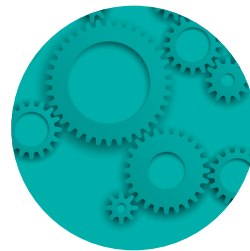




# 2023-2024 Budget and Work Program



# What's inside?

DRCOG's 2023-2024 budget, the fiscal guide for the operation of DRCOG from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. Additionally, the 2023-2024 work program organized within four perspectives highlights key efforts DRCOG plans to pursue as it serves simultaneously as the Denver area's regional planning commission, area agency on agency and metropolitan planning organization roles. The biennial Unified Planning Work Program outlines the full scope of DRCOG's work as the metropolitan planning organization.







## Budget

Budget summaries, comparisons, funding sources and anticipated expenditures.

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## Communities and residents

Objectives that represent continuous improvements needed for the region's communities and their residents.

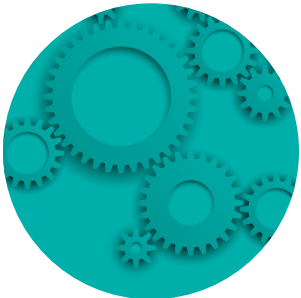
Page 10



## Financial stewardship

Objectives related to cost management, funding and resource investment.

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## Business operations

Objectives related to process improvement, partnering, products and services.

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## Skilled workforce

Objectives related to organizational culture and staff development.

Page 17



# Letter from the executive director

May 17, 2023

To: Finance and Budget Committee and Board of Directors  
Denver Regional Council of Governments

I am pleased to submit the proposed budget of the Denver Regional Council of Governments for fiscal year 2023-2024. The budget is transmitted to the Finance and Budget Committee for review and recommendation for approval by the Board of Directors.

The budget is a fiscal guide for the operation of DRCOG from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. It supports work activities in the DRCOG metropolitan planning organization's Unified Planning Work Program, and its Area Agency on Aging, Communications and Marketing, Executive Office, Administration and Finance, and Human Resource divisions.

Variations of note between the 2022-2023 fiscal year budget and the 2023-2024 fiscal year budget include:

## Revenues

- **Federal funding is expected to increase by 8.5% or \$2.2 million** due to the recent approval of Transportation Improvement Plan set-aside projects totaling \$1.5 million. Federal funds are also inclusive of approximately \$400,000 in Older Americans Act administrative carryover as well as almost \$700,000 in American Rescue Plan Act administrative dollars.
- **State funding** will increase by approximately \$1.0 million from the 2022-2023 fiscal year budget. The increase is primarily due to a Human Services Transportation TIP set-aside award in the amount of \$900,000 that will assist in funding DRCOG's internal programs that support transportation efforts for vulnerable populations.
- **Local/other funds** reflect a decrease of approximately \$519,000 which is primarily a result of regional data acquisition projects (which includes the Denver Regional Aerial Photography Project) being in the second year of a two-year programmatic cycle. Historically, a larger amount of participant payments are received in the first year of the cycle as compared with the second year.

Additionally, the decrease can be attributed to a decline in employer enrollment in the Guaranteed Ride Home program and vanpool program participation.

- **In-kind services**, where in-kind contributions from volunteers and partnering organizations are reflected, are expected to remain relatively flat.
- **Member contributions** provide match for federal programs and help fund initiatives such as legislative activities and strategic partnerships which assist in increasing overall funding. Contributions also fund Board-related expenditures associated with monthly Board meetings and other committees of the Board, the annual awards celebration, the Board Retreat, quarterly meetings of the region's city and county managers and hosting the annual Small Communities, Hot Topics Forum.

Contributions are calculated annually using the most recent data from the Department of Local Affairs and are based on each member jurisdiction's population and assessed valuation. Contributions for the 2023-2024 fiscal year will increase slightly overall by 3.19%.

## Expenditures

- **Personnel expenditures** were budgeted with a 4% market adjustment increase and a 3.5% performance-based merit pool. DRCOG health insurance premiums are renewed on Jan. 1 of each year. The 2023-2024 fiscal year budget includes a 12% increase in medical premiums. There is no budgeted increase for dental.

