

May 5, 2022

**Denver Regional Council of Governments welcomes
500-plus attendees to annual awards celebration April 27**
Event celebrating regional success held at Empower Field at Mile High

Denver, CO – With a crowd of more than 500 attendees, the Denver Regional Council of Governments held its largest [annual awards celebration](#) in nearly a decade at Empower Field at Mile High on Wednesday, April 27. This year marked the return of an in-person gathering for DRCOG after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Community leaders, government representatives and nonprofit organizations were among the honorees at the 2022 ceremony, which was emceed by CBS4 anchor, Makenzie O’Keefe. The innovative people and projects recognized at the awards event underscored the theme of “Envision. Engage. Empower.”

- **The Metro Vision Awards** recognize community projects and plans for excellence, innovation, collaboration and leadership in problem-solving among communities and their partners. The 2022 winners are:
 - City of Golden and Colorado School of Mines – “[Autonomous Electric Vehicle Pilot](#)” (Mines Rover project)
 - Changing the Narrative – “[Age-Friendly Workforce Initiative](#)”
 - City and County of Denver – “[Energize Denver](#)”
 - Regional Transportation District (RTD) – “[Equitable Transit-Oriented Development Policy](#)”
 - Smart Commute Metro North and Adams County – “[North I-25 Microtransit Service](#)”
 - High Line Canal Conservancy – “[High Line Canal Partnership](#)”
 - Cities of Englewood, Littleton and Sheridan – “[Tri-Cities Homelessness Plan](#)”
- **The Way to Go Commuter Awards** celebrate commuters and organizations in the region that choose commute options that reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. The 2022 winners are:
 - [Rising Star](#) – Kelly Tomajko
 - [Employer Champion](#) – City of Longmont
 - [Commuter of the Year](#) – Avi Stopper
- **The Distinguished Service Awards** honor individuals who have contributed to the success of DRCOG programs and initiatives to enhance and protect our quality of life. The 2022 winners are:
 - [Frank W. Bruno](#) – Chief Executive Officer, Via Mobility Services
 - [Therese Ellery](#) – Chair, Changing the Narrative Advisory Council
 - [Michael Finochio, PE](#) – Retired Engineer Manager, Transportation Operations | System Operations, City and County of Denver
 - [Jarett Hughes](#) – Senior Policy Advisor on Aging, Office of Governor Jared Polis
 - [Paul Jesaitis](#) – Colorado Regional Director, EST, Inc.
 - [John Mackey](#) – Retired Chief of Police, City of Edgewater
 - [Dr. Paul Teske](#) – Dean, School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado Denver
 - [Jonathan Wachtel](#) – Sustainability Manager, City of Lakewood

[Champions of Older Adults](#) is a special tribute for people in our region who responded to the pandemic challenges of some of our region’s most vulnerable populations. In lieu of the John V. Christensen Memorial Award, the DRCOG Board of Directors chose to honor the staff of the Area Agency on Aging, along with

community partners and county councils on aging, for their tireless efforts to support the region's older adult population during the pandemic.

In addition to honoring the numerous award recipients, current DRCOG Board Chair Kevin Flynn recognized Louisville Mayor Ashley Stolzmann for her service as the outgoing chair of the board. Flynn spoke of Stolzmann's immediate response to the Marshall Fire in late December, reiterating that "the whole region continues to stand with Louisville, Superior and the Boulder County communities affected by the fires."

For more information about the 2022 DRCOG Annual Awards, go to drcog.org/awards.

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The Denver Regional Council of Governments is a planning organization where local governments collaborate to establish guidelines, set policy and allocate funding in the areas of transportation and personal mobility; growth and development; and aging and disability resources.