

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AGING
MEETING SUMMARY
Friday, February 21, 2020**

Members Present

Barbara Boyer	At Large Arapahoe County
Bob Brocker	At Large Denver
Bob Davis	City and County of Broomfield
Cary Johnson	Jefferson County
Cathy Noon	At Large Arapahoe County
Connie Ward	At Large Jefferson County
Dawn Perez	Adams County
Houston "Tex" Elam	At Large Arapahoe County
Karie Erickson	Douglas County
Larry Strock	DRCOG Board
Perla Gheiler	City and County of Denver
Sharon Perea	Gilpin County

Guests Present

Bonnie Ashton, Adams County, Gretchen Lopez, Senior's Council of Douglas County, Valerie Robson, Douglas County,

Others Present

Douglas Rex Executive Director, Jayla Sanchez-Warren, AAA Director, Mindy Patton, Division Assistant, Heather Kamper Manager Transitions and Veterans Programs, AJ Diamontopoulos, Manager Accountable Health Communities, Ryan McGee, Transition Counselor, Amy Pulley, Manager Aging and Disability Resource Center, Kelly Roberts, Community Resource Specialist, Shannon Gimbel Manager Ombudsman, Travis Noon, Senior Program Specialist, Zack Gibbons, Senior Fiscal Specialist, Cindy Grainger, Administrative Assistant, Sharon Day, Program Manager, AAA Business Operations, Lindsay Westmiller Community Resource Specialist, DRCOG

Jayla Sanchez-Warren, AAA Division Director – Called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m. with a quorum present.

Public Comment Period (Non-ACA Members)

There was no Public Comment

Report of the AAA Director

Jayla opened with an announcement of a change to the agenda, she told the group that a staff member from Senator Cory Gardner's office would be joining the group and taking a few minutes to talk and answer questions.

- Information and Assistance (I&A)
 - The Information and Assistance program is now fully staffed with 3 fulltime people on phones and another on standby. The I&A line is receiving 4 times the calls with the addition of the voucher program.
 - The Network of Care database has a designated staff person to keep it up to date, they will be adding new modules and updating existing modules.

- SHIP
 - SHIP will be collocating in the social security office in the Douglas County Littleton office and in Arapahoe County with more sites to come.
 - SHIP has had many calls from clients who have not signed up for their Medicare benefits 3 months prior to turning 65 staff have assisted them with getting them signed up.
 - Medicare is allowing a time extension to people who signed up for the Humana Walmart RX Medicare and rolled over to Humana Premier program to change their choices due to the many changes they had the first of the year. SHIP is available to assist with these changes.

SHIP received 350 calls in the month of January.

- Accountable Health Communities (AHC)
 - Since hiring Navigators in November navigation intake numbers have doubled in the Denver Health clinic and ER.
 - Denver Health would like to add an additional 2 navigators, DRCOG is in the process of hiring these navigators.
 - The hope is once the grant is over the hospital will still pay for the services provided by the navigators but are afraid once they must pay will do away with the program.
 - AHC has identified the number one need to be food insecurity.
 - They had their second food fare where they served over 400 people. It was asked by the committee to let County Councils know when AHC is having the food fares so they might attend and promote in their counties.
 - Added Tri-County Health Department's WIC program as a new clinical partner.

Anticipate expanding partnerships with the refugee mental health program.

- Case Management
 - DRCOG has revamped the program and reduced the waitlist to under a month and have hired new staff.
- Refugee Program
 - Working to expand the program to partner with Aurora Mental Health.
- Ombudsman
 - The staff are currently working on a sex assault investigation a staff to resident case in Lakewood. Ombudsman may be closing by closing the facility they are keeping a close watch on it. If so will be working to relocate residents to other housing.
 - PACE program has 2 Ombudsman assigned to the program. Anthem Project
 - DRCOG has been given the go ahead from their Board to pursue the Anthem project.
 - Launch will begin once contracts are in place, currently waiting on the Anthem Colorado to follow what the Anthem National has agreed upon.
 - DRCOG wants to use the powerful network of Anthem to get additional funding that is not associated with federal or state dollars and add business to current providers.
- Veterans Program
 - The Veterans program has caught up with payments to DRCOG after many internal meetings to figure out what the flaws were with the program and how to remedy them. They used their lobbyist, DC connections to get help with back payments.