Due to expanded activities across the organization, there are four new positions budgeted in Administration and Finance. Three of these positions will be fully paid with Federal Transit Administration and Human Services Transportation funding. The onboarding of these new positions will be staggered throughout the year. The 2023-2024 budget also includes four new positions in the Area Agency on Aging. Two of these positions will be paid for with American Rescue Plan Act funds to support DRCOG's respite program and two navigators will be hired using Public Health Workforce grant funds.



- **Contractual** obligations increase in fiscal year 2023-2024 by approximately \$2.9 million. The increase is primarily due to new Human Services Transportation and TIP set-aside projects which account for \$2.2 million. Unified Planning Work Program contractual expenses make up most of the remaining increase and include contracts to support mobility hub planning, corridor studies, traffic data collection and efforts to develop the first phase of a housing transportation coordination plan as well as a Transit and Active Transportation Design Standards Manual for local governments.
- **Non-personnel expenditures** include funds for direct business expenses such as equipment, technology updates, license renewals and training. Business insurance premiums are also included, which total approximately \$195,000. Per the terms of DRCOG's lease agreement, the rent obligation for DRCOG's offices at 1001 17th St. increases slightly in June of each year.
- **Capital outlay** includes \$10,000 for the installation of a secure door to the Area Agency on Aging office space and \$5,000 to replace a number of office chairs that are in decline. There is also \$65,000 set aside for office reconfiguration. Due to agency growth, DRCOG explored multiple options over the last year that would accommodate additional staff in its current office space, including desk hoteling and office space reconfiguration. Such items as lockers, cubicle movement and redesign, space reallocation planning, consulting and technology needs are included in the estimated cost.

daily expense outlays while awaiting grantor payments. DRCOG's auditors have consistently recommended maintaining a fund balance equal to three months' expenditures. Based on the audited fiscal year 2021-2022 statement, expenses and contractual rent obligations totaled nearly \$45.6 million suggesting a fund balance of approximately \$11.4 million. Member contributions collected in excess of program obligations and activities will be applied toward the general fund to replenish its balance and further strengthen DRCOG's overall financial position.

Pass-through funds are estimated to total \$22.9 million. This year's pass-through funds will be received through Older Americans Act/State Funds for Senior Services, Federal Transit Administration 5310 awards and state Human Services Transportation funds.

Respectfully submitted,



Douglas W. Rex  
Executive Director

## Fund balance

The fiscal year 2023-2024 ending fund balance for DRCOG is projected to be approximately \$11.8 million. Approximately \$2.9 million of the fund balance reflects prepaid funds set aside for specific programs such as regional data acquisition projects, Guaranteed Ride Home and regional vanpool.

Because most of DRCOG's grants operate on a reimbursement basis, substantial working capital must be available to pay contractual obligations and meet

