



DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

We make life better!



DRCOG Annual Report

2012

Enhancing and protecting the quality of life in our region

Denver Regional Council of Governments Board of Directors

(December 2012)

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Governor's Non-Voting Appointees

Doug Young, Office of the Governor
Andrew Freedman, Office of Lt. Governor
Debra Perkins Smith, Colorado Department of
Transportation

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The Face of Regional Collaboration

Since 1955, DRCOG has been the focal point of cooperation and collaboration in the Denver region, bringing local elected officials together to make decisions on behalf of the entire region. Today, as DRCOG nears its 60th anniversary, Board members representing nearly 60 member governments – from the eastern plains to the mountains -- meet at DRCOG, maintaining a regional perspective as they work to make life better for people of all ages, incomes and abilities.

DRCOG is the face of regional collaboration in a number of key areas. Highlights from 2012 follow.

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Metro Vision

Metro Vision, DRCOG's long-range plan to make life better for people of all ages, incomes and abilities in the region, continues as the regional standard. A number of important steps were taken to reinforce and build on Metro Vision's role in the region in 2012.

Activities begin our Metro Vision 2040 effort

DRCOG officially began its Metro Vision 2040 update on June 7 with an at-capacity attendance for the special kickoff event at History Colorado. The meeting explored the region's common values and priorities for Metro Vision 2040, building on feedback from the regionwide Listening Tour. The workshop included national scenario planning speakers, supported by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Volpe National Transportation Systems Center.



Listening Tour informs Metro Vision 2040

DRCOG worked with BBC Research & Consulting to conduct a regional Listening Tour to help identify key issues, begin to engage stakeholders and inform the overall scope of the Metro Vision 2040 planning process. A Listening Tour is a qualitative research process designed to listen to stakeholders, subject matter experts and residents on their vision for the future. This process included focus groups with subject matter experts in a variety of interest areas, such as economic development, aging and housing. Local elected officials also participated, providing information on emerging issues that should be considered for indepth analysis during the Metro Vision 2040 planning process. And, more than 1,000 general residents responded to a Metro Vision online survey conducted as part of the Listening Tour.

Housing history for Metro Vision 2040

As background for the Metro Vision 2040 effort, Tom Simmons of Front Range Research Associates made a presentation on "Historic Residential Subdivisions of Metropolitan Denver, 1940-1965" in June. The presentation talked about the development of many of the region's cities and counties. As historian and co-owner of Front Range Research Associates, he conducted the research as part of a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the State Historic Preservation Office of the Colorado Historical Society.

Sustainable Communities Initiative formally launches

U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Shaun Donovan encouraged DRCOG and its regional partners to roll up their sleeves and get to work on the Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI). He spoke in May at a special event for the SCI Consortium, a group of more than 80 public, private and non-profit partners. The SCI partnerships were solidified when the Denver region received a \$4.5-million grant from HUD in late 2011 to support regional, corridor and site-level planning and implementation activities and leverage the region's multibillion-dollar expansion of the FasTracks transit system. The consortium's overarching goal is to align investments, programs and policies to maximize the benefits that result from the region's investment in transit. The consortium involves municipalities, counties, state agencies,





housing authorities, nonprofits, corporate interests, philanthropic and academic organizations. Donovan said "Indeed, when HUD forged the Partnership for Sustainable Communities with our partners at DOT and EPA, we saw the work the Denver metro area was doing with FasTracks as a model for the kind of collaboration, smart planning and catalytic investment regions need to be successful."

Metro Vision 2035 implementation

The Steering Committee of the Metro Vision Implementation Task Force concluded its work by issuing a set of three recommendations to help implement Metro Vision 2035. The three projects include a study of construction defects legislation, coordinated land use and economic development best practices, and a transportation station analysis. The Boomer Bond, the group's first special project, is helping local governments develop a set of tools to aid in addressing the impacts of their aging population.

Metro Vision 2035 Growth and Development Supplement adopted

The Board adopted the Metro Vision 2035 Growth and Development Supplement, a technical appendix that provides more detailed information about the application of regional policies in the growth and development-related elements of Metro Vision. The supplement reflects the work of an urban centers working group and other revisions designed to streamline and highlight key policy applications.

Metro Vision Planning Advisory Committee created

To work in conjunction with the Metro Vision 2040 planning effort, the Board approved a new temporary committee. Known as the Metro Vision Planning Advisory Committee (MVPAC), the 20-25 member committee is comprised of local government

staff and officials, other public agency staff and officials, and subject matter experts to develop policy options and make

recommendations to the Board of Directors and the Metro Vision Issues Committee on Metro Vision development and implementation. The committee will exist throughout the Metro Vision 2040 planning process. Committee membership



involves an application process, with the DRCOG Board chair making final appointments. Members were appointed at the end of 2012, and the first committee meeting was held in January 2013. The committee's creation is another step in assuring Metro Vision represents a shared vision that belongs to everyone involved in shaping the future of the Denver metro area.

New tools in scenario planning

DRCOG and USDOT collaborated to offer a webinar to a national audience in April: New Tools in Scenario Planning: the Denver Region's Metro Vision 2040 Update. Staff described our previous scenario planning efforts, how scenario planning will fit into the Metro Vision planning process, and the new tools and associated data we have developed. Also participating were officials from FHWA and FTA, and a panel of five scenario planning experts.

Roundtable discussion

Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele participated in a roundtable discussion with Shelley Poticha, HUD's director of the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, and other metro area women. The roundtable was part of a national women's outreach initiative through the White House Office of Public Engagement to hear comment from across the country on a variety of topics and initiatives.

Water Dialogues move forward

The Water Dialogues effort, an action item from the updated Metro Vision 2035 plan, moved ahead in late 2012. DRCOG serves on a Steering Committee with Western Resource Advocates on best practices with land use and water efficiency offered through the Pace Law School Land Use Law Center. Also, DRCOG will review data collected by the Colorado Water Conservation Board for its relevance to land use and water conservation.



Metro Vision Idea Exchange

In 2012, DRCOG continued holding its Metro Vision Idea Exchange as a forum for local governments to share information and best practices about efforts in the region to implement Metro Vision. Each session featured presentations from local governments. Topics included the following.

- Urban agriculture and food system planning
- Wildfire mitigation
- Commercial strip revitalization in Wheat Ridge and Brighton
- Sustainability

TOD Fund information shared with Board

Enterprise Community Partners met with DRCOG communities interested in learning more about an expanded TOD fund and how they might participate. The purpose of the Denver TOD Fund is to create and preserve affordable housing units near transit through property acquisition and land banking. In 2011, the DRCOG Board decided to participate in the project in a non-funding role as a convener, setting the stage for Enterprise to meet with local governments. Elected officials and staff from various DRCOG jurisdictions met with Enterprise, discussing a variety of topics. Discussion continues into 2013 on maintaining the fund with the greatest flexibility possible, releasing the city or county from being the investor, and using investment in the fund as local match for FasTracks build out, among others.

Jim Taylor represents DRCOG

Immediate Past Chair and SCI Executive Committee Chair Jim Taylor traveled to South Padre Island, Texas, in September to represent the Denver region at the Rio South Texas Regional Planning Consortium Peer Exchange. The event brought elected officials together to discuss sustainable development and wealth creation. Jim and other national speakers shared information about their regions' efforts and provided examples of best practices/lessons learned. The event was sponsored by



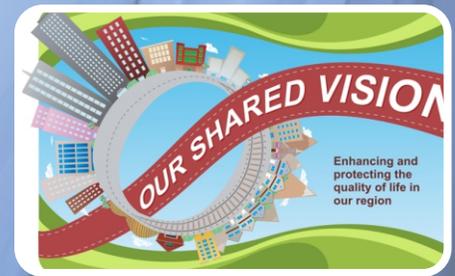
the National Association of Development Organizations and the Ford Foundation.

New land use model

DRCOG is developing a new land use model for the DRCOG region. The model, known as UrbanSim, will provide forecasts of the pattern of regional development in support of DRCOG's regional planning processes. UrbanSim will replace the current model, which DRCOG has used for the past 20 years, and provide more accurate forecasts that better reflect both development market conditions and planning goals and directives of DRCOG member governments. Input data to the model is being provided by DRCOG and member governments. A rough draft of the model is being tested by Urban Analytics, project consultant, and the first draft of UrbanSim is expected to be available for DRCOG's official planning activities in summer 2013.

Our Shared Vision debuts

In October, DRCOG issued its first newsletter reporting current activities with Metro Vision and the SCI. The monthly newsletter, named Our Shared Vision, was unveiled to a positive response.



Teri Whitmore chosen for sustainability leadership academy

DRCOG Regional Planning and Operations Director Teri Whitmore participated in the 3rd National Sustainability Leadership Academy on Creating, Leading and Managing Change. The academy, held in June in Denver, was sponsored by the Institute for Sustainable Communities and brought together 30-40 senior local government sustainability directors and managers for the peer-learning and training program.

Solar Map earns NARC Achievement Award

DRCOG received a National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) Achievement Award in the Major Metro category at the regional association's summer meeting for DRCOG's Solar Map. This is NARC's highest award. The solar map, recently featured in a solar case studies booklet produced by NARC, has been a useful tool for estimating potential solar energy costs since its release in December 2009.



Regional Leadership

As one of the nation's three oldest regional planning organizations, DRCOG is a model nationally and regionally.



Board service noted

In 2012, a number of Board members were honored for their service to DRCOG. They included:

- Arapahoe County Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld for five years of service in January;
- Littleton Council Member James Taylor for five years of service in January;
- Sheridan Council Member Cliff Mueller for 10 years in November;
- Broomfield Council Member Dennis McCloskey for five years in December; and
- Boulder County Commissioner Will Toor for 15 years of service as a Board member in December.



2012 officers elected

In February, the Board elected its 2012 officers. Broomfield Council Member Dennis McCloskey was elected chair, while Bennett Mayor Sue Horn was chosen as vice chair. Douglas County Commissioner Jack Hilbert and Arvada Council Member Rachel Zenzinger were selected as secretary and treasurer, respectively. Littleton Council Member Jim Taylor completed the slate as immediate past chair.



Board sets 2012 goals at workshop

February's annual Board Workshop set DRCOG's 2012 goals. The workshop focused on Metro Vision 2035 implementation efforts and what to expect with Metro Vision 2040. Thirty-five Board members and alternates received presentations on how DRCOG's functions are interrelated and an overview of 2011. Generally, the Board identified key goals for stakeholder engagement and expressed its wish to engage partners to inform them of the process and further involve key stakeholders in collaboration. Board members also stated their need to know how we are doing on 2035 implementation before setting a direction and outcomes for Metro Vision 2040.



DRCOG Board representatives serve regional roles in 2012

In 2012, a number of Board members also served on various regional committees/boards. The DRCOG Board appointed Greenwood Village Mayor Ron Rakowsky and Lone Tree Council Member Jackie Millet to serve as member and alternate, respectively, on the E-470 Highway Authority Board. Representing DRCOG on the State Transportation Advisory Committee were DRCOG Chair Dennis McCloskey, Broomfield council member, and Thornton Councilmember Beth Humenik as member and alternate, respectively. Gubernatorial appointments to the Regional Air Quality Council included Boulder County Commissioner Will Toor and Lone Tree Council Member Jackie Millet, DRCOG Board members, and DRCOG Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele.



Data Summit brings region's technology experts together

More than 100 people packed the REI Flagship Store's meeting room for the Fourth Annual Regional Data Summit in January, showing the widespread interest in the region for sharing information on new technologies and exploring more avenues for data sharing. The Data Summit has emerged as a great networking opportunity for IT and GIS professionals from around the region. Attendees also have expressed their great enthusiasm for DRCOG's role in hosting the event.

Baghdad-Denver Regional Partnership

DRCOG welcomed more visitors from Baghdad, Iraq, in October as part of the long-running Baghdad-Denver Region Partnership. The visit was geared toward providing an



overview of the Denver metro area's long history of cooperation and collaboration, and the leadership role DRCOG has played for the last 57 years. Visitors also discussed the history of the partnership and its goal of exchanging ideas and knowledge between the leaders of the two regions. Board Chair Dennis McCloskey, Vice Chair Sue Horn, Board members Doug Tisdale and Cliff Mueller, and Board alternates Sharon Richardson and Ron Weidmann attended the exchange and informal luncheon that followed. The group's visit to the United States was sponsored by the International Visitor Leadership Program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

DRCOG Board Member and Commerce City Council Member Jim Benson and volunteer Joe Rice, a former DRCOG Board member and Colorado legislator, represented DRCOG and its Sister Cities program, the Baghdad-Denver Region Partnership, in mid-July. The Partnership began in 2003 and has hosted more than a dozen delegations of officials from Iraq since then. Two delegations of officials from the Denver region also have gone to the Middle East, including Baghdad in 2007. The conference provided a great opportunity to reintroduce the Partnership, a very unique Sister Cities alliance. It even became the impromptu subject of one of the breakout sessions.

International visitors come to DRCOG

DRCOG staff met with a number of international visitors throughout the year.

Visitors came to DRCOG from Japan's Institute of Behavioral Sciences and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. DRCOG staff shared our Metro Vision plan, as well as transit planning and transit-oriented development in the Denver region early in 2012. The Japanese visitors also met with staff from Denver and Boulder.

DRCOG was also pleased to have a Turkmenistan delegation of local leaders visit in April. Chair McCloskey met with the visitors and shared information about the region and the work of DRCOG. The delegation expressed lots of interest and posed many questions.

In December, DRCOG hosted a delegation of eight visitors from Russia interested in learning about "accountable government" in the United States. The group was sponsored by the congressionally supported Open World Leadership Center, which brings emerging leaders from Eurasian countries to the United States for firsthand exposure to the American system of participatory democracy and free enterprise. After receiving an overview of DRCOG, the group discussed regional collaboration with Board members Jim Taylor and Sue Horn. The visitors were impressed with the voluntary collaboration that occurs in the region.





Working together for a better region

Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele participated in a panel at the Metro Mayors Caucus annual retreat. She joined Glendale Mayor Larry Harte, representing the Metro Mayors Caucus, and Colorado Municipal League Executive Director Sam Mamet in talking about the three organizations and how they work together for a better region. Each speaker had time on the agenda to address the mayors and show how the three organizations clearly have different missions, membership and priorities, but work together when called for and interests align.

DRCOG joins in hosting federal candidate debate

With the Metro North Chamber of Commerce and Suncor Energy, DRCOG once again co-hosted a federal candidate debate in early October. A couple hundred people attended the breakfast event, which featured good give and take by the candidates on a number of topics, including DRCOG's interest areas of transportation and aging. CBS4 Political Specialist Shaun Boyd moderated the event.

Panelists in the debate included

- the 7th Congressional District, Rep. Ed Perlmutter and Joe Coors;
- the 2nd Congressional District, Rep. Jared Polis and Kevin Lundberg;
- the 4th Congressional District, Rep. Cory Gardner and Brandon Schaffer; and
- the 6th Congressional District, Rep. Mike Coffman.



Schaufele serves on planning team for leadership symposium

Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele served on the planning team for the second Rocky Mountain West Urban Leadership Symposium in February. The event focused on the unique challenges of creating partnerships between urban areas in the west, where major cities aren't as close to each other geographically as they are in other parts of the nation, making it more difficult to leverage shared resources and opportunities.