- Are now able to lift the cap on number of veterans they can assist and are looking to hire another staff person to help with the increase.
- Homestead funds
 - Over 65 and in their home for 10 years can claim a reduced rate on property taxes, when that money is not used there is an overage that is dedicated to older adults.
 - State has spending authority for the funds which have been broken down into \$3M for over 5 years. The funds can only be used for services and not infrastructure. Now there is another additional \$16M available.
- Adams County
 - Adams County exploring being a AAA of their own, DRCOG has met with them and will meet again to discuss financials.
- Annual Dinner
 - Perla Gheiler and Bob Brocker will be receiving service awards, the awards banquet is April 22nd at 6:00 p.m., Empower Field at Mile High.

Report of the Chair

There was no Report of the Chair.

Move to approve consent agenda

Cathy Noon **moved** approve the consent agenda. The motion was **seconded** by Tex Elam and passed unanimously.

Items on the consent agenda included:

Summary of the November 15, 2019 meeting

Informational briefing by Megan Axelrod of Cory Gardner's Office

- Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act
 - Reauthorization is moving forward through the senate.
 - Those in Washington are proactively working with those states who may not benefit from the reauthorization and have not heard much push back from these states.
 - Colorado will probably receive the highest funding from the change in the reauthorization.

A question was asked regarding how much interest there was in Washington regarding older adults. Megan said that it was of a high interest to Senator Gardner but could not speak for others in Washington. She went on to say Senator Gardner introduce the Homecare for Seniors Act to expand the way seniors could find homecare options and is also working on nursing home transparency legislation.

Update on the Transportation Voucher Pilot Program

- Travis Noon, DRCOG Senior Program Specialist provided a presentation outlining the background of the Voucher program, how the program works and is working, explained the benefit of using Hop Skip Drive company and adding more vendors to the program as it expands.
 - Since the program began in May of 2019 through January of 2020, they have provided 2,968 rides.

- Next steps for the program will be to convene a stakeholder group that will consist of community partners, ACA members and County partners.

There was discussion on this topic among the group concerning the future of the program, how to use existing experiences from the Centennial program and the use of the Aurora transportation dollars.

DRCOG AAA Reimagined?

- With the Adams County inquiry found it was time to reevaluate, Doug would like to enhance the communication and collaboration with the ACA and the community.
- Doug spoke of the ACA having more of an active voice and of a more formal structure moving forward.
- The committee will see a new agenda format similar to other DRCOG standard meeting agendas and the audio of the meetings will be available on the DRCOG website.
- Will reevaluate the bylaws and get the ACA's input on what the role, mission, membership should be, policy and funding.
- AAA will generate an annual report to the ACA and County Commissioners that will include units of service, dollar value associated with units of service, program services within each region with a prospectus of what accomplishments they would like to complete in the coming year.

There was discussion of various ways to communicate with the County Commissioners, the County Councils on Aging and the ACA that will be revisited at a later date.

County Reports

Douglas County – Karie Erickson

With the closure the of A3 Douglas County's ADRC will absorb the A3 clients, they plan on having low vision support groups

Dawn Perez – Adams County

Dawn announced the 20th Annual Senior Conference, May 2 2020 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Cathy Noon – Arapahoe County

TLC Meals on Wheels successfully move to Broadway and Arapahoe Road, they are fund raising to buy the building and would like to become a congregate meal site.

Next meeting – March 20, 2020

Other matters by members

There were no other matters by members

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

ATTACH A

DRCOG's Pilot Transportation Voucher Program

Presented by:

Travis Noon

February 21, 2020



Background

- Utilize Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) (e.g., Uber and Lyft) through vouchers
- The program was designed to achieve the following:
 - Reduce the call ahead time for scheduling rides
 - Reduce the overall unit cost for transportation
 - Expand our service area
 - Expand hours of operation
 - Provide an outlet for personal trips
- Complement existing services
- DRCOG had discussions in the past with Lyft
- Fall 2018 we began talks with HopSkipDrive on piloting the program



Background on HopSkipDrive



HopSkipDrive

- Ride-share company out of California
- Mostly provide transportation to children without parents/caregivers present
- Drivers are vetted more than Uber/Lyft (requires caregiver experience)
- Will provide door-through-door transportation and other assistance needs
- Provides foster youth transportation for counties and school districts
- Requires 24 hour call ahead period
- Cost is \$15 flat, plus \$1.50 per mile



Timeline



HopSkipDrive



- Jan. 2019: Began contract negotiations with HopSkipDrive.
- Jan. 2019: Contracted with Senior Support Services and Southwest Improvement Council to offer RTD tickets.
- May 2019: Contract with HopSkipDrive executed
 - Provided 4 test rides in May using members of our Advisory Committee on Aging
- DRCOG started offering RTD tickets in Sept. 2019



DENVER'S SOUTHWEST
IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL



How it works

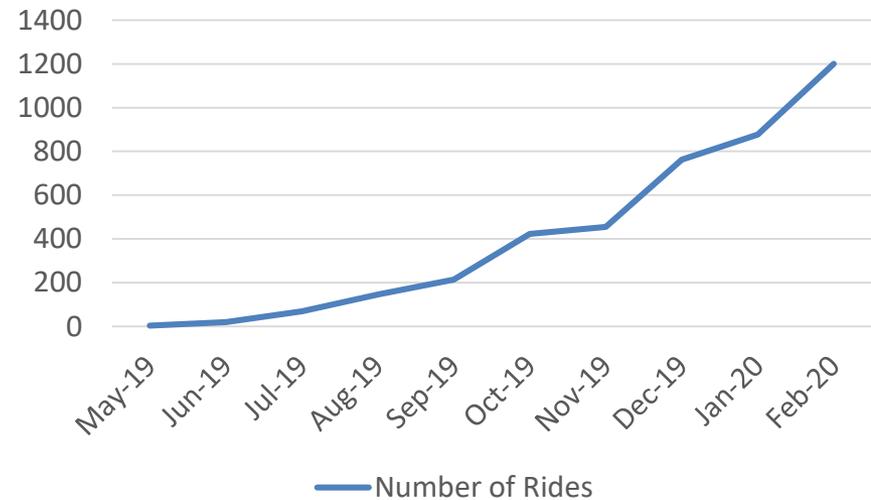
- Clients who need transportation call DRCOG's ADRC line
- ADRC staff together with the client will determine the best option for them (Current community partners, HopSkipDrive, Bus Tickets, etc.,)
- If going through the voucher program, ADRC staff issues voucher and schedules the ride
- Invoices are received with datafiles that are uploaded to the voucher system to redeem the vouchers



Tremendous Program Growth

- Program started in May 2019 (4 Rides)
- 2,968 Rides completed with HopSkipDrive through January 2020
- On pace to issue vouchers for over 1,200 rides in February
- 167 Unique Clients Served through January

Number of Rides (HopSkipDrive)

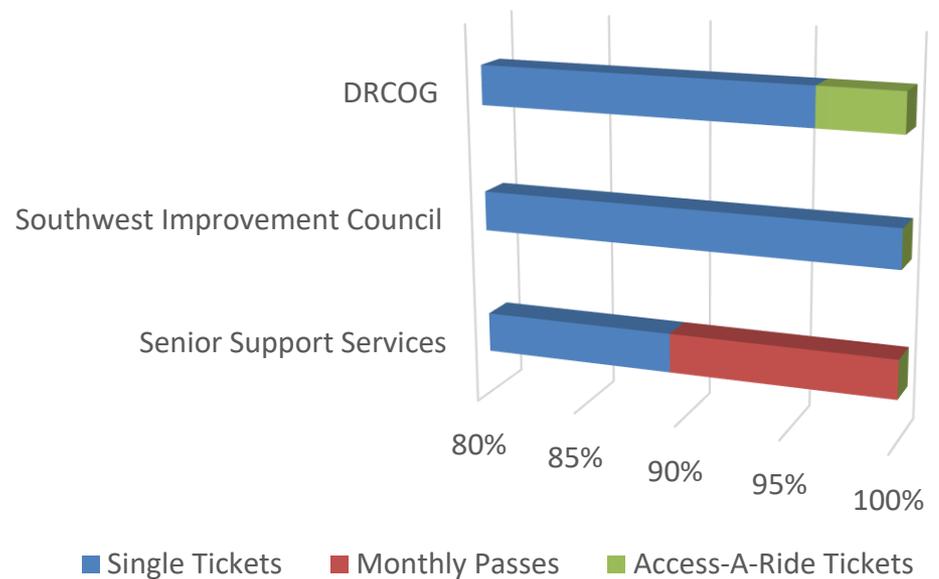




Bus Tickets

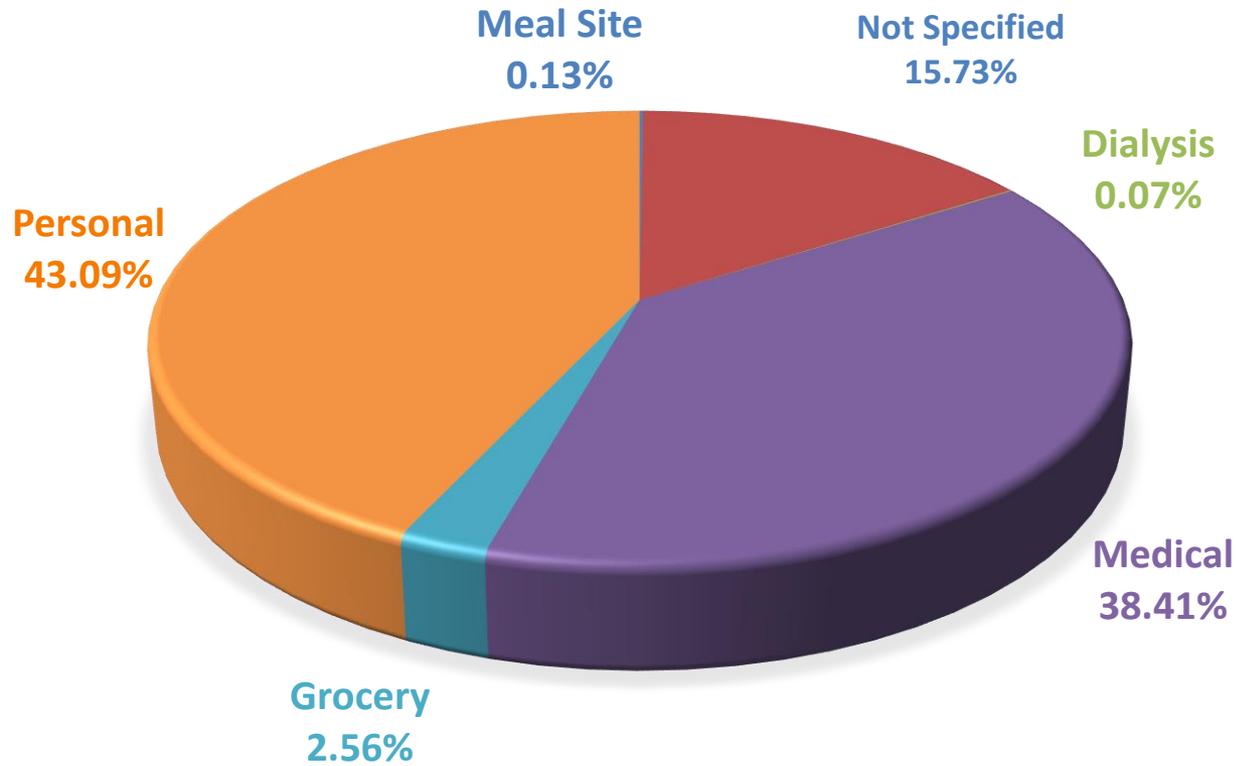
- Bus Ticket distribution by community partners began Jan. 1, 2019
- DRCOG started distributing tickets Sept. 2019
- Over 11,000 single ride tickets distributed during this time
- Senior Support has given over 600 monthly passes to their clients
- Access-A-Ride Tickets available through DRCOG as of Jan., 2020 (174)
- DRCOG distributed tickets to 68 unique clients
- 284 Clients Served through community partners

Bus Pass Distribution





Where are we taking people?



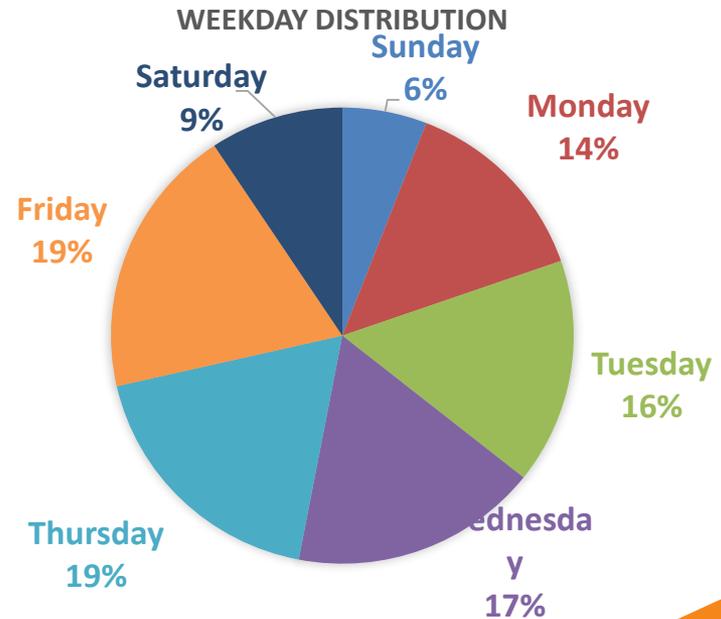


Expanded hours of Operations

Times	Rides
6:00 AM – 12:00 PM	1,284
12:00 PM – 5:00 PM	1,419
5:00 PM – 11:00 PM	138

Latest ride: 10:55 PM
Earliest Ride: 6:28 AM

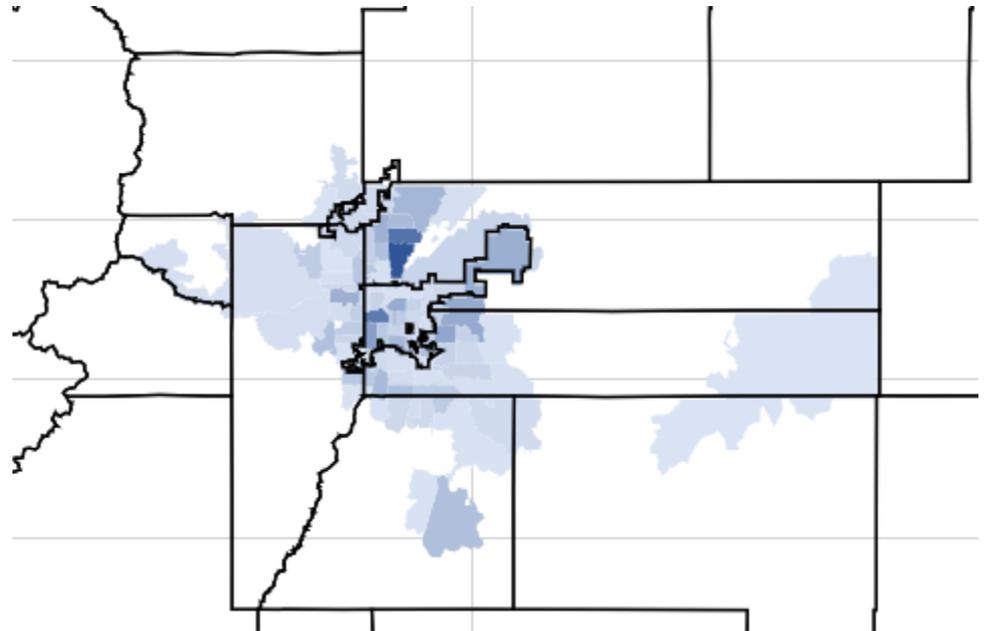
Rides to/from church on Sundays
Trips to restaurants
Visiting family





Expanded Service Area

- HopSkipDrive operates in all counties except Gilpin and Clear Creek
- Provided necessary medical transportation from Deer Trail to Aurora: 55 miles one-way
- HopSkipDrive is committed to finding drivers
- Followed up with me to ask where they should focus recruiting efforts



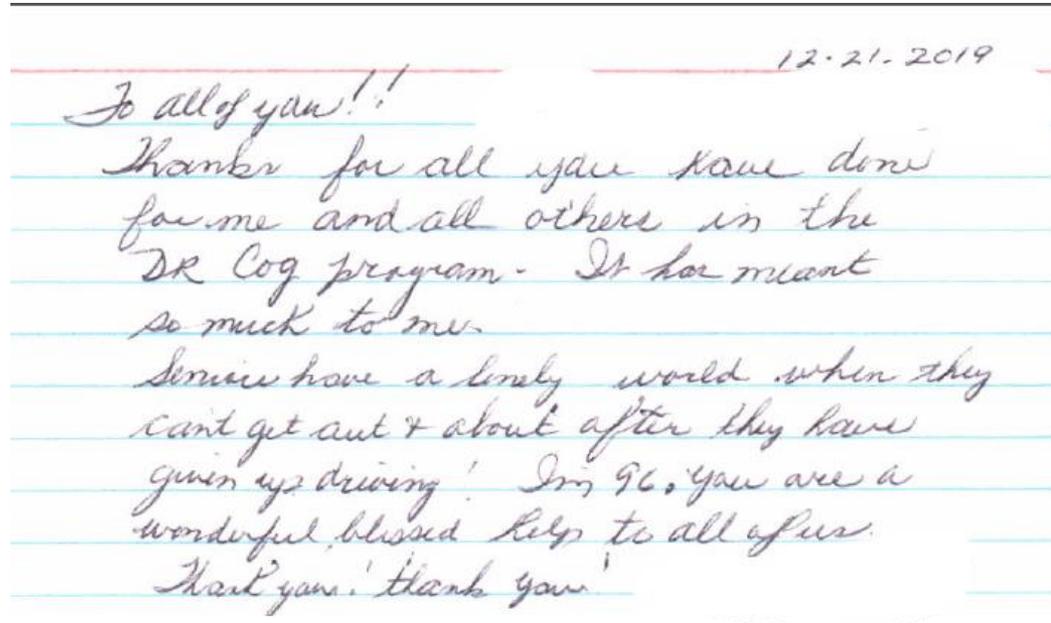


Other Successes

- Cut down on call ahead time
 - DRCOG requests a 3 day call ahead period
 - HopSkipDrive only requires 24 hours advanced notice
- Program is working collaboratively with current providers
 - Current providers deny over 200 rides per month
 - SRC, Broomfield, and others are referring their denials to DRCOG for services
- DRCOG is able to fill gaps in service
 - Able to provide service to dialysis patient outside of SRC service area



Client Feedback



- Overall extremely positive feedback from clients, other members of the community, and DRCOG Board members.
 - “To all of you!! Thanks for all your have done for me and all others in the DRCOG program. It has meant so much to me. Seniors have a lonely world when they can’t get out and about after they have given up driving! I’m 96. You are a wonderful blessed help to all of us. Thank you! Thank you!”



Challenges

- Keeping up with the growth
- ADRC Staff time
- Client Education & Support
- Unit rate through HopSkipDrive is on par with what we pay current providers
- No current option for immediate trips to be dispatched
- ADRC data entry into 4 systems



Addressing the Growth

- DRCOG is exploring options for a long-term solutions to the increased calls volume
 - Contracting out to call center,
 - Utilizing current providers,
 - Hiring internal staff, etc.,
- Staff capacity at DRCOG has led to limits being placed on rides
 - Stakeholder group to help inform policies and shape the program for the future



Client Education

- DRCOG is going to leverage our community partnerships to help educate clients on ride-shares
 - Denver Public Library has expressed interest
- Provide app usage education
- Safety information on using ride-shares



Bring on New Partners

- Lyft/Uber – contracts pending
- Will allow DRCOG to provide immediate trips, if necessary
- Able to send monthly passes to users
 - Clients will be able to schedule their own rides
 - Flexibility on setting this up
- Overall expected lower units cost compared to HopSkipDrive
 - Uber base pricing is ~\$8.00 vs. HopSkipDrive's \$15.00
- Uber/Lyft will allow even further expansion of service area
- Uber is exploring Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles in Denver



Next steps

- In-depth analysis of the pilot
- Convene a stakeholder group
 - Community partners
 - ACA members
 - County Partners
- Cost estimates for the program
 - Internal Staff vs. Contracting out
- Discuss options for sustainable funding
 - Currently funded with Homestead
- Make a recommendation to the ACA and DRCOG Board of Directors on continuing the program in SFY 2021



Questions?

For any follow-up questions contact me:

Travis Noon

Senior Program Specialist

303-480-6775

tnoon@drcog.org



THANK YOU



ATTACH B



Improved governance, accountability and collaboration

DRCOG AAA REIMAGINED?



Improve Governance

- A **sharpened role** for the Advisory Committee on Aging (ACA)
 - Empower ACA members
 - similar to the role of TAC in the transportation process
 - a more formal structure for policy and funding **decisions**
 - Expand membership of ACA?
- Allow counties to **“touch”** the funding process to better understand senior needs/priorities in each county



Improve Accountability and Collaboration

- **Better communication with members**
 - Annual report highlighting past year's **accomplishments** and **prospective** actions/direction
 - County Commission briefings?
- **Better collaboration**
 - Standing committee of county human services staff
 - to improve coordination and **integration** of services
 - DRCOG staff placement out in the counties?



DISCUSSION