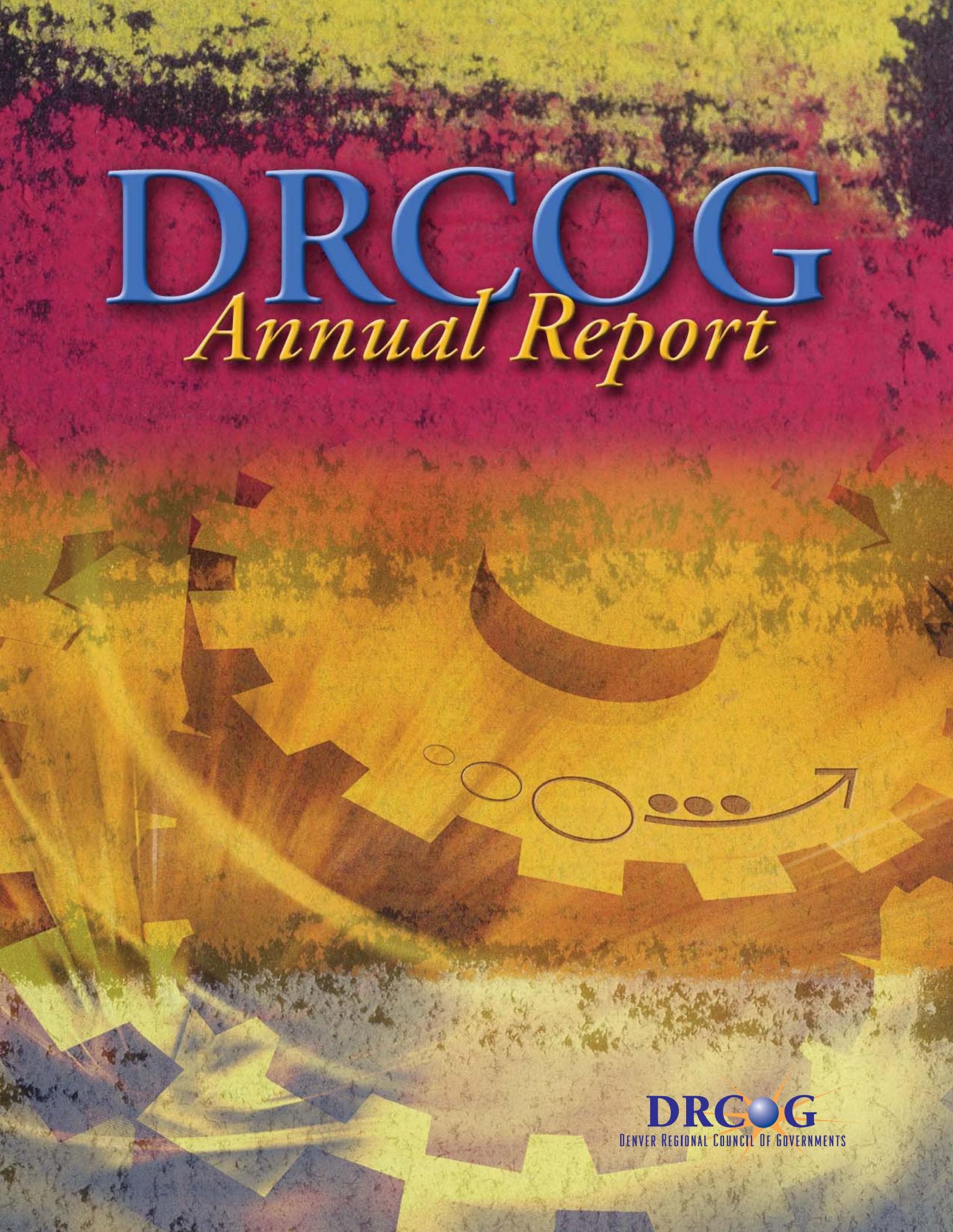


DRCOG

Annual Report



DRCOG
DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



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1. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

By the time Congress approved the landmark American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in February 2009 and the President signed it Feb. 17, 2009, the DRCOG Board had already held one meeting on ARRA, established guidelines for project submittals, issued a call for projects, set a public hearing on the projects and was poised to hold its second meeting on the topic in two weeks.

Despite having no template to follow, DRCOG took seriously its charge to quickly allocate \$60 million in ARRA funds to local government projects in the region,



getting money into the community to preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery in short order. The DRCOG Board held four meetings in six weeks to expeditiously allocate these funds, and a public hearing that attracted a large crowd and drew 90 minutes of testimony. ARRA continued as a Board meeting topic in 2009 and into 2010, as the Board worked to reprogram project savings and address other issues.

The recovery funds came to DRCOG to distribute as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the greater Denver region. In that role, DRCOG works with local governments, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Regional Transportation District (RTD) to cooperatively determine the region's funding priorities and to direct federal transportation funds to these priority projects. The region does this

through its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and, if ARRA-funded projects were not already in the TIP, the Board's action amended the TIP to include them.

DRCOG also approved regional projects CDOT is implementing with \$120 million in ARRA funds, as well as \$70 million for RTD projects.

As Board member and former Northglenn Mayor Kathie Novak stated, the feedback she got through her role as president of National League of Cities was that DRCOG was recognized nationally as having "done it right."

ARRA projects approved by DRCOG Board include those listed in the table on the following page:

The DRCOG Board's consensus on the region's priority projects for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding reflects its commitment to helping the economy and our region's transportation mobility. Our transportation system is the backbone of our economy, moving people, goods and freight, while creating jobs and attracting businesses to the region. This is a good investment in our region's future.

