DRCOG
DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

AGENDA

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 2014
6:30 P.M.
1290 Broadway
First Floor Independence Pass Conference Room

1. 6:30 Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call and Introduction of New Members and Alternates

4. *Motion to Approve Agenda

5. 6:35 Report of the Chair
   - Regional Transportation Committee report
   - Presentation of Outgoing Chair award to Sue Horn

6. 6:40 Report of the Executive Director

7. 6:50 Public Comment
   Up to 45 minutes is allocated at this time 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 to complete public comment. The chair requests that there be no public comment on issues for which a prior public hearing has been held before this Board. Consent and action items will begin immediately after the last speaker.

***Motion Requested**

TIMES LISTED WITH EACH AGENDA ITEM ARE APPROXIMATE
IT IS REQUESTED THAT ALL CELL PHONES BE SILENCED
DURING THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING. THANK YOU

Persons in need of auxiliary aids or services, such as interpretation services or assisted listening devices, are asked to contact DRCOG at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting by calling (303) 480-6701.

CONSENT AGENDA

8. 7:35 *Move to Approve Consent Agenda
   - Minutes of April 16, 2014
     (Attachment A)
   - Confirm appointments to the Metro Vision Issues Committee
     (Attachment B) Jack Hilbert, Chair

ACTION AGENDA

9. 7:40 *Move to approve a resolution adopting amendments to Urban Centers and Rural Town Centers in the Metro Vision 2035 Plan including the growth and development supplement
   (Attachment C) Brad Calvert, Senior Planner, Regional Planning & Operations
   This action requires an affirmative majority (29) of the total participating membership

10. 7:45 *Move to adopt a resolution approving the 2013 Cycle 2 amendments to the *2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan*, including the *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan*, and the associated *2013 Amendment Cycle 2 DRCOG CO and PM-10 Conformity Determination,* and the *2013 Amendment Cycle 2 DRCOG Denver Southern Subarea 8-Hour Ozone Conformity Determination*, concurrently
   (Attachment D) Jacob Riger, Senior Transportation Planner, Transportation Planning & Operations
   This action requires an affirmative majority (29) of the total participating membership

11. 7:50 *Move to support a proposal for MAP-21 reauthorization to allow MPOs flexibility to use certain funds for TOD investment
   (Attachment E) Rich Mauro, Senior Legislative Analyst

12. 8:00 *Move to establish a Board of Directors Working Group to consider the findings of the *Fair Housing Equity Assessment* and *Metro Vision 2040 Regional Housing Strategy* and recommend to the Board of Directors goals, objectives, performance measures, and initiatives for inclusion in Metro Vision 2040, and authorize the chair to make appointments to the Working Group
   (Attachment F) Brad Calvert, Senior Planner, Regional Planning & Operations

***Motion Requested**

INFORMATIONAL BRIEFINGS

13. 8:10 Presentation on the future of transportation project funding
Herman Stockinger, CDOT staff, and Michael Cheroutes, CDOT Transportation Commissioner, will address the Board on the new era of transportation funding.

14. 8:40 Presentation on RTD Annual Report to DRCOG
(Attachment G) Regional Transportation District Staff

15. 9:00 Report on Sustainable Communities Initiative
(Attachment H) Craig Carlson, SCI Executive Committee

16. 9:30 Committee Reports
- A. Report on State Transportation Advisory Committee – Elise Jones
- B. Report from Metro Mayors Caucus – Doug Tisdale
- C. Report from Metro Area County Commissioners– Don Rosier
- D. Report from Advisory Committee on Aging – Jayla Sanchez-Warren
- E. Report from Regional Air Quality Council – Joyce Thomas/Jackie Millet
- F. Report on E-470 Authority – Ron Rakowsky
- G. Report on FasTracks – Bill Van Meter

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

17. 2014 Legislative Wrap-up
(Attachment I) Rich Mauro, Senior Legislative Analyst

18. DRAFT summary of April 16, 2014 Administrative Committee meeting
(Attachment J)

19. Relevant clippings and other communications of interest
(Attachment K)
Included in this section of the agenda packet are news clippings which specifically mention DRCOG. Also included are selected communications that have been received about DRCOG staff members.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

20. **Next Meeting – June 11, 2014**

21. Other Matters by Members

22. 9:40 Adjournment

SPECIAL DATES TO NOTE

Bike to Work Day	June 25, 2014

CALENDAR OF FUTURE MEETINGS

May 2014

16	Advisory Committee on Aging	Noon – 3 p.m.
19	Transportation Advisory Committee	1:30 p.m.
20	Regional Transportation Committee	CANCELLED
21	Administrative Committee	5:30 p.m.
	Board of Directors	6:30 p.m.

June 2014

4	Metro Vision Issues Committee	4 p.m.
10	**Regional Transportation Committee**	**8:30 a.m.**
11	**Administrative Committee**	**5:30 p.m.**
	Board of Directors	**6:30 p.m.**
20	Advisory Committee on Aging	Noon – 3 p.m.
23	Transportation Advisory Committee	1:30 p.m.

July 2014

2	Metro Vision Issues Committee	4 p.m.
15	Regional Transportation Committee	8:30 a.m.
16	Administrative Committee	5:30 p.m.
	Board of Directors	6:30 p.m.
25	Advisory Committee on Aging	Noon – 3 p.m.
28	Transportation Advisory Committee	1:30 p.m.

Acronym List

* Denotes DRCOG Program, Committee or Report

AAA	Area Agency on Aging
AASHTO	American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
ADA	Americans with Disability Act of 1990
AMPO	Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
APA	American Planning Association
APCD	Air Pollution Control Division
AQCC	Air Quality Control Commission
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments
CAC	Citizens Advisory Committee
CARO	Colorado Association of Regional Organizations
CBD	Central Business District
CCI	Colorado Counties, Inc.
CDPHE	Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CM/AQ	Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality
CML	Colorado Municipal League
CMS	Congestion Management System
CO	Carbon monoxide
CWA	Clean Water Act
CWP	Clean Water Plan*
DBE	Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
DMCC	Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce
DoLA	Colorado Department of Local Affairs and Development
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
DRMAC	Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council
DUS	Denver Union Station
E&D	Elderly and Disabled
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIRE	Firefighter Intraregional Recruitment & Employment*
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
GIS	Geographic Information System
HB	House Bill
HC	Hydrocarbons
HOT Lanes	High-occupancy Toll Lanes
HOV	High-occupancy Vehicle
HUTF	Highway Users Trust Fund
IGA	Intergovernmental Agreement
ICMA	International City Management Association
IPA	Integrated Plan Assessment*
ISTEA	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act
ITE	Institute of Traffic Engineers
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
JARC	Job Access/Reverse Commute
LRT	Light Rail Transit
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization*
MVIC	Metro Vision Issues Committee*
MVITF	Metro Vision Implementation Task Force
MVPAC	Metro Vision Planning Advisory Committee
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NARC	National Association of Regional Councils
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPP	National Highway Performance Program
NFRMPO	North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization
NHS	National Highway System
NOx	Nitrogen oxides
NWCCOG	Northwest Colorado Council of Governments
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
O_3	Ozone
P3	Public Private Partnership
$PM_{2.5}$	Particulates or fine dust less than 2.5 microns in size
PM_{10}	Particulates or fine dust less than 10 microns in size
PnR	park-n-Ride
PPACG	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
RAQC	Regional Air Quality Council
RAMP	Responsible Acceleration of Maintenance & Partnerships
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFQ	Request for Qualifications
ROD	Record of Decision
ROW	Right-of-way
RPP	Regional Priorities Program
RTC	Regional Transportation Committee*
RTD	Regional Transportation District
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan*
SAFETEA-LU	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users
SB	Senate Bill
SCI	Sustainable Communities Initiative
SIP	State Implementation Plan for Air Quality
SOV	Single-occupant Vehicle
STAC	State Transportation Advisory Committee
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
STP	Surface Transportation Project (STP-Metro, STP-Enhancement)
TAC	Transportation Advisory Committee*
TAP	Transportation Alternatives Program
TAZ	Traffic Analysis Zone
TCM	Transportation Control Measures
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TIFIA	Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program*
TLRC	Transportation Legislative Review Committee
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TMO/TMA	Transportation Management Organization/ Transportation Management Agency
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
TPR	Transportation Planning Region
TSM	Transportation System Management
TSSIP	Traffic Signal System Improvement Program
UGB/A	Urban Growth Boundary/Area
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program
V/C	Volume-to-capacity ratio
VMT	Vehicle Miles of Travel
VOC	Volatile Organic Compounds
WHSRA	Western High Speed Rail Authority
WQCC	Water Quality Control Commission
WQCD	Water Quality Control Division (CDPHE)

ATTACH A

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2014

Members/Alternates Present

Jack Hilbert, Chair	Douglas County
Eva Henry	Adams County
Bill Holen	Arapahoe County
Elise Jones	Boulder County
Dennis Harward	City & County of Broomfield
Tim Mauck	Clear Creek County
Crissy Fanganello	City & County of Denver
Chris Nevitt	City & County of Denver
Bob Fifer	City of Arvada
Anne Justen	Town of Bow Mar
Doris Truhlar (Alternate)	City of Centennial
Doug Tisdale	City of Cherry Hills Village
Gale Christy	Town of Columbine Valley
Jim Benson	City of Commerce City
Joe Jefferson (Alternate)	City of Englewood
Mark Gruber	Town of Erie
Joyce Thomas	City of Federal Heights
Amy Schiers	Town of Frederick
Paula Bovo	City of Glendale
Saoirse Charis-Graves	City of Golden
Ron Rakowsky	City of Greenwood Village
Tom Quinn	City of Lakewood
Phil Cernanec	City of Littleton
John O’Brien	Town of Lyons
Joe Gierlach	Town of Nederland
Joyce Downing	City of Northglenn
John Diak	Town of Parker
Gary Howard	City of Sheridan
Val Vigil	City of Thornton
Herb Atchison	City of Westminster
Joyce Jay	Wheat Ridge
Debra Perkins Smith	Colorado Department of Transportation
Bill Van Meter	Regional Transportation District

Others Present: Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director, Connie Garcia, Executive Assistant/Board Coordinator, DRCOG; Jeanne Shreve, Adams County; Mac Callison, Aurora; Art Griffith, Joe Fowler, Douglas County; Shakti, Lakewood; Torie Brazitis, Lone Tree; Kristopher Larsen, Nederland; Beth Humenik, Gene Putman, Kent Moorman, Thornton; Danny Herrmann, Jeff Sudmeier, Jerome Estes, CDOT; Kent Bagley, Bill James, RTD Board of Directors; Jim Taylor, SCI Executive Committee; Steve Klausing, Denver South EDP; George Dibble, Tomlinson & Assoc.; Ted Heyd, Bicycle Colorado; Brad Weinig, Enterprise Community Partners; Chris White, Colorado Housing & Finance Authority; Jin Tsuchiya, CRL; Jim Brady, Doug Eberhart, Wilson & Company; Kevin Abels, FRESC; and DRCOG staff.

Chair Jack Hilbert called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum was present. New members and alternates were introduced: John O'Brien, new member for Lyons; Kristopher Larsen, new member for Nederland.

Motion to Approve Agenda

> Doug Tisdale **moved** to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded and **passed** unanimously.

Public Hearing
Jacob Riger and Brad Calvert, DRCOG staff, provided a brief overview of proposed Cycle 2 amendments to the 2035 Metro Vision Plan, the 2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan, and the accompanying air quality conformity documents.

Steve Klausing, Denver South TMA and Denver South EDP; Art Griffith, Douglas County staff; and Jim Taylor, SCI Executive Committee, provided comment in favor of the C-470 RAMP project.

Report of the Chair
- The chair reported the STAC approved the FY 2015 budget. They discussed upcoming telephone town hall meetings, cash management workshops, funding allocations for the regional priority program, and received a presentation on FASTER safety funding.
- The Regional Transportation Committee acted to recommend amendment of the FY 2014-2015 Unified Planning Work Program.

Report of the Executive Director
- Jennifer Schaufele called out the flyer at everyone's seats on the 2014 Awards Celebration. Board members may attend for free; there is a $59 charge for guests.
- Ms. Schaufele noted updates at the seats for the "At a Glance" folders.
- The group for the second phase of organizational development (Principles of Policy Governance) will have their first meeting on April 21. The Administrative Committee began work on the Executive Policies this evening. The third phase of organizational development will focus on structure and dues.
- Ms. Schaufele reported the Board Officers are scheduled to meet with the metro area Transportation Commissioners and the CDOT Executive Director to discuss the RAMP program.
- Ms. Schaufele noted Statements of Interest are being solicited for participation on the Metro Vision Issues Committee. Please contact Connie Garcia by April 25 to sign up.

Public comment
No public comment was received.

Move to approve consent agenda

> Doug Tisdale **moved** to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded and **passed** unanimously. Items on the consent agenda included:

- Minutes of March 19, 2014
- Resolution No. 2, 2014, approving amendments to the FY 2014-2015 Unified Planning Work Program

Move to approve Metro Vision Issues Committee recommendation regarding gap closure criteria for the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan

Steve Cook provided information on a minor revision to criteria the Board approved last month. The revision is specifically to change language for the gap closure criteria. Action is needed for staff to begin project evaluation tomorrow.

Herb Atchison **moved** to approve the Metro Vision Issues Committee recommendation regarding gap closure criteria for the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Discussion of State Legislative Issues

Rich Mauro provided updates on bills previously acted on:

- Senate Bills 12, 13, and 14, related to funding for the Older Coloradans fund, have passed out of appropriations, with SB 12 and 14 passing with reduced funding. Members were asked to change their position to support all three bills.

  Bill Holen **moved** to support all three bills. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

- SB 143 has passed out of appropriations and has been funded. Members were asked to change their position to support the bill.

  Bill Holen **moved** to support SB 143. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

- HB 1243; members were requested to adopt a position of monitor for this bill. Partner organizations such as CML and CCI have moved to monitor or support the bill after amendment.

  Bill Holen **moved** to monitor HB 1243. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

- HB 1301(Safe Routes to Schools) has passed through the House and is in Senate Transportation. The amount has been reduced from $3 million to $700,000.

- DRCOG was successful in getting an amendment to SB 125 (Uber/Lift) to explicitly exempt public ridesharing programs form the bill.

- SB-180 (new bill) proposes to transfer what is currently an Old Age Pension dental program to Health Care Policy & Finance, who would in turn disburse the funds to the Area Agencies on Aging for distribution to program recipients. Staff recommends supporting the bill as presented.

Bill Holen **moved** to support SB-180. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

- Two new bills introduced today may be of interest to members. Staff offers no recommendation on these bills. One bill adds restrictions on hybrid vehicles in HOV lanes, and the other is related to the HPTE (SB-197). Debra Perkins-Smith noted CDOT will be monitoring this bill. Staff was directed to send a summary of the bill to members for review and comment. Since the Board cannot vote via email, staff will gather member comments and forward them to the bill sponsors. DRCOG will take no official position on the bill.

Doug Tisdale asked members to take a position opposing SB 14-181; related to red-light photo cameras. He and other members noted that this is a matter of public safety.

Doug Tisdale **moved** to oppose SB 14-181. The motion was **seconded** and **passed** unanimously.

Bill Holen recommended the Board support HB-1283, related to controlling the problem of prescription drug abuse. The chair noted this bill is not germane to DRCOG's mission. He encouraged members to support the bill through their own communities.

<u>Report on Regional Housing Strategy/Sustainable Communities Initiative</u>
This item was postponed to the next meeting, as the guest presenter was called away for a personal issue.

<u>Report on changes to Aging Program</u>
Jayla Sanchez-Warren provided information to members about changes to the Aging program as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

<u>Committee Reports</u>
State Transportation Advisory Committee – This report was provided earlier in the agenda.
Metro Mayors Caucus – Doug Tisdale reported the Metro Mayors met in Westminster. They received reports on Owner Occupied Affordable Housing and other legislative matters; the 2014 World Lacrosse Championship coming to Commerce City; CSU's Colorado Sustainability Study; MPACT64 polling results; and a presentation from CDOT on Public Private Partnership efforts moving forward.
Metro Area County Commissioners – No report was provided.
Advisory Committee on Aging –No report was provided.
Regional Air Quality Council – Joyce Thomas reported the group received an update from DRCOG on Metro Vision 2040, a recap of adopted oil and gas rules, the summer ozone programs, and Charge Ahead Colorado grants for charging stations. She noted the RAQC displayed an electric vehicle at the recent Denver Auto Show.
E-470 Authority – Ron Rakowsky reported Commerce City will begin building the northwest ramp at Tower and Peña Boulevard. The Authority has negotiated an oil and gas lease on a small piece of their land; and will receive $21,600 per year for the next 20 years.
FasTracks – Bill Van Meter reported the RTD Board's FasTracks Monitoring Committee approved staff's proposal for light rail storage tracks on I-225, with the full RTD Board approving the proposal as well. The Committee received an update on the annual program

evaluation that RTD staff is beginning. This is the annual assessment of FasTracks of revenues and costs; which this year will be combined with the baseline report on FasTracks for DRCOG. The grand opening of Denver Union Station is Friday, May 9. The festivities will run from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., with the grand opening ceremony at noon. RTD will host a P3 forum the morning of May 9; from 8:30 to 11 a.m.

<u>Next meeting – May 21, 2014</u>

<u>Other Matters by members</u>
Phil Cernanec reported on a discussion regarding Transportation and Economic Development. He proposed an education series for members on transportation, covering a variety of topics such as what it takes to build and maintain streets, trails, bridges, etc. Investments across the region could be included, as well as where transportation funding comes from.

<u>Adjournment</u>
The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

____
Jack Hilbert, Chair
Board of Directors
Denver Regional Council of Governments

ATTEST:

____
Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director

ATTACH B

To: Members of the Board of Directors

From: Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director
(303) 480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
May 21, 2014	Consent Agenda	8

SUBJECT

Appointments to MVIC (Metro Vision Issues Committee) occur annually. Approval of the proposed list establishes the membership for June 2014 through May 2015.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board Chair recommends the proposed appointments be confirmed.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

In May 2001 the Board approved the makeup and membership of the Metro Vision Issues Committee.

MVIC is comprised of up to 28 Board members and alternates and represents a cross-section of the membership per the MVIC committee description.

MVIC appointments were considered based on the criteria and committee description as well as their expression of interest in serving.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to confirm the Chair's appointments to MVIC in accordance with the committee guidelines established by the Board.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment: List of proposed appointments

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director at 303-480-6701 or jschafuele@drcog.org.

METRO VISION ISSUES COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS
MAY 2014

Adams County
Eva Henry – Adams County
Val Vigil – Thornton
Bob Roth – Aurora
Sue Horn – Board Officer (required)

Arapahoe County
Bill Holen – Arapahoe County
Doug Tisdale – Board Officer (required)
Ron Rakowsky – Greenwood Village
Cathy Noon – Centennial
Phil Cernanec – Littleton

Boulder County
Elise Jones – Board Officer (required)
Tim Plass – Boulder
Hank Dalton – Louisville

Clear Creek County
Tim Mauck – Clear Creek County

Denver
Robin Kniech – Denver
Anthony Graves – Denver

Douglas County
Jack Hilbert – Board Officer (required)
Jackie Millet – Board Officer (required)
John Diak – Parker

Jefferson County
Don Rosier – Jefferson County
Bob Fifer – Arvada
Todd Riddle – Edgewater
Marjorie Sloan – Golden
Shakti – Lakewood
Herb Atchison – Westminster

ATTACH C

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director
303-480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
May 21, 2014	Action	9

SUBJECT

This action concerns amendments to the Metro Vision 2035 Plan.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends approval of Cycle 2, 2013 amendments to the Metro Vision 2035 plan and Metro Vision Growth and Development Supplement.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

In November 2013 MVIC recommended revisions to urban centers recognized in Metro Vision to the DRCOG Board for the purposes of modeling revised regional land use assumptions. In November 2013 the Board agreed with the MVIC recommendation and directed staff to include proposed urban center amendments in modeling assumptions.

In addition to the urban center amendments, DRCOG staff proposes an amendment to the designation criteria for rural town centers. The proposed amendment would increase the maximum contiguous urban growth boundary/area (UGB/A) associated with a rural town center to three square miles.

MVIC recommended the Board approve all proposed amendments in April 2014. A public hearing was held on April 16, 2014. No comments were received during the hearing or the public comment period.

A summary of all proposed amendments can be found here.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

November 6, 2013 MVIC Meeting Summary
November 20, 2013 Board Meeting Summary
April 2, 2014 MVIC Meeting Summary

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to approve a resolution adopting amendments to Urban Centers and Rural Town Centers in the Metro Vision 2035 Plan including the growth and development supplement.

ATTACHMENTS

N/A

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director, at 303-480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org or Brad Calvert, Senior Planner, at 303-480-6839 or bcalvert@drcog.org

DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
STATE OF COLORADO

BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESOLUTION NO. _____, 2014

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING AMENDMENTS TO URBAN CENTERS AND RURAL TOWN CENTERS IN THE METRO VISION 2035 PLAN INCLUDING THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPLEMENT.

WHEREAS, it is a function and duty of the Denver Regional Council of Governments, as a regional planning commission under the laws of the State of Colorado, to make and adopt an advisory regional plan for the physical development of the territory within it jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the Denver Regional Council of Governments in 2011 adopted a document titled the *Metro Vision 2035 Plan* that established broad policies to guide growth and development, transportation, and environmental quality in the Denver region through the year 2035; and

WHEREAS, the Denver Regional Council of Governments in 2012 adopted a document titled the *Metro Vision 2035 Growth and Development Supplement* that is a technical appendix to the *Metro Vision 2035 Plan*; and

WHEREAS, the Denver Regional Council of Governments held a public hearing on April 16, 2014 to consider amendments proposed to the *Metro Vision 2035 Plan and Supplement*; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Vision Issues Committee has recommended that the Board of Directors of the Denver Regional Council of Governments adopt the proposed amendment to the *Metro Vision 2035 Plan including the Metro Vision Growth and Development Supplement*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that pursuant to its Articles of Association, and the authority granted under Section 30-28-106 of the Colorado Statutes the Board of Directors of the Denver Regional Council of Governments hereby adopts the proposed amendment to the *Metro Vision 2035 Plan*.

RESOLVED, PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of _____________, 2014 at Denver, Colorado.

____
Jack Hilbert, Chair
Board of Directors
Denver Regional Council of Governments

ATTEST:

____
Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director

ATTACH D

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director
jschaufele@drcog.org or 303 480-6701

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
May 21, 2014	Action	10

SUBJECT

This action concerns adoption of amendments to the *2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan* (2035 MVRTP). Twice a year, DRCOG staff asks partner agencies and local governments for proposed amendments.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the 2013 Cycle 2 amendments to the 2035 MVRTP as they represent fiscally constrained regionally significant changes and were shown to not impact air quality conformity.

ACTION BY OTHERS

March 24, 2014 – TAC recommended approval.
April 2, 2014 – MVIC recommended approval.
April 15, 2014 – RTC recommended approval.

SUMMARY

The proposed amendments were the subject of a public hearing before the DRCOG Board on April 16, 2014. A summary of comments heard at the public hearing and during the initial 30-day comment period, along with staff responses, is available here.

The proposed amendments to the 2035 MVRTP address CDOT RAMP-funded projects, RTD FasTracks changes, and local government projects. Highlights are:

Regionally Significant Roadway Projects

- C-470 (Douglas County): New managed toll express lanes (RAMP)
- I-70 (Mountain Corridor): Eastbound peak period toll express lane (RAMP)
- US-6/19th Street (Golden): New interchange (RAMP)
- SH-2 (Commerce City): Widening (RAMP)
- Bridge Street/I-76 (Brighton): New interchange
- Arapahoe Road/Jordan Road (Centennial): Grade separation

Rapid Transit Projects (RTD)

- North Metro: Extend from 72nd Avenue to 124th Avenue
- I-225: Relocate Montview Station to Fitzsimons Parkway

The *Summary Document for the Public Hearing* further describes the proposed 2035 MVRTP amendments.

The amended roadway and transit networks have been modeled for air quality conformity and the results were used by the state Air Pollution Control Division to calculate pollutant emissions. All pollutant emission tests were passed, as shown in the air quality conformity documents (DRCOG CO and PM 10 Conformity Determination and Denver Southern Subarea 8-hour Ozone Conformity Determination).

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

November 20, 2013 - Board Meeting Summary (approved modeling networks)
April 16, 2014 – Public Hearing

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to adopt a resolution approving the 2013 Cycle 2 amendments to the *2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan*, including the *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan*, and the associated *2013 Amendment Cycle 2 DRCOG CO and PM-10 Conformity Determination*, and the *2013 Amendment Cycle 2 DRCOG Denver Southern Subarea 8-Hour Ozone Conformity Determination*, concurrently.

ATTACHMENT

Draft resolution
Links:

- Summary Document of the *2013 Cycle 2 Amendments to the 2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan*
- DRCOG CO and PM 10 Conformity Determination
- Denver Southern Subarea 8-hour Ozone Conformity Determination
- April 16, 2014 Public Hearing Summary

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director, at 303-480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org, or Jacob Riger, Transportation Planning Coordinator, at 303-480-6751 or jriger@drcog.org

Summary of Written and Oral Testimony Received

(During the Public Comment Period from March 17, 2014 to April 16, 2014 Hearing)

This document summarizes the written (letters, emails, online submittals) and oral testimony received by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG).

No testimony was received prior to the public hearing. Oral testimony was provided at the public hearing. The following three individuals spoke in support of the proposed C-470 managed lanes project amendment:

1) Steve Klausing, Executive Vice President of the Denver South Economic Development Partnership and Executive Director of the Denver South Transportation Management Association

2) Art Griffith, Transportation Capital Projects Manager, Douglas County

3) Jim Taylor, former DRCOG Board Chair and former Littleton City Councilman

No other public comment was received.

DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

STATE OF COLORADO

BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESOLUTION NO. ________, 2013

MOTION TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2013 CYCLE 2 AMENDMENTS TO THE *2035 METRO VISION REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2035 MVRTP)*, INCLUDING THE *FISCALLY CONSTRAINED 2035 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN*, AND THE ASSOCIATED *2013 AMENDMENT CYCLE 2 DRCOG CO AND PM-10 CONFORMITY DETERMINATION*, AND THE *2013 AMENDMENT CYCLE 2 DENVER SOUTHERN SUBAREA 8-HOUR OZONE CONFORMITY DETERMINATION*, CONCURRENTLY.

WHEREAS, it is a function and duty of the Denver Regional Council of Governments, as a regional planning commission under the laws of the State of Colorado, to make and adopt a regional plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the Denver Regional Council of Governments, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the continuing transportation planning process designed to prepare and adopt transportation plans and programs, pursuant to state and federal statutes and regulations; and

WHEREAS, the transportation planning process is carried out by the council through a cooperative agreement with the Regional Transportation District and the Colorado Department of Transportation; and

WHEREAS, state and federal statutes require that a long-range Regional Transportation Plan be prepared, including highway and transit facilities that can reasonably be provided over a 20-year time horizon; and

WHEREAS, the *Metro Vision 2035 Plan* that guides the region's growth and development was adopted on February 16, 2011 and amended on August 17, 2011, September 19, 2012, and February 20, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the *2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan*, including the *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan* was prepared by the Denver Regional Council of Governments in cooperation with the Colorado Department of Transportation and Regional Transportation District, and was updated and adopted on February 16, 2011; and amended on August 17, 2011, September 19, 2012, February 20, 2013, and September 18, 2013; and

WHEREAS, Section 176(c) of the federal Clean Air Act as amended requires that the Metropolitan Planning Organization not give its approval to a transportation plan or program unless such plan or program conforms to an approved or promulgated implementation plan for air quality; and

WHEREAS, the amendments to the *2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan*, including the *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan*, reflect changes to the regional transportation network maps; and

WHEREAS, the amended financial plan of the *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan* meets fiscal constraint based on a reasonable estimate of funds available from 2012 through 2035; and

WHEREAS, an air quality analysis of the amended *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan and 2012-2017 Transportation Improvement Program* has been prepared consistent with the requirements of the Clean Air Act as amended, and regulations promulgated by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency; and

WHEREAS, this analysis indicates that the amended *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan and 2012-2017 Transportation Improvement Program* conform to the State Implementation Plan for air quality; and

WHEREAS, on April 16, 2014, a public hearing before the Denver Regional Council of Governments was held and comments received on the Summary Document of Amendments to the *2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan*, including the *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan,* were addressed*;* and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Advisory Committee and the Regional Transportation Committee have recommended that the Board of Directors of the Denver Regional Council of Governments adopt the proposed amendment to the *2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan,* including the *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan*, and find that the *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan* conforms to the State Implementation Plan for air quality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, pursuant to its *Articles of Association*, authority granted under Sections 30-28-106 and 43-1-1101 through 1105 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, and as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Denver region, the Board of Directors of the Denver Regional Council of Governments hereby approves the amendments to the *2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan,* including the *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan,* as described in the document titled *2013 Cycle 2 Amendments to the 2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan* and includes them as part of the regional master plan of the Denver region. This plan, as amended herein, supersedes any regional master plan previously adopted by the Denver Regional Council of Governments for the described area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Denver Regional Council of Governments, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, hereby determines that the amended *Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan* conforms to the applicable implementation plans approved or promulgated under the Clean Air Act, as amended, by virtue of the demonstrations incorporated in the *2013 Amendment Cycle 2 DRCOG CO and PM-10 Conformity Determination* and the *2013 Amendment Cycle 2 Denver*

Southern Subarea 8-hour Ozone Conformity Determination required pursuant to Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act, as amended.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chair of the Denver Regional Council of Governments is hereby authorized to certify copies of the plan amendments to all counties and municipalities lying wholly or partly in the Denver region.

RESOLVED, PASSED AND ADOPTED this _____ day of ____________, 2014 at Denver, Colorado.

____
Jack Hilbert, Chair
Board of Directors
Denver Regional Council of Governments

ATTEST:

____
Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director

ATTACH E

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director
jschaufele@drcog.org, or (303) 480-6701

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
May 21, 2014	Action Item	11

SUBJECT

This item concerns a legislative proposal for the reauthorization of MAP-21 to give metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) the flexibility to voluntarily use federal transportation dollars for investment in transit oriented developments (TOD).

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the Board support the proposal to amend MAP-21 concerning MPO voluntary investment in a TOD fund.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

The Denver region (along with many other metro areas around the country) faces challenges in financing transit oriented developments. Financial barriers, including higher land costs around transit stations, infrastructure upgrades needed to support increased density, the need to assemble small parcels of land to reach a critical mass, and the need to replace existing surface parking with structured parking, often delay or even prevent TODs because these barriers cannot easily be addressed through traditional funding and financing mechanisms available to regional entities, local jurisdictions and developers.

Given the regional nature of transit investments, MPOs are uniquely situated to play a leadership role in developing cross-jurisdictional instruments to assist in financing TODs. Enterprise Community Partners is proposing an amendment to MAP-21 in the upcoming reauthorization to provide MPOs with flexibility to create TOD loan funds, using a small portion of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds that are flexed for transit purposes.

The proposal leverages private funds and other public financing mechanisms; is cost neutral to the federal budget; and creates flexibility and enhances local control as regions are able to determine which investments are best for their area.

Enterprise Community Partners has requested DRCOG support this proposal. This will include signing on to a letter supporting the proposal and communicating our support to key federal officials.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to support a proposal for MAP-21 reauthorization to allow MPOs flexibility to use certain funds for TOD investment.

ATTACHMENT

Attachments: Transit Oriented Community Development Legislative Proposal
Proposed Language for Transportation Reauthorization

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Jennifer Schaufele at (303) 480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org, or Rich Mauro at (303) 480-6778 or rmauro@drcog.org.

<u>Transit-Oriented Community Development</u>
<u>Legislative Proposal</u>

With a minor change to federal law, metropolitan planning organizations could leverage additional private resources to encourage transit-oriented development.

<u>Importance of TOD</u>: Transit-oriented development (TOD) can ensure that people of all income levels can access housing, employment, and related community amenities (such as childcare facilities, fresh-food stores, healthcare facilities, and cultural and educational institutions) within a short, convenient, and safe walk or bike to reliable public transportation. Furthermore, building housing near transit enhances the fiscal viability of the transit agency by stabilizing ridership and revenues.

<u>Barriers to TOD:</u> Unfortunately, there are often significant barriers to developing TOD projects, such as the high cost of acquiring and holding land around transit. To overcome these barriers there is a need for the public sector to partner with private-sector community developers. Given the regional nature of transit investments, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) are uniquely situated to play a leadership role in developing cross-jurisdictional financing instruments to assist in financing TOD. Unfortunately, current law limits the ability of MPOs to utilize federal resources for this purpose, even if they determine that it is in their community's best interest.

<u>Solution:</u> Provide MPOs with flexibility to create TOD loan funds, using a small portion of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds that are flexed for transit purposes. MPOs would have the discretion and the authority to use these funds to establish or invest in financing instruments that provide capital for affordable housing and community development projects (including, but not limited to childcare facilities, education facilities, and health services) within close proximity to transit. The flexibility can be used to implement the goals identified in regional planning efforts, including those funded through the Federal Transit Authority's (FTA) TOD Planning Program, an innovative pilot program established by MAP-21 that should be renewed.

<u>This proposal:</u>

- **Leverages private funds.** Existing TOD Fund efforts have leveraged significantly more private capital than the initial public investment, at a ratio of 5:1 or more. This spreads risk, maximizes the impact of federal dollars, and instills private-sector discipline into the transactions.
- **Leverages housing funding, capacity and experience.** TOD Funds allow developers to purchase vital sites, which are then developed using existing, successful tools such as the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, New Markets Tax Credit, and other housing programs. When considering total development costs, each public/MPO dollar that has been invested in property acquisition has leveraged an average of more than $50 in housing funding and private capital.
- **Is cost neutral**. The proposal would not authorize any additional spending.
- **Creates flexibility**. The proposal does not create a set-aside, obligation, or priority for MPOs to use funds in a certain way.
- **Enhances local control**. MPOs are empowered with additional flexibility to make investments in TOD if they feel it is in the best interest of their communities/regions.
- **Is limited to a specific pool of funds**. Only CMAQ and STP funds flexed for transit purposes would be used. The proposal does not extend new eligible activities broadly.

Proposed Language for Transportation Reauthorization

Inserted at the end of section 5323 or at another appropriate place in 49 U.S.C. 53:

OPTION 1

(a) Authority: Funds that are transferred pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 104(k)(1) may be used within structured funds or as part of assembled capital pools that create or invest in activities eligible under 12 U.S.C. 4707(b) located within close proximity to public transportation services.

OPTION 2

(a) Authority: Funds that are apportioned or allocated under 23 U.S.C. 133 and 23 U.S.C. 149 and transferred pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 104(k)(1) may be used within structured funds or as part of assembled capital pools that create or invest in activities eligible under 12 U.S.C. 4707(b) located within close proximity to public transportation services.

ATTACH F

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director
303-480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
May 21, 2014	Action	12

SUBJECT

This action establishes a Board of Directors Working Group to explore the integration of housing issues into Metro Vision 2040.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends the Board establish a Working Group to consider the findings of the *Fair Housing Equity Assessment* and *Metro Vision 2040 Regional Housing Strategy* and recommend to the Board of Directors goals, objectives, performance measures, and initiatives for inclusion in Metro Vision 2040.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

As part of the Metro Vision 2040 update process regional stakeholders, including local planners and elected officials have consistently identified housing as a key issue that should be reflected in the final plan.

DRCOG retained BBC Research and Consulting to complete a Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA) and a Regional Housing Strategy. The Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) funded by U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires all grantees to complete an FHEA as part of the grant process.

The full FHEA and Regional Housing Strategy reports are being finalized. Summaries of the reports are attached.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

June 5, 2013 MVIC Meeting Summary

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to establish a Board of Directors Working Group to consider the findings of the *Fair Housing Equity Assessment* and *Metro Vision 2040 Regional Housing Strategy* and recommend to the Board of Directors goals, objectives, performance measures, and initiatives for inclusion in Metro Vision 2040, and to authorize the chair to make appointments to the Working Group.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments: Fair Housing Equity Assessment Summary
Metro Vision 2040 Regional Housing Strategy Summary

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director, at 303-480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org or Brad Calvert, Senior Planner, at 303-480-6839 or bcalvert@drcog.org

Summary
Denver Region Fair Housing Equity Assessment

This Fair Housing Equity Assessment is a key deliverable in the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Sustainable Communities Initiatives (SCI). The summary presents the primary findings from an assessment of fair housing equity in the Denver region. A Fair Housing Equity Assessment, or FHEA, is a required component of DRCOG's Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. All Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant (SCRPG) recipients must complete an FHEA as part of their work program.

The Denver region's FHEA has two primary areas of focus:

1) **An assessment of "access to opportunity" for residents in the region.** For this report, under HUD's guidance, access to opportunity is defined as access to: transit; affordable, quality housing; quality schools, job training facilities and employment; and needed supportive services.[1] The FHEA is also required to examine fair housing challenges, including an analysis of legal complaints and violations related to fair housing.

2) **Development of a plan to improve areas where opportunity is lacking and improve the fair housing environment**. This is contained in the document's Recommendations section.

It is important to note the FHEA differs from Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) reports, which are completed by jurisdictions in the region receiving HUD community development and housing funds directly. The FHEA has a deeper emphasis on access to opportunity; in contrast, AIs focus more directly on discrimination and other barriers to housing choice.

Conversations with representatives of the region's many jurisdictions during the development of the FHEA revealed challenges in understanding and embracing the concept of "access to opportunity." Viewing fair housing needs through this lens is new to many and will require education and outreach—an effort that begins with this FHEA.

Key Findings of the FHEA:

- Racial and ethnic concentrations are limited, but do exist in the region
- The region is economically segregated, restricting opportunity for residents

[1] A HUD-requirement of FHEAs is an examination of the existence of segregation of residents by race and ethnicity, as well as poverty. As such, this FHEA incorporates a number of HUD-prescribed indicators and maps to examine racial, ethnic and economic segregation in the Denver region.

- Gaps in opportunity exist throughout the region

Addressing these critical challenges requires a coordinated, concerted effort involving numerous partners. Initial recommendations are described in this summary, and the full report.

The Story of Fair Housing in the Region

The Denver region developed later than many areas of the country and, as such, grew at a time when racial and ethnic discrimination was beginning to be addressed nationally through activism and legislation. Prior this period, Colorado and the City and County of Denver were pioneers on many civil rights fronts. In 1959, Colorado passed one of the earliest state civil rights laws in the nation. In 1947, Denver's mayor established one of the nation's first civil rights commissions. The City and County of Denver's current goal to be a "world-class city where everyone matters" demonstrates continued commitment to equity.

The region and state are certainly not immune to racial and ethnic discrimination—the Poundstone Amendment, for example, prevented Denver from expanding in reaction to school busing and integration. Public- and private-sector actions and cultural biases contributed to segregated neighborhoods. At one point in history, both Denver and state had an active KKK. But, overall, the region is fortunate not to have a history of severe racial and ethnic tensions when compared to other established regions around the country.

Despite this relatively positive history, racial and ethnic separations persist in the region—and it is unclear exactly why. These concentrations are mostly likely not a result of any one factor, but instead a mix of historical settlement patterns (some related to institutional segregation), economic need, housing preferences and community perceptions.

Racial and ethnic concentrations are limited, but do exist. A neighborhood-level analysis revealed residents are much more likely to live near neighbors who share their race and ethnicity. Nearly half of the region's minority residents live in racially/ethnically concentrated neighborhoods with high levels of poverty (defined by HUD as three times the region's rate of poverty).[2] According to HUD, these areas of poverty "merit special attention because the costs they impose extend far beyond their residents"—e.g., crime, low education and skill development of residents, costs supportive services, etc.[3]

About 150,750 residents in the region live in neighborhoods with both racial/ethnic and poverty concentrations. Of these, over half (57 percent) are in Denver, 20 percent are in Arapahoe County, 19 percent are in Adams County and 4 percent are in Boulder County.

Why racial/ethnic concentrations exist. A recent report by the Manhattan Institute shows segregation in most American cities has been declining since a peak in the mid-twentieth century, when both government policies and market forces contributed to neighborhood segregation. Policy reform, shifts in racial attitude, gentrification of urban areas and integration of suburbs have all contributed to the overall decline in segregation.[4] Even so, racial

[2] RCAPs and ECAPs are HUD-defined terms and required of the FHEA.

[3] http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-07-19/pdf/2013-16751.pdf

[4] https://www.manhattan-institute.org/html/cr_66.htm

concentrations persist in many neighborhoods due to a multitude of reasons including neighborhood history, immigration patterns, economic mobility and actual/perceived racism.

In a series of focus groups, residents suggested that lack of diversity in some areas of the region is due to perceptions of exclusion, in addition to economic factors. Some neighborhoods are viewed as inclusive by residents, while some are not. The perception of inclusiveness may be related to initial settlement reasons. An example is Green Valley Ranch, developed as an affordable home-buying option for city employees, when city workers were required to reside in Denver. Because city workers were racially and ethnically diverse, the neighborhood was diverse from its beginning. This has remained the case.

The region is economically segregated, restricting opportunity for residents. A statistical examination of segregation in the nation's largest metropolitan areas conducted by the Pew Research Center, *The Rise of Residential Segregation by Income,* found the Denver metropolitan statistical area (MSA) to be the 5th most segregated of the 30 largest cities in the U.S.. [5] The Denver MSA is second only to New York in the share of households earning less than $40,000 who live in a majority low-income Census tract.

As described previously, more than 150,000 residents in the region live in areas of both racial/ethnic and poverty concentrations. At the neighborhood level, research has shown that a 40 percent poverty threshold is the point at which an area becomes socially and economically dysfunctional. Conversely, research has shown that areas with up to 14 percent poverty have no noticeable effect on community opportunity.[6]

In the Denver region, there are 14 Census tracts (2 percent of all Census tracts) with severe poverty rates exceeding 40 percent. About 49,000 residents live in these extreme poverty neighborhoods; two-thirds (64 percent) of those residents are racial/ethnic minorities. These areas are generally areas of poor-performing schools, as well as areas with poor housing condition and little private investment.

Gaps in opportunity exist throughout the region. Gaps in access to opportunity were identified through an analysis of opportunity indicators including school quality, job access, income equality, access to health care and neighborhood investment.[7] Opportunity gaps in the region were found for school quality; job access, especially relative to affordable housing; income equality; neighborhood investment; and in fair housing information. Specifically:

- **School quality.** Minorities and children living in poverty, as well as renters, are much less likely to live near high quality schools than the rest of the region's population. Access to

[5] http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/08/01/the-rise-of-residential-segregation-by-income/

[6] The Costs of Concentrated Poverty: Neighborhood Property Markets and the Dynamics of Decline." In Nicolas P. Retsinas and Eric S. Belsky, eds., Revisiting Rental Housing: Policies, Programs, and Priorities. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 116–9. Poverty is defied at the federal level and is roughly less than $23,000 for a family of four.

[7] The opportunity measures chosen are not exhaustive of the many indicators of economic opportunity. These were chosen because they were readily available, recommended by stakeholders and/or provided by HUD.

quality schools is limited by affordable housing options and transit options in high-performing areas.

- **Jobs and housing/training access.** There is a large mismatch between affordable homes (priced below $250,000) and job centers in the region. Excluding the relatively small affordable housing near the central business district, areas of high job density have no overlap with areas of affordability.

  There is also a mismatch between job training resources and areas that are most likely to need those resources—high proportions of unemployed residents and adults with less than a high school degree.

- **Income inequality.** As mentioned earlier, 49,000 residents are living in extremely high poverty neighborhoods (greater than 40%). These areas of high poverty, many of which are occupied by racial and ethnic minorities, are characterized by poor housing condition, below-average school quality, high crime and low levels of capital investment.

- **Neighborhood investment.** In the Denver region, racially and ethnically concentrated areas, as well as areas with poor housing stock, tend to have high rejection rates for home purchase and home improvement loans. As affordability has declined in the region, these areas are some of the only places left with affordable homes to buy—yet they offer considerably less access to good schools and well-paying jobs.

- **Gaps in information**. Due to budget and staffing constraints, the region lacks a robust and coordinated outreach system to educate residents and landlords about their fair housing rights, obligations and responsibilities. Historically, most fair housing organizations in the region have focused on enforcement.

How to improve access to opportunity

Strengthening the economic capacity of residents in the Denver region is a complex effort, requiring a diverse set of strategies and collaboration among cities, counties and other public and private entities.

Because of the many factors involved in increasing opportunity—improving school quality, growing jobs that pay a living wage, ensuring residents can live near where they work, providing a range of housing choices to accommodate lifestyle and economic changes—improving access to opportunity must be a coordinated, concerted effort.

DRCOG's role. DRCOG can play an important role in increasing access to opportunity by strengthening the linkages between affordable housing, educational opportunities, job centers and transit. As the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), DRCOG is also in a unique position to be a catalyst for improving opportunities for older adults and persons with disabilities.

To this end, it is recommended that DRCOG:

Recommendation 1. ***Begin by establishing an initiative to understand and address gaps in opportunity.***

Potential Focus Areas:

- Convene public and private partners interested in working with DRCOG to define and improve access to opportunity.

- Define roles for each partner, as well as how to measure near- and long-term progress (e.g. improving transit access for housing units priced less than $350,000)

- Determine the current and future role of the Denver Regional Equity Atlas in illustrating key challenges to accessing opportunity.

Recommendation 2. ***Reward communities that work to improve their affordable housing choices.*** DRCOG could take on a more direct role in addressing access to opportunity by incentivizing geographically-based affordable and workforce housing through DRCOG's role as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)—including allocation of federal transportation dollars.

Potential Focus Areas:

- Reward or incentivize communities to provide (or plan to provide) a certain proportion of affordable and workforce housing near employment/job training centers as identified in local housing needs assessments.

- Provide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) points to communities demonstrating a commitment to the efforts listed above.

- Prioritize transportation projects that are catalysts to revitalization of disadvantaged areas, including projects that connect low-income residents and older adults to services, job training, and employment.

Recommendation 3. ***Support efforts to improve school quality in the region's core neighborhoods.*** A spatial analysis of good-quality schools showed few affordable housing choices are available and that these areas also have high transportation costs. Strengthening schools in the region's core neighborhoods not only has long-term economic payoffs, but also has the potential to reduce transportation challenges.

Potential Focus Area:

- While other entities have the most direct influence on improving school quality, DRCOG could be a model for other organizations by dedicating resources, as available, to support educational improvement in disadvantaged areas.

Recommendation 4. ***Take a leadership role on improving housing opportunities and transit for persons with disabilities and seniors.*** To improve access to opportunity for persons with disabilities and seniors—a fast-growing population cohort in the region—DRCOG's efforts should focus on increasing visitable and accessible housing options and access to transit.

Potential Focus Areas:

- Through ADRC surveys and discussions with residents, explore the demand for expanded and formal rideshare and transit options for seniors and persons with disabilities—particularly in areas not currently served by transit.

- With the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Regional Transportation District (RTD), Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council (DRMAC) and local governments, study the accessibility of major transportation and pedestrian corridors (e.g., Colfax Avenue, Parker Road) and how well they accommodate persons with disabilities who work/live nearby.

- Continue and expand DRCOG's Boomer Bond to include a focus on people with disabilities.

- Develop a comprehensive housing resource guide to accessible housing opportunities, in conjunction with DRCOG's aging resource publications and products.

Recommendation 5. *Launch a fair housing public information campaign and support testing.* The region lacks a public information campaign to inform residents about their fair housing rights and responsibilities. Currently, fair housing outreach is done at the jurisdictional level, but the extent and content varies depending on resources.

Potential Focus Areas:

- Develop a regional awareness campaign on fair housing laws to avoid duplication of jurisdictional efforts, create a consistent regional message, and conserve local resources.[8]

- Provide direct financial support and/or data to assist with fair housing testing efforts done by the Metro Denver Fair Housing Center.

- Coordinate with jurisdictions on methods to identify and address fair housing violations.

Recommendation 6. *Provide data and information to help entitlement communities meet their fair housing obligations.* Jurisdictions across the region are conducting similar efforts to obtain and analyze data to support development of HUD-required plans.

Potential Focus Area:

- Work with entitlement communities and HUD to determine data needs for future fair housing reports and create a "one-stop shop" where communities can access data and analysis needed to complete the required reports—this is particularly timely given the pending release of a new HUD template for fair housing.

[8] All jurisdictions receiving HUD block grant funding, either directly or through the state allocation, are required to affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH). The obligation to AFFH includes fair housing outreach and education efforts.

SUMMARY
DRCOG Regional Housing Strategy

This Regional Housing Strategy (RHS) is a key deliverable in the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Sustainable Communities Initiatives (SCI). DRCOG identified housing as a missing element in Metro Vision, the region's long-range plan for growth and development. The need for a regional focus on housing was reinforced in the results of the Metro Vision 2040 Local Government Survey when two-thirds of respondents indicated that growth in low- and moderate-income households was a key challenge. Sustainable Regional Community Regional Planning Grant (SCRPG) recipients are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to conduct a fair housing analysis. A companion Fair Housing and Equity Analyis (FHEA) study was also developed.

The RHS tells a story of the housing market in the Denver region—where it has been, where it is and how it is likely to change. The RHS also incorporates major findings from the required Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA). The principal component of the RHS is a set of recommended strategies from which DRCOG and area partners can work to further a diverse set of housing choices in the region—an important component of sustainable growth.

In addition to quantitative analysis, the RHS was informed through interviews and focus groups with engaged stakeholders and the public.

Economic importance of housing choice

The concentration of affordable housing—which occurs when only a few communities are the predominant home location of lower-wage workers—has many adverse economic effects. The most prominent are:

- **Increased traffic congestion and wear-and-tear on roads** caused by workers commuting from home to work. Affordable housing in the region has become much more concentrated within a handful of communities. This is likely to continue unless the array of housing choices can be broadened throughout the region.

- **Lower community investment by workers** who commute long distances in volunteering and contributing to civic life, as well as patronizing local businesses. These commuters also have less time to invest in their families and children.

- **The consequence of cost burden,** when a household pays more than 30 percent of its household income in housing cost. This is a problem for renters because it limits their ability to save to buy a home. And in almost every county in the region, more than half of renters are cost-burdened.[1] Cost burdened owners often need to cut back on other household spending to make their mortgage payments. In the most severe situation, cost burden leads to foreclosure. One-third of the region's owners are currently cost burdened.

- **Constraints on economic development.** In interviews with local, regional, and state economic development organizations (EDOs) conducted for the Regional Economic Strategy (a companion study to the RHS), it was noted that lack of housing affordability and stability (ability to stay in the same home) are threats to economic opportunity. The mismatch between affordable housing locations and job centers creates costly commutes, stresses families, and results in significant turnover in lower-wage jobs.

- **Housing costs and outmigration.** The Center for Housing Policy recently examined lost economic development opportunities that occur when employers and qualified employees move from a community because of high housing costs.[2] According to the report, between 2000 and 2006—the period when housing costs rose at record levels in most U.S. cities—23 of the 35 metropolitan areas in the country with the highest housing costs lost population to out-migration; on average, a 6 percent loss per year.

Recent research has demonstrated that an increase in the ratio of housing prices to income can slow regional employment growth by as much as 1 percent per year.

Maintaining a diverse mix of housing choices in the region—a "housing balance"—should be an important focus of the region's economic growth strategy. This should involve an efficient positioning of future housing for workforce, which takes advantage of existing infrastructure, occurs near job centers and transit, and maximizes areas of new opportunity. It must also involve efforts to increase opportunity for the region's lowest-income residents, especially children, who will comprise a large part of the future workforce. Finally, it must address the supportive service needs of future older adults, many of whom will age in place, away from easy access to major service centers.

[1] Cost burden exists when a household pays more than 30 percent of its gross income toward housing and utilities costs. This is an industry standard for being able to afford to buy or rent through both the private and public markets.

[2] *The Role of Affordable Housing in Creating Jobs and Stimulating Local Economic Development: A Review of the Literature,* The Center for Housing Policy, Keith Wardrip, Laura Williams, and Suzanne Hague, January 2011.

The Denver region: Where we have been

The Denver region ended the last decade—a tough one, for many regions in the U.S.—in a relatively strong place. The region was fortunate that our housing bubble was modest compared to many areas: Prices went up, but not at the rate seen in many parts of the U.S., and the post-recession landing was soft.

Yet many of the region's residents ended the decade worse off than in the beginning. Many residents fell out of, then re-entered, poverty. Incomes failed to keep pace with increased housing costs, eroding housing purchasing power. And the areas in the region where affordable housing could be found declined, narrowing the opportunities for residents to live close to places of employment.

Population growth. The region experienced moderate population growth in the 1980s, but saw a population surge in the 1990s when the region added nearly 600,000 residents (a 31 percent increase over the decade). In the 2000s, population growth returned to more moderate increases.

Altogether, the region gained over 1.1 million new residents from 1980 to 2010. This growth required development of many residential units to house new residents. *Nearly half of all homes in the region, more than 550,000 residential units, were built during this period.*

Diversity. The region's racial and ethnic diversity continues to increase as the region grows—33 percent of the region's residents were racial and ethnic minorities in 2010 compared to 28 percent in 2000. But this increase was not uniform across the region. The largest shifts in racial and ethnic diversity occurred in Adams and Arapahoe counties, each of which increased its shares of minority residents by about 10 percentage points. Denver's diversity remained the same and Weld County grew less diverse. At the end of the decade, Denver and Adams County remained the most diverse in the region, with minority residents making up a little less than half of all residents.

Age and household composition. The region experienced modest shifts in age distribution during the past decade, mostly a tilt toward residents aged 55+ (growing from 17 percent of residents to 21 percent) and away from 35 to 54 year olds (declining from 32 percent to 29 percent). However, the aging of the population will be a critical issue for the region moving forward, as discussed later in the report.

The region saw only a small shift in household composition, a slight movement away from family households and families with children toward single households. Households with children made up 37 percent of all households in 1980 compared to 33 percent in 2010.

Income and poverty. Poverty changed little except during the 1990s, when it fell to 8 percent in 2000. Currently, about 300,000, or 12 percent, of the region's residents live in poverty. Poverty is highest in Denver (19 percent) and Adams County (14 percent).

Between 1980 and 2010, residents living in poverty became more segregated from moderate and high-income residents. A 2013 study by the Pew Research Center, *The Rise of Residential Segregation by Income,* used a Residential Income Segregation Index (RISI) to evaluate income segregation by metropolitan area.[3] The RISI for the Denver metropolitan statistical area (MSA) was found to have increased significantly during the past 30 years, from 34 in 1980 to 55 in 2010—a 62 percent increase in the segregation index.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN DENVER REGION

Increase in racial and ethnic minorities

28% → 33%
2000 2010

Decline in households with children

37% → 33%
1980 2010

Modest shifts in age distribution towards older adults, 65+

17% → 21%
2000 2010

Strong young adult in-migration

60% of new residents from 2000-2010 aged 25-34

Growth in poverty and economic segregation

10% Residents living in poverty, **1990**
to 8% **2000**
to 12% **2010**

Economic segregation increase = 62%

Increase in child poverty rate, 1990-2010
13% → 16%

Increase in older adult poverty rate, 1990-2010
5% → 9%

Housing costs. At the end of the decade, housing was more expensive, mostly driven by demand to reside in the region. Although incomes rose in tandem with housing costs, the income increase was not enough to keep up with inflation. As of 2010, households needed to dedicate more of their incomes to housing costs than in 2000, causing erosion of purchasing power overall.

In 2000, the median rent ranged between $650 and $800 per month in most counties; by 2013, it approached or exceeded $1,000 in many counties. Due to strong rental demand in the latter part of the prior decade, 2010 began with rental vacancy rates at low levels—only to decline even

[3] The index adds the share of low-income residents who live in a majority low-income Census tract to the share of upper-income residents living in a majority upper income Census tract; higher indices indicate higher levels of segregation.

further in recent years with continued strong demand. For example, the metro area vacancy rate was 7.7 percent at the end of 2009, dropping to 4.4 percent by third quarter 2013.

The median price of homes to buy rose from $189,000 in 2000 to $259,000 in 2012-13—a $70,000, or 37 percent, increase. The locations of affordable homes, priced at less than $250,000, shifted away from the southern areas of the region, toward the northeast, farther away from the region's core job centers.

Homeownership declined in all counties except those in the western part of the region and Weld County. An influx of younger residents who rent contributed to the decline. Indeed, 25- and 34-year-olds—58 percent of whom rent—made up more than 60 percent of all net migration in the region between 2000 and 2010.

The Denver region: Where we are now?

Age. The region's older adults currently make up a relatively small portion of residents (15 percent), but this will change dramatically in the very near future with the aging of the Baby Boomers. With the aging of the population, the region will also experience an increase in population with one or more disabilities; older adults have much higher rates of disability than younger residents.

Childhood poverty. Children make up about one-fourth of the region's residents. They have the highest poverty rate of all residents at 16 percent for the region overall. Almost 40,000 of the children in the region live in poverty. Children have the highest rate of poverty of any age cohort in almost every county in the region. The region has significant disparities in childhood poverty rates by county. In Denver, nearly 30 percent of children live in poverty, while only the figure is only 3 percent in Douglas County.

Racial and ethnic concentrations. The region remains predominantly non-Hispanic White (67 percent), with two counties—Denver and Adams—almost "majority minority."
Few neighborhoods in the region mirror the region's overall racial and ethnic composition. Instead, residents are more likely to live near neighbors who share their race and ethnicity. In 2010, Hispanic residents were nearly three times as likely as the average resident to live in a Hispanic majority Census Tract. African Americans were 10 times as likely as the average resident to live in an African American majority tract.

About 150,000 residents in the region live in neighborhoods with both racial/ethnic and poverty concentrations. Of these, over half (57 percent) are in Denver, 20 percent are in Arapahoe County, 19 percent are in Adams County and 4 percent are in Boulder County. These areas are generally areas of poor-performing schools, as well as areas with poor housing condition and little private investment.

Economic segregation. Income or economic segregation in the Denver region is currently the 5th worst of the 30 largest cities in the U.S. according to a recent study measuring economic segregation.[4] The study found that the Denver MSA—in addition to New York, San Antonio and

[4] http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/08/01/the-rise-of-residential-segregation-by-income/

Philadelphia—led the 30 largest metro areas in the share of lower-income households residing in majority lower-income tracts. The Denver MSA is just second to New York in the share of households earning less than $40,000 living in a majority low-income Census tract.

Housing affordability. A near halt in rental housing production in the middle part of the past decade following high vacancy rates, coupled with increased rental demand of new residents, has contributed to record low vacancy trends since 2011. Vacancy rates hovered around 4 percent in 2013—a significant change from the 11 percent high in 2004. Low vacancies—and corresponding increases in rental costs—disproportionately affect low-income renters, who already have a limited supply of units in their price range.

As of 2013, the average renter in the region needed to earn $40,000 to afford the median rental unit. The following table below details median rent (all unit sizes), vacancy rate, and income needed to afford median rent in 2013. Renters looking for more affordable rentals are often only exploring options in limited submarkets within counties—these areas are currently experiencing extremely low vacancy rates, as low as 1 percent according to stakeholders familiar with these areas.

MEDIAN RENTS, VACANCIES, AND INCOME NEEDED TO AFFORD RENT, 3Q13

	Rent	Vacancy Rate	Income Needed to Afford Rent
Adams	$931	5.7%	$37,000
Arapahoe	$947	4.8%	$38,000
Boulder/Broomfield	$1,172	2.8%	$47,000
Denver	$933	4.6%	$37,000
Douglas	$1,188	3.5%	$48,000
Jefferson	$996	3.6%	$40,000

The most expensive submarkets for rentals include central and downtown Denver, which require an annual income of almost $60,000 to afford the median rent. In these two market areas, the median rent exceeds $1,400 per month.

Lower-income rentals are concentrated in the City and County of Denver. Nearly half the rental units in the region affordable to households earning less than $25,000 are located in Denver. Denver also has the widest gap between overall regional rental share and share of most affordable units.

PROPORTION OF RENTALS AFFORDABLE TO RENTERS EARNING < $25,000/YEAR

	Percent of all rental units affordable to renters earning < $25,000/year	Distribution of Affordable Units: Regional distribution of all rentals	Units affordable at < $25,000	Difference from all unit distribution
Adams County	15%	13%	13%	0%
Arapahoe County	12%	20%	16%	-4%
Boulder County	8%	11%	6%	-5%
Broomfield County	13%	2%	1%	0%
Clear Creek County	16%	0%	0%	0%
Denver County	22%	33%	49%	17%
Douglas County	3%	5%	1%	-4%
Gilpin County	11%	0%	0%	0%
Jefferson County	11%	16%	12%	-4%
Weld County (DRCOG portion)	7%	1%	0%	0%
DENVER REGION	**14%**	**100%**	**100%**	

An analysis of home sales below $250,000 indicate significant concentrations in areas that tend to have low levels of elementary school quality, which can negatively affect the region's ability to grow its own skilled workforce.

These affordable areas for homeownership are also far from job centers in the region. Excluding the relatively small affordable area near the central business district in Denver (which is primarily composed of condos), areas of high job density have no overlap with areas of for-sale affordability.

The Denver region: Where are we headed?

Population growth. DRCOG's population forecast for the year 2040 shows rates of population growth experienced in the last 30 years. The region is projected to grow by 1.2 million people between 2010 and 2040.

Population growth is anticipated to be strongest in Adams, Arapahoe, Denver and Douglas counties—representing nearly a million new residents between these four counties.

Age shift. The demographic composition of the region will be quite different than in the past. The percentage of the population made up of older adults will double by 2040. Many inner-ring suburban communities currently have older adult populations that are over 20 percent of the city's total population. The region's outer-ring suburbs will increasingly see their residents age. Douglas County will continue to lead the region in greatest change in senior growth.

Largely due to the growth of older adults, the number of residents with disabilities will increase by 237,000. The increases in persons with disabilities in most counties will be quite significant, resulting in more demand for accessible and visitable housing, transit and supportive services.

A shift away from residents in prime working ages toward residents in retirement will increase demand for new workforce. Ensuring the region's current children have optimal educational opportunities will be an important part of sustaining future economic growth. Continued in-migration of well-educated, young adults has and may continue to be an important part of the region's economic growth.

Increase in poor residents. If the region fails to improve economic opportunity for its lowest income residents and poverty rates stay the same as they are currently, the number of individuals living in poverty in the region will increase by 141,000, with 46,000 of these individuals being older adults and 39,000 being children.

Housing preferences. Another 1.2 million people in the region could require development of at least 550,000 new housing units, if household sizes remain similar to the past.[5] This begs the question of: *will future housing demand be different?*

Housing preferences are difficult to predict, since they are so closely related to personal financial, employment and familial situations. But the behavior and housing preferences exhibited by the two large age cohorts that will drive housing demand during the next 20 years—the Millenials[6] and Baby Boomers—suggest housing preferences could differ from the past.

A 2013 Urban Land Institute (ULI) survey of Millenials found favorable responses to developments that have a variety of housing types, are mixed-use and pedestrian friendly, suggesting a desire for both urban and "urban light," mixed-use settings that are growing in suburban markets.[7]

Some research has shown similar preferences toward denser, walkable residential environments among Baby Boomers. Yet the behavior of older adults, historically, has been to remain in their own homes as long as possible—due in some part to lack of housing options suitable for aging-in-place. If this continues, there will be a large need for expanded home health care networks to accommodate growth in older adults throughout the region, as well as home modifications to accommodate disabilities, senior-friendly transit and, for older adults who can afford and desire to move, senior-friendly residential communities.

Primary housing gaps in the region

Considering where the region has been, where it is now and the demographic direction in which it is likely headed, continuing on the same path of housing provision will not meet residents' future needs. But it's not just future gaps in housing; there are current needs as well. The RHS and Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA) identified key challenges that should be addressed.

[5] 2010 Census data estimate that 566,000 new units were developed in the Denver region between 1980 and 2010.

[6] Millenials are residents between the ages of 25 and 34, also known as Generation Y.

[7] http://uli.org/research/centers-initiatives/terwilliger-center-for-housing/research/community-survey/ contains a compilation of recent surveys, articles and opinions on Millennials' housing preferences.

The challenges below were informed by data analysis and engagement with informed and knowledgeable stakeholders.

- Declining housing affordability region-wide and geographically limited options for affordable housing, particularly near job centers.
- A growing disconnect between locations of public transit and where lower- and moderate-wage workers, as well as seniors, reside.
- Gaps in opportunity for low-income and minority residents. The primary opportunity gaps are in education, job access, income segregation and neighborhood investment.
- Lack of a flexible funding source, such as a housing trust fund, to address housing needs.
- Lack of rental subsidies and permanent housing for the region's residents living in poverty, in addition to supportive services.
- Urban areas, as the primary provider of housing and services to the region's households with the most severe needs, are sheltering much of the burden. But needs are growing in suburban areas, which initially had relatively low demand, but are now struggling to serve increasing numbers of residents living in poverty.
- More permanent, supportive housing region-wide is needed to address homelessness.
- Information is needed, such as housing condition and best practices in zoning and land use, for jurisdictions to effectively and efficiently address housing issues.

How can DRCOG make a difference?

DRCOG has the potential to improve regional housing diversity and, as such, help to further economic opportunity by playing a variety of roles. The recommended strategies are organized around these various roles.

- **Convener.** Provide information and bring together cities, counties, industry experts and other partners to discuss solutions to improve housing options across the region.
- **Incubator.** Set in motion, through provision of information, administrative and/or financial support, new regional programs and initiatives to support increased housing options.
- **Do-er.** Implement programs and policies that support the production and preservation of housing options in location-efficient places, including urban centers, high opportunity areas, and areas well-served by transit.

DRCOG as a convener

Recommendation C-1. ***Sponsor discussions and workshops to provide information about best practices in land use regulations, zoning and housing policies.***

Potential Focus Areas:

- Education on proactive, flexible, zoning and expedited development reviews that can reduce regulatory barriers in housing production.
- Strategies to build and recognize successful mixed-income developments in urban centers.
- Documenting programs and practices with successful housing outcomes, including well-integrated, racially/ethnically and economically diverse communities.
- Efforts to revitalize aging inner-ring suburban neighborhoods and improving housing condition in aging neighborhoods.

Recommendation C-2. ***Continue and amplify dialogue about visitable and accessible housing demand.***

Potential Focus Areas:

- Education on successful regulatory tools (e.g. Arvada visitability ordinance) to help communities meet demand.
- Coordinate with private development community to understand and convey key incentives needed to produce units, including clarity on key challenges that must be overcome.
- Continue to promote dialogue at the local level, including documentation of innovative practices, through DRCOG's Boomer Bond initiative.
- Facilitate a discussion of the growing needs (housing, transportation, services, etc.) of seniors in inner- and outer-ring suburban communities.

DRCOG as an incubator

Recommendation I-1. ***Become a catalyst for additional, flexible sources of funding.***

Housing experts consulted in this effort strongly agree that a source of new funding for affordable and workforce housing production is needed to address gaps in current and future affordable housing stock. Ideally, this would be a regional dedicated source of flexible funding.

Potential Focus Areas:

- Sponsor discussions about sources of funding for housing development.
- Bring together housing advocates, real estate professionals, local leaders and housing finance interests together to develop a funding recommendation.
- Examine if models exist in other regions that could be replicated in the Denver region.

- Explore innovative revenue-generating and -sharing models such as inter-jurisdictional agreements to share in the cost of housing that will benefit multiple communities.

Recommendation I-2. ***Explore a new method of coordinated and collaborative housing planning for homelessness.***

Potential Focus Areas:

- Explore partnership opportunities with regional homeless coordinating entities such as the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) to initiate regional planning for homeless initiatives.

- Consider implementation of a single point of entry system and creation of permanent supportive housing region-wide.

Recommendation I-3. ***Gather and make available research on successful ways to improve access to economic opportunity.***

Potential Focus Areas:

- Build-on initial analysis of geographic analysis of opportunity in the Denver region initiated in the Fair Housing Equity Assessment

- Work with partner organizations to identify the long-term, multi-faceted, and interrelated challenges that combine to create areas of low economic opportunity

- Determine strategies, resources, and investments that can improve life outcomes for all residents.

- Coordinate with housing providers to determine the most effective interventions and programs that will produce positive outcomes in the areas they serve.

DRCOG as a do-er

Recommendation D-1. ***Create and share information about housing condition.***

Information on housing condition is lacking in the Denver region, as it is in many regions. Numerous jurisdictions interviewed for this study identified the need for a condition database that would help them better target home rehabilitation programs and plans for aging housing stock.

Potential Focus Areas:

- Create a database and mapping tool that helps local governments assess existing housing condition.

- Variables that are indicative of condition could be used to predict home rehabilitation needs and identify program needs where improvements are not being made.

Recommendation D-2. ***Conduct research, education and outreach to member communities about the economic benefits of addressing housing needs.***

This RHS has barely scratched the surface in identifying the economic benefits associated with diverse housing choices that can meet the needs of all the region's residents. Many interviewed for this study emphasized a need for a continuous stream of information to help decision makers understand the economic benefits of having a diverse array of housing for residents.

Potential Focus Areas:

- Conduct research to quantify the economic benefits of reducing income and race/ethnic segregation (a similar study was completed by MetCouncil in Minneapolis/St. Paul).

- Quantify the costs to the region of future, resource-intensive growth patterns on transportation systems, water and resident health.

- Detail the economic impact of development of affordable housing to reduce existing cost burden and meet future housing needs.

- Outline key housing needs identified by the economic development community as part of the Regional Economic Strategy.

Recommendation D-3. *Reward communities that work to improve their affordable housing choices.* Stakeholders suggested the most successful way to produce geographically-based affordable and workforce housing is through mandates or incentives. They pointed to DRCOG's role in the allocation of federal transportation funds as an opportunity to ensure affordable housing production and preservation.

Potential Focus Areas:

- Reward or incentivize communities to provide (or plan to provide) a certain proportion of affordable and workforce housing near employment/job training centers as identified in local housing needs assessments.

- Provide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) points to communities that demonstrate a commitment to the efforts listed above.

- Prioritize transportation projects that are catalysts to revitalization of disadvantaged areas, including projects that connect low-income residents and older adults to services, job training, and employment.

Recommendation D-4. *Support expansions of existing programs to create mixed income housing in desired locations*.

Potential Focus Areas:

- Support the efforts of the region's innovative, successful organizations and programs that are already catalysts to affordable housing creation.

- Support land banking efforts of non-profits to assist with affordable housing production.

- Expand eligibility of existing Urban Center/Station Area Master Plan funds to include housing authorities.

ATTACH G

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director
303 480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
May 21, 2014	Informational	

SUBJECT
This agenda item provides RTD's 2014 FasTracks Annual Status Report.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS
This item is for information only.

ACTION BY OTHERS
N/A

SUMMARY
The DRCOG Board adopted Resolution #14 2013 in September 2013 which modifies the FasTracks annual review process. That resolution requires RTD to provide a FasTracks Annual Status Report for informational purposes no later than May of each year. The 2014 Annual Status Report is attached. RTD staff will summarize the report at the May Board meeting.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS
September 18, 2013 - Board adopted Resolution #14 2013

PROPOSED MOTION
N/A

ATTACHMENT
2014 RTD FasTracks Annual Status Report

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
If you need additional information, please contact Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director at 303-480-6701or jschaufele@drcog.org or Bill Van Meter, RTD Asst. General Manager for Planning, at 303-299-2448 or bill.vanmeter@rtd-denver.com.

RTD

May 8, 2014

Jacob Riger, Long Range Transportation Planning Coordinator
Denver Regional Council of Governments
1290 Broadway, Suite 700
Denver, CO 80203-5606

Dear Mr. Riger:

Attached is the 2014 FasTracks Status Report for your review and distribution. This document is being submitted per DRCOG resolution number 14, dated September 18, 2013, which states that RTD is to provide a status report to DRCOG on the FasTracks Program annually for informational purposes. This year the Status Report consists of the RTD FasTracks Progress Fact Sheet (second quarter 2014), which provides a status on each project as well as a map with schedule information, and FasTracks project costs as presented to the RTD Board in April 2014. Specifically, this budget information depicts expanded or currently committed capital funds on FasTracks projects through 2019.

We look forward to providing DRCOG with additional detailed information, to be provided in the 2014 FasTracks Plan Baseline Report, which is required for submittal in August of this year. This information will be reviewed and acted on by RTD's Board in June/July, 2014.

If you require further information or have questions, please feel free to contact me at 303-299-2448 or bill.vanmeter@rtd-denver.com.

Sincerely,

William C. Van Meter

William C. Van Meter
Assistant General Manager, Planning

cc: Brian Welch, Senior Manager, Planning Technical Services
Susan Wood, Planning Project Manager
Genevieve Hutchison, Senior Transportation Planner

One region. One mission.

RTD FasTracks

Progress Fact Sheet
Second Quarter 2014

FasTracks Progress

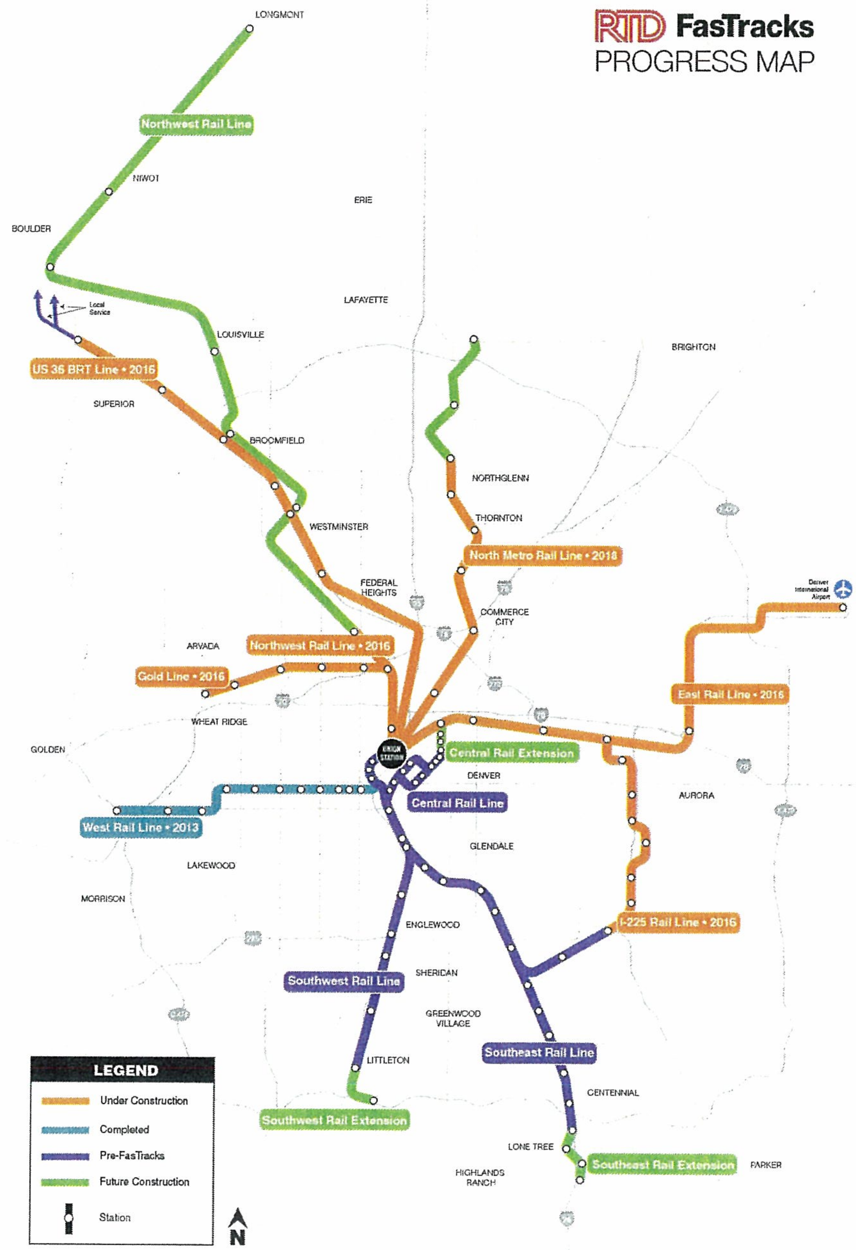
- One rail line opened; construction underway on five other rail lines, U.S. 36 BRT and Denver Union Station.
- $5.3 billion invested or committed to date across the region.
- Every $1 invested in transit infrastructure translates into a $4 investment into the local economy over 20 years.

FasTracks is an Economic Driver for the Region

- Since January 2005, RTD has injected $3.2 billion into the local economy through February 2014.
- Since 2005, FasTracks has created more than 12,800 direct, full-time jobs.
- FasTracks is expected to generate $150 million a year in wages and salaries across the metro area each year once the program has been completed.

FasTracks Moving Forward

- More than 300 people attended the groundbreaking for the North Metro Line on March 20.
- The Denver Union Station Bus Concourse Grand Opening is Friday, May 9 at noon with a festival to follow.
- The Northwest Area Mobility Study is entering the homestretch. The study's Policy Advisory Committee is meeting in April to get consensus on how to move forward. The outcome of the study will be shared in June.
- RTD continues to collaborate with its partners on partially funded projects to find strategies to complete them sooner rather than later.
- It took a region to create FasTracks and it will take a region to get it done.



FasTracks at a Glance

- 122 miles of new commuter rail and light rail
- 18 miles of bus rapid transit service
- 21,000 new parking spaces at rail and bus stations
- Redirected bus service for easy, convenient bus/rail connections
- Redevelopment of Denver Union Station as a mixed-use transit hub

Regional Transportation District
303.299.2000 | rtd-denver.com

Denver Union Station

- Kiewit has turned over the bus concourse to RTD and bus operation training is underway.
- Bus service at Market Street Station will cease and begin at the new bus concourse starting Sunday, May 11.

Construction crews set girders on the Iliff Avenue light rail bridge.

Central Rail Extension

- Based on public input and the technical analysis, the mobility study team will develop and evaluate a number of potential alternatives and recommend a preferred option to RTD and stakeholders later this year.

Eagle P3

- Denver Transit Partners is installing servers and other equipment in the commuter rail maintenance facility's operations and control center, a prelude to the 2015 start of testing and commissioning out on the tracks.

East Rail Line

- Workers are using a specially built "wire train" from Italy to install wires on the overhead power poles along Peña Boulevard between 56th Avenue and Denver International Airport.

Free MetroRide

- Service will begin May 12. The Free MetroRide will operate weekdays during peak hours from 6-9 a.m. and 3:30-6:30 p.m.
- Uniquely branded buses will have low-floors and three doors for quick and easy loading and unloading of passengers.

Gold Line

- The contractor has rerouted BNSF Railway freight trains onto the westbound track along Ridge Road, allowing the construction pace to increase.

I-225 Rail Line

- The project received the first shipment of rail in March and crews will begin welding the rail and dragging it to areas along the line for later installation.

North Metro Rail Line

- Design on the North Metro Line continues. Early construction includes track removal and utility relocation.

Northwest Rail Line

- Northwest Rail's Westminster Segment has four major bridge structures nearing completion and construction crews have mobilized to start the Clear Creek Bridge.

The Free MetroRide bus will feature low-floors and three doors.

Southeast Rail Extension

- RTD staff has delivered engineering plans to Southeast Extension project stakeholders for review and comment.

The Wire Train installs overhead wire on the East Rail Line .

Southwest Rail Extension

- RTD executive staff will continue to meet with Southwest Rail Extension stakeholders in a collaborative effort to identify means to move the project forward.

US 36 BRT

- Colorado Department of Transportation issued the Notice to Proceed on March 6 to Plenary Roads Denver for Phase II of the U.S. 36 Express Lanes Project. Construction is expected to be completed by January 2016.

West Rail Line

- The West Rail Line opened April 26, 2013, eight months ahead of the original schedule and within budget.
- RTD continues to install artwork by various commissioned artists along the W Line. Installations will continue in 2014.

FasTracks Program Costs through 2019 (millions of dollars)

RTD FasTracks

Project	Spent Through 2013	Total Project Budget
Denver Union Station	$298.4	$314.9
Eagle Project	$1,239.4	$2,272.6
West Corridor	$665.5	$678.4
North Metro	$101.5	$708.3
Northwest Rail	$11.0	$29.2
I-225	$216.3	$693.2
Southwest Extension	$23.2	$24.5
Southeast Extension	$33.1	$39.6
Central Extension	$10.7	$10.9
Light Rail Maintenance Facility	$17.2	$17.2
US 36 BRT	$119.8	$198.7
Free MetroRide	$0.3	$16.9
Misc. Projects	$244.8	$344.2
Total Program	$2,981.1	$5,348.7

ATTACH H

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director
303-480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
May 21, 2014	Information	14

SUBJECT

This item is a briefing on activities related to enhancing Economic Opportunity conducted as part of the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI).

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

This item is for information only.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

The presentation will include a brief overview of activities related to the topic of enhancing economic opportunity that have occurred to date and those that are still in process in anticipation of a more robust discussion and presentation from the Metro Vision 2040 perspective at the June Board meeting. An overview of work on FasTracks corridor catalytic site and technical assistance projects currently underway in the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) will be provided. This presentation will continue to facilitate the integration of economic opportunity and strategy issues between SCI and Metro Vision 2040.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

No action necessary, this item is provided for information only.

ATTACHMENT

N/A

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you need additional information, please contact Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director, at 303-480-6701 or jschuafele@drcog.org; Brad Calvert, Senior Planner, Regional Planning and Operations at 303-480-6839 or bcalvert@drcog.org; or Paul Aldretti, SCI Coordinator, at 303-480-6752 or paldretti@drcog.org.

ATTACH I

To: Chair and Members of the Board of Directors

From: Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director
jschaufele@drcog.org, or (303) 480-6701

Meeting Date	Agenda Category	Agenda Item #
May 21, 2014	Informational Item	17

SUBJECT

This item provides a final report to the Board on the status of bills acted on by the Board during the recently completed legislative session.

PROPOSED ACTION/RECOMMENDATIONS

No action requested. This item is for information only.

ACTION BY OTHERS

N/A

SUMMARY

The Colorado General Assembly completed the 2014 legislative session on May 7. This was a successful session for DRCOG. Every bill the Board supported was passed and every bill the Board opposed failed to pass.

The attached Legislative Wrap-Up highlights the most significant pieces of legislation for DRCOG during the 2014 legislative session.

The attached spreadsheet provides a list of the bills on which the DRCOG Board took a position, with updated status.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS/ACTIONS

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION

N/A

ATTACHMENT

Attachments: 2014 Legislative Wrap Up
Bills of Active Interest—2014 Session

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Should you have any questions regarding this item, please contact Jennifer Schaufele at (303) 480-6701 or jschaufele@drcog.org, or Rich Mauro at (303) 480-6778 or email to rmauro@drcog.org.

2014 LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP
May 7, 2014

During the Second Regular Session of the 69th General Assembly, the DRCOG Board took positions on 15 bills. DRCOG staff and lobbyists lobbied these bills, including seeking specific amendments to the bills where appropriate and providing input to legislative sponsors, committees and staff on these and related legislative issues. All but one of the bills the Board supported was passed and every bill the Board opposed failed to pass.

The 15 bills on which positions were taken were of special interest because of an identified impact on member governments or the regional programs administered by DRCOG. DRCOG staff and lobbyists also monitored and in some cases provided input and advice on at least four dozen other bills for potential impact on DRCOG, its programs or its members.

The most significant pieces of legislation for DRCOG are summarized below. A final status report on all the bills on which official positions were taken is attached.

State Fiscal Issues

Every year there are challenges in balancing the state budget and the 2014 legislative session was no exception. But the FY 2014-15 budget marked the second year in a row the General Assembly enjoyed additional revenue available to fund state priorities. With improved budget forecasts, the year began with the governor and the General Assembly considering several proposals for restoring cuts from previous sessions and even new initiatives. These included proposed investments in K-12 education, higher education, economic development, Medicaid and other human services, capital construction, and the state’s reserve fund.

Although forecasters continue to say the economy is improving, they expect the recovery to continue to be slow. Also, since much of the higher revenue in this fiscal year was considered “one-time,” much of the increased spending was considered as one-time only. Continued improvement in the economy will be an important factor in whether any of those efforts are funded next year.

Also, the SB 09-228 earmark for transportation may be triggered for next year. If it is, about $200 million of General Fund will be set aside for transportation for the next five years. The budget also is facing a potential TABOR rebate issue that could impact the availability of these transfers and other investments. This may depend on the resolution of legal issues related to the revenue and spending estimates for Proposition AA related to the taxes on marijuana.

Older Adults

State Funding for Senior Services is increased by $4.5 million. For many years, DRCOG has collaborated with various senior advocacy groups to protect and whenever possible increase the statutory appropriation to the Older Coloradans Fund (OCF), which supplies money for services provided under the Older Coloradans Act. During this time, DRCOG has worked with AARP, the Bell Policy Center, the Colorado Senior Lobby, Older Americans Coalition, Colorado Commission on Aging, Alliance for Retired Americans, and many other organizations and service providers to advocate for these funds.

Until last year, most of the efforts necessarily have been focused on protecting existing funding. Last year, the Older Coloradans Fund saw its first increase in funding since 2008. The OCF was increased by $2 million and another $2 million of General Funds was invested through the State Funding for Senior Services (SFSS) line item.

DRCOG staff worked with AARP and The Bell Policy Center last summer to initiate an effort to increase funding for these services again this year. This advocacy effort resulted in the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) including a $4 million appropriation in the FY 2014-15 budget. The JBC also included another $500,000 with intent the money be used to provide services to the blind and visually impaired. All of the funds were invested through the SFSS line item.

Monies appropriated through the OCF and SFSS are allocated to the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) for programs – such as home delivered and congregate meals, in-home services, options counseling, and transportation – that help seniors live independently longer. DRCOG's AAA receives approximately 40 percent of the funds. These programs are safety net services for the recipients and are more cost effective with taxpayer dollars than institutional services.

Older Adult Protection, Services and Supports. DRCOG supported another important effort to protect vulnerable older adults from abuse. SB 14-098 strengthens the bill passed last year, SB 13-111, which requires various professionals to report abuse or exploitation of a person who is 70 years of age or older. The new bill importantly adds financial exploitation as a crime under the law and clarifies reporting procedures.

DRCOG also supported bills to increase access to services and supports. These include SB 14-014, which expands the property-related expense rebates for low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities. SB 14-087 clarifies and simplifies procedures for older adults and veterans to obtain a valid state identification card to assist with qualification for various state programs and services. SB 14-130 increases the personal needs allowance in nursing homes to allow for the purchase of clothing and other goods and services not reimbursed by any other program.

Transportation

Overall, this was a relatively quiet year for transportation, especially with regards to funding. Still, there were three important bills of interest to DRCOG.

SB 14-1301 was introduced to establish a state funding source for the Safe Routes to Schools program. The federal "Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act" (MAP-21) eliminated the dedicated federal funding stream of $2.1 million for the program beginning in FY 2014-15. Under the program, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) had distributed the federal funds to state subdivisions for projects that improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists in school areas. As introduced, the bill provided for $3 million of General Fund for the program. As passed, the bill appropriates $700,000 General Fund to CDOT in FY 2014-15 for the continuation of the program. It specifies that at least 20 percent but not more than 30 percent of state funds must be used for non-infrastructure projects.

SB 14-125 is the bill that establishes regulatory provisions for private ride-sharing companies like Uber and Lyft. DRCOG staff became concerned that public ride-sharing programs – like DRCOG's WayToGo – could inadvertently be drawn into regulation under the bill. DRCOG staff and lobbyists, at the direction of the Board, worked with the bill's proponents to incorporate an amendment to specifically exempt public ride-sharing programs. The amendment became one of a handful of consensus amendments and DRCOG was commended for proposing this clarification that legislators said would benefit local governments around the state.

SB 14-197 was introduced in response to concerns over the contract for the US 36 Phase 2 project. Since the bill was introduced late in the session, the DRCOG Board did not take a position. However, since the bill was of keen interest to many DRCOG members, the Board authorized staff to present DRCOG's policy of support for tolling and the HPTE, along with member concerns about enabling future PPPs to go forward.

The bill requires: the board of the High-Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) to increase public notice of and participation in, and legislative oversight of, any public-private partnership (PPP) involving the HPTE; public and legislative check-ins at critical points, including town hall meetings; any agreement over 35 years to be approved by the legislature; legislative approval of any compensation event due to the private company that's not directly related to the road lanes; local government notification and involvement; written notice to the legislature of any HOV changes. The bill also expands annual legislative reporting requirements, adds the CDOT Executive Director as a nonvoting member of the board, and makes all appointments subject to Senate confirmation.

Bill No.	Sponsor	Short Title/Summary	Status	Position	Staff Comments	Legislative Policy
AGING BILLS						
SB 012	Kefalas/ Exum	*Aid to Needy Disabled Program* - **Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force.** The AND program provides payments to low-income Colorado residents from ages 18 to 59 who have been medically certified as disabled and are unable to work for a period of at least six months. The current monthly payment is $175. If a person is later deemed eligible for federal Supplemental Security Income benefits, the state is retroactively reimbursed for any payments made to the person. As introduced, the bill would have required the Department of Human Services to set the monthly assistance payment to be equal to at least 28% of the federal poverty guidelines for a household of one. AND applicants who may be eligible for other state or federal benefits must apply for and accept any such benefits.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Support	DRCOG typically supports programs like those in SB 14-012, SB 14-013 and SB 14-014 because they help keep older adults living independently. However, these bills will require an estimated $13 million in the state budget. At the same time, with the Board's support, staff also is pursuing a $4 million increase in the appropriation for senior services. In order to have the flexibility to work with Joint budget committee members and supportive legislators, staff requests discretion to monitor or support these bills with the caveat that they are not funded at the expense of our $4 million request. SB 14-012, as amended, increases the monthly benefit by 8% in FY 15. From FY 16 to FY 19, DHS is encouraged to increase the award until it is equal to the level in FY 07, then by the cost of living. The bill also creates the Federal Supplemental Security Income Application Assistance Pilot Program to provide assistance to SSI applicants in order to increase the approval rate and timeliness of federal SSI applications. It was funded at about $1.5 million.	DRCOG supports increased funding for programs providing services to older adults, persons with disabilities, and their caregivers, especially services that support individuals continuing to live independently in their homes and communities.
SB 013	King/	*Allowing Gifts to Old Age Pensioners* - For a person eligible for an old age pension, allows the person to receive up to $300 per month in gifts, grants, or donations without reducing the amount of the pension or reporting the gifts, grants, or donations.	House PHC & HS Postponed Indefinitely	Support	The bill failed in the House committee over concerns about possible unintended consequences of the additional income causing recipients to be disqualified from eligibility for other programs.	
SB 014	Kefalas/ Pettersen	*Property Tax/Rent/Heat Fuel Grants For Low-Income* - Expands the property-related expense assistance grants for low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities by increasing the maximum awards, creating a minimum award and increasing the income threshold.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Support	As passed, the bill increases the income thresholds for eligibility, the maximum rebate by $100, and established a new minimum $227 minimum rebate. But all were less than the original bill. It was funded at about $1.5 million from an original fiscal impact of $4 million.	

Bill No.	Sponsor	Short Title/Summary	Status	Position	Staff Comments	Legislative Policy
SB 87	Ulibarri/ Fields	*Identification Card Issuance Standards* - **Economic Opportunity Poverty Reduction Task Force.** Requires the issuance of identification cards for an applicant that is at least 70 years old or at least 50 years old and is an honorably discharged or retired veteran of the armed forces using certain documents issued by the United States government to prove name, age and lawful presence. The Department of Revenue is required to promulgate rules to clear up minor spelling discrepancies and to accept alternate documents showing lawful presence. Creates a simplified process for a person to change his or her name to settle name discrepancies.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Support	Colorado residents who lack a valid state identification card can find themselves marginalized and excluded from essential services and assistance including access to health care, housing, employment and public benefits. In addition, citizens often need a picture ID during the normal course of daily life. State IDs are issued by the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) within the Department of Revenue. The ID application process can be daunting and confusing to individuals who lack documents required by the DMV. The elderly, for instance, often need IDs for medical care, banking needs and public assistance. For both groups, access to a state ID provides a means to improve independence, economic opportunity and reduce poverty.	DRCOG supports services that support individuals continuing to live independently in their homes and communities.
SB 98	Zenzinger/ Schafer	*Crimes against At-risk Elders* - Amends provisions of Colorado statutes enacted in SB 13-111, which replaced Colorado's voluntary reporting statute with a statute mandating reporting of abuse and neglect of at-risk adults. These include clarifying the definition of the crime of exploitation and the procedures for reporting to a local law enforcement agency or county department of social services.	Signed by the Governor	Support	As operator of an Area Agency on Aging and Long Term Care Ombudsman program, DRCOG is mandated to advocate for older adults, particularly those living in long-term care facilities. Last year, DRCOG supported SB 13-111, which replaced Colorado's voluntary reporting statute with a statute mandating reporting of abuse and neglect of at-risk adults.	DRCOG supports increases in consumer protections for older adults and their caregivers and, in particular, legislation strengthening the role of the long-term care ombudsman as a resident/consumer advocate.
SB 130	Tochtrop/ Primavera	*Increase Personal Care Allowance Nursing Facility* - The bill changes the personal needs allowance by increasing the minimum amount payable to a resident of a nursing facility or an intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities from $50 to $75 per month and provides for annual cost adjustments.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Support	A personal needs allowance for residents of Medicaid nursing facilities was enacted by federal law in 1987, at which time the minimum allowance was set at $30. The purpose is to allow for the purchase of clothing and other goods and services not reimbursed by any other program. States have the option to set the allowance at a higher rate. The most recent adjustment in Colorado occurred in 1999, when it was increased to the current $50 from $34. The increase is estimated to cost a little over $500,000 of General Fund.	As the Long-Term Care Ombudsman for the region, DRCOG is an advocate for the rights of residents in long-term care communities and for improvement in the quality of care in such facilities.

Bill No.	Sponsor	Short Title/Summary	Status	Position	Staff Comments	Legislative Policy
SB143	Steadman/ May & Gerou	*Payment of Appeals Nursing Facility Cash Fund* - The bill authorizes appropriations from the Medicaid Nursing Facility Cash Fund to satisfy settlements or judgments resulting from nursing facility provider reimbursement appeals.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Support	The need for this legislation has been identified by the Joint Budget Committee and the state Attorney General to clarify that prior year rate adjustments, including settlements and appeals, will be handled through a payment process the following year through the Nursing Facility Provider fee. Currently, such adjustments are made through the supplemental appropriations process. The state expects this clarification to reduce the risk of appeals.	As the Long-Term Care Ombudsman for the region, DRCOG is an advocate for the rights of residents in long-term care communities and for improvement in the quality of care in such facilities.
SB 151	Tochtrop/ Young	*Nursing Home Innovations* - Changes the nursing facilities civil penalties law on how moneys are used to fund innovations in care. Specifies grants must have a direct impact on the residents or an indirect impact through education of facility staff; programs approved for grants must be portable and not proprietary to the grantee so they can be shared without cost to other providers; increases the amount available for grants to $250,000 annually, if the balance in the fund is above $2,000,000. If the balance falls below $2,000,000, the amount remains 25% of the moneys deposited in the fund the prior year. Appropriates $250,000 from the fund for implementation of the bill in FY 15.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Support	HB 09-1196 allowed for moneys derived from civil penalties imposed on nursing facilities that are noncompliant with certain regulations governing participation in the Medicare and Medicaid program, to be used to promote the philosophy and practice of "culture change" in nursing facilities. After four years' experience those involved in the program have agreed that certain changes should be made to the statute to authorize more funding be made available for grants, make the program more accountable, and have a more direct impact on the residents living in nursing care facilities.	DRCOG supports increases in consumer protections for older adults and their caregivers and, in particular, legislation strengthening the role of the long-term care ombudsman as a resident/consumer advocate. DRCOG urges the state, when making decisions regarding funding for long-term care communities, to structure such funding to protect the quality of care for residents.
SB 180	Kefalas/ Swalm	*Transfer Senior Dental Program to DHCPF* - Moves the existing senior dental care program for low-income seniors from the Department of Public Health and Environment to the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing; HCPF to make grants to Area Agencies on Aging or other qualified grantees to arrange for dental services for eligible seniors. $3.2 million currently is appropriated for this program.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Support	This bill redesigns the existing Old Age Pension Dental program currently administered by the Department of Public Health and the Environment as the Dental Health Care program for Low-Income Seniors to be administered by the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. As introduced, Area Agencies on Aging - like DRCOG - received allocations from the state to then distribute as grants to local providers. As passed, AAAs are eligible to apply for grants from the state and applicants are encourage to collaborate with community organizations such as a AAAs.	DRCOG supports increased funding for programs providing services to older adults, persons with disabilities, and their caregivers, especially services that support individuals continuing to live independently in their homes and communities.

Bill No.	Sponsor	Short Title/Summary	Status	Position	Staff Comments	Legislative Policy
TRANSPORTATION BILLS						
HB 1203	Duran/ Lambert	*Funding For Digital Trunked Radio System Maintenance* - As introduced, would have directed $3.5 million annually, beginning with FY 2013-14 through the FY 2024-25, to be appropriated from the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) to the Public Safety Communications Trust Fund (trust fund) for the replacement of legacy radio equipment and hardware at radio tower sites. Also, beginning with the FY 2017-18 through the FY 2024-25, the bill directs the General Assembly to transfer $3.7 million from the General Fund to the trust fund for software upgrades. As passed, the HUTF was replaced as the source with the General Fund.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Monitor (original bill was opposed)	The statewide digital trunked radio system provides interoperable radio communications that allow personnel from multiple agencies in different levels of government to rapidly share information and coordinate efforts in emergency situations. The General Assembly established the Public Safety Communications Trust Fund for the acquisition and maintenance of public safety communications systems, including the digital trunked radio system.	DRCOG opposes “Off-the-Top” appropriations from the Highway Users Tax Fund.
HB 1259	Del Grosso/ None	*General Fund Transfer To State Highway Fund* - Requires the state treasurer to transfer $100 million from the General Fund to the State Highway Fund on July 1, 2014. CDOT is required to: allocate the money among its engineering regions in proportion to the number of state highway system lane miles in each engineering region; and expend the money transferred only for the maintenance, repair, reconstruction, and replacement of existing state highways and bridges.	House Appropriations Postponed Indefinitely	Monitor	DRCOG has considered proposals to transfer General Fund moneys to transportation, taking into account this can place transportation funding in competition with funding for other priorities, such as funding for senior services. DRCOG typically has taken positions on such proposals on a case-by-case basis. Staff also is concerned about setting a precedent for allocating those moneys based solely on lane miles.	DRCOG supports increased funding for transportation to preserve the system, address congestion and safety, and provide multimodal options for people of all ages, incomes and abilities. Provide a share of increased revenues back to local governments.

Bill No.	Sponsor	Short Title/Summary	Status	Position	Staff Comments	Legislative Policy
HB 1301	Mitsch Bush/ Kerr	*Safe Routes to School Program State Funding* - The bill authorized the appropriation of state moneys to the program and requires that at least 20% but not more than 30% of the state moneys be used for noninfrastructure projects. As introduced, the bill appropriated $3 million of general fund moneys for the program. Under current law, the Colorado Department of Transportation administers the Safe Routes to School Program. The program distributes federal moneys to local governments and schools for projects to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in school areas. Beginning in FY 2014-15, CDOT will receive no federal moneys for the Safe Routes to School grant programs.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Support	As passed, the bill appropriates $700,000 General Fund to the CDOT in FY 2014-15 for the continuation of the program. The bill also requires CDOT, when evaluating grant applications for implementation of safe routes to schools, to take into consideration communities with schools having greater than fifty percent of the students eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch. Finally, the bill requires that General Fund appropriations made to the program be reduced in any year that the CDOT receives federal moneys for the program, by the amount of federal moneys received.	DRCOG supports legislation that promotes efforts to create and fund a multimodal transportation system. DRCOG supports funding for safe routes to schools.
SB 125	Jahn & Harvey/ Pabon & Szabo	*Transportation Network Companies Regulation* - Authorizes the Public Utilities Commission to exercise limited regulatory authority over transportation network companies - companies that match drivers and passengers through a digital network, such as a mobile phone application, for transportation from an agreed-upon point of origin to an agreed-upon destination. Exempts transportation network companies from much of the PUC's authority. Authorizes the PUC to regulate permit holders with respect to safety conditions, insurance requirements, and driver qualifications.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Amend	Staff had concerns that the bill did not include an express exemption for nonprofit corporations or quasi-governmental entities. Even though the definition of “transportation network company” in the bill exempts a “ridesharing arrangement” from regulation, its focus on how the arrangement is made – through a digital network – could create uncertainty as to whether MyWayToGo would fall within the regulatory net. MyWayToGo uses a digital network, while the current definition of ridesharing arrangement is focused on “the vehicular transportation of passengers traveling together” – the transportation act itself. DRCOG proposed an amendment explicitly exempting public ridesharing programs, including contract ridesharing services, that was added to the bill in the House Transportation and Energy Committee.	DRCOG supports carpooling, vanpooling, and schoolpooling and infrastructure that facilitates these transportation options to promote transportation demand management.

Bill No.	Sponsor	Short Title/Summary	Status	Position	Staff Comments	Legislative Policy
SB 181	Renfroe & Guzman/ Ferrandino & Humphrey	*Prohibit Automated Camera Vehicle Identification* - Prohibits use of an automated vehicle identification system, including photo radar and red light cameras, by state and local governments for the purposes of enforcing traffic laws or issuing citations for the violation of traffic laws. Repeals authorization for the Colorado Department of Public Safety to use such system to detect speed violations in a highway maintenance, repair, or construction zone. Under the bill, a governmental entity may use an automated vehicle identification system to assess tolls and civil penalties on toll roads and highways, and to issue citations for violations related to high occupancy vehicles and high occupancy toll lanes.	House Appropriations Postponed Indefinitely	Oppose	The bill was amended in the House State Affairs Committee to be a study of photo enforcement by the Colorado Department of Transportation and sent to the House Appropriations Committee to determine the cost of the study. Instead, the bill was postponed indefinitely.	DRCOG supports increased funding for transportation to preserve the system, address congestion and safety, and provide multimodal options for people of all ages, incomes and abilities. Developing and maintaining a safe transportation system for all users is a policy of the Metro Vision Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan.

Bill No.	Sponsor	Short Title/Summary	Status	Position	Staff Comments	Legislative Policy
SB 197	Jones & Herpin/ Foote & Kraft-Tharp	*Transportation Enterprise Transparency Act* - Requires the High-Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) to increase public notice of and participation in, and legislative oversight of, any public-private partnership (PPP) involving the HPTE. The board must, in coordination with local governments, hold public meetings throughout the PPP process and provide full and timely notice to state legislators, county and municipal governments, and the general public. After entering into a PPP, the terms of the agreement must be provided to the legislative transportation committees and posted on the CDOT website. Prohibits the HPTE from entering into PPPs that contain certain provisions until the General Assembly specifically approves any such provision. The HPTE must provide public notice of any change in the status of a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, and when considering a project related to HOV, high-occupancy toll lanes, or managed lanes, the HPTE must evaluate the sustainability of express bus service or bus rapid transit service. Allows the State Auditor to audit the HPTE.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	No Position (the bill was introduced too late in the session for the Board to act)	The bill prohibits the HPTE from entering into a PPP that includes any of the following provisions, until the General Assembly specifically approves any such provision through the enactment of a joint resolution: • A term that exceeds 35 years after completion of the project to be developed and implemented by the PPP; • A non-compete clause that prohibits, or imposes financial penalties or obligations on the enterprise for the development of infrastructure other than infrastructure that is directly above or below the highway lanes of the project being developed and implemented by the PPP, that reduces usage of the project; or • A requirement that the transportation enterprise compensate a private partner for any loss in toll revenues resulting from responses to types of emergencies, weather events, or safety events that occur intermittently but routinely, unless such emergencies occur on an unusually frequent or severe basis during a specific period as defined based on reasonable evidence-based forecasts.	DRCOG supports alternative revenue and financing mechanisms, including tolls as a financing mechanism for public roads or highways with the conditions that (1) any road, highway, or tolled lanes in the Denver metro region or that impact the Denver metro region are reviewed and approved by the DRCOG Board for inclusion in the fiscally constrained regional transportation plan; (2) toll receipts remain in the toll highway system within the region that is tolled; and (3) toll receipts are allowed to be used for multimodal improvements and accumulated for system reconstruction.

Bill No.	Sponsor	Short Title/Summary	Status	Position	Staff Comments	Legislative Policy
OTHER BILLS						
HB 1017	Duran/ Ulibarri	*Expand Availability of Affordable Housing* - Makes modifications to statutory provisions regarding the Housing Investment Trust Fund, the Housing Development Grant Fund, and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit. The Division of Housing shall give priority to owners of property that was either destroyed or incurred substantial damage as a result of one or more state or federally declared natural disasters. The bill expands the funding sources available for those programs.	Awaiting Governor's Signature	Support	The need for more affordable housing has been a longstanding concern in Colorado and the Denver region. DRCOG has long supported efforts to preserve and expand the availability of quality affordable housing. The bill makes modifications to three existing tools to increase their capacity and effectiveness in addressing current affordable housing needs. As passed, the bill authorizes $40 million of General Fund from FY 2015-16 to FY 2024-25 for the tax credit .	DRCOG supports the following principles pertaining to the quality, quantity and affordability of housing in the Denver metro area: • Regional approaches to addressing the affordable housing issue that incentivize local efforts, particularly as they relate to preservation of existing affordable housing stock. • An adequate supply of permanently affordable housing located near job and transit hubs and continued public- and private sector support for such an effort. • Increased state financial support for loan and grant programs for low- and moderate-income housing. • Collaboration among public and private entities, including efforts to develop loan programs and address the jobs-housing connections. • Actions to provide more accessible and obtainable housing options for seniors.
HB 1336	Duran/ Steadman	*2014-15 Long Appropriations Bill* - Provides for the payment of expenses of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the State of Colorado, and of its agencies and institutions, for and during the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2014, except as otherwise noted.	Signed by the Governor	N/A	The bill includes a $4.5 million increase in "State Funding for Senior Services." This money is allocated to the 16 Area Agencies on Aging to provide for services to older adults. DRCOG typically receives over 40% of the funds. $500,000 of the funds is earmarked for services to the blind and vision impaired.	DRCOG supports increased funding for programs providing services to older adults, persons with disabilities, and their caregivers, especially services that support individuals continuing to live independently in their homes and communities.

ATTACH J

MINUTES
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE
Wednesday, April 16, 2014

Present:

Elise Jones, Vice Chair	Boulder County
Eva Henry	Adams County
Doug Tisdale	Cherry Hills Village
Chris Nevitt	Denver
Crissy Fanganello	Denver
Ron Rakowsky	Greenwood Village
Tom Quinn	Lakewood
Joyce Downing	Northglenn
Val Vigil	Thornton

Others Present: Anthony Graves, Denver; Shakti, Lakewood; John Diak, Parker; Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director; Connie Garcia, Executive Assistant/Board Coordinator, Steve Dazzio, Dazzio & Plutt; and DRCOG staff.

Vice chair Elise Jones called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. with a quorum present.

Motion to Adopt the Consent Agenda

Doug Tisdale **moved** to adopt the consent agenda. The motion was **seconded** and **passed unanimously**. Items on the consent agenda included:

- Minutes of March 19, 2014
- Resolution No. 6, 2014 authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and execute a contract with FHU to provide planning services for the SCI Gold Corridor Catalytic Project at the Wheat Ridge – Ward Road Station on the Gold Corridor Rail Line.

Presentation of 2013 Audit
Steve Dazzio, Dazzio & Plutt, provided an overview of the 2013 Audit. It was noted that the audit was clean, with no compliance issues noted.

Report of the Chair
No report was provided.

Report of the Executive Director
Jennifer Schaufele reported that the Colorado Department of Human Services recently completed an audit of the Area Agency on Aging. No compliance issues were noted in the audit.

Review and Refine Executive Policies
Jerry Stigall, DRCOG staff, provided an overview of the agenda material. Members noted several revisions to the policies, and directed staff to bring a revised version back to them at the next meeting.

Other Matters by Members
No other matters were discussed.

Next Meeting
The next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2014

The meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

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Elise Jones, Vice Chair
Administrative Committee
Denver Regional Council of Governments

ATTEST:

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Jennifer Schaufele, Executive Director

ATTACH K

Tri-County Health Department

March 11, 2014

Roxie Ronsen
Denver Regional Council of Governments
1290 Broadway, Suite 700
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Roxie,

I would like to thank you for providing the development of tabs, printing and assembling of the Spanish Matter of Balance Participant Workbooks for the Tri-County Health Department. We plan to put these workbooks to good use in the near future in our fall prevention class for older adults in service to the Hispanic community.

We appreciate the opportunity to request and receive these creative services through DRCOG and the turnaround time from request to completion is stellar. You offer world-class customer service and should be recognized for your valuable contribution.

Thank you!

Regards,

Barbara Lyons

Barbara Lyons MA, MHA
Matter of Balance Project Coordinator
blyons@tchd.org
(720) 200-1572

Toll lanes with carpools and buses can reduce highway costs and congestion

April 21, 2014
By: Allen Best
Mountain Town News

DENVER, Colo. – For crowded highways, such as I-70 between Denver and Summit County, managed toll lanes are better than general access lanes at alleviating congestion.

That's one take-away from a white paper released today by the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project. The study, *Managed Highway Lanes in Colorado*, says attempts to solve traffic overcrowding by adding free lanes to highways simply generate more traffic.

Will Toor, director of transportation programs at SWEEP, points to the T-Rex expansion of I-25 in metro Denver completed in 2006. The easy-driving conditions were short-lived. A recent ***Denver Regional Council of Governments*** report found that severe weekday congestion plagued the heart of the expanded roadway by 2011.

Free-flowing highway lanes can carry up to 2,000 vehicles an hour, the SWEEP report notes. But when a lane gets overloaded, such as on I-25, stop-and-go traffic can reduce traffic capacity by almost half while doubling greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants.

Colorado already has a managed toll lane as part of I-25 north from downtown Denver and U.S. 36 to Pecos Street. Other managed toll lanes are under construction on U.S. 36 to Boulder, while several other toll lanes are being considered for several highway segments, including I-70.

But SWEEP also sees a social equity issue in managed toll lanes. The non-profit finds that the top third of households by income use toll lanes almost eight times more than the bottom third.

To make the most of managed toll lanes, Toor says that they need to be opened more to carpoolers but also buses—as is planned on the U.S. 36 toll lanes that will be opened in two years.

This is a message that also needs to be kept in mind on I-70 through the mountains, says Toor. There, C-DOT is considering using shoulders of I-70 in the Idaho Springs-Georgetown area for toll lanes during congested weekend periods. Those using the toll lanes would be assured of going faster than general traffic, a minimum of 45 mph.

An even more ambitious tolling enterprise that results from additional construction, such as a third bore through the Continental Divide, would also probably require a managed toll lane.

In these cases, says Toor, access should also be provided to car poolers. Given that ski traffic already has a high proportion of car-pooling, unlike the single-occupancy vehicles of urban commuting, the minimum for carpooling would have to be edged higher, he says. SWEEP also wants to see buses employed along I-70.

Colorado has seen public-private partnerships toll lanes as a key way to pay for transportation expansions. But the P3 approved by the Colorado Transportation Commission in February came after great controversy. Two bills introduced into the Colorado Senate on Friday by State Sen. Matt Jones would place restrictions on such P3s.

Denver's Union Station Renovation Watched Around the World

April 28, 2014
By: Jennifer McRae
CBS Denver

DENVER (CBS4)- The Union Station redevelopment in Denver is being watched by transportation developers around the nation and around the world for its contemporary design and emphasis on commuter-friendly transit.

"We've had a lot of people from outside the state– from outside the country– look at our facilities to see if they could replicate that here," said RTD Union Station Project Manager Jerry Nery. "So we're hoping we can kind of set the stage for a lot of agencies in other places."

The historic Union Station is iconic in Denver and the renovation from a building with a lot of wasted space to a multimodal hub is considered a major revitalization in LoDo.

Union Station was built at 17th and Wynkoop in 1881. Now it is being transformed from a seemingly vacant at times building into a centralized and bustling centerpiece for all kinds of transportation including bus, light rail, commuter rail and Amtrak.

Union Station (credit: CBS)

"This is probably the largest transportation project of a comparable transportation agency when you compare it to Seattle, Portland, Salt Lake, Phoenix, those transit agencies," said Nery. "What makes this work the best, and I've been to almost every one of their Union Stations, is they didn’t have the opportunity to have all of the transits come to one location and have a development opportunity in that same location.”

Union Station’s redesign was planned with commuters and pedestrians in mind.
The intent is to grow to meet the demands of the population as Denver continues to grow. Developers hope the design will have a positive impact on transportation for the region for the next 100 years.

Union Station (credit: CBS)

“Right now the activity for commuters and pedestrians, we run about 15,000 people in and out in a day. We anticipate in 2030… is about 200,000 people, 100,000 in and 100,000 out, with all of our lines completed for commuter rail,” said Nery. The Union Station renovation is about 95 percent finished with the first phase scheduled to open next month.

“We’re going to open up the underground bus facility. The planned celebration is May 9,” said Nery. “We’re ahead of schedule, under budget.”

Jerry Nery (credit: CBS)

The new underground bus concourse has 22 gates and will serve 16 bus routes. With that opening the old Market Street Station will close and buses will use Union Station instead.

Union Station (credit: CBS)

Next month RTD will also introduce a new Metro Ride program that’s free to riders. Those buses will run during peak hours Monday through Friday from Union Station and the Civic Center Station along 18th and 19th streets.

Union Station (credit: CBS)

Another major portion of Union Station is mixed use with space for retail, restaurants and a hotel. Among the stores moving in are Milkbox Ice Creamery, Pigtrain Coffee, Eatmore Burgers and Brats, and the Tattered Cover Bookstore. It will make the new and improved Union Station much more than a transportation hub. The businesses and the 112-room Crawford Hotel will be open to the public starting July 12.

Some of the rooms are classic hotel rooms, while others are called “loft” rooms and will be decorated with art from Colorado artists, reflecting the state’s history, including the current make up of LoDo.

The Crawford Hotel is named after Dana Crawford, an urban preservationist and a partner in the Union Station redevelopment. She has spearheaded preservation efforts in downtown Denver for more than 30 years.

Union Station (credit: CBS)

“The forecast that we originally had was to have about 900,000 square feet of mixed use by 2019. Right now we have over 2 million square feet of mixed use either being designed or under construction,” said Nery.

A planned commuter rail line from Union Station to Denver International Airport will open in 2016, along with the Gold Line to Wheat Ridge and Arvada. Once those are completed construction will begin on other RTD commuter lines. “We will have the North Metro Line that goes up to Commerce City, Adams County, Thornton, Northglenn that will be in operation in 2018,” said Nery.

Amtrak returned to Union Station in March. The first departure from the redesigned train station took passengers from Denver to San Francisco. The three-year renovation project cost nearly $500 million.

(credit: RTD)

“This has been a great project. It has taken a lot of partners to do this, not just RTD. We have the City and County of Denver, the ***Denver Regional Council of Governments***, the Colorado Department of Transportation, plus all of the developers. We have a master developer, Union Station Neighborhood Company, they’re responsible for attracting a lot of the developers,” said Nery.

There are also modern amenities added to make commuting more comfortable. The transportation project includes heated concrete to melt ice in the underground terminal and vastly improved acoustics within the station. They call it an “urban living room.”

The renovation also includes a new technology called Positive Train Control, or PTC. PTC will increase safety by stopping a train if it is speeding or going around a curve too fast.

What will become of Mineral Station?

April 28, 2014
By: Jennifer Smith
Littleton Independent

The City of Littleton has begun to lay the groundwork for the future of the 17-acre Mineral Station, recruiting a team from the Urban Land Institute to visualize what the light-rail station parking lot and the surrounding area could someday be.

“We took a look at how the site could redevelop, and some of the nuts and bolts of how that could happen,” Renee Martinez-Stone told members of city council and the planning board during a joint meeting at Littleton Museum on April 22.

The panel's work is a precursor to a more major study the city will undertake this summer, funded by a grant from the ***Denver Regional Council of Governments*** (DRCOG). It could result in the area being designated “blighted” and ripe for attention from the city's newly rejuvenated urban-renewal authority.

The ULI panel envisions a coordinated effort among RTD, the city, Aspen Grove and the owners of the 111 acres south of the RTD lot at Mineral Avenue and Santa Fe Drive known as the Ensor property, which might result in what Bill Sirois of RTD said is that entity's new philosophy around light rail.

“Transit-oriented communities are better than just surface parking lots,” he said.

The panel suggests the area can support more small retailers and a grocery. It could also help fill a growing demand for multifamily housing, say the members, adding that the city should offer financial incentives of some sort to attract those uses.

Doug Elenowitz, a managing partner at investment firm Raindrop Partners, said forming a metropolitan district that might encompass everything from the future Breckenridge Brewery site at Briarwood Avenue south to the county line could incentivize uniformity and a sense of community throughout the area.

“If you could get that 17-acre site connected to Aspen Grove, that would be good for everybody,” agreed developer Stephen Clarke, president of Prime West. “There's an even bigger opportunity with Ensor. You could conceptually go all the way south to the (Wolhurst) trailer park.”

Steve Wilensky, a principal with civil-engineering firm AECOM, envisions a normal city-block street grid over at least the RTD site and the undeveloped overflow lot. Since metro districts can own parking structures, it might be feasible to replace the 1,700 spaces with one.

“Go down before you go up though,” he said.

He pointed out the contrast with Aspen Grove's massive lot.

“Aspen Grove was a good project when it was built, but it's starting to feel a little old,” he said. “… It's about placemaking.”

Wilenski also suggests highlighting the river and the Mary Carter Greenway more. “You can ride all over the metro area from right there, but you wouldn't know it from anything that's going on there now,” he said.

The panel stressed the importance of educating the public every step of the way when talking about any urban-renewal project.

“We're taking the risks like we normally would on a project, and then putting another layer of brain damage on it,” said Elenowitz. “It's important on designing projects like this to feel like you have the community behind you.”

Chances are good for 104X route in Commerce City to be permanent

May 9, 2014
By: Yesenia Robles
The Denver Post

Initial ridership numbers for the new 104X bus route intended to connect Commerce City residents with jobs in Denver are showing the route could become permanent.

"We're certainly optimistic that if we continue to show this ridership, RTD will be able to take the route over as part of their normal operations," said Chris Cramer, the city's community development director. "That's certainly our bottom line."

Operating costs for the route, started last year, are covered by a three-year, $148,000 grant from the ***Denver Regional Council of Governments*** and a $37,000 annual contribution from Commerce City. Cramer said city officials would like to see the Regional Transportation District take over full funding as soon as possible.

"We've thrown that out there as an idea already," Cramer said.

Nataly Erving, an RTD lead service planner, agreed that the numbers look good. Asked if RTD would be likely to take over the route, Erving said, "I can't imagine we would not." She added, "We are not making any decisions until the grant expires. But we're excited too."

During its first year, the 104X route had an average of 65 people boarding per day, according to Commerce City's reports. RTD numbers show less than 50 people boarding per day, but Erving said numbers steadily have increased over time.

Only one stop at the end of the workday is showing to be "weak," Erving said. In the morning, the bus makes three stops along 104th Avenue from Walden Street to U.S. 85 and then becomes a nonstop shuttle to Denver's Market Street Station, which will be replaced by Union Station this weekend. In the afternoon, the bus makes the reverse trip.

RTD has started a public process to consider adding new stop times in the morning and in the afternoon.

The proposed new times would be at 6:13 a.m. at Walden Street and East 104th Avenue, and a new takeoff from Union Station at 4:15 p.m. The additional stops, which would be added in August, would also be covered with funding from the grant.

For Commerce City officials seeing rapid growth and development in the city, the 104X would only be the start. "Our long-term hope is that eventually it will grow to be more regular service through the weekends," Cramer said. "So instead of it just being a commuter route one way, eventually there are other strong transit connections to other high-employment areas as well."