# Budget

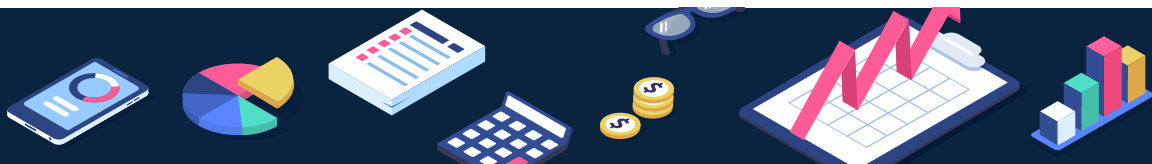


## Fiscal year 2023-2024 budget summary and comparison

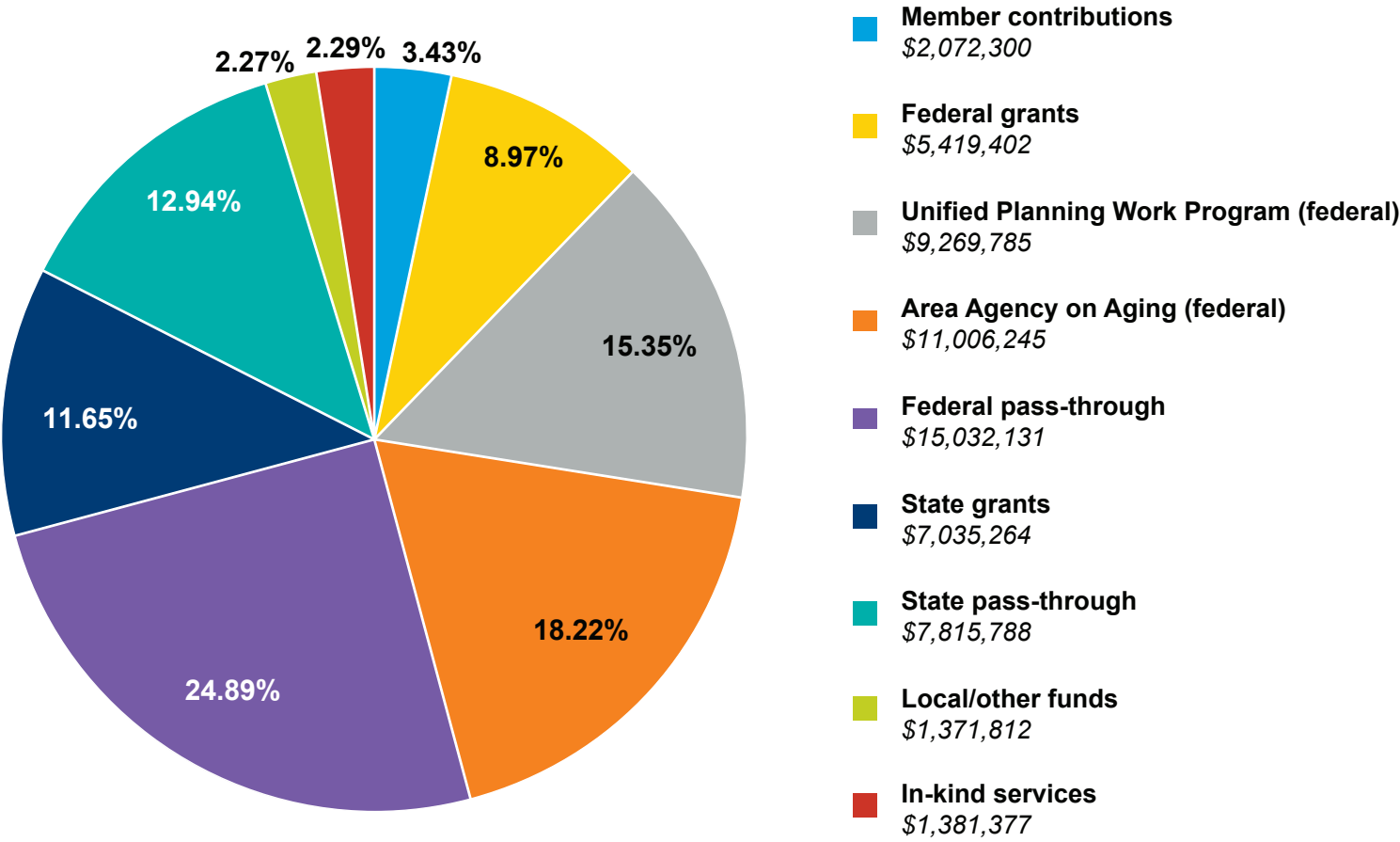
	2021-2022 actuals	2022-2023 budget	2023-2024 budget
Beginning balance <sup>1</sup>	\$12,509,447	\$11,754,369	\$11,754,369
General funds	\$9,436,219	\$8,813,636	\$8,813,636
Program obligations <sup>2</sup>	\$3,073,228	\$2,940,733	\$2,940,733
<b>Revenues</b>			
Member contributions	\$1,740,000	\$2,006,200	\$2,072,300
Federal grants	\$14,853,923	\$23,525,019	\$25,695,432
State grants	\$12,867,479	\$6,018,094	\$7,035,264
Local/other funds	\$1,617,738	\$1,931,805	\$1,371,812
In-kind services	\$503,493	\$1,332,970	\$1,381,377
Interest/investment income	-\$203,279	\$30,000	\$30,000
Pass-through grant funds	\$13,483,097	\$23,697,130	\$22,847,919
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>\$44,862,451</b>	<b>\$58,541,218</b>	<b>\$60,434,104</b>
<b>Total funds available</b>	<b>\$57,371,898</b>	<b>\$70,295,587</b>	<b>\$72,188,473</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Personnel	\$12,691,997	\$16,778,541	\$17,956,470
Contractual services	\$9,134,703	\$12,489,508	\$15,338,800
DRCOG cash	\$503,493	\$1,285,115	\$1,593,386
Non-personnel	\$3,529,080	\$4,220,924	\$2,617,529
Capital outlay	\$0	\$70,000	\$80,000
Pass-through grant funds	\$19,758,256	\$23,697,130	\$22,847,919
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>\$45,617,529</b>	<b>\$58,541,218</b>	<b>\$60,404,104</b>
<b>Ending balance</b>	<b>\$11,754,369</b>	<b>\$11,754,369</b>	<b>\$11,784,369</b>
General funds	\$8,813,636	\$8,813,636	\$8,843,636
Program obligations <sup>2</sup>	\$2,940,733	\$2,940,733	\$2,940,733