Transportation primer for the Board

To help Board members gain a basic understanding of how transportation planning processes and procedures work at DRCOG, the Board had a transportation primer in October. The presentation marked the beginning of a three-step approach to assure everyone on the Board has a basic understanding of:

- 1) the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and its duties and responsibilities,
- 2) how DRCOG and its planning partners – the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Regional Transportation District (RTD) – have agreed to do business, and
- 3) how the DRCOG Board has traditionally developed the federally-required MPO plans and programs.

Phase 2 was given as part of the Board Short Course on Transportation in January, with Phase 3 happening at the Board's annual workshop in February 2013. During the workshop, the Board was set to discuss the transportation planning process and identify areas where improvement or change is needed.



We make life better!



2012 Awards Event celebrates regional service

The region celebrated service and excellence at DRCOG's biennial Awards Event celebration in May. In the impressive new History Colorado Center, DRCOG presented 15 awards recognizing individuals, local governments and community partners who make life better in the Denver region.

About 400 people attended the event, including Mayor Michael Hancock who welcomed them to Denver and History Colorado, and Denver comedian Sam Adams, who emceed. Guests toured the museum exhibits and enjoyed the new strolling reception format, which allowed plenty of time for visiting with colleagues and counterparts, and dining on an assortment of hot and cold food.



Top regional award goes to...

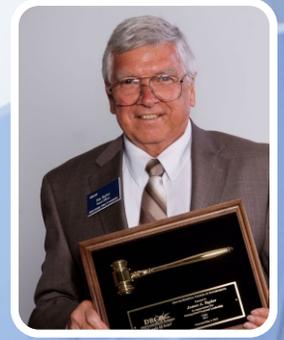
Former Northglenn Mayor Kathie Novak, the 38th recipient of the John V. Christensen Memorial Award. Novak received the award from Chair Dennis McCloskey, who noted her 18 years of combined service on the Northglenn city council and as mayor. He also cited her work on behalf of the region through such organizations as the DRCOG Board, the Colorado Municipal League, the Colorado Water Partnership, Transit Alliance, the Metro Mayors Caucus and the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, and municipalities as president of the National League of Cities. McCloskey thanked Novak for her long record of public service devoted to the betterment of her community, region, state and nation.



Board honors Taylor for leadership in 2011

Littleton Council Member James Taylor was recognized at the Awards Event for his service to DRCOG and hard work as

2011 Board chair. Chair Dennis McCloskey presented the organization's Outgoing Chair Award to Jim, who also served DRCOG as vice chair, secretary and treasurer since becoming a Board member in 2007.



Distinguished Service Awards presented

Four individuals were recognized for giving their time, talent and skills to regional efforts, and to DRCOG programs and activities. They included:

Aurora Public Works Director **Dave Chambers** for his work as chair of the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee and on behalf of regional transportation projects and issues.

The late **Jennifer Finch**, former director of the CDOT Division of Transportation Development, for her assistance and support to DRCOG's regional transportation planning program for more than a decade as a member of many committees and task forces.



The late **Mark Mehalko** for his wide-ranging efforts to serve Colorado's communities for more than 30 years in the field of transportation planning and engineering.

Lakewood Mayor **Bob Murphy** for his work as chair of the Metro Mayors Caucus FasTracks Task Force.



Local Government Awards

Through the long-running Local Government Awards program, a number of awards were presented in the areas of Planning with Vision, Collaboration and Community Outreach.

Planning with Vision: High-Value Projects that Achieve Community and Metro Vision Goals

Gold Award: 40 West Arts District and Urban Design and Mobility Planning - A Collaborative Effort: City of Lakewood and the Lakewood-West Colfax Business Improvement District

Silver Award: Arapahoe Square Charrette: City and County of Denver and Downtown Denver Partnership

Bronze Award: Strategic Plan for Aging Well in Jefferson County: Jefferson County

Collaboration

Gold Award: Adams 12 Five Star Schools and the City of Thornton's Consolidated Service Center: City of Thornton and Adams 12 Five Star Schools (Adams 12).

Silver Award: Asarco: Adams County, City and County of Denver, Denver Urban Renewal Authority and Adams County Economic Development

Bronze Award: Community Safety Volunteers (CSV): Douglas County, Town of Castle Rock and City of Lone Tree

Community Outreach/Public Education

Gold Award: Mile High Greyhound Park Redevelopment: City of Commerce City and the Commerce City Urban Renewal Authority

Silver Award: Boulder's Energy Future: City of Boulder

Bronze Award: Urban Coyote Safety and Awareness Program: City of Aurora, the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Colorado State University Human Dimensions and Natural Resources Department, and Adams County

The awards celebration is held every two years; it alternates each spring with DRCOG's Live Work Play event, which honors the region's great places and livable communities.





Schaufele elected to NARC post

At the NARC annual conference in St. Petersburg, Florida, in June, DRCOG Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele was re-elected to serve on the Executive Directors Council for 2012-2013. She represents NARC's Region XIII, which includes Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada and Utah, on the 30-member committee.

Cooperating on data

DRCOG is a member of the Governor's Office of Information Technology's Geospatial Advisory Council. In 2012, the state began an initiative to more readily share data through a Colorado Information Marketplace website and DRCOG's geospatial team worked with the state to get an initial sampling of DRCOG data and information provided through the marketplace. The site brings users interested in DRCOG data back to DRCOG's Regional Data Catalog for the actual download. Access it by going to data.colorado.gov.

Bike route app excels in challenge

DRCOG staff participated in an App Challenge during the summer to develop applications using open data (including DRCOG's Regional Data Catalog) to advance sustainability and livability in the region. A diverse team of technical professionals (including some DRCOG employees) was awarded second place in the competition sponsored by PlaceMatters. The RadRoutes bike app (now re-branded as Open Bike – www.openbike.co) allows individuals to rate DRCOG's regional bicycle routes (collected from our member governments) on measures of quality. The app leverages DRCOG's own mapping data with other open data sources to illustrate the safety of bike racks and routes. The app is currently under development but the Open Bike team has the intention to feed useful data back to the community which could be used to yield feedback regarding future investments around safety and the bike network.



Tapping DRCOG knowledge

DRCOG staff served as a source of information and ideas for the advance team planning for the InterCity Leadership Visit to the Denver region in the fall. A delegation of 80 community and regional representatives from the Minneapolis-St. Paul area traveled to Denver in late September-early October to look at the Denver region's efforts in the areas of economic development, education and urban issues (transportation, downtown development, etc.). DRCOG staff discussed the topics, people and places the InterCity Leadership Visit should consider for its visit agenda.

Santa DRCOG

DRCOG staff repeated a long-standing tradition when they delivered 18 large bags full of Christmas presents to the 130 residents of the Speary Center for the 2012 holidays. For about 15 years, the DRCOG staff has been adopting the Speary residents, making sure each resident has at least one gift to open for Christmas. The residents provide short wish lists and the 90 members of the DRCOG staff do what they can to play Santa Claus. The DRCOG AAA pointed staff in the direction of Speary, a care facility home for people with disabilities, including brain injuries. Speary staff relate what a difference the gifts make to the residents. That gives DRCOG staff a good feeling at the holidays and throughout the year when they provide other remembrances.



DRCOG honors employees

Each year, DRCOG honors its Employee of the Year for outstanding service. In 2012, the recipient was Janna Doyscher, senior HR generalist. A spring celebration honored Janna and the other employees nominated for the award: Traffic Signal Engineering Coordinator Jerry Luor and Regional Transportation Demand Management Program Sales Specialist Mia Bemelen.



FasTracks

FasTracks, RTD's ambitious plan to provide rapid transit throughout the region, was supported by DRCOG in a number of ways. FasTracks is a key element in Metro Vision, the region's long-range growth and development plan to make life better for people of all ages, incomes and abilities.

Funding to FasTracks

Federal transportation funding awarded to a number of FasTracks projects reaffirmed DRCOG's continued commitment to the region's rapid transit system, formally described in a 2008 resolution. The Board selected projects that are both ultimately supportive of FasTracks and independently useful until FasTracks corridor segments open. DRCOG allocated \$18.7 million to the following FasTracks projects:

- \$6.46 million to the Gold Line
- \$5.08 million to the North Metro Corridor
- \$3.6 million to the Peoria/Smith transit station
- \$1.5 million for the 72nd Avenue station
- \$1.2 million to the Northwest Corridor
- \$827,000 for 112th Avenue corridor improvements

Annual FasTracks Review

Since 2004, as part of action taken by DRCOG on the original FasTracks plan, RTD has submitted annual reports on the status and progress of FasTracks for DRCOG review and approval. This year, RTD withdrew its annual report after deciding not to pursue an additional sales and use tax vote in 2012. Instead, the DRCOG Board adopted a resolution waiving the requirement for an annual FasTracks review this year, subject to certain conditions. In place of an annual report, RTD submitted a 2013 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) amendment in August requesting the removal of portions of four transit lines. The Board was set to act on the plan amendment in early 2013.

Chair McCloskey represents DRCOG at C Line anniversary



Chair Dennis McCloskey represented DRCOG at RTD's 10th anniversary celebration of the Central Platte Valley Light Rail C Line in April at the Denver Union Station light rail station. He spoke of the DRCOG Board's commitment to rapid transit as a key part of the region's economic well-being, pointing out the construction of the Central Platte Valley line was the DRCOG Board's first commitment of transportation dollars to a rapid transit rail line. He also cited DRCOG's more than \$40 million commitment to Denver Union Station transit hub project, several million dollars in funding for various pedestrian and bicycle facilities to access transit stations and to help local communities plan around prospective transit stations, and \$120 million in commitments to FasTracks buildout. Since RTD opened the 1.8-mile line April 5, 2001, it has carried more than 17 million passenger trips.

DRCOG represented on DUSPA

Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele continued serving as DRCOG's voting representative on the Denver Union Station Project Authority or DUSPA. The authority has a 13-member board, 11 voting members and 2 non-voting members. DUSPA, created by the Denver City Council, is responsible for the financing, acquiring, owning, equipping, designing, constructing, renovating, operating and maintaining of the Denver Union Station redevelopment project.



Area Agency on Aging

The DRCOG Area Agency on Aging (AAA) serves the Denver region of Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin and Jefferson counties. DRCOG is recognized locally and nationally for its leadership on older adult issues.

Community-based Care Transitions Project

In 2012, DRCOG worked on and submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services an application for a Community-based Care Transitions Program (CCTP).

Early in 2013, word came that the DRCOG AAA is one of 35 newly announced participants in the program designed to improve care transitions from the hospital to other settings and reduce readmissions for high-risk Medicare beneficiaries.



Spearheaded by DRCOG, the Denver Regional Care Connection brings together Exempla Saint Joseph Hospital, Medical Center of Aurora, North Suburban Medical Center, Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center, Rose Medical Center, Sky Ridge Medical Center and Swedish Medical Center, along with more than 50 other community service organizations and providers. Participants in the 30-day program will receive assistance from a transitions coach who will guide patients to take charge of their own health care. In addition, some program participants will have access to supportive services needed to keep them healthy at home and avoid unnecessary hospital readmissions. The project is expected to decrease Medicare costs within the community.



Network of Care notches two milestones

In April, the DRCOG AAA notched two milestones related to the popular Network of Care community-based website for older adults and people with disabilities. DRCOG unveiled and demonstrated the new look of the site and several new features, and observed the site's two-year anniversary in the Denver metro area at a celebration event. Network of Care continues to be widely used and consulted by area older adults, service providers and community groups and organizations. It is a one-stop shop for many topics that help older adults. DRCOG is very proud of the site and all it offers. Staff members of Trilogy Integrated Resources, who operate the site on DRCOG's behalf, were so impressed with what DRCOG sent out announcing the site's new platform that they shared it with other Network of Care programs throughout the nation. The AAA staff members can provide live demonstrations of Network of Care to community groups. Visit www.DRCOG.NetworkofCare.org.





DRCOG receives Adult and Disability Resource Center designation

The Colorado Department of Health and Human Services State Unit on Aging designated DRCOG's Area Agency on Aging as an Adult and Disability Resource Center in April. The designation allows DRCOG to expand its well-known role assisting area seniors to become a community resource on long-term care for all adults. The new designation allows DRCOG to extend the comprehensive services it provides to now assist adults with disabilities (18 and over). To make it easier to acquire information, DRCOG created an Adult Resources for Care and Help (ARCH) program as a single-door, coordinated system for all persons seeking long-term care support. DRCOG operates an information and assistance line (303-480-6700 or 1-866-959-3017 toll-free outside the Denver area) and also provides information through the popular and widely used Network of Care website.

Boomer Bond project



Also underway in 2012 was the region's Boomer Bond project. Project teams consisting of more than 60 professionals and citizens donated their time to help DRCOG develop a Community Assessment Tool that member governments can use to identify local successes and challenges in supporting healthy and successful aging. Local planners, urban designers, housing advocates, transportation planners and engineers, public health and human service officials were involved in the project in 2012. Lakewood, Lyons and Wheat Ridge each recently completed comprehensive assessments of their community's readiness for a growing older adult population and provided feedback on the assessment tool.



The Boomer Bond has garnered national attention as an innovative program with significant promise. In addition to numerous local speaking engagements, DRCOG was invited to speak on the Boomer Bond at several events that cater to national audiences, including the 2012 American Planning Association National Conference, the 2012 National Association of Area Agencies on Aging Conference and Tradeshow, MetLife Livable Communities Summit, and the Promoting Healthy Lifestyles Symposium sponsored by the National Black Caucus of Black State Legislators.

DRCOG is emerging as a national leader in developing collaborative solutions to the "age wave" that will transform the nation in every aspect of community life: transportation, housing, economic development, land use, health care and aging services.

DRCOG begins working on faith-based initiatives

Faced with the fact resources are not keeping up with a growing older adult population, the DRCOG AAA is reaching out to the community to explore faith-based initiatives. DRCOG's 2011-15 Area Plan on Aging identifies this as an avenue to find more efficient ways to use resources. The initiative is an effort to understand and expand the services being provided by the region's faith community and to provide information, training and support for their efforts. The goal is to help churches support their congregations and the community more effectively.

The AAA has begun collaborating with local faith organizations to better meet the growing needs in their own congregations and neighborhoods, starting with the Lakewood Church of Christ. AAA staff met with Pastor Reg Cox and key leadership to form a partnership and shape the new program. AAA staff trained church staff on available community resources for seniors, including how to use Network of Care to become local experts on aging issues, and the church announced the new partnership to its members. In addition, we debuted an Aging Joyfully presentation that includes the top 10



things you need to know to age well at a community meeting of church members. We are working to help churches identify program champions internally and train them in areas such as: volunteer management, resiliency, efficient use of resources, and Network of Care. Our ultimate goal is to create a program other faith communities across the region can easily replicate.

Emergency Preparedness Plan in place

The State Unit on Aging has approved the DRCOG AAA's Emergency Preparedness Plan, which details how we will work with providers in the event of an emergency. The intent of the plan is to ensure limited disruption in service to the region's older adults and to make certain each county Office of Emergency Management is mindful of the special needs that may exist for the vulnerable older adults in their communities. As State Unit on Aging Program Specialist Todd Swanson said in his email to AAAs requesting the plans, "Already this summer, over half of the AAAs have had wildfires in their areas and over two-thirds have had an emergency in their regions over the last twelve months." The DRCOG AAA has always been required to have an Emergency Preparedness Plan in place, but last summer's wildfires and other emergencies in the state certainly brought home the need to be ready for virtually anything.

DRCOG AAA lends assistance to national aging event

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) held its 2012 Conference in Denver during the summer, and the DRCOG AAA provided support to the successful conference. AAA Director Jayla Sanchez-Warren provided the association with a great deal of assistance on the location, logistics and planning for the event. In addition, several DRCOG staff members made presentations. Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele presented on Creating Communities for Lifelong Living, while Sanchez-Warren addressed The Biggest "Party" of the 21st Century: Planning for an Aging Population. AAA Compliance Program Manager Chandra Matthews spoke about Creating a Best-in-Class Transportation System, and Ombudsman Jennifer Solms talked about Aging in Isolation: Strategies for Making AAAs Inclusive of Transgender Elders.

Senior service funding

In May, the DRCOG AAA awarded \$8.5 million in federal and state funds to 22 older adult service providers in the region. The funds will provide assistance to older adults in the areas of transportation, caregiver support, respite care, chore services, health promotion and education, legal aid, material aid, homemaker assistance, and home-delivered and congregate meals from July 2012-June 2013.

Raising awareness of AAA services

The DRCOG AAA brand was very visible this year, thanks to a number of activities, including presentations, resource fairs, press opportunities and media appearances.

Highlights included taping several shows on older adult topics for airing on News4, focused on empowering seniors to age independently with quality and purpose, helping caregivers discover the resources available to help them care for their loved ones, providing information about the ombudsman program and discussing the vital and valuable work DRCOG does as the local AAA on behalf of the region's elders. In addition, staff appeared on





KEZW radio, with popular morning show host Rick Crandall, to tell listeners about how the DRCOG AAA offers programs to help older adults and people with disabilities live independently in the community and how the information and assistance program connects children of aging parents and other caregivers to local resources.

In addition, AAA staff distributed new handouts encouraging older adults to stay informed about legislation affecting them and to make their voices heard. The goal is to encourage seniors to keep focused on federal and state bills of interest, the legislative process and its terminology, and keeping in touch with their legislators.

Ombudsman Program protects the vulnerable

DRCOG's Ombudsman Program investigated more than 2,000 complaints on behalf of long-term care residents and their family members in 2012. The Ombudsman Program is a free advocacy program for residents of nursing homes and assisted living residences that, through regular visitation, helps resolve complaints on behalf of residents and their families. In addition, program staff provided more than 3,000 consultations to long-term care communities, residents and family members. Nearly 3,000 visits to long-term care communities were made by program staff.

DRCOG ombudsmen also frequently provide trainings for ombudsmen across the state and even the nation. In addition to the work DRCOG ombudsmen do in facilities, they are involved in a variety of advocacy efforts on long-term care through their participation on various work groups and subcommittees, including the Colorado Culture Change Coalition, Colorado Coalition to Improve Dementia Care, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Assisted Living Informal Dispute Resolution Committee, and county Adult Protection Services Review

Committees, among a host of other groups and committees. Notably, Ombudsman Program Manager Shannon Gimbel serves on the Colorado Culture Change Coalition board and Ombudsman Heather Porreca is on the Leadership Council of the National Ombudsman Office. DRCOG ombudsmen are also involved in working with the health department as well as the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Finance to bring about higher standards for assisted living residences.

Jayla Sanchez-Warren honored

DRCOG AAA Director Jayla Sanchez-Warren was invited to the 2012 White House Holiday Open House for her efforts on behalf of the metro area community.

DRCOG represented on new aging advisory group

In 2012, Gov. John Hickenlooper signed an Executive Order establishing the Office of Community Living and the Community Living Advisory Group in the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. The goal is to help meet the growing need for long-term services by people with disabilities and aging adults. Consumers, family advocates, providers, communities, legislators and agencies will work with the office through the Community Living Advisory Group to make sure necessary coordination and integration of services and supports is achieved. Jayla Sanchez-Warren is a member of the Community Living Advisory Group, representing the AAA.





Advocacy

MPO network mobilized for surface transportation reauthorization



Congressional reauthorization of federal transportation legislation was DRCOG's focus for the first half of 2012, as the legislation first faced a March expiration deadline and then a June deadline. Throughout March, reauthorization legislation moved through Congress, and then again in June,

Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele and DRCOG played a vital leadership role with 375 other MPOs around the nation. DRCOG provided real-time updates and materials each MPO could customize with its specific information and concerns about the legislation and amendments. A LinkedIn group, MPOs & Transportation Authorization, was also created to provide current information. The MPOs mobilized to carry their

message to Congress about

the importance of transportation funding and how regional planning is a successful way to address transportation. After extending the legislation for the ninth time in March, Congress passed new federal transportation legislation at the end of June. The new legislation is known as MAP-21 or Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century. Total funding is \$118 billion over 27 months, with this legislation set to expire Oct. 1, 2014. Many MPOs expressed their appreciation for DRCOG's leadership in providing materials and information.

In addition, Schaufele and Board members made trips to Washington, D.C., and to local congressional offices to express the importance of the legislation.

Working with AAAs to point out sequestration's dire consequences



Advocacy efforts in the latter half of 2012 were directed at working with Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) across the nation to call attention to the dire consequences sequestration could have on vulnerable older adults. In addition to holding congressional meetings on the issue, DRCOG developed materials showing sequestration will actually cost the federal government more money and shared that with congressional representatives. Similar to the effort with the MPOs, DRCOG developed customizable materials AAAs around the country could use to show the impacts on older adults in their areas if AAA services are cut. The services provided by AAAs to help older adults remain in their own homes are far less expensive than care received in assisted living facilities or nursing homes, which is where many older adults would need to go if AAA services are cut.

Even as the fiscal cliff was averted at the end of 2012, the March 1, 2013, sequester deadline still loomed and DRCOG kept up its efforts to carry the message that cuts to Older Americans Act funds will force more older adults to go on Medicaid because they can't get the services they need, ultimately costing more and providing services to fewer people. At a time when people are living longer and the nation faces a huge influx of baby boomers who will soon need services and cause waiting lists to swell, cutting Older Americans Act dollars is not the answer – it will cost more. Through the Act, AAAs, like DRCOG, coordinate existing services to help older adults remain in their own homes. That's far more cost-efficient than Medicaid and remaining in their own homes is the number one goal of the majority of seniors.



DON'T PUT Colorado's Transportation Future at Risk!

The backbone of Colorado's economy is its transportation infrastructure, supporting efficient movement of people, goods and services, ensuring our quality of life, in both our region and state each survive with a second-rate transportation system.

History / Background

- Historically federal and state-level Metropolitan Planning Organizations were formed in the '60s and '70s to empower local elected officials with transportation decision-making
- Colorado's total transportation infrastructure is funded by state and federal gas taxes, flat per gallon taxes that don't rise with inflation or fuel costs
- Overall funding for transportation has decreased in real dollars. The federal gas tax, the Highway Users Tax (HUT), hasn't increased since 1993, reducing effective purchasing power by two-thirds. Would a dairy be in business today if it still charged 1993 prices for a gallon of milk?
- The number of cars on the road is increasing, but better fuel efficiency keeps gas tax revenues flat
- Congestion and time cost money; on average, \$1,500 per household annually

OVERVIEW
As the MPO for the area, DRCOG has strong concerns about the following provisions of the House bill:

- Removes all transit programs and some highway and Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality programs from the state's Highway Trust Fund, giving them to the Alternative Transportation Program to be funded 100 percent from the General Fund. This proposal runs counter to 30 years of transportation funding history giving transit programs 20 percent of highway trust fund revenues. This agreement was created in 1982 under President Reagan.
- Relieves the Highway Trust Fund on programs/projects with regional and national impacts
- Creates new reporting requirements through performance measures such as Asset Management Plans and Performance Measure Reports
- Includes a Governor's Review, which would allow a state's governor to force a Metropolitan Planning Organization to include a project on an Interstate, meaning a new project might not have funding and it might not have been considered for air quality impacts

Current Amendments

- A number of bill amendments also are cause for concern.
- Would be up to each MPO to add amendments of concern/support

DRCOG's Viewpoint

- DRCOG, the MPO for the greater Denver region, believes the issue needs to go back to the drawing board. In its current form, we simply cannot support legislation with such significant potential negative effects on our region.

For more information, please contact the Denver Regional Council of Governments
Jennifer Schaufele
Executive Director
303.733.8888

DRCOG Vice Chair Sue Horn, Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele and AAA Director Jayla Sanchez-Warren met with U.S. Sen. Mark Udall in October at the Volunteers of America in Denver to give Sen. Udall a first-hand glimpse of the vital services provided by VOA for older adults and how these services would be affected by sequestration. DRCOG Chair Dennis McCloskey, Board Member Jackie Millet and Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele traveled to Washington, D.C., in the fall to talk about this message with each of Colorado's representatives at the Capitol.



Spreading the word about AAAs

AAA Director Jayla Sanchez-Warren and her counterpart at the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Guy Dutra-Silveira, gave a presentation in December to the Joint Budget Committee. The presentation showed the valuable services AAAs coordinate in Colorado on behalf of older adults, giving the JBC an up-close look at the huge need we have in Colorado for funding for services that help elders live independently.

2012 federal and state legislative policy statements

Early in 2012, the Board approved both federal and state legislative policy statements. The federal and state legislative policy statements, updated and adopted by DRCOG annually, outline key policy issues and provide policy direction for the organization.

Regular reports on 2012 General Assembly

As part of its long-running advocacy program, the DRCOG Board received and discussed monthly reports on issues to come before the Colorado General Assembly during the 2012 session. By keeping up with legislation affecting the region and local governments, the Board took positions on bills and conveyed those positions to legislators. In 2012, the Board took positions on 14 bills or proposed bills. DRCOG's legislative activity is focused on proposals of special significance to the Denver region, which have a unique effect on local governments in the region; proposals affecting DRCOG as an organization or one of more of its programs; and legislation to implement DRCOG special task force recommendations.

Represented on Accelerate Colorado

DRCOG Board and Legislative Liaison Pat Cronenberger represented DRCOG at the Accelerate Colorado 2012 business mission to Washington, D.C. She was one of 100

statewide business executives, civic leaders and elected officials participating on the mid-May trip. The goal of the trip was to advocate for federal support to benefit Colorado's economy, especially in the areas of transportation, small business, water, aerospace and defense, bioscience/health care and energy

Gov. Hickenlooper supports older adult services

Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper showed his support for older adult services by including in his 2013-14 budget a one-time appropriation of \$2 million to AAAs across the state. The appropriation is much needed, as AAAs work to cost-effectively serve a growing older adult population. The governor's action was in response to a request submitted to him by DRCOG and the American Association of Retired Persons to include an increase in his budget request.

Keeping an eye on possible restructuring

Throughout 2012, DRCOG monitored the possible restructuring of the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) and the Department of Human Services (DHS). The restructuring is proposed to include the relocation of, among other units, the State Unit on Aging (SUA) from the DHS to the HCPF. The SUA is the state oversight agency for DRCOG's AAA. The move is being considered now with the intent to leverage federal health care reform dollars, to streamline the long-term care system and to improve services to clients. DRCOG agrees efficiencies can be achieved through better collaboration and coordination between the two agencies, but worries about administrative impacts on providers, disruptions in services to clients, and the potential impact this move would have on State Funding for Senior Services, which makes up 40 percent of the DRCOG AAA's overall funding and is vital to supporting a variety of safety net programs for the region's older adults. DRCOG staff participated in numerous meetings with executive and legislative policymakers to convey these concerns and work on possible solutions.

Helping the Region Get Around

For almost 40 years, DRCOG has helped commuters find carpool partners and other ways to get to work. DRCOG began promoting commute alternatives in response to the 1970s gas crisis and has broadened its commute alternatives ever since.



DRCOG tells the region Way to Go

In December, DRCOG unveiled Way to Go as its new brand name to help with regionwide efforts to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and save people money. Way to Go also describes a better means of commuting: for some people carpooling or taking transit is the way to go; for others, biking to work is the way to go. The new name officially retired the familiar RideArrangers brand, which served the region well since 1997.

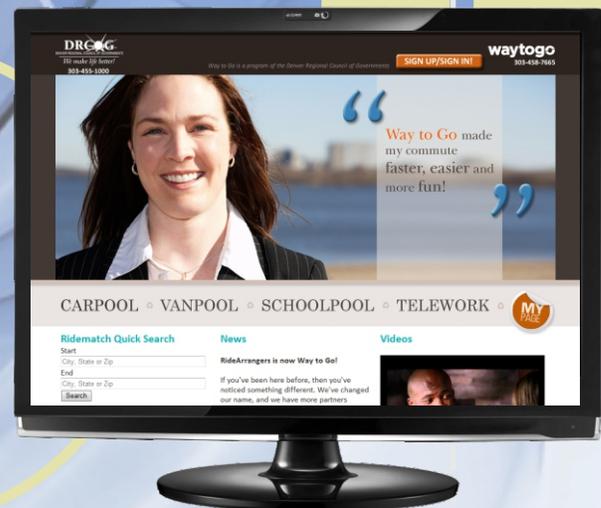
The new brand comes about from efforts in 2011 by DRCOG Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele to create an alliance between DRCOG and six Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) to cooperatively promote responsible commute options throughout the region. The six partner organizations working along with DRCOG under the umbrella brand are 36 Commuting Solutions, Boulder Transportation Connections, Denver South TMA, Downtown Denver Partnership, Stapleton TMA and Transportation Solutions.

The creation of the partnership presented the perfect opportunity to find a new brand name better representing the breadth of services provided and talking about those services in a fun and engaging way that spurs people to try them. Amélie Company worked with the partnership on the brand, through research and fact gathering, target audience analysis, interviews with key partners, focus groups with commuters, and ride-alongs with vanpoolers and carpoolers. Way to Go emerged as the perfect fit.



Stop Being an SOV

Hand in hand with the new brand announcement, DRCOG and its TMA partners launched a public awareness campaign to reduce Single-Occupant Vehicle (SOV) travel with a clever campaign titled "Stop Being an SOV." Good ad campaigns grab your attention, are memorable and spur action or raise awareness; the Stop Being an SOV print and broadcast advertising campaign succeeded in all three areas with huge increases in web traffic, particularly from new visitors, and many new registrants in DRCOG's ride-matching system. Planning is underway for a spring 2013 campaign that will build on the success of the brand launch and awareness campaign.





It's another off-the-charts Bike to Work Day

Despite record heat, wildfire smoke and air quality concerns, the region showed how much it loves Bike to Work Day. More than 27,000 cyclists used pedal power to get to and from work June 27, availing themselves of more than 160 breakfast and bike home stations throughout the metro area. About 31 percent of riders were first-time Bike to Work Day participants. The 26-59 age group made up the vast majority of participants (86 percent), with most participants falling in the 30-49 age group. Interestingly, participants were also more likely to be male (59 percent). On average, participants rode 8.6 miles, one way, from home to work, on Bike to Work Day. DRCOG also tracked vehicle miles of travel reduced (312,330) and carbon dioxide emissions reduced (more than a quarter of a million pounds).

And as further evidence of the power of Bike to Work Day, a follow up survey in October revealed 34 percent reported participating in the event motivated them to travel more often by bicycle for all trips, with 19 percent saying they were commuting more often by bicycle. That's more than 10,000 people who ended up cycling more frequently for trips. Among all event participants, the average number of bicycle commute to work days increased from 8.5 per month to 9.2.

Schoolpool goes back to school

Schoolpool was originally created to help families connect easily to share rides, and it's a part of DRCOG's regionwide effort to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution. Our program is one of the country's most successful, serving as a model for others nationwide. More than 11,000 elementary



and secondary school families in the region are already enrolled in the program.

Schoolpool's busiest time of the year is gearing up for the school year. In summer/fall 2012, DRCOG provided nearly 10,000 free matches to parents of elementary and secondary school-age children at about 52 schools throughout the metro area. Research shows nearly 30 percent of the families receiving Schoolpool information formed a carpool because of information they received from DRCOG.

DRCOG, Jeffco Public Schools team up through Schoolpool

In the fall, Jeffco Public Schools and DRCOG teamed up to give parents options for getting their students to and from school safely and conveniently through Schoolpool. Jeffco, the state's largest school district, sent information to district parents about the matching services available to help them set up carpools, and walking and biking groups to get their students to school. Parents indicate their interest in sharing student transportation with other families by providing basic contact information using a secure online form.

Regional Transportation Demand Management Short-Range Plan 2012-2016

The Board adopted the *Regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Short-Range Plan 2012-2016*. The plan identifies the structure of the DRCOG TDM program, methods to reduce demand for single-occupant vehicle travel, agency roles, TDM participants and key categories of activities to be conducted over the next five years.



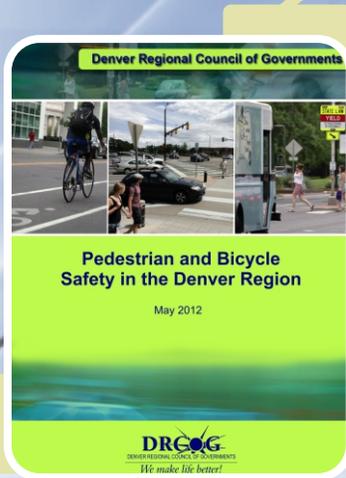
Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region

Board members received the *2011 Annual Report on Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region* in July. It is a follow-up to annual reports prepared the past five years through the DRCOG Congestion Management Program. Report key findings include:

- Average weekday Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) increased substantially between 2001 and 2006, but has leveled off due to both a change in driving habits and the recent economic recession.
- Weekday VMT is expected to increase by more than 60 percent by 2035, while vehicle hours of delay is expected to triple.
- The average driver experienced 38 hours of extra travel time in 2010 due to congestion-related delay. By 2035, this will increase to 90 extra hours of travel time per year.
- In 2035, half of all lane miles of freeways and major roads will be congested for more than three hours per day.
- A 70 percent increase in bicycling and walking trips is expected between 2010 and 2035. Transit ridership is predicted to more than double.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety in the Denver Region

DRCOG also produced the report, *Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety in the Denver Region*, which examines motor vehicle crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists. The report describes traffic safety



issues, high-frequency crash locations and crash mitigation strategies to be considered by engineers, planners and other decision makers for their communities.

Regional Concept of Transportation Operations

The Board adopted the **Regional Concept of Transportation Operations**, a management tool to define and develop collaborative transportation systems management and operations. The tool presents a unified direction for regional transportation managers through shared objectives and performance measures. In addition, it clarifies the roles and responsibilities of regional stakeholders to achieve the shared objectives.

Steve Erickson joins DRCOG

DRCOG brought Steve Erickson on as communications and marketing director in January. His primary responsibilities include oversight of communications and marketing across the organization. First-year highlights include launching the regional transportation demand management Way to Go partnership, initiation of a website redesign effort to promote options to driving alone to improve traffic congestion and air quality, and focusing on outreach on Metro Vision, the Boomer Bond project and the sustainable communities federal grant. Steve has more than 15 years of diverse experience in marketing, advertising and public relations, with a strong emphasis on new media and web marketing, direct marketing, marketing communications, promotions and sponsorship development. Most recently, he served as vice president of sales and marketing for Viaero Wireless.

National award recognizes Front Range Travel Counts project

The Transportation Research Board Executive Committee selected the paper, "An Evaluation of Key Design Elements of the Front Range Travel Counts Long Distance Survey," as the winner of the Charley V. Wootan Award. The award is given each year for the best paper in the area of transportation policy and organization. The Front Range Travel Counts project studied in-depth urban household travel behavior along Colorado's Front Range, from Fort Collins to Pueblo. It involved DRCOG, the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, the Pueblo Area Council of Governments, CDOT, RTD and the FWHA.

Assisting Local Governments

As an association of local governments in the Denver region, one of DRCOG's most important jobs is helping local governments do their jobs. DRCOG had many activities in 2012 that did just that.

Denver Regional Aerial Photography Project

The 2012 Denver Regional Aerial Photography Project (DRAPP) is wrapping up. High-resolution photography was captured for roughly 7,000 square miles of the greater Denver metropolitan region in March and June of 2012. Kucera International (Willoughby, OH) acquired and processed the data according to participants' specifications. Quality assurance vendor, MapMart, Inc. (Lone Tree, CO) reviewed every tile of the imagery and made it available online for project participants to use. DRCOG is pleased to report the project had 50 partners this year and due to this level of participation, the project cost less per participant than any DRAPP to date. A customer satisfaction survey is still out, but overall comments regarding imagery quality and project management are positive.



FIRE program efficiency

Another of DRCOG's shared services is the FIRE (Firefighter Intraregional Recruitment and Employment) program. FIRE provided shared testing of new firefighter personnel for 15 area jurisdictions and fire departments. The popular service adds efficiency to an administrative function, saves costs, and periodically validates a leading-edge test. Some added-value programs in development include: hiring tips and tools for members, investigation of applicable behavioral test availability, affirmative action planning, and job interviewing skills for candidates. In 2012, more than 800 candidates took the DRCOG firefighter test.



Training provided for Planning Commissioners

In September, DRCOG once again joined with the Colorado Division of Local Affairs in co-hosting the *Planning Commissioners Workshop: Back to School*. Other co-hosts included the Colorado Chapter of the American Planning Association, Colorado Counties Inc., and the Colorado Municipal League. Representatives of about 20 member governments attended. The training was geared to planning commissioners, but of interest to local elected officials and planners too. Topics discussed included: running effective meetings; roles and responsibilities; decision-making; how to stay out of trouble; ride codes, right place; and planning for changing demographics. DRCOG Planner Brad Calvert also made a presentation. As a service to its members, DRCOG has been involved in regular trainings for planning commissioners since 1983.



We make life better!

Planning director quarterly lunch sessions popular

DRCOG continued efforts to bring planning directors together on a regular basis to meet and talk about regional issues, while sharing community success stories. The meetings are especially prized as opportunities for planning officials to get together and hear about each other's efforts to support Metro Vision.

Sessions held in 2012 included the following:

- The City of Centennial Planning Department hosted a session on The Streets of Southglenn
- The City of Lakewood hosted a session on West Line initiatives and the Federal Center project
- The City of Aurora hosted a session and talked about its I-225 project.



2012 Membership Directory

Performing another of its annual tasks, DRCOG produced its 2012 Membership Directory. The directory provides listings and contact information for the Board of Directors, elected officials, and other key officials and staff for each DRCOG member jurisdiction, and contact information for the Colorado Congressional delegation, and Colorado House and Senate members. Information is also provided for DRCOG sister organizations throughout Colorado.

Workshops provide energy efficiency ideas for local governments

In 2012, DRCOG continued its partnership with the Metro Mayors Caucus to co-host four workshops designed to help local governments promote energy efficiency in their communities. The workshops are funded by the Better Buildings grant the City and County of Denver, Boulder County and Garfield County received from the U.S. Department of Energy to support their energy efficiency programs. Topics in 2012 included:

- Solar-friendly communities,

- Building codes,
- Solar gardens: Your offsite community solar solutions, and
- The commercial sector: small businesses, big impact.

Workshops began in 2010, and will conclude in 2013.

Many graduates of DRCOG 101 sessions

DRCOG held orientation sessions in January and August to share information about DRCOG's responsibilities, activities and programs. It seems there is always something to learn about DRCOG as attendance at the sessions was record-setting. All Board members and alternates, local elected officials, local government staff members and others are welcome to attend orientation sessions, held twice a year.





Short courses help leaders know and understand DRCOG

DRCOG continued its popular Short Course Series in 2012 to host in-depth workshops on key program areas: transportation, Metro Vision and Aging. The courses are held annually to help newcomers and veterans learn all they need to know about DRCOG.

TRIPS database provides detail

At the start of 2012, DRCOG unveiled its new Transportation Regional Improvement Projects and Survey database, known as TRIPS. TRIPS allows the user to search current and past Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) and the Transportation Improvement Survey in greater detail than the .pdf copies of the projects currently posted on our website.

Web refresh underway

2012 saw DRCOG complete the first phase of its Web Refresh project, moving toward delivering a new, more user-friendly website to DRCOG site users in 2013. The next phase starts early in 2013, focusing first on delivering a revamped version of the always popular Bike to Work Day website and a new Way to Go website, with remaining sites to follow.



Traffic Operations Program saves

DRCOG's Traffic Operations Program continues its important work to save the region's motorists time and fuel, while reducing pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions. The program worked with local governments throughout the region and the Colorado Department of Transportation to retime traffic signals along major travel corridors. The program allocated about \$2.9 million for traffic signal system capital improvements across the region and retimed 15 travel corridors, which involved traffic count assessments and analyses to retime 220 signals to allow smoother traffic movements at morning and evening peak periods, and during off-peak hours. On a typical day, these signal timing projects result in regionwide reductions of nearly 7,225 hours of travel, saving an estimated 3,700 gallons of fuel. On the environmental side, the region reduces pollutant emissions by 892 pounds and greenhouse gas emissions by 77,340 pounds on a typical day. Daily savings to users are estimated at \$164,500.



Transportation

Additional fiscal year 2011 transportation funds programmed

In January, the Board selected projects to be programmed with additional fiscal year 2011 federal formula (TIP) funds of \$7.3 million. Final 2011 transportation appropriations provided more federal funds to Colorado than the resource allocation process estimated. The Board allocated the funds as follows:

- City of Aurora: \$476,000 for bicycle/pedestrian access improvements at the Nine Mile Transit Station;
- Regional Air Quality Council: \$2,121,000 for its Advanced Fleet Technology Project and \$263,000 for its Ozone Aware outreach and education campaign to emphasize the connection between air quality and transportation choices.
- City of Federal Heights: \$4,037,000 for intersection operational improvements at US 287 and 92nd Avenue.
- CDOT Region 4: \$400,000 for two semi-tractor trucks and two anti-ice tanker trailers' replacements devoted to the US-36 and I-25/SH-119 corridors.

DRCOG programs additional federal formula funds

In August, the DRCOG Board selected 11 projects to receive about \$36.7 million in federal funds due to additional appropriations above the original resource allocation estimates. The federal funds were made available for the 2013-2015 time period, and the Board established policies for programming the funds, initiated a new call for projects and held a public hearing. The projects selected by the Board and federal funding levels were:

Roadway Capacity

- The Wadsworth Roadway Capacity Project: Highland Drive to 10th Avenue, City of Lakewood, \$5,400,000
- US 36 Managed Lanes/BRT – 88th Street to Table Mesa (second phase), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Region 4, \$15,000,000
- I-25: Ridgeway to County Line Road Lane

Balancing and Widening, Douglas County,
\$10,400,000

Roadway Operations

- Arapahoe Road and Yosemite Street Intersection, Arapahoe County, \$3,000,000
- Smoky Hill Road and Himalaya Street Intersection, City of Centennial, \$475,000

New Bus Service

- Commerce City's Northern Range to Denver Central Business District-Regional Service, Commerce City, \$444,000

Upgrade/Reconstruct Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

- Colfax Avenue Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements: Fitzsimons Parkway to Peoria Street, City of Aurora, \$485,000
- West 57th Avenue Bicycle/Pedestrian Project, City of Arvada, \$546,000

Studies

- Parker Road/Quincy Avenue Intersection Roadway Operational Study, City of Aurora, \$239,000
- Wadsworth Boulevard Widening: West 35th Avenue to West 46th Avenue Planning Environmental Linkage Study, City of Wheat Ridge, \$636,000

Connecting the West symposium

The Western High Speed Rail Alliance sponsored its third annual meeting in October. DRCOG is a founding member of the alliance, and Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele is the current president. The meeting focused on the topic of Connecting the West, looking at high-speed rail as an avenue to consider in the future for a robust multimodal transportation system in the Western states. Several DRCOG Board members and alternates, and local elected officials attended the symposium, including DRCOG Chair Dennis McCloskey who spoke at the opening session. Former DRCOG Chair and now Colorado Transportation





Commissioner Ed Peterson delivered remarks at the opening reception.

DRCOG pledges funds to assist TIGER 2012 grant application

In February, at the request of the North Area Transportation Alliance and in connection with a TIGER 2012 grant application, the Board of Directors committed future funding to the North I-25 Interim Managed Lanes Project. The action committed \$5 million for the project. CDOT submitted the project for a 2012 TIGER discretionary grant from USDOT and it was approved.

Federal certification review

FHWA and the FTA conducted their quadriennial federal certification review of the transportation planning process in the Denver – Aurora area, holding a public hearing in April. The hearing was designed to take comments on the region's process and how it is meeting the needs of the Denver – Aurora area. Current federal legislation, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), requires a planning certification review be performed for all metropolitan areas with populations of 200,000 or more once every four years. In October, the final review document was issued in which DRCOG's federal partners certified the transportation planning process.

Complete Networks: Phase I Project

DRCOG was awarded TIP funds to conduct the Complete Networks: Phase I Project. This cooperative project will evaluate the feasibility of enhancing the detail of transportation network maps. Enhancements would include adding more local streets, bicycle facilities, and selected pedestrian infrastructure to improve transportation modeling capabilities.

DRCOG staff member honored by ITE

DRCOG staff member Greg MacKinnon was selected as the 2011 Transportation Professional of the Year by the Colorado/Wyoming Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers or ITE. He manages the DRCOG Transportation Operations Program.

Weld County receives funding for CNG

Weld County opened several public Compressed Natural Gas fueling stations in the county. The project received Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality funding from DRCOG in 2010.

Peña Boulevard Task Force

Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele participated on the Peña Boulevard Task Force, which looked at the history of Peña Boulevard, how it was built, the Federal Aviation Administration requirements for using airport funds to maintain the roadway and the possibility for expansion. The task force delivered recommendations to Mayor Hancock in early summer.

Webinar presence

DRCOG Director of Transportation Planning and Operations Steve Rudy participated in a NARC webinar in May. He participated and gave a presentation as part of "Forecasting Federal Funding: Implications for Regional Transportation Planning."

Major projects completed or underway

In 2012, several DRCOG-funded projects were completed (e.g., C-470 at Santa Fe Drive interchange), well underway (e.g., Colfax at I-225) or starting construction (e.g., US 36 managed lanes).





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