Ed Peterson, DRCOG 2009 Chair
Lakewood Council Member



ARRA Funded Projects

TIP ID	Project Name	Amount (in thousands)	Sponsor	Funding Type/Code
2007-057	Denver Union Station Intermodal Renovations	9,800	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-056	Farebox Equipment	17,100	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-057	Central Corridor: Replace Corroded Pandrol Clips	2,000	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-058	Southwest Corridor Safety Improvements	5,000	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-059	RTD Four-Car Platform Extensions: Southwest and Central Platte Valley (CPV) C	2,640	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-060	FasTracks West Corridor Improvements (ARRA funded)	8,804	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-061	New Bus Purchases	3,006	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-063	RTD Facility Upgrades (Various)	4,114	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-064	Capital Maintenance: Bus and Light Rail Vehicles	10,245	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-065	Software System Upgrades: Regional	1,781	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-071	US-36: Queue Jumps	7,594	RTD	5307 (ARRA)
2008-062	Automatic Passenger Counters	753	RTD	5309 Fixed Guideway (ARRA)
2007-024	Dry Creek: Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge Extension	637	Arapahoe County	Enhancement (ARRA)
2007-030	US-36: 3rd to 5th Ave Reconstruction and Streetscape Improvements	689	Lyons	Enhancement (ARRA)
2008-017	Hwy 119/72: Eldora Rd. to 2nd Steet	385	Nederland	Enhancement (ARRA)
2008-048	Leon A Wurl Pkwy On-Street Bike Lanes: Bonanza Dr. to I-25	733	Erie	Enhancement (ARRA)
2008-049	W. 86th Pkwy On-Street Bike Lanes: Queen St. to W. 88th	300	Arvada	Enhancement (ARRA)
2008-051	Bike/Ped Intersection Improvements: Spruce St. and Folsom St.	318	Boulder	Enhancement (ARRA)
2008-052	Boulder ADA Pedestrian Access Improvements	566	Boulder	Enhancement (ARRA)
2008-053	US-36 Trail: Bradburn Blvd. from 73rd Ave. to Turnpike Dr. Reconstruction/Upg	260	Westminster	Enhancement (ARRA)
2008-069	Bike Lanes on County Line Rd. South	433	Erie	Enhancement (ARRA)
2008-084	SH157: Goose Creek to Valmont Rd Bike/Ped Path	121	Boulder County	Enhancement (ARRA) (see Metro ARRA also)
2003-071	I-225/Colfax Interchange (17th Place)	11,300	Aurora	Metro (ARRA)
2003-112	C-470: Santa Fe Drive Interchange Reconstruction	5,053	Douglas County	Metro (ARRA) (see ES9-CDOT funding also)
2005-099	Pecos Street: Grade Separation at UPRR and BNRR	5,150	Adams County	Metro (ARRA)
2007-029	120th Avenue Connection: Wadsworth Blvd to Allison St.	4,000	Broomfield County	Metro (ARRA)
2007-057	Denver Union Station Intermodal Renovations	18,600	RTD	Metro (ARRA)
2007-083	I-70: Central Park Boulevard Interchange	12,000	Denver	Metro (ARRA)
2008-052	Boulder ADA Pedestrian Access Improvements	566	Boulder	Metro (ARRA)
2008-054	Denver Bikeway Mobility Enhancements	250	Denver	Metro (ARRA)
2008-070	Huron Street Reconstruction: 104th to 112th St.	3,904	Northglenn	Metro (ARRA)
2008-072	74th Avenue Bike Lanes: Kipling to Carr	300	Arvada	Metro (ARRA)
2008-084	SH157: Goose Creek to Valmont Rd Bike/Ped Path	120	Boulder County	Metro (ARRA) (see Enhancement ARRA also)
2001-154	US-85: Titan Road to Meadows Pkwy Widening	5,400	CDOT Region 1	ES9-CDOT
2001-214	Region 6 Surface Treatment Pool	51,050	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2001-214	C-470: Santa Fe to I-25	33,000	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2001-214	I-25: 6th Ave to 23rd Ave	5,500	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2001-214	I-70: Kipling to Wadsworth	1,800	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2001-214	SH-177 (University): C-470 to Arapahoe	2,800	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2001-214	SH-2 Vasquez to Quebec	2,401	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2001-214	SH-40 (Colfax): Kipling to Sheridan	4,700	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2001-214	SH-88 (Bellevue): Federal to US-85	1,200	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2003-071	I-225/Colfax Interchange (17th Place)	1,100	Aurora	ES9-CDOT
2003-112	C-470: Santa Fe Drive Interchange Reconstruction	808	Douglas County	ES9-CDOT (see Metro ARRA funding also)
2003-124	US-285: Foxton Road to Richmond Hill Rd.	8,400	CDOT Region 1	ES9-CDOT
2005-104	I-76: UPRR & SH-224 Bridge	13,500	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2005-108	SH-52 Boulder Creek (west of County Line Road) Replace Bridge	8,000	CDOT Region 4	ES9-CDOT
2007-095	Region 4 Surface Treatment Pool [US-36: Estes park to Lyons (DRCOG portion)]	1,000	CDOT Region 4	ES9-CDOT
2007-101	I-76: 96th Avenue Interchange Reconstruction	2,500	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2007-158	I-25: Santa Fe to Alameda Interchange	36,400	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2008-044	Ramp Metering (various locations)	500	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2008-045	Signal Installation Replacement: SH-128 and Simms	500	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2008-046	I-70 Median Cable Rail Installation	400	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT
2008-047	Signal Installation: US-36 & Broadway	500	CDOT Region 4	ES9-CDOT
2008-050	Signal Installation Replacement: US-6/SH-93/SH-58	500	CDOT Region 6	ES9-CDOT

2. FasTracks

DRCOG's relationship with FasTracks continued in 2009, with DRCOG contributing to and supporting FasTracks in a number of ways.

In March, the DRCOG Board approved a number of local projects to receive ARRA funds coming to the region, including \$18.6 million to intermodal renovations at Denver Union Station to connect the city, region and state in one central location. That was the single largest allocation of ARRA funds approved by the Board and reflected the Board's continued commitment to the hub of the FasTracks 122-mile rail transit system.

In August, DRCOG completed and held a public hearing on the FasTracks Annual Review, per state statute. The 2008 Annual Report identified changes to the FasTracks program that had occurred since RTD's last annual report in 2007. The Board reviewed the changes, and accepted the findings and recommendations of DRCOG's 2008

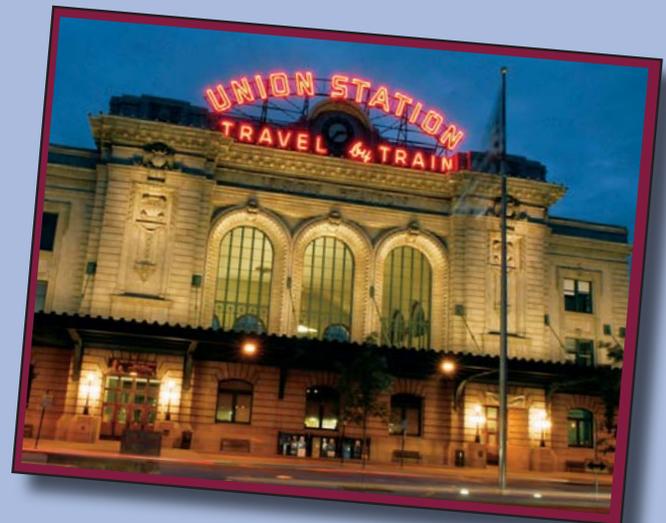


Annual FasTracks Review and Determination Report. The Board stated that RTD should include projected shortfalls and needed strategies to achieve the necessary funding to fulfill the vision of FasTracks approved by voters in 2004.

In addition, Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele served as the DRCOG Board's representative on the Denver Union Station Project Authority (DUSPA) 13-member (11 voting; 2 nonvoting) Board of Directors, focused on ensuring DUS becomes the multimodal transportation

hub long envisioned. DUSPA is the entity responsible for financing, acquiring, owning, equipping, designing, constructing, renovating, operating and maintaining the Denver Union Station redevelopment project.

The Colorado Chapter of WTS, Advancing Women in Transportation, recognized the importance of Denver Union Station by honoring it as Colorado's Big Project of the Year for 2008 at the Feb. 5 WTS awards dinner. The award specifically recognized the efforts of the project's Executive Oversight Committee, which included project partners DRCOG, the City and County of Denver, RTD, and the Colorado Department of Transportation.



"Through its action on the recovery funds, the DRCOG Board had two great accomplishments. The Board selected regional projects that will stimulate the economy and reaffirmed its support for FasTracks."

Jennifer Schaufele,
DRCOG Executive Director



3. Helping the Region's Older Residents

DRCOG is recognized state-wide for its leadership in advocacy for senior services and issues.

In 2009, DRCOG expanded its efforts to serve older adults by establishing a dedicated information and assistance line – 303-480-6700 in the metro area and 1-866-959-3017 toll free outside metro Denver – to guide callers to services for those 60 and over. DRCOG also contracted with a vendor for a complete information



NetworkofCare.org.

and assistance website, which debuted in early 2010 as Network of Care. The new system not only helps those seeking information, but also helps DRCOG staff and other community providers track requests, help identify unmet needs, services gaps, etc. Visit <http://www>.

The DRCOG Area Agency on Aging continued its bread and butter work to fund service providers in the Denver region for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. The DRCOG AAA prioritized service needs and funded approximately 25 service providers with \$8M in pass-through funds from the state and federal government for a total of over 961,000 service units. On average, services reach about 72,000 seniors in the metro area annually. Each unit represents everything from meals to eyeglasses and hearing aids to wheelchair ramps. The AAA computerized its RFP process for service providers and held contractor training.

In addition, the DRCOG AAA secured funding of an additional half million for the region. The Colorado Department of Human Services gave DRCOG more than \$.5M in carryover funds because of DRCOG's efficient service delivery and record-keeping of community needs. The DRCOG AAA earned the honor of being the only AAA

in Colorado to receive a citation-free audit from the state in 2009 -- no small feat.

In another area, DRCOG staff and members of an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) work group provide information and research to encourage jurisdictions to consider ADUs as viable housing options where desirable. In addition, DRCOG continues working on the issue with the Home Builders Association of Metro Denver.

DRCOG also worked hard to carry the message about the 2010 Census and the importance of being counted to the region's older adults.

U.S. Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee

visited the region and DRCOG assisted by setting up site visits to show how Older Americans Act and ARRA dollars are used here. Joining the assistant secretary on her visits were Regional Director Percy Devine and State Unit on Aging Director Todd Coffey. They toured the kitchen at Volunteers of America where more than 500,000 congregate and home-delivered meals were made last year. They ate lunch at the Sunset Park Dining Center, a congregate meal site where they could see one of the health promotion programs DRCOG funds. Assistant Secretary Greenlee and AAA Director Jayla Sanchez Warren received flu shots from HealthSet, an organization that provides free health clinics to low-income elderly.



4. Nation Association of Regional Councils (NARC)

For the first time in 31 years, DRCOG and the Denver region were honored to host the annual conference of the National Association of Regional Councils May 31-June 3.



Despite the less-than-perfect timing due to the state of the economy, conference attendance was great and DRCOG and NARC reached fundraising goals. The 43rd annual conference also featured the first aging workshop track and partnerships with more sponsors and exhibitors than ever before. Many DRCOG member governments stepped up to the plate with sponsorship dollars.

Highlights of the conference from DRCOG's perspective included the following:

- A showcase reception at the Denver Botanic Gardens on the opening day of the conference, with transportation supplied by RTD.
- More than 460 people attended the conference, a notable fact in a tough economic climate, with many of the region's local governments taking advantage of the national conference to explore timely topics with their peers from across the nation.
- DRCOG put together the very first aging workshop track offered by NARC and those sessions were well-attended and well-regarded.
- NARC opened up several different registration opportunities - one-day, breakfast/lunch keynotes only, an aging workshop track only - and those innovative approaches suggested by DRCOG allowed and motivated more people to get involved in the conference.
- The event represented the first time NARC sought and received AICP (American Institute of

Certified Planners) certification maintenance credits, which helped DRCOG member government planning staff members.

- The conference also boasted more sponsors and exhibitors than ever before, another remarkable feat in a tough economic situation. This came about because of expanded sponsorship opportunities at lower, more doable financial levels. DRCOG shared the knowledge it gained from fund raising with Cleveland, local host of the 2010 conference.
- Many local governments stepped up to the plate to help DRCOG host the event and welcome conference-goers to the region by participating as sponsors. NARC said that had never happened before and that commitment from local governments impressed NARC.
- DRCOG's novel work in the area of livable communities and with MetroQuest was highlighted in workshop sessions.
- By contacting and securing donations from Colorado merchants and manufacturers, DRCOG made more than a dozen fantastic gift baskets given away during the conference as door prizes. The gift baskets called attention to Colorado merchants and offered great incentive for people to stay through sessions to be eligible for the drawings. This was another first for the NARC conference and the baskets were hot commodities!
- Greenwood Village Mayor and former DRCOG Chair Nancy Sharpe received NARC's Tom Bradley Leadership Award for her leadership in advocating regional concepts, approaches and programs at all levels of government.





5. Leadership

As one of the nation's three oldest regional planning organizations, DRCOG has become a model around the nation. Its leadership in the region is also a model.

DRCOG was a key player in helping draft language for the Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery (FASTER) bill approved by the Colorado General Assembly in 2009.

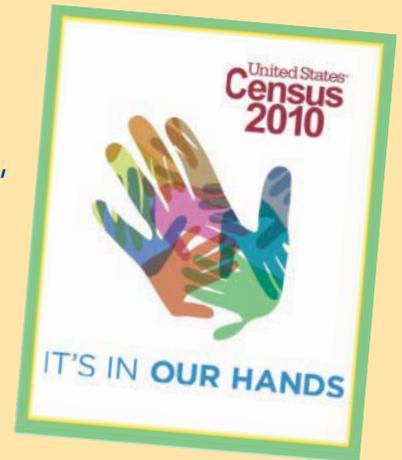


DRCOG also brought together different groups to shape the outcome of this legislation that provides the state's first new source of transportation funding in years. The Board joined the Metro Mayors Caucus in voting to support the omnibus transportation bill as an important first step in addressing the state's transportation funding needs. The Board also supported reinstating the authorization for the state to investigate the feasibility of conducting a "mileage based revenue" pilot project and reinstating the indexing of the "road safety surcharge." A list of projects proposed by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to use FASTER safety funds for fiscal year 2010 also received Board approval. The projects proposed by CDOT and

approved by the Board cover three CDOT engineering districts that affect the metro area, Regions 1, 4 and 6. The identified projects are designed to respond to existing safety concerns, prevent future safety issues, and fix existing infrastructure with an identified safety component. As part of the action, the Board also modified the Transportation Improvement Program accordingly.

DRCOG received the welcome news late in 2009 that the Governor's Energy Office approved its application for a New Energy Economic Development (NEED) grant. The NEED grant program is tied to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and is designed to advance energy efficiency and renewable energy. DRCOG is receiving \$189,200 to develop a web-based information portal where building owners can estimate the costs and benefits of installing solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on their rooftops.

DRCOG conducted a flurry of efforts, with Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele serving on the Colorado Complete Count Committee, to support the Colorado Department of Local Affairs in getting a full count of the state's citizens in the 2010 Census. Committee members identified communication channels and messages to help ensure no one failed to understand the reasons a complete count is in everyone's best interests. DRCOG efforts focused on getting the word out to seniors and local governments about the Census. The Board adopted a resolution affirming DRCOG's support of and partnership with the Department of Local Affairs and the Complete Count Campaign for the 2010 Census. From creating posters and distributing information to local governments, older adults and interested groups to adding Census information to employee email signatures, DRCOG did its part to get the word out about the Census.



DRCOG experimented with a study session format in conjunction with the Metro Vision Issues Committee meetings as a way to streamline Board meetings. While it was decided to return to MVIC's original role as the Board's primary policy making body, the exercise raised interest and involvement in MVIC and emphasized the continued importance of participation of all Board members.

To help Board members get up to speed on regional issues and DRCOG, the organization worked hard in 2009 to make DRCOG more user-friendly for Board members by holding orientation one-on-one meetings with new Board members and alternates soon after their appointment, installing WiFi in the Board meeting rooms, adding more detail to agenda item summaries, and developing orientations for the officers, and Metro Vision Issues Committee, Administrative Committee, Regional Transportation Committee members.

Orbis Institute and the DRCOG Baghdad/Denver Partnership for Peace hosted a youth delegation in the summer of 2009. Orbis is a nonprofit educational leadership organization introducing youth to their peers around the world. The Town of Parker was the DRCOG host jurisdiction and nine Iraqi teens and two chaperones lived with area families during that time. The town developed a full calendar of events that included civics lessons, visioning exercises, field trips, and cultural attractions. After a morning at the Capitol, DRCOG provided lunch and a discussion on problem-solving and reaching consensus.

Executive Director Schaufele was appointed to the Regional Air Quality Council by Gov. Ritter, and as a member, helped the RAQC prepare state implementation plan elements demonstrating long-term compliance with state and federal air quality standards and providing acceptable public health and environmental protections for the DRCOG and North Front Range regions. When the governor made appointments to the RAQC, he urged members to consider a range of cost-effective measures to address air quality, including reduction of vehicle miles traveled. He also noted the connection between land use and transportation, an ongoing discussion topic at DRCOG. Schaufele also



served on a special committee designated to work with the National Governor’s Association to bring the Policy Academy Center for Best Practices to Denver to develop and implement innovative solutions on Shaping a New Approach to Transportation and Land use Planning in 2010.

DRCOG also plays a key role with groups such as the Front Range MPOs (North Front Range, Pikes Peak, and Pueblo) and the Colorado Association of Regional Organizations (CARO). The Front Range MPO group meets monthly to discuss issues and develop strategies for addressing such topics as resource allocation, grant applications, legislation and federal funding, among others. CARO, which meets quarterly, was convened to further the common interests of the state’s designated planning and management districts.

DRCOG is represented on the NARC Executive Directors Council by Executive Director Schaufele. She represents executive directors in Region XIII (Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah).

DRCOG has been named a Bicycle-Friendly Business by Bike Denver. The bike-friendly activities and amenities we feature here, including our bicycle lockers, and internal and external Bike to Work Day activities among others, netted us the designation.





6. Metro Vision

Metro Vision, DRCOG’s long-range growth and land use plan continues to be the regional leader in all things growth- and futures-oriented. The Board took strides to increase Metro Vision’s role and relevance through a number of important steps in 2009.

After holding and hosting many educational sessions and workshops on sustainability topics and much discussion, the DRCOG Board established and decided to explore draft sustainability goals. The goals are designed to guide DRCOG policy and funding decisions to promote a more sustainable region and reflect the Board’s desire to incorporate sustainability into the next major update of Metro Vision, scheduled late in 2010. Moving



forward to explore incorporating sustainability into the Metro Vision 2035 update, the Board selected six potential goals to consider for inclusion Metro Vision and discussing and learning more about the principles at continuing discussions.



A December public hearing on proposed amendments to Metro Vision 2035, the Metro Vision Clean Water Plan, the 2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan and air quality conformity findings on the proposed transportation plan amendments attracted a large and



engaged audience of close to 350 people. Eighty speakers addressed the Board on the proposed amendments at the Colorado History Museum.

Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan, U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and U.S. Environmental Protection Administrator Lisa Jackson were in the region as part of the National Conversation on the Future of America’s Cities and Metropolitan Areas. Denver was one of the stops and DRCOG was invited to participate in a closed-door conversation with the cabinet members, Gov. Ritter, Mayor Hickenlooper and others to discuss sustainable communities. Many good ideas were shared and the role of the COG was explained, as well as the need to address growth in the 60+ demographic.

DRCOG contacted Colorado’s senators and Sen. Chris Dodd to express support for the Livable Communities Act of 2009, intended to help local communities plan and create better and more affordable places to live, work and raise families through comprehensive regional planning and implementation. The effort helped lead to Congress providing a total of \$150 million to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Sustainable Communities Initiative to improve regional planning efforts integrating housing and transportation decisions.



the UGB/A concluded in early 2009 when the Board accepted its working group’s recommendations. The DRCOG Board established a UGB/A Working Group to address issues that arose over the expansion of the UGB/A during the Metro Vision 2035 update in 2007. The proposed amendments to DRCOG’s UGB/A policy reflect the working group’s final recommendations.

An interactive planning exercise is being used throughout the region by citizens, business groups and policy makers to see into the region’s future. MetroQuest lets users see how decisions made today affect tomorrow. The tool is being used in conjunction with the update of Metro Vision and was recently recognized by *5280 Magazine* in a series of articles on the future of region.

DRCOG and ULI co-hosted a two-day workshop that provided tools and strategies for local public officials to learn how they can leverage more sustainable development practices in their communities. Public-sector presenters included Golden Mayor Jacob Smith, who discussed Golden’s Sustainability Plan, and Aurora Mayor Ed Tauer, who discussed Aurora’s Prairie Waters Project.



As early as 2004, discussions began with Weld County communities to redraw the region’s MPO boundary. Four Weld County municipalities joined DRCOG in 2008 after the boundary was redrawn due to federal requirements. After the staffs of DRCOG and the jurisdictions worked together, these communities were incorporated into the Metro Vision Plan and the plan’s urban growth boundary was amended in 2009. DRCOG’s UGB/A defines where urban development will take place in the region over the next 25 years, and promotes an orderly, compact and efficient development pattern.



Since its inception, the UGB/A has been the source of controversy. A collaborative process that began in January 2008 to address issues of concern surrounding





7. Battling Budget Cuts

In a year marked by budget cutting and economic uncertainties, DRCOG did what it could to avert service and funding cuts, help local governments and tighten its own belt.

DRCOG led the charge with MPOs across the nation to fight \$8.7 billion in rescissions, \$114 million in Colorado alone. A rescission occurs when Congress decides to rescind or “take back” funding from previous or current fiscal years, usually through an appropriations bill. Not routinely a significant issue – rescissions have been around since the inception of SAFETEA-LU – states’ unobligated funding balances have dwindled, leaving only real program dollars to cut. First, CDOT and Colorado MPOs teamed up to try for a legislative fix for this planning funding problem, and then Executive Director Schaufele mobilized affected MPOs and planning organizations throughout the country into an influential coalition to fight the rescission. In addition, Schaufele worked with NARC and Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations to make the case with U.S.



Department of Transportation Director Ray LaHood that FHWA was misinterpreting how the rescission should be applied to MPO planning funds as well as showing FHWA the negative impact a rescission

would have nationally on jobs and the economy. DRCOG Board members met on the issue with the Colorado Congressional delegation. While there was no legislative or congressional fix, the attention to rescissions ultimately led FHWA to “reinterpret” rescission

implementation, lessening the impacts to CDOT and Colorado’s MPOs. As a result, CDOT turned back only \$50 million rather than \$114 million and DRCOG did not lose any planning funds. In fact, in March 2010, Congress passed the HIRE Act and rescinded the SAFETEA-LU rescission. As a member of NARC’s transportation finance committee, Schaufele was asked by NARC to host a Web presentation on the value of collaboration. She partnered with CDOT’s legislative liaison to develop and present a 60-minute webinar on the lessons learned from the rescission experience.

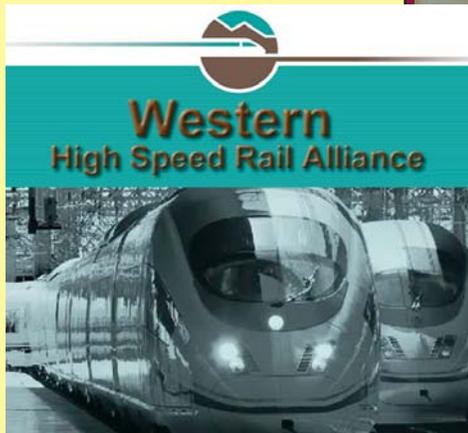
Congress punted on adopting a new federal transportation bill in 2009 and instead eventually adopted a bill extending SAFETEA-LU through December 2010. Early in the year, DRCOG’s Area Agency on Aging and other AAAs around the state were threatened by approximately \$2 million (more than \$850,000 in the DRCOG region alone) in proposed cuts to the state budget that would have affected services to older adults. In record time, a coalition of senior-focused organizations, including DRCOG, worked with service providers and their clients to show how desperately seniors need these services, especially in tight economic times. The Joint Budget Committee restored the funding. As local governments cut expenses, DRCOG did too. Just some examples:

- Moving to electronic agendas for all Board and committee meetings saved around \$60,000 in paper and postage costs and was eco-friendly.
- Using printers with more features and capabilities enabled DRCOG to save on overhead and paper and printing costs.
- Asking DRCOG staff members for their ideas to save costs and generate revenues resulted in a number of their ideas being implemented. DRCOG employees were engaged and committed to meeting the problem head on.
- Consolidating benefits under one vendor saved approximately \$125,000.
- Reducing travel, training and memberships, and leaving some positions vacant also saved money. Member government dues remained at the same rate as 2008 in an effort to help local governments with their own budgets.

8. Helping the Region Get Around

DRCOG may be known best for its work in the transportation arena and 2009 saw many achievements in that regard.

The Board authorized DRCOG to enter into an Interagency Agreement regarding the creation and operation of the Western High Speed Rail Alliance and allocated \$60,000 to support this effort. The five major metropolitan areas of the Intermountain West (Utah Transit Authority, the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, the Maricopa Association of Governments, and DRCOG) worked jointly for the acquisition of funding to conduct feasibility studies of high-speed rail options. The Alliance study effort is a multi-state follow-on to groundwork laid by the Rocky Mountain Rail Authority and others. It complements the state’s freight and passenger rail study as well as its evaluation of high-speed

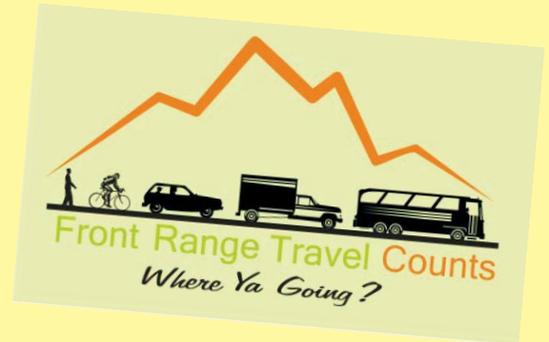


rail feasibility from Colorado to Texas. Plans were set for a June 2010 luncheon to

formally address the WHSRA to Colorado and an annual conference was planned in October 2010.

In 2009, an in-depth study of urban household travel along the Front Range got underway. Data from the Front Range Travel Counts survey project will be a gold mine of information in helping the project partners (Front Range MPOs, CDOT, RTD and FHWA) plan for future

transportation needs from Fort Collins to Pueblo. The project will yield data fundamental to the agencies’ ability to analyze, plan, and forecast travel behavior in the Front Range, and to then develop transportation facilities that meet the travel patterns of people and goods. Efforts have already concluded in the north Front Range area to collect data through household surveys, while surveys are underway in the Denver, Colorado Springs and Pueblo metro areas. Previous survey efforts have focused on individual areas; this is the first project to examine travel along the Front Range.



To enhance the operation of DRCOG’s rapidly growing vanpool program, DRCOG has contracted with VPSI Inc. to handle operations, financial, administrative and customer service responsibilities for the 100-vehicle vanpool program. DRCOG will continue to handle marketing and outreach of the program it has administered since 1992. RideArrangers also will continue to operate the Guaranteed Ride Home program, which provides a free taxi ride home to vanpoolers in the event of an emergency or unexpected work schedule change. Over the four years of the contract, existing RideArrangers vans will be sold as they fully depreciate and RideArrangers will lease vans from VPSI.



Efforts began to update the Regional Travel Demand Management (TDM) Strategic Plan, adopted in 2005, and set to be updated in the spring of 2010. This plan expands upon the TDM overview provided by the Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan, focusing on the goal of reducing demand for travel by single- occupant



vehicles, especially at peak drive times. The benefits of TDM projects and services include reduced congestion, pollutant emissions, and fossil fuel energy consumption; improved personal health and mobility; and a larger pool of available workers for employers. The strategic plan is used to guide selection processes for TDM Program Pool funds and RideArrangers annual work plans. DRCOG is gathering thoughts and ideas from local governments staff on the plan's update; discussion of topics will continue via a Web discussion forum and future meetings.

The Board authorized the two-year extension of the revenue allocation memorandum of understanding between DRCOG and the Colorado Department of Transportation. Originally signed by the two organizations in November 2004, the MOU addresses continued coordination, planning and revenue allocation for transportation within the Denver transportation management area. One of the MOU's key components was the establishment of formulas and methods to be used for determining the minimal percent of funds to be allocated to the DRCOG region based on statewide measures for system quality, mobility and safety.

The Board allocated funding to a variety of organizations for Job Access/Reverse Commute and New Freedom projects in the region. The funding is available through the Federal Transit Administration for projects in fiscal years 2010-2011 that develop transportation services for welfare recipients and low-income individuals to and from jobs and training opportunities, and provide services for individuals with disabilities, beyond those required by

the Americans with Disabilities Act. The action awards funding of \$2.7 million to RTD for Job Access/Reverse Commute projects; \$2.6 million is available for New Freedom projects. Project sponsors include Seniors Resource Center, Colorado Cab Company, RTD, DRMAC, Transit Alliance and the City of Centennial.

The DRCOG Board approved a resolution allocating funding for Regional Intelligent Transportation System projects for fiscal years 2010-2011. Intelligent transportation system projects apply technology to reduce delay and improve safety for the movement of goods and people. Funding of \$700,000 is available each year and a call for applications drew nine applications for the funding. The nine applications sought more money than is available so applications were scored, based on a set project selection process. Projects of RTD, the Colorado Department of Transportation and the City of Centennial are receiving funding. A City of Arvada project is on the waiting list.



DRCOG met with Cornell University representatives studying fast-growing metropolitan regions. DRCOG discussed the Denver regional successes of the past 10 years, Metro Vision and DRCOG's relationships with other regional organizations. The Denver area is one of six regions selected for the study.



The *Denver Post* published a front page story on DRCOG's report Freeway Bottleneck Locations in the Denver Region. Staff prepared this document to present general information and a range of potential mitigation efforts for 18 bottleneck locations. The locations were first identified in DRCOG's 2006 Annual Report on Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region.

The Board also allocated funds for Regional Travel Demand Management projects for fiscal years 2010-2011. There is \$880,000 available in 2010; \$700,000 is available in 2011. Travel demand management projects offer people opportunities and options to reduce their need to travel, especially by car. DRCOG received 16 project applications requesting almost \$1.2 million more than is available. Projects were scored on measured criteria. Receiving funding are projects in Denver, Boulder, the Denver Tech Center, Boulder County, the entire Denver region and in the US 36/SH 119 area.

The Board also adopted the Unified Planning 2010-2011 Work Program (UPWP), which outlined the planning tasks and activities to be conducted in the region with federal planning funds. The UPWP also lists other major planning activities currently being performed by local governments, CDOT and RTD. Just a few highlights of the UPWP include efforts to:

- complete a new regional land use/transportation model,
- continue energy and regional sustainability activities,
- expand Web-based public involvement, and
- monitoring ozone and air quality conformity.

With fiscal year 2009 the last year of current federal transportation legislation authorization, DRCOG staff reported on the urgent need for local governments to obligate funds for transportation projects before the fiscal year ends Sept. 30. The CDOT budget office had indicated that nearly \$40 million of federal funds from the current fiscal year and prior years in the DRCOG Transportation Improvement Program that have not yet been obligated. DRCOG staff contacted all sponsors of TIP projects reminding and urging them to obligate their funds before Sept. 30. In addition, CDOT notified DRCOG that an additional \$21 million is available for projects that

can be obligated before Sept. 30. DRCOG staff worked with local government project sponsors, according to current adopted TIP policies and protocols, to get these funds to projects before the fiscal year ended.

DRCOG was among 15 federal, state and local agencies signing a Planning and Environmental Linkages Partnering Agreement. The agreement, developed through the state Transportation Environmental Resource Council and encouraged by the U.S. Department of Transportation and other federal planning partners, represents a commitment to work together to improve integration of planning and environmental study activities.



Nearly 25,000 people registered with DRCOG in 2009 to ride a bicycle on Bike to Work Day, almost identical to the previous year's number when high gas prices spurred more interest. The actual number of cyclists was even higher when combining registered participants with additional surveyed cyclists. Almost 1,100 companies participated and more than 100 breakfast stations helped cyclists refuel on their way to work.





9. Assisting Local Governments in Doing their Jobs

DRCOG continued offering its popular short courses on major program areas – transportation, Metro Vision, aging and water.



Board members completing all four short courses earn a certificate of completion.

The 2010 Denver Regional Aerial Photography Project got underway. The program is a collaborative effort between member governments, regional special districts, the U.S. Geological Survey, the State of Colorado and utilities to acquire high-quality digital aerial photography for the Denver metro area.



Twenty-three agencies participated in the 2010 project's kickoff



meeting in June, and a project schedule calls for the delivery of final imagery at the end of 2010. DRAPP began in 2000, with additional projects in 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008. The program provides cost savings to local governments, quicker access to photos and higher resolution imagery for member governments.

DRCOG, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs and the Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association offered a special day-long workshop Aug. 8 for newly appointed and veteran local



government planning commissioners. The conference not only provided valuable information to planning commissioners, but also Board of Adjustment members, zoning hearing officers, planning department staff, city attorneys, and elected officials. General plenary sessions were followed by specialized training tracks.

Each year, DRCOG applies for a grant from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs to provide planning assistance to smaller member governments and then seeks applications for and allocates the funds. DRCOG had \$35,000 to allocate in 2009 – the six projects included the following:

- Bennett – a master plan for parks and interconnecting trails
- Dacono – new unified development code to replace the existing zoning and subdivision ordinance
- Edgewater – parks and recreation master plan
- Foxfield – revision of the town's zoning regulations
- Gilpin County – hiring a GIS contractor to integrate mining claim maps
- Lyons – securing a consultant to perform an economic development market survey

Exciting collaborative data-sharing efforts between DRCOG, member governments and partners launched in 2009 at the first Regional Data Summit. More than 100 people attended to discuss coordinated regional data sharing among local, state and federal government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, academia and the

More than 100 people attended DRCOG's second annual Regional Data Summit. The summit focused on coordinated regional data sharing among local, state and federal government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, academia and the private sector. Noted geospatial data expert Peter Batty was the keynote speaker, addressing the geospatial revolution.



private sector. The outgrowth was a 30-member steering committee that pursued next steps, such as building on the Denver Regional Aerial Photography Project and a regional land use and zoning map, and explored a variety of opportunities for cooperation, including consortium examples from other parts of the nation. A vision statement developed at the data summit guided the committee's efforts. DRCOG also unveiled its new Regional Data Catalog Web application, which allows users to search for and interact with data, and contact DRCOG for data requests.

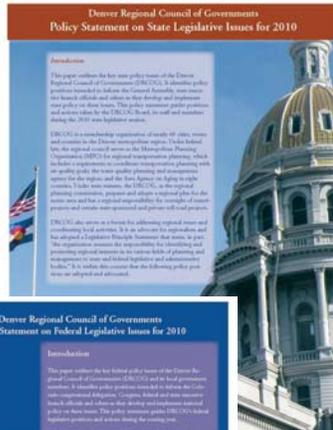
Through the DRCOG and Regis University Educational Alliance, employees of DRCOG member jurisdictions received a 10 percent tuition discount at Regis' School for Professional Studies throughout 2009. About 250 people have taken advantage of the program since it began in 2007. The school targets adult learners working toward bachelor's and master's degrees and certain certificate programs.

10. Advocacy

Getting a jump on both 2010 federal and state legislative sessions, the DRCOG Board adopted policy statements on both state and federal issues at year's end to guide the organization. The statements included positions in the areas of regional planning and development, transportation, human services, the environment and intergovernmental relations.

DRCOG also adopted a position paper on federal transportation enabling legislation guiding federal transportation policies, programs and funding in fall 2009. The position paper, shared with members of Colorado's congressional delegation during congressional recess, supports a policy framework that

- invests in rebuilding the nation's transportation infrastructure
- supports multimodal solutions
- supports a metropolitan nation
- improves energy efficiency and environmental sustainability, and
- provides responsible and efficient investment. The Board acknowledged the position paper will be updated as work continues on reauthorizing the current legislation or developing new legislation.



DRCOG Chair Ed Peterson and Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele addressed the state legislature's Long-Term Fiscal Stability Commission, a legislative interim committee studying matters related to the state's fiscal stability, presenting the view that the state needs stable, long-term funding sources. They covered the huge transportation funding shortfalls the region faces as well as funding issues in the aging services area. Peterson and Schaufele pointed out the pending demographic shift in older adults and reviewed DRCOG's planning efforts that will help accommodate the shift, such as transit-oriented development, review of local zoning ordinances and working with the Home Builders Association. They culminated their presentation by offering several potential ideas and pledged DRCOG's desire to work with the state on a solution.



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(December 2009)

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