<sup>1</sup> The beginning balance for the fiscal year 2022-2023 budget is based on fiscal year 2021-2022 actuals.

<sup>2</sup> Program obligations are pre-paid funds set aside for specific programs: Guaranteed Ride Home, regional data acquisition projects, Regional Vanpool, and Veteran Directed Care.



2023-2024 fiscal year funding



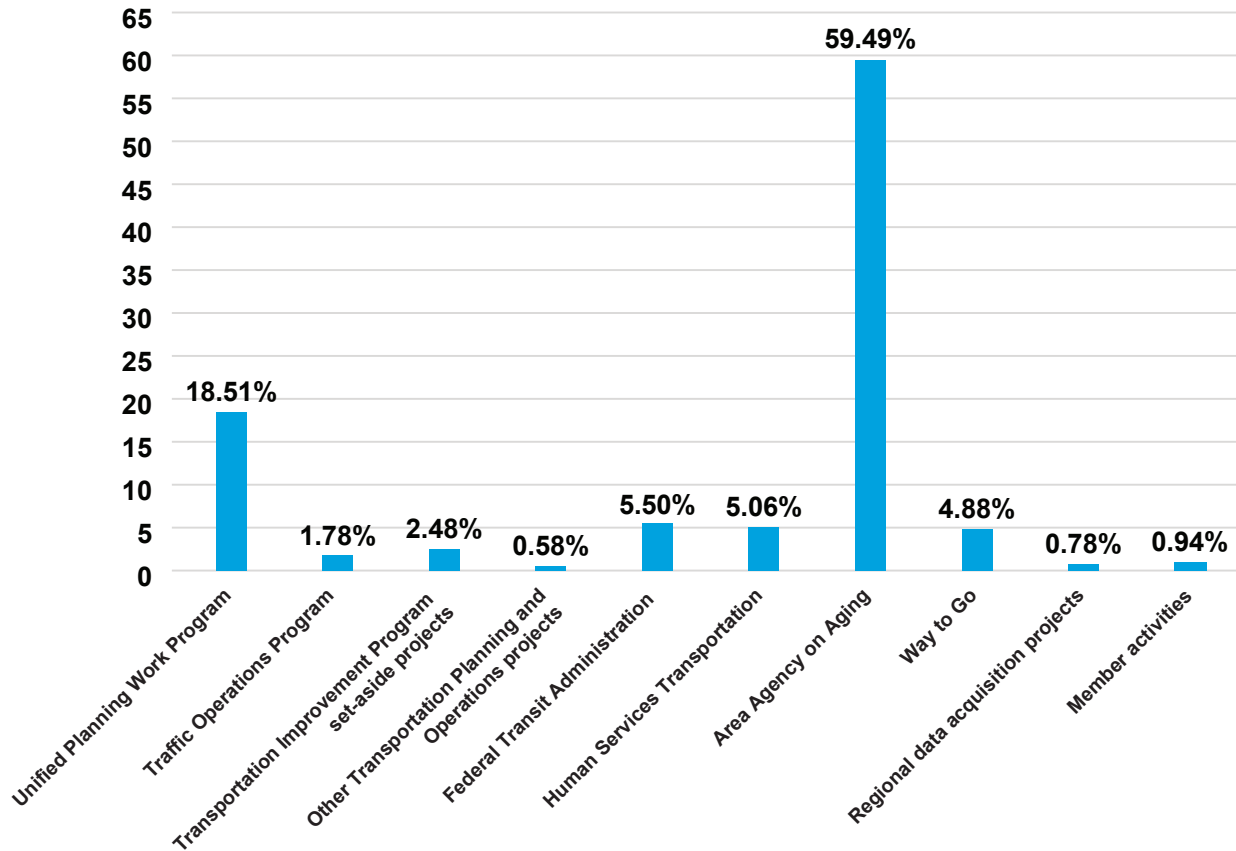
Source	Percent of total	Amount
Member contributions	3.43%	\$2,072,300
Federal grants	8.97%	\$5,419,402
Unified Planning Work Program (federal)	15.35%	\$9,269,785
Area Agency on Aging (federal)	18.22%	\$11,006,245
Federal pass-through	24.89%	\$15,032,131
State grants	11.65%	\$7,035,264
State pass-through	12.94%	\$7,815,788
Local/other funds	2.27%	\$1,371,812
In-kind services	2.29%	\$1,381,377
Projected total funding	100.00%	\$60,404,104



# Budget



## Fiscal year 2023-2024 expenditures by strategic initiative



Strategic initiative	Percent of total	Amount
Unified Planning Work Program	18.51%	\$11,178,574
Traffic Operations Program	1.78%	\$1,077,926
Transportation Improvement Program set-aside projects	2.48%	\$1,500,000
Other Transportation Planning and Operations projects	0.58%	\$350,929
Federal Transit Administration	5.50%	\$3,319,422
Human Services Transportation	5.06%	\$3,055,663
Area Agency on Aging	59.49%	\$35,932,292
Way to Go	4.88%	\$2,949,954
Regional data acquisition projects	0.78%	\$470,000
Member activities	0.94%	\$569,344
Strategic initiatives total	100.00%	\$60,404,104

# Budget



## Fiscal year 2023-2024 strategic initiatives funding summary

Project	Federal	Federal pass-through	State	State pass-through	Local/other funds	In-kind services	Service income	Member contributions: cash match and DRCOG funded	Total
Unified Planning Work Program	\$9,269,785					\$1,281,242		\$627,547	\$11,178,574
Traffic Operations Program	\$1,077,926								\$1,077,926
Federal Transit Administration 5310	\$292,914	\$3,026,508							\$3,319,422
Transportation Improvement Plan set-aside projects	\$1,500,000								\$1,500,000
Other Transportation Planning and Operations projects*	\$196,929				\$154,000				\$350,929
Human Services Transportation			\$1,100,000	\$1,955,663					\$3,055,663
Area Agency on Aging	\$11,006,245	\$12,005,623	\$5,935,264	\$5,860,125	\$109,196	\$50,000		\$965,839	\$35,932,292
Way to Go	\$2,351,633				\$548,186	\$50,135			\$2,949,954
Regional data acquisition projects					\$470,000				\$470,000
Member activities					\$90,430			\$478,914	\$569,344
<b>Total funding summary</b>	<b>\$25,695,432</b>	<b>\$15,032,131</b>	<b>\$7,035,264</b>	<b>\$7,815,788</b>	<b>\$1,371,812</b>	<b>\$1,381,377</b>		<b>\$2,072,300</b>	<b>\$60,404,104</b>

\*Budgeted projects include Regional Transportation District FasTracks annual review, 405(c) federal safety grant, and Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee.

Funding summary does not reflect \$30,000 in projected interest income



# Communities and residents

## Collaboration with peer agencies

Ongoing collaboration with forward-thinking groups on topics of regional growth and development, transportation planning and to promote and support communities that facilitate healthy and successful aging.

## Population and employment forecast coordination

DRCOG staff will collaborate with the Colorado Department of Local Affairs to improve local, regional and state coordination on accurate, timely and transparent forecasts. The Small Area Forecast Work Group will continue to engage local stakeholders to ensure the incorporation of local plans in regional forecasts.

## Metro Vision Idea Exchanges

Metro Vision Idea Exchanges provide a forum where DRCOG's planning partners and other stakeholders share information and ideas, identify local and regional successes worth continuing, as well as emerging and ongoing challenges and actions to address them.

## City and County Managers Forum

DRCOG began hosting quarterly forums for the region's city and county managers in February 2019. The forums provide an opportunity for DRCOG staff to keep the region's managers apprised of current and emergent issues, programs and opportunities as well as hear directly from the managers about challenges in their communities that may require a regional solution. Managers identify the topics for conversation and DRCOG staff coordinates the meetings and identifies information and relevant resources.

## Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act regional grants navigator program

Launching in 2023, the program is a partnership among the Governