of Westminster

City of Wheat Ridge

City of Wheat Ridge

Others Present: Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, Melinda Stevens, Executive Assistant, DRCOG; Josh Sender, Adams County; Mac Callison, Aurora; Kent Moorman, Thornton; Carol Quinn, Camille Ziccardi, Darren Allison, Karsh Hagan; Rachel Meier, Lotus; and DRCOG staff.

Chair Whitlow called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **DRCOG Comprehensive Climate Action**

Max Monk provided an overview of the plan to the Directors. The Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) is a major milestone in the Denver region's climate planning, funded through a \$1 million Climate Pollution Reduction Grant awarded to DRCOG. It builds directly on the earlier Priority Climate Action Plan, expanding its scope to address emissions across all major greenhouse gas sectors, including electricity, transportation, buildings, industry, agriculture and natural lands, and waste, and incorporating a region-specific greenhouse gas inventory. The CCAP is structured to set both long-term and near-term emissions reduction

goals (including alignment with Colorado's targets such as 65 % reduction by 2035 and net-zero by 2050), analyze mitigation strategies for each sector, evaluate workforce and economic impacts, and identify potential funding to support implementation. Robust public and stakeholder engagement with local governments, equity-focused groups, and the public has been integrated throughout the planning process, ensuring the plan prioritizes benefits for vulnerable communities and aligns with regional needs. The draft CCAP reflects extensive technical work and consultation and is expected to be adopted by the DRCOG Board in November 2025.

The plan emphasizes voluntary, interconnected strategies that DRCOG is uniquely positioned to advance in partnership with its 59 member jurisdictions. Core existing measures from the Priority Climate Action Plan (such as building decarbonization, energy advising, rebates and incentives, and regional transportation expansions) remain foundational, with new priorities added under the broader CCAP framework, including advance transportation demand management, clean transportation infrastructure support, and comprehensive regional waste planning. DRCOG's role is described as a central convener and coordinator that will facilitate collaboration, support policy alignment, track progress, and ensure equitable distribution of resources and benefits. The CCAP also includes supporting analyses on workforce needs, co-pollutant reductions, and benefits to marginalized communities, positioning the region to pursue implementation funding and accelerate climate action beyond planning toward tangible reductions and resilience.

### **Decarbonize DRCOG Branding**

Chris Selk introduced Carol Quinn, Camille Ziccardi, and Darren Allison of Karsh Hagan to present the branding of this program to the Directors. The Decarbonize DRCOG Branding initiative outlines the process DRCOG used to develop a compelling brand identity for its regional decarbonization program. In 2025, DRCOG contracted marketing firm Karsh Hagan and sub-consultants to lead a structured branding process that included market research, one-on-one stakeholder interviews, a communications advisory council, and an online focus group of 180 homeowners across the region. This research sought to understand how best to communicate complex topics like energy efficiency and electrification in a way that resonates with diverse audiences, particularly homeowners, without relying on technical jargon. Based on these insights, the project team and DRCOG staff selected the program name Power Ahead Colorado along with a logo and color palette consistent with DRCOG's visual identity. The brand will undergo further refinement and be launched more widely in January 2026.

The branding strategy centers on creating recognition, trust, and emotional connection around the region's decarbonization goals. The research highlighted that homeowners care most about comfort, health, safety, and future savings (especially when considering upgrades like heat pumps) so messaging emphasizes achievable benefits rather than technical language. DRCOG staff evaluated 75+ name options and narrowed them through testing, with Power Ahead Colorado emerging as the favorite: roughly three-quarters of the 180 homeowners surveyed found it meaningful and appealing. The initiative now moves into deeper creative development and campaign planning, aiming to use the new brand to engage communities and support uptake of decarbonization programs and resources across the Denver region.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.



# ATTACH B

## Board Work Session

Meeting date: February 4, 2026

Agenda Item #: 4

### Status of the Power Ahead Colorado Program

Agenda item type: Discussion

#### Summary

Status update on the Power Ahead Colorado Program.

#### Background

In August 2024, DRCOG received a \$199.7 million Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to develop and implement a regional Building Decarbonization Program through October 2029. The four initiatives that comprise the program, building policy, marketing and communications, incentives, and advising and workforce have made meaningful progress in advancing the program's goals.

#### *Building Policy Collaborative*

The \$39 million Building Policy Collaborative helps DRCOG jurisdictions adopt advanced building energy codes and performance standards. The first funding round awarded \$25.95 million to 27 jurisdictions for staffing, training, permitting upgrades, community engagement, and technical assistance. Round two of funding is slated for summer 2026. The New Buildings Institute was selected as the research vendor in Q4 2025 and will develop a regional building and energy inventory, policy modeling, and an electrification and grid-readiness assessment.

#### *Marketing and communications*

On January 13, the first iteration of the Power Ahead Colorado website launched, along with the Colorado Contractor Hub, and provides information on heat pumps and testimonials from community members. Concurrently, advertisements across digital media began and will showcase the program across radio, tv, social media and more. Community engagement is in early stages with stakeholder mapping and creation of community engagement plans with community based organization work kicking off in summer 2026.

#### *Incentives/advising*

VEIC was chosen to design and administer the \$59.6 million incentives and advising program, and is currently developing detailed measure designs and conducting stakeholder engagement to support the launch of broad residential and commercial incentives by spring 2026. The Income Eligible Program, which will provide comprehensive home upgrades to 1,600 households is currently in contract negotiations with elected vendor Energy Outreach Colorado and a policy for defining eligibility criteria will come to the committees and Board later in 2026 for approval. The innovation grants program, designed to test and scale new approaches to business, service access, or program design, completed procurement in Q3 2025 with VEIC selected to administer the \$6 million program; DRCOG is currently working with VEIC on detailed program design and stakeholder engagement, and expect to bring the policy for how incentives will be distributed to the DRCOG Board for approval by Q2 2026.



**Workforce**

The Colorado Contractor Hub is now live, providing training reimbursements, license verification, and customer lead access. Furthermore, the five Green Workforce Hubs will launch in Q2 of 2026, offering three Career Pathway Tracks: Building Performance/Energy Efficiency, HVAC/Mechanical Systems, and Electrical/Renewable Energy. For the Growth Access Programs, contracts are under negotiations for the three selected vendors with Q3 2026 as the expected launch date.

DRCOG staff continue to work diligently with regional partners, local government staff and its vendors to further guide and implement the Power Ahead Colorado Program.

**Action by others**

None.

**Previous discussion/action**

None

**Recommendation**

None.

**Attachments**

Staff presentation.

**For more information**

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at 303-480-6701; or Robert Spotts, Power Ahead Colorado Manager, at 720-272-9476 or [rspotts@drcog.org](mailto:rspotts@drcog.org).





# Status of the Power Ahead Colorado Program

DRCOG Board Work Session- February 4, 2026



# Power Ahead Colorado

- Funded by a \$200m grant through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- Implementation through October 2029.
- Overseen and advised by a Technical Committee and Oversight Committee, composed of DRCOG Board Members, local government staff, and special interests.

# Our mission and vision

Power Ahead Colorado provides home and building owners with a trusted path to healthier, safer comfort, through rightsized heat pumps, expert advising, vetted installers and rebate support.

We are powering better homes, stronger communities and quality jobs for Colorado's clean, healthy future.



# Our team



**Robert Spotts**  
Manager, Power Ahead  
Colorado



**Sharon Day**  
Manager, Administration  
& Finance

## Building Policy

## Workforce & Industry Development

## Energy Advising, Rebates, & Low-income Programs

## Communications & Community Engagement

## Climate Pollution Reduction Planning

## Administration and Finance



**Greg Miao**  
Program  
Manager



**Clay McCombe**  
Program  
Manager



**Mac Prather**  
Program  
Manager



**Chris Selk**  
Program  
Manager



**Maddy Nesbit**  
Senior Planner



**Katie Maxted**  
Contracts Lead



**Crystal  
Egelkamp**  
Senior Program  
Specialist



**Devon  
Reifsneider**  
Senior Program  
Specialist



**Fernando  
Briones**  
Senior Program  
Specialist



**Andy Birkey**  
Senior Program  
Specialist



**Kenia Flores**  
Compliance Lead



**Luke  
Charbonneau**  
Senior Program  
Specialist



**Emily Loker**  
Senior Program  
Specialist

**Vacant**  
Contracts and  
Compliance  
Specialist

**Vacant**  
Contracts and  
Compliance  
Specialist





# Our partners

- Building Decarbonization Network
  - DRCOG
  - Local government staff
  - Xcel Energy
  - Colorado Energy Office
  - Rewiring America
  - Collective Clean Energy Fund





# Building Policy

# Building Policy Collaborative (BPC): Benefits & Resources



**Regional  
Decarbonization  
Roadmap**



**Collaboration  
and Peer Learning**



**Model Policy  
Options**



**Regional  
Engagement**



**Research  
Support**

# Building Policy Collaborative updates

- Kicked off in May 2025.
  - 3 Steering Committee meetings.
  - 3 Full Building Policy Collaborative meetings.
  - 16 cohort meetings.
  - Policy working groups start in February.
  - Region building roadmap drafted.
- An average of over 30 participating jurisdictions.

# Policy Working Groups: Topics

## Policy Development

Commercial and  
Multifamily  
Benchmarking to  
Building  
Performance  
Standards

Residential  
Transparency and  
“Step-Up” Policy  
Options

## Policy Adoption & Implementation

Energy Code  
Adoption and  
Implementation  
Support

*Friendly reminder, if you received a subaward we ask that you commit to participating in a policy working group.*



# Policy Working Groups Timeline

[illegible]

# Engagement to Date

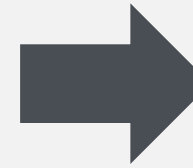
- Completed Engagement Plan.
- Built out industry contact list.
- Connector calls with key industry contacts to confirm how, when, where, and who to engage.
- Planning industry sessions to identify opportunities, challenges, partnerships, including:
  - Colorado Real Estate Alliance presentation.
  - Building Jobs for Colorado presentation.



# Engagement Feedback Loops

## Phase 1 Feb-May

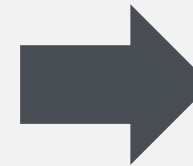
- Discuss opportunities and challenges.
- Surface implementation realities, costs, workforce, and friction points.
- Input informs early policy concepts and assumptions.



Feedback to BPC & policy working groups

## Phase 2 Oct-Dec

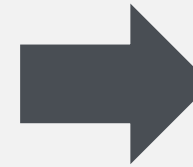
- Community partners assess equity, affordability, and lived impacts.
- Industry tests draft policies for practicality.
- Input identifies needed refinements and supports.



Integrated feedback to refine policies & messaging

## Phase 3 Apr-June

- Policies reflect feasibility and community priorities.
- Lessons inform implementation guidance and adoption strategies.



Ongoing learning feeds future engagement and adjustments

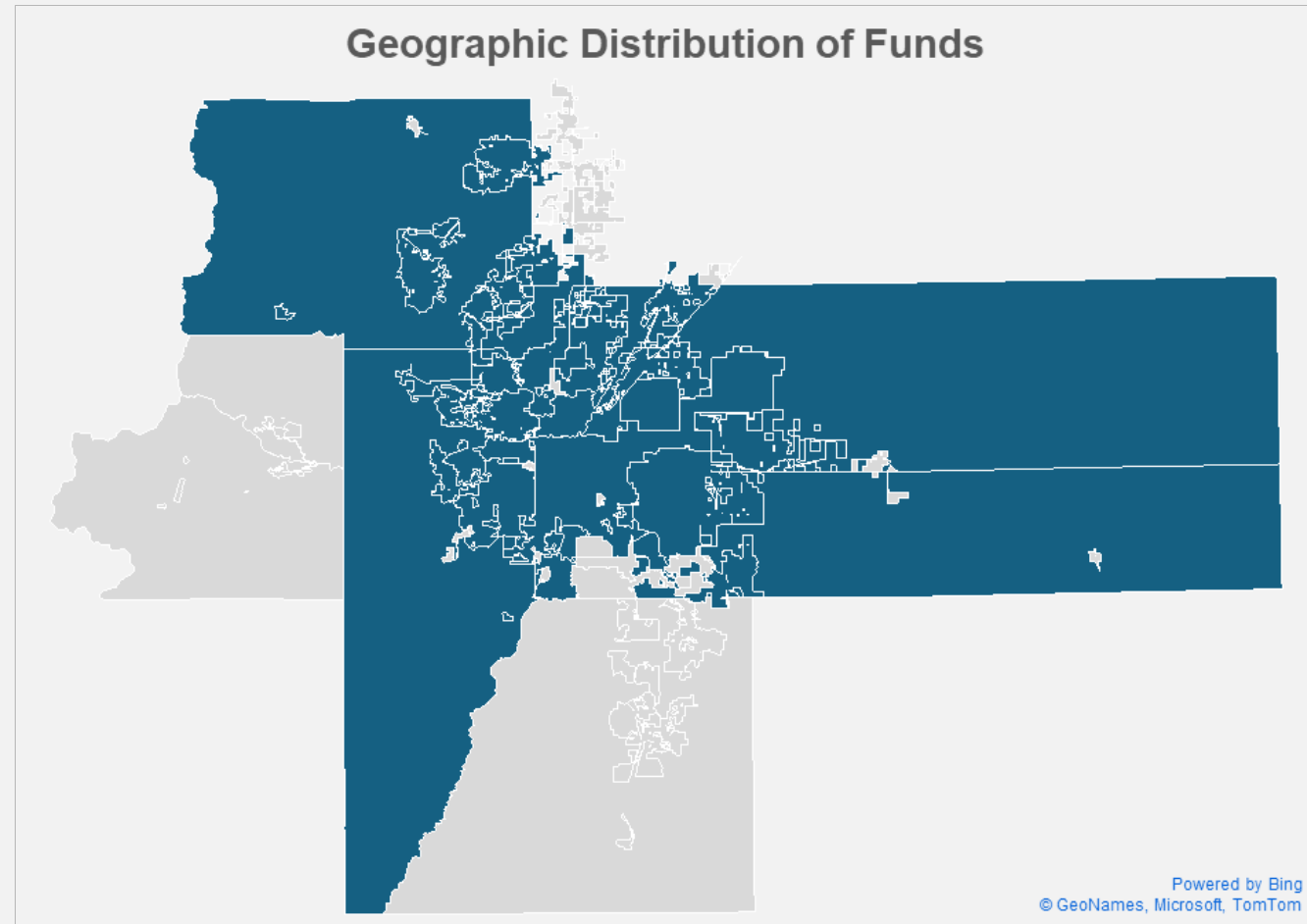
A photograph of a modern, multi-story building with large glass windows and a brick walkway in the foreground. The building has a dark roof and a mix of brown and grey exterior panels. The address number 1025 is visible on the corner. The sky is clear blue. A semi-transparent white box with a dark blue diagonal stripe is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the title text.

# BPC Subaward Updates



# Round 1: Results

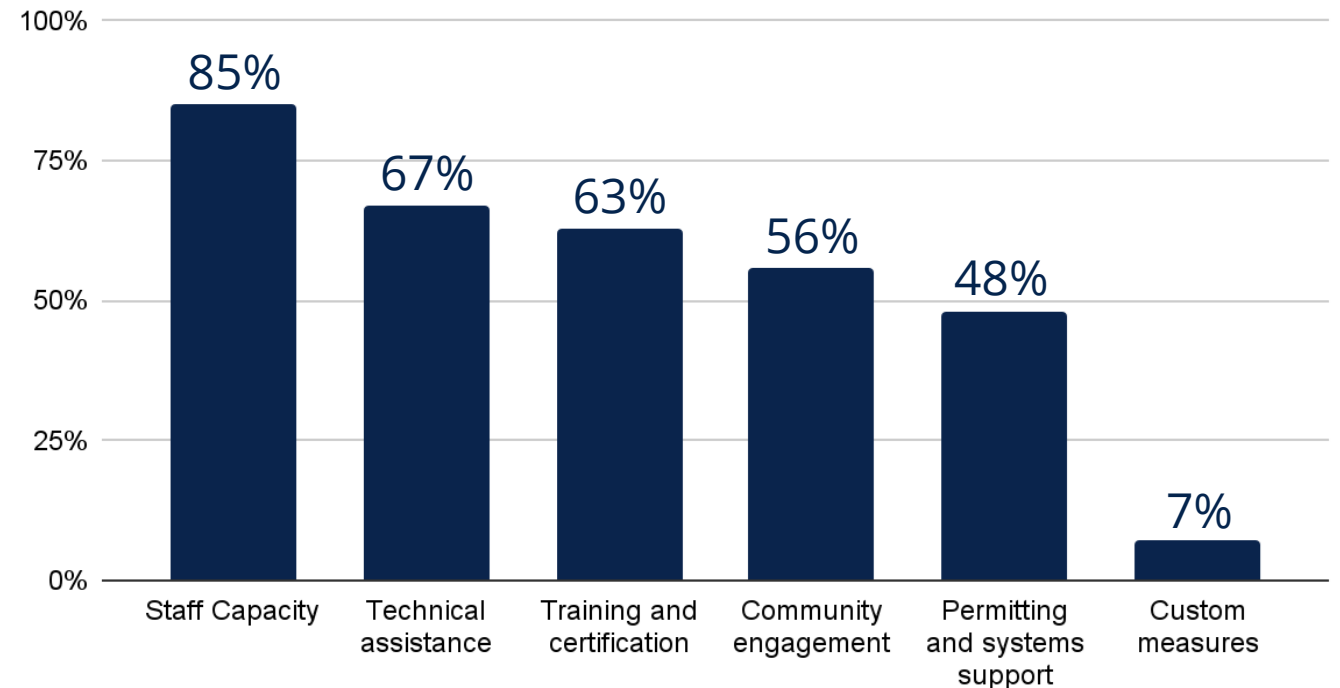
- 27 jurisdictions were awarded
  - 42% of DRCOG jurisdictions.
  - Representing 85% of the population in the DRCOG region.
- Obligated \$26 million of \$34.8 million available
  - ~75% of total funds.
- Most applicants were over \$300,000
- Partnerships:
  - Northglenn & Superior – energy code support
  - Englewood & Sheridan – shared full-time employee



# Round 1: Eligible Uses

- **Staffing:** including internal FTE or external support via contractor.
- **Training/Certification:** training to upskill current staff or train new FTE both on codes and performance policies.
- **Technical assistance:** Sustainability and Comprehensive Plan updates.
- **Permitting system updates:** for energy code compliance, or benchmarking/BPS software support.
- **Community engagement** around new policies.

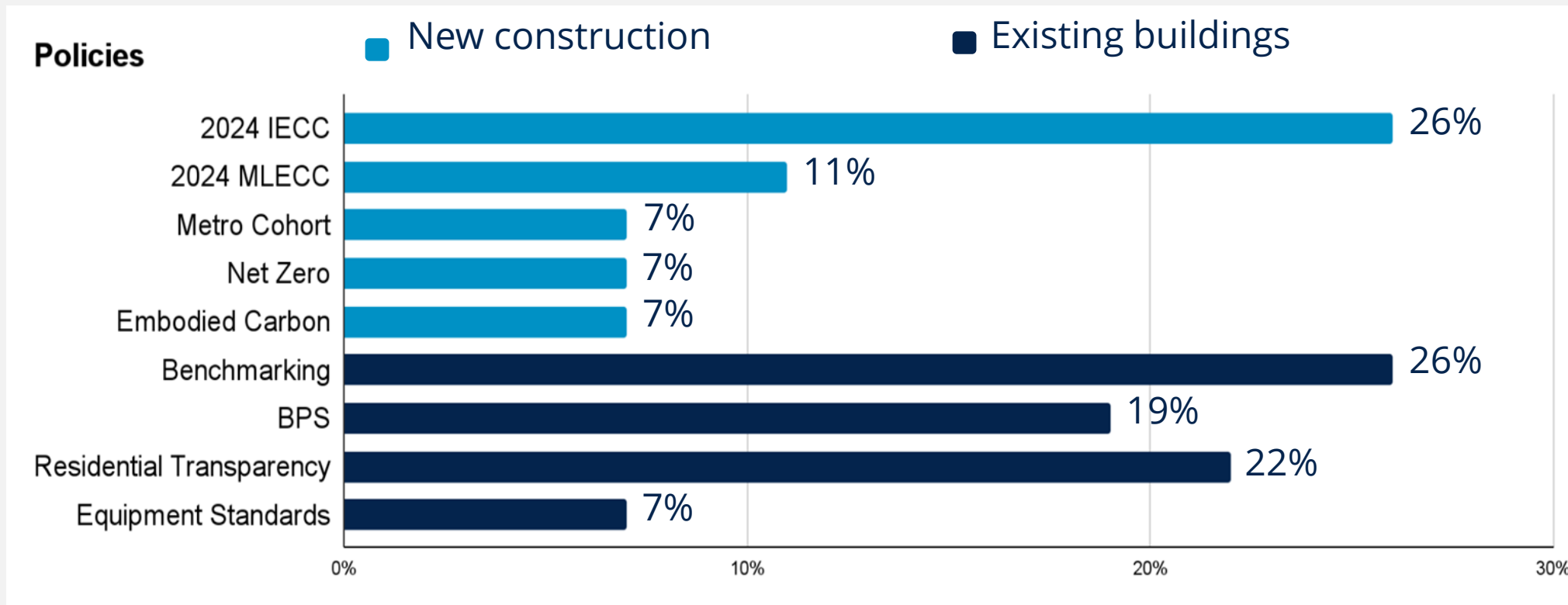
Round 1: Eligible Uses



# Round 1: Policies

59% of jurisdictions working on energy codes (i.e., **new construction policies**)

74% of jurisdictions working on **existing building policies**.



# Community Projects

## Staff Capacity

Adams County  
Arapahoe County  
Arvada  
Aurora  
Boulder  
Boulder County  
Brighton  
Broomfield  
Commerce City  
Denver  
Englewood  
Erie  
Golden  
Jefferson County  
Lafayette  
Lakewood  
Longmont  
Louisville  
Northglenn  
Sheridan  
Superior  
Thornton  
Westminster

## Training and Certification

Adams County  
Arapahoe County  
Arvada  
Aurora  
Boulder  
Boulder County  
Commerce City  
Englewood  
Erie  
Golden  
Louisville  
Nederland  
Northglenn  
Sheridan  
Superior  
Thornton  
Wheat Ridge

## Permitting and Systems Support

Adams County  
Arapahoe County  
Arvada  
Boulder  
Boulder County  
Broomfield  
Englewood  
Golden  
Jefferson County  
Lafayette  
Northglenn  
Superior  
Thornton

## Technical Assistance

Adams County  
Arapahoe County  
Aurora  
Boulder  
Boulder County  
Brighton  
Broomfield  
Commerce City  
Englewood  
Erie  
Lafayette  
Littleton  
Louisville  
Northglenn  
Sheridan  
Superior  
Thornton  
Wheat Ridge

## Community Engagement

Adams County  
Arapahoe County  
Arvada  
Boulder  
Boulder County  
Broomfield  
Commerce City  
Englewood  
Golden  
Littleton  
Louisville  
Northglenn  
Sheridan  
Thornton  
Wheat Ridge

## Custom Measures

Adams County  
Arapahoe County

## Workforce

Adams County

# Subaward Round 2 update

- ~\$8.5 million competitive subaward process incentivizing new participation and additional need.
- Most awards likely in the range of \$100-\$500k.
- Anticipated launch 4/1/2026.
- Full policy for discussion at March 4 Board workshop

# Research

## Project Overview

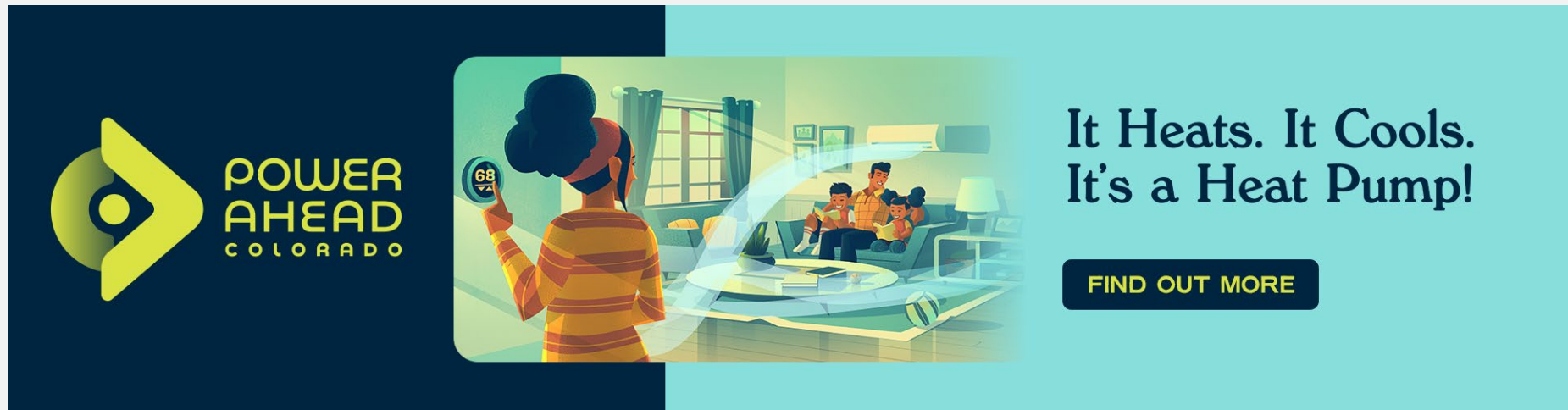
- RFP released October 2025; vendor selected December 2025
- Selected vendor: New Buildings Institute, with Colorado Health Institute and Touchstone IQ
- Contract value: \$600k
- Scope: regional building and energy inventory, policy modeling, electrification and grid readiness assessment, cost-effectiveness analysis, and community impact evaluation

## Timeline

- Feb–Mar 2026: Contract executed
- Feb–Apr 2026: Vendor onboarding
- Summer–Fall 2026: Preliminary analysis for policy working groups

# Upcoming board and committee items

- Building Policy Roadmap
- Round 2 Jurisdictional Support Policy



The banner features a dark blue background on the left with the 'POWER AHEAD COLORADO' logo in yellow. The logo consists of a stylized yellow arrow pointing right, with a small circle inside. To the right of the arrow, the words 'POWER AHEAD' are stacked above 'COLORADO' in a bold, sans-serif font. The central part of the banner is a light blue rectangle containing an illustration of a woman in a striped shirt holding a circular thermostat showing '68'. A beam of light from the thermostat illuminates a family sitting on a couch in a living room. To the right of the illustration, the text 'It Heats. It Cools. It's a Heat Pump!' is written in a bold, sans-serif font. Below this text is a dark blue button with the words 'FIND OUT MORE' in yellow.

**POWER AHEAD**  
COLORADO

It Heats. It Cools.  
It's a Heat Pump!

**FIND OUT MORE**





# Communications and Marketing



# Website

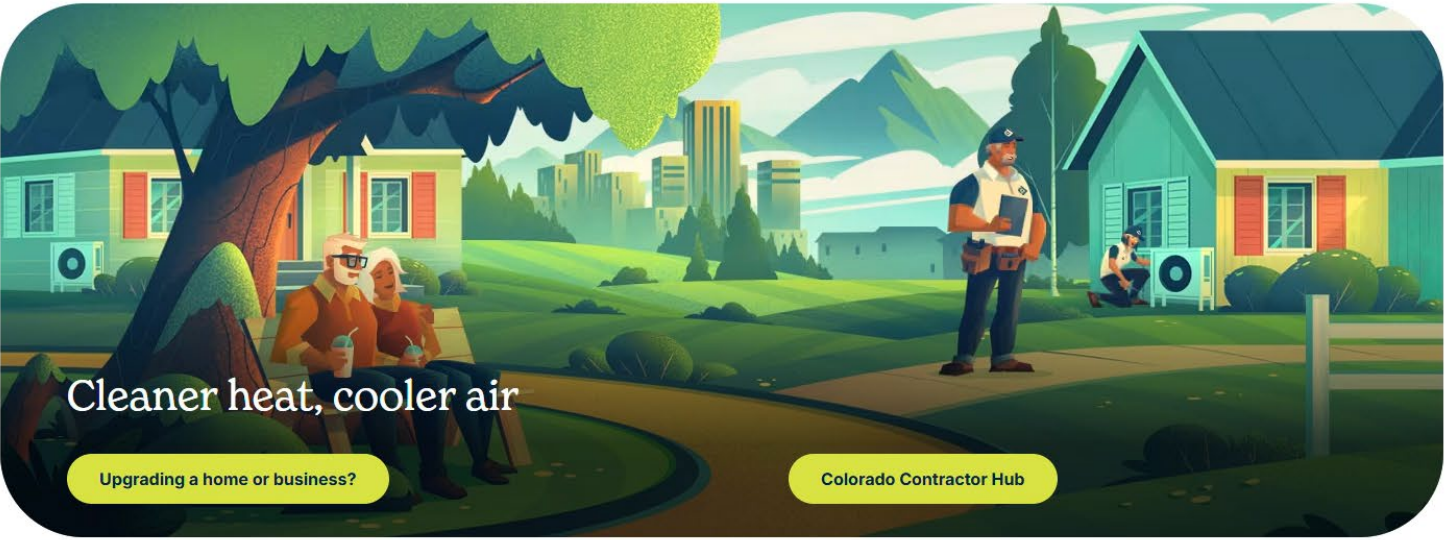
- Contract with ImageX Media for two website launches:
  - PowerAheadColorado.org
  - MVP on January 13
  - Phase 1 in Spring 2026.
- Website and ad campaign uses illustrations from Firestone, CO artist, Brian Miller.
- Contains link to Colorado Contractor Hub, information on heat pumps and testimonials from community members.





For Contractors English Text size: A A A

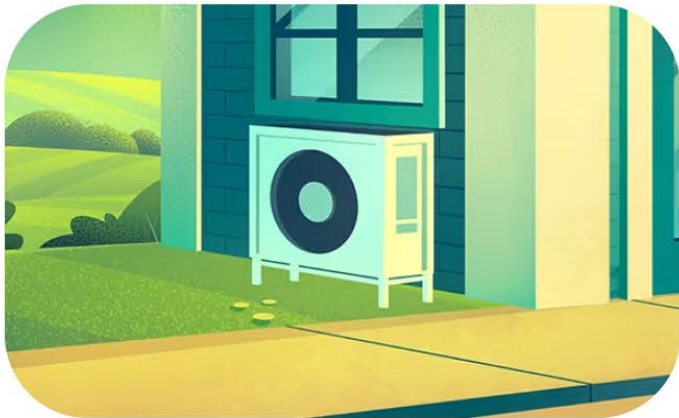
- About
- Find a Contractor
- Why Heat Pumps?
- Explore Green Careers
- FAQs
- Community Stories



## Heat pumps in Colorado

Think of it as your home or business' new best friend. It's an all-season comfort system that heats, cools, and even saves energy. Perfect for Colorado's "sunny one day, snowy the next" weather, a heat pump is designed for a cozier, cleaner future. Here's the scoop on everything you need to know.

Heat Pumps 101



Who we are



# Communications

- Contract with Karsh Hagan.
- Completed first phase of market research and branding.
- Advertising campaign launched January 26, 2026.

# Our campaign goals

**Maximize  
adoption of  
heat pumps**

Target homeowners with universal messaging.

**Improve  
quality of life  
in vulnerable  
communities**

Conduct community engagement/ outreach to find 1,600 homes to retrofit.

**Fill workplace  
pipelines**

Create demand for workplace training programs.

**Increase  
contractor  
participation**

Create demand for heat pumps and fill the Contractor Navigation hub pipeline.



# Our audience's mindset



## The Value Seeker

Stability and affordability



## The Quality of Life Seeker

Health, comfort, and safety



## The Opportunist

Quality for a deal: "Smart deal"



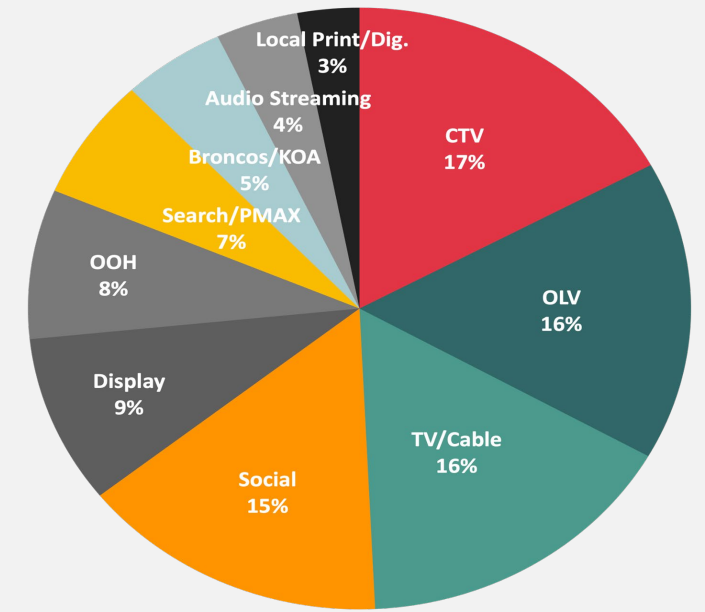
## The Technologist

Performance, control, innovation

\*"Eco-conscious innovators" were more motivated by other factors in decision making, such as cost and comfort.

# Paid media approach

- Budget of approximately \$2 million per year.
- Digital media began in January 2026.
- Broadcast begins during the Winter Olympics in February 2026.
- Billboards throughout the region in March 2026.



## AWARENESS

Media Impressions

### LINEAR TV



### CTV



### PODCAST, AUDIO STREAMING



### OOH



## CONSIDERATION

Engagement & Education

### OLV



### HIGH IMPACT DISPLAY



### PAID SOCIAL



### EBLASTS



## CONVERSIONS

Request for Information

### STANDARD DISPLAY



### META FILL FORM



TOTAL  
ESTIMATED  
IMPRESSIONS

234MM







# Earned media approach

- Press release distributed to regional, local and industry media.
- Targeted pitching to ~10 outlets.
- Media kit materials distributed and available to all.
  - Press release
  - Program fact sheet
  - Program FAQs
  - Heat Pump 101
  - Testimonials available for interviews
  - Brand assets
- Key external milestones, such as Colorado Home and Garden Show and Earth Day





# Community Engagement

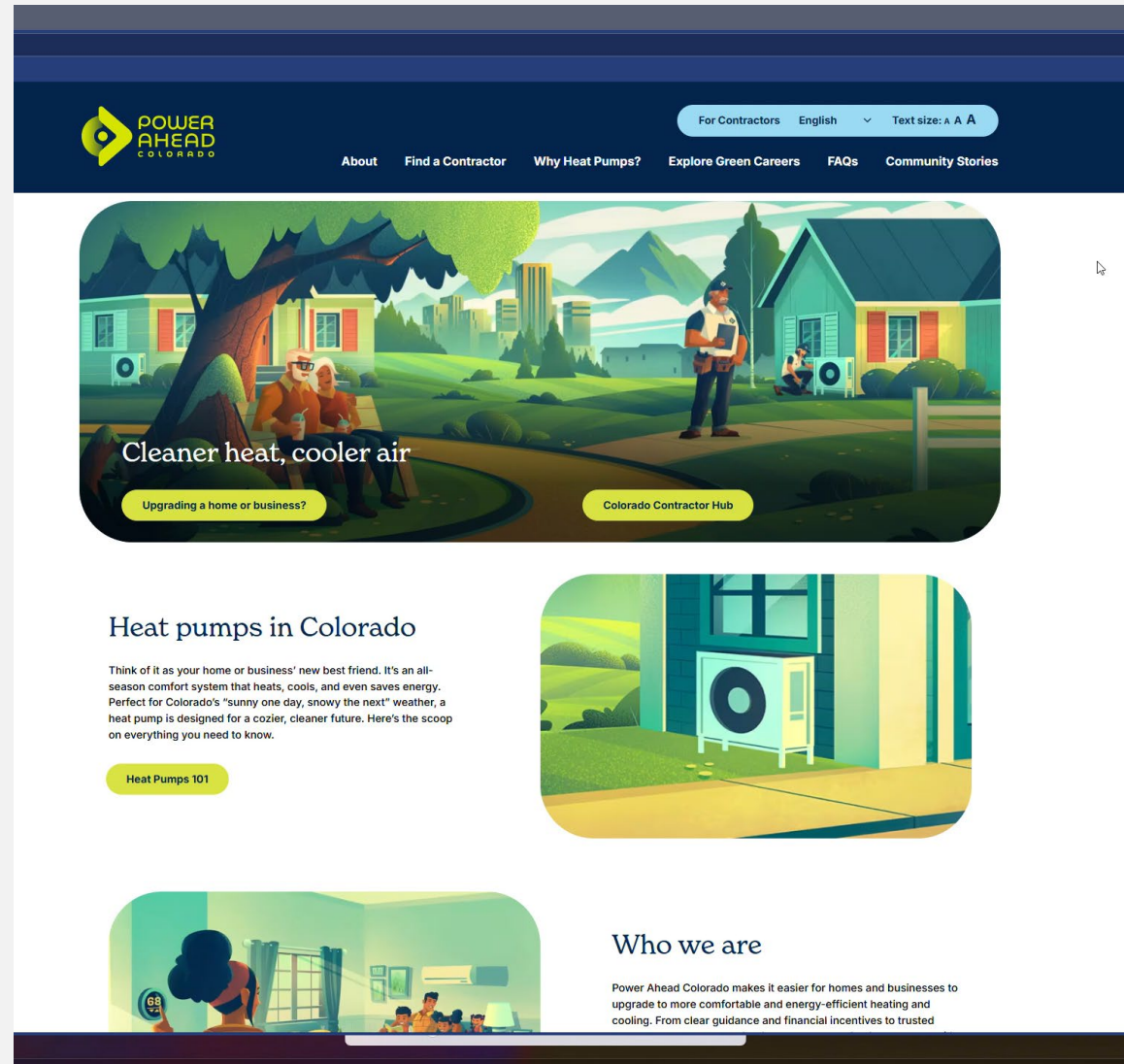
- Contract with Kearns & West.
- Currently creating community engagement plans and conducting stakeholder mapping.
- Grant framework for CBOs established by Summer 2026, allowing organizations to apply for \$2.2M in pass-through funds to assist with public involvement.






# Workforce and Industry Development

# ‘Find A Contractor’ Tool






# Colorado Contractor Hub




Sign in | Colorado Contractor Hub

https://colorado-contractor-hub-git-develop-bdc-projects.vercel.app/account/login

DRCOG PACO EWN HVAC License GWFF Hubs Dell

 COLORADO  
CONTRACTOR  
HUB

## Sign in to your pro account

 **Check your inbox**

A link has been sent to  
clay@coloradocontractorhub.org

Click the link in your email, or enter the 6-digit code below:

Simply click on the link we've sent you to continue. If you can't find our email, it could be in your spam folder, or you can [click here](#) to try sending it again.

Don't have a pro account? [Sign up here](#)

3:13 PM  
1/23/2026

33

# Green Workforce Hubs

- Each Hub will be allocated \$1M over four years.
- 3,800 new workers registered by 2029.
- Wraparound services provided as needed.
- Participants will choose one of five Career Pathway Tracks

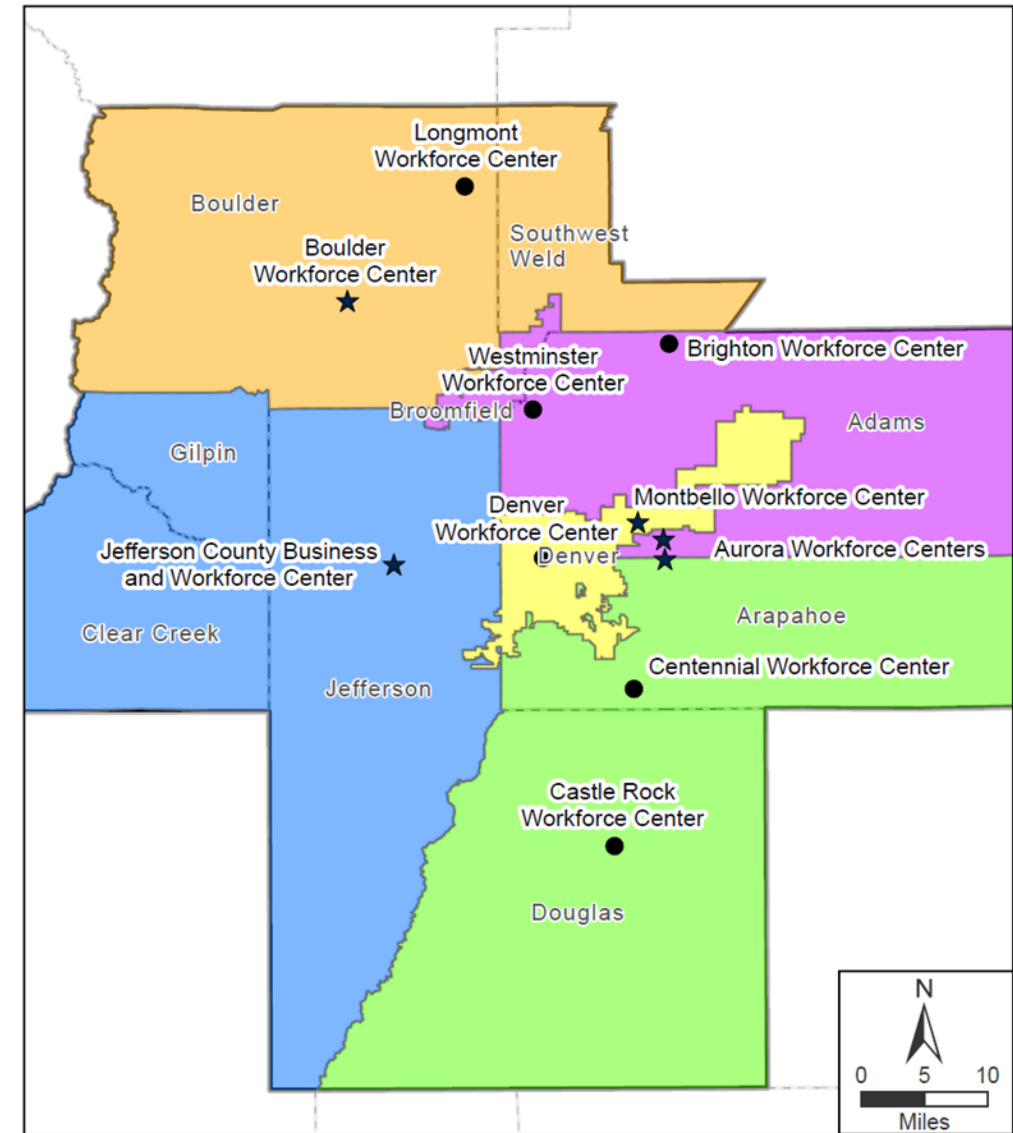


Why Chase the  
Future When You  
Can Install It?

GROW YOUR CAREER

## Green Workforce Hub Zones

Non-Accessibility  
For Internal Use Only



- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Adams County Workforce Center                  | ★ Green Workforce Hubs      |
| Arapahoe/Douglas Works!                        | ● Partner Workforce Centers |
| Boulder County Workforce Center                | □ County boundaries         |
| Denver Workforce Development                   | ▬ DRCOG boundary            |
| Jefferson County Business and Workforce Center |                             |

Creator: PJordan  
Location: \\TPO\0-Projects\  
Decarbonization\Green Work  
Force Hub Centers

# Career Pathway Tracks

- Building Performance & Energy Efficiency.
- HVAC & Mechanical Systems:
  - HVAC.
  - Sheet Metal.
  - Plumbers, Pipefitters, Steamfitters.
- Electrical & Renewable Energy.





# Heat Pump Training (GAPs) – Justice Impacted

- 94% of Breakthrough graduates remain free after their release.
- Saved the state of Colorado and its taxpayers over \$24M in recidivism reduction.
- 92% employment rate of enrolled participants post-release.



# Heat Pump Training (GAPs) – Multilingual



# Heat Pump Training (GAPs) – Young Adults





A man with short dark hair and a goatee, wearing safety glasses and a light-colored button-down shirt, is looking up and to the right. He is holding a large sheet of paper, likely an architectural drawing or blueprint, which is partially visible in the upper right. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor space. A dark blue diagonal graphic element is on the right side of the image.

# Incentives, Advising and Innovation

## Incentives (\$40 million)

Fast payments with transparency.  
Predictable and consistent.  
Focus on regional impact.

## Advising (\$17 million)

"No-wrong-door" approach.  
Trusted, neutral advisors.  
A sales tool for contractors.

Activities	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Procurement					
Design					
Implementation					



Provide energy advising support for:

- 11,000+ single family homes.
- 22,750+ multifamily homes (units).
- 5,800 commercial buildings.

Provide incentives for equipment in:




- 10,000 single family homes.
- 16,000 multifamily units.
- 4.15 million square feet of commercial space.

## Innovation Grants (\$6 million)

Track 1: Reducing Market Friction & Soft Costs

Track 2: Technical and Grid Optimization

Track 3: Community-Driven Design, Accessibility and Health

Activities	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Procurement					
Design					
Implementation					



Approximately 20 awards completed in three rounds.

Final priorities in development:

- Grants succeed in generating lessons learned and policy outcomes
- Grants are accessible and represent the region
- Program has top-tier customer service



## Income Qualified (\$47 million)

**No-cost home upgrades** for homeowners and affordable housing .

Prioritizing households with multiple vulnerabilities  
Financial accessibility and safeguards  
Accountability and Data Management.



# ENERGY OUTREACH COLORADO

Activities	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Procurement					
Design					
Shovel Ready Projects					
Implementation					

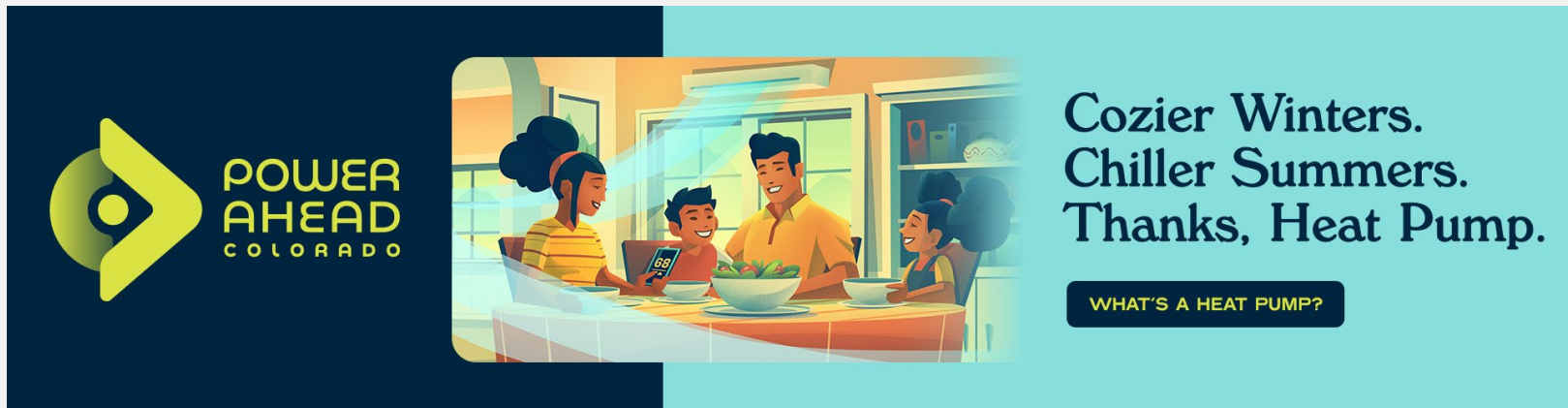
- Serve 1,600+ low-income households by 2030.
- Reduce emissions by at least 12,204 metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>e at <\$506.62/ton.
- Improve health, housing stability, and economic resilience through upgrades and workforce development.
- Develop scalable models for replication in other jurisdictions.

# Upcoming board and committee items

- Innovation program grant policy.
- Initial incentive policies and recommendations.
- Summary of income-eligible 'shovel-ready' projects.

And later...

- Policies and priorities for income-eligible program implementation.





**What's next**

# How we transform the HVAC market





# The value of Power Ahead Colorado

**Scale**

**Alignment**

**Trust**

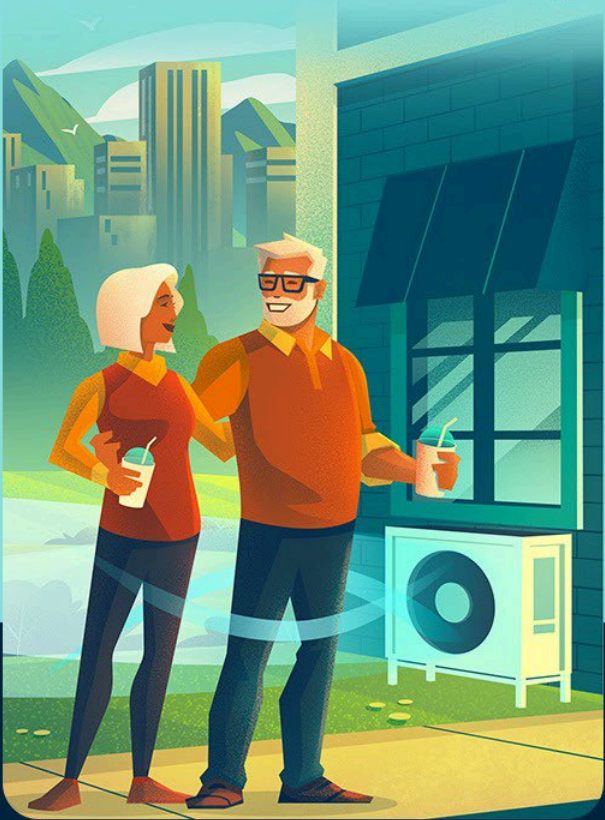
Cleaner Heat.  
Cooler Air.  
That's a Heat Pump!



**POWER  
AHEAD  
COLORADO**

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Cleaner Heat.  
Cooler Air.  
That's a Heat Pump!



FIND OUT MORE

# Thank you!

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**ATTACH C**

## **Board of Directors**

Meeting date: February 4, 2026

Agenda Item #: 5

### **Area Agency on Aging Update**

Agenda item type: Discussion

#### **Summary**

Staff will provide a strategic briefing on the Area Agency on Aging (AAA), including an overview of service statistics, the impacts of recent funding reductions, and future goals for the program

#### **Background**

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) serves as the federally designated Area Agency on Aging for the metropolitan region, covering Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin, and Jefferson counties. As the AAA, DRCOG is responsible for administering the requirements of the Older Americans Act, including:

- Funding and providing community-based services that support older adults in living independently.
- Planning for current and emerging needs of older adults and their family caregivers.
- Advocating for older adults and their caregivers at the local, state, and federal levels.

#### **Action by others**

None

#### **Previous discussion/action**

None

#### **Recommendation**

None

#### **Attachment(s)**

Staff presentation

#### **For more information**

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at (303) 480-6701 or [drex@drcog.org](mailto:drex@drcog.org); or Jayla Sanchez-Warren, Director, Area Agency on Aging, at (720) 589-7727 or [jswarren@drcog.org](mailto:jswarren@drcog.org)



# AAA Update

February 4, 2026

AAA Director Jayla Sanchez-Warren

# Agenda

- AAA Overview
- Current status – where we are now
  - FY2025 performance statistics
  - Challenges
- Changes and Innovation
- Shifting focus to meet critical needs – where we are going
  - Review most in need and profile of our average client

# Mandated AAA Services

- Transportation
- Nutrition services
- Ombudsman
- Legal assistance
- Evidence-based disease health promotion
- Family caregiver support
- Advocacy and education
- In-Home personal service
- Chore services
- Case management
- Information and assistance
- Respite services



# Area Agency on Aging – Internal programs

AAA has 60 skilled staff

- Information and assistance
- Options counseling
- Case management
- Ombudsman program
- State Health Insurance program
- Community transitions
- Veterans Directed Care
- Denver Health Navigation
- Network of Care
- Administration
- AAA business and contract management

# DRCOG contractors and partners



# Client Profile

- Average age 74.4
- More likely to be female
- More likely to be living with others
- More likely to be low income
- Living in an urban area
- Not a veteran
- More likely to be a member of a minority population
- Receives an average of 60 units of AAA service per year



The background of the slide features a photograph of three elderly individuals. In the center, a Black man is shown in profile, smiling. To his left, a white woman with glasses is visible. To his right, another Black man wearing glasses and a hat is partially visible. A solid teal horizontal bar spans the width of the image, positioned over the middle of the photograph. The text 'Current Status' is written in white on this bar. Decorative white plus signs are scattered across the image: two in the top left, one on the teal bar to the right of the text, one in the bottom left, and a cluster of three in the bottom right.

## Current Status



# DRCOG AAA Service Funds

Funding source	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Older American's Act (OAA)	\$8,040,890	\$8,751,798	\$9,188,913
OAA Carryover	\$5,129,638	\$908,528	\$238,815
State Funding for Senior Services	\$9,417,937	\$9,514,332	\$9,662,904
Homestead	\$1,162,843	\$386,796	\$0
Consolidated Appropriations Act	\$21,507	\$0	\$0
Vaccine Fund	\$298,867		\$0
AARP	\$2,909,136	\$5,028,228	\$305,885
Total	\$26,980,818	\$24,589,683	\$19,396,517
Budget Change	2%	-9%	-21%

# DRCOG AAA Services Provided FY2025

Service	FY2025 units
Home delivered meals	126,222
Congregate meals	458,731
Transportation	163,006
Case Management	4,324
Chore	13,160
Homemaker	32,446
Personal Care	5,359
Caregiver	25,667
Counseling	4,492
Education	10,249
Health Promotion	3,324
Legal Assistance	8,650
Home Modification	10,440
Screening	1,675
Ombudsman Service	10,729
Navigation	328
Total	878,802





# Nutrition Services (FY2023-2025)



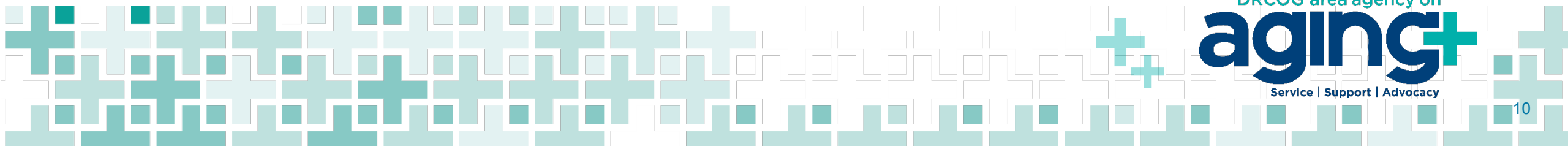
- Congregate Meals

Fiscal Year	Meals	Clients	Meals per Client
2023	129,000	3,118	41
2024	127,610	3,794	33
2025	126,222	3,602	35

- Home Delivered Meals

Fiscal Year	Meals	Clients	Meals per Client
2023	615,878	2,870	214
2024	627,086	2,555	245
2025	458,731	2,749	167

Waitlist: 264 average wait time is 63 days



# DRCOG Choice Services Transportation

Trip Type	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025
Bus tickets	610	1,073	0
Bus passes	0	0	1,450
Trips	4,134	7,813	11,983
Uber trips	14,425	37,397	46,617
Total	19,196	46,283	60,050

# Contracted Transportation Services

## Bus tickets/Passes

Fiscal Year	Rides	Clients	Units per Client
2023	52,020	366	142
2024	53,296	520	102
2025	33,030	377	88

## Assisted Transportation

Fiscal Year	Rides	Clients	Rides per Client
2023	95,909	3,401	28
2024	83,954	2,557	33
2025	69,926	2,160	32

### Key Insights

- Over all services dropped by over 30,000 rides from FY 2023 to FY2025
- Fewer clients were served from 2023 to 2025
  - 38% decrease in those receiving bus tickets and passes
  - 36% fewer people served with assisted transportation service



# Comparisons of service units over time

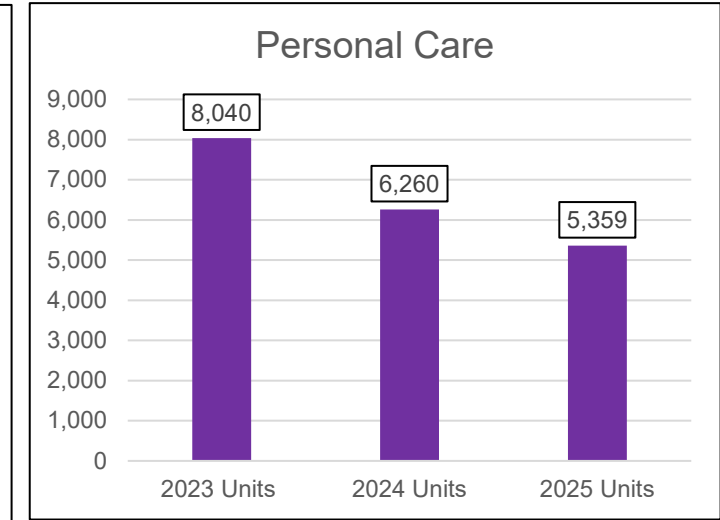
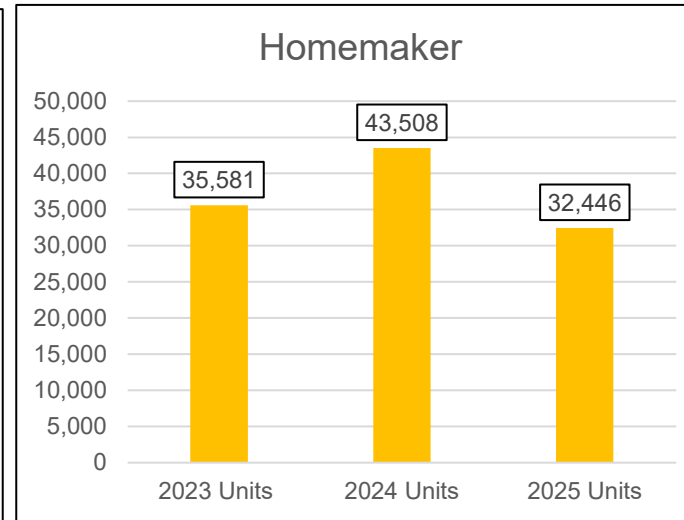
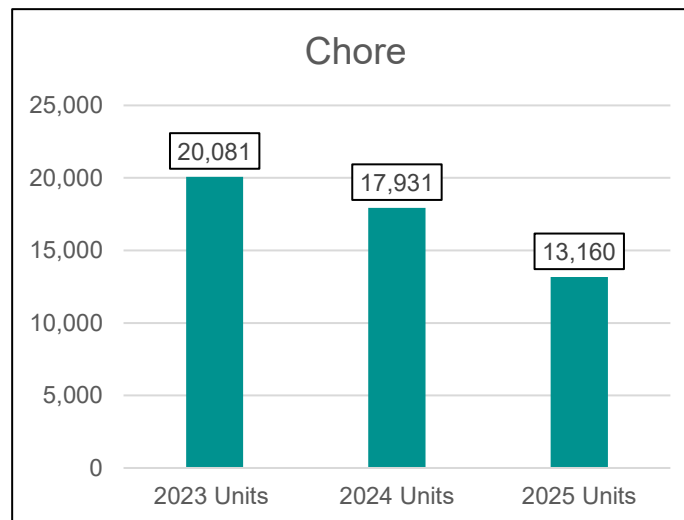
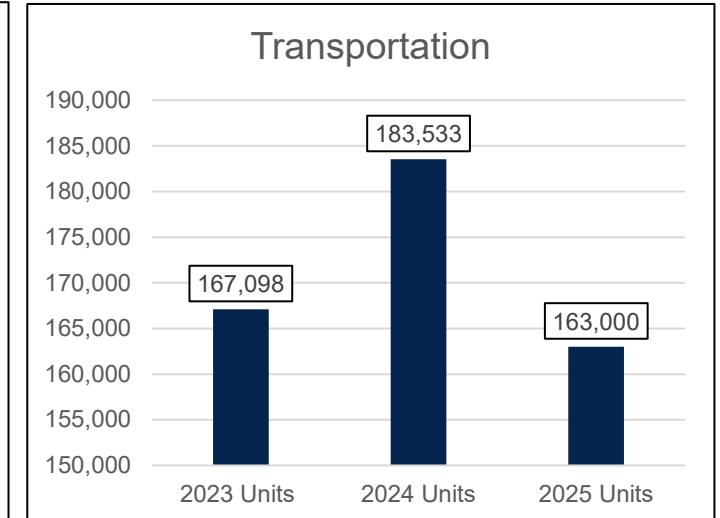
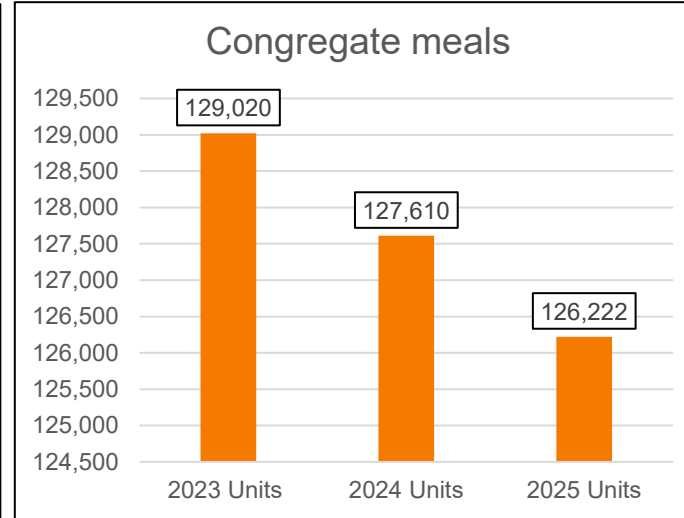
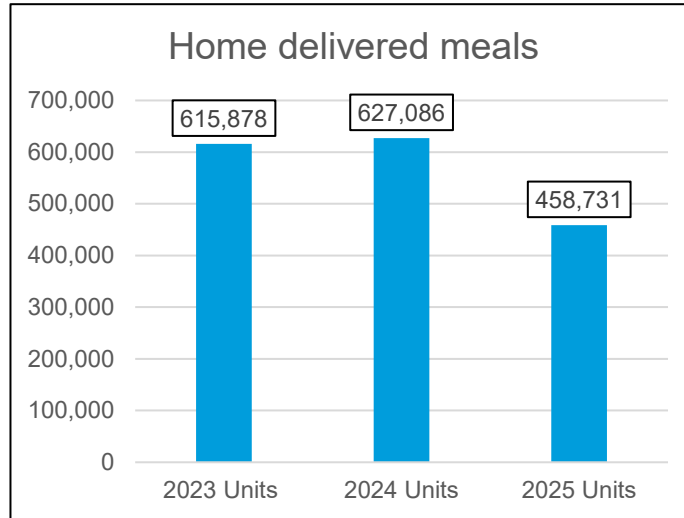
Service	FY2023 units	FY2024 units	FYI 2025 units
Counseling	16,193	14,518	4,453
Education	107,602	148,529	10,248
Disease prevention/Health promotion	1,815	2,336	3,324
Legal Assistance	10,182	10,105	8,650
Material Aid	10,472	14,988	10,444
Screening	20,713	22,347	1,675
Case Management	14,112	14,125	4,324

# Grandparent Services

Service	FY2023 units	FY2024 units	FY2025 units
Grandparent caregiver respite	834	1,211	1,045
Grandparent caregiver training	1,376	697	42
Grandparent caregiver support	642	675	329
Grandparent support groups	539	528	728
Grandparent information and assistance	2,846	2,817	2,606



# AAA funding cuts have real impact





# Necessary Changes and Innovations

DRCOG area agency on  
**aging+**  
Service | Support | Advocacy

# Internal Changes

## Funding Cut Changes

- Reduced funding to contracted providers
- Reduced funding for internal operations
- Eliminated 10 internal positions
- Stopped funding 12 contractor partners
  - Loss of transportation call center

## Response to Changes

- Received New Grants
- Cross-training staff and new types of positions
- Implemented new transportation service
- New transportation call center in Jan 2026
- New partnerships
- Internal caregiver program with a new focus
- Ride Alliance
- Commitment to improving data interoperability, and data driven decisions



# Challenging times for older adults in need

- **Medicaid**

- In Colorado's Medicaid unwind 776,200 Coloradoans lost Medicaid.
- Federal cuts shift significant financial responsibility to states.
- This could impact Colorado's aging population ability to access service.

- **Medicare**

- Medicare Advantage plans are reducing coverage some are discontinuing service.
- Medigap plans are increasing premiums, scaling back or exiting some markets.

# Challenging times for older adults in need - continued

- **Department of Human Services**
  - \$4.1million cuts last year in Office of Aging and Disability Services  
Impacting Area Agencies on Aging services and disability services.
- **Department of Local Affairs (DOLA)**
  - Senior Homestead Exemption in question for 2026.
- **Old Age Pension Cash Fund**
  - Has declined from \$92.9 million in FY 2021-2022 to \$78.9 million in 2024-2025 reducing the per month maximum grant to \$1,005 per month

*Source: Colorado Fiscal Institute, "The Cost of Aging in Colorado," 2025.*

# People are waiting for AAA Service

Service	Number waiting for service	Average wait time
Home Delivered Meals	264	63 days
Transportation	783	304 days
Chore services	450	69 days
Homemaker	190	288 days
Personal Care	12	88 days
Total	1,699	



The background image is a blue-tinted photograph. In the foreground, the large front wheel of a wheelchair is prominent, with a person's hand visible on the handlebar. In the background, a white van is parked on a street with its side door open and a ramp extended. The scene suggests a focus on transportation and mobility for older adults.

# + Shifting Priorities – Back to the Basics



# Understand what older adults say they need

- Information and assistance
- Transportation
- Nutrition
- Financial assistance
- In home-services
- Chore service
- Caregiver service
- Housing to suit needs
- Benefits counseling
- Protection from scams, fraud abuse and crime.





## AAA focus

- Focus on quality service for those most in need.
- Partner with health care and health payors.
- Offer services that support family caregivers.
- Data collection and data-based decisions.
- Educate and advocate.
- Support age-friendly initiatives in the region.
- Understand local non-traditional resources.

# Thank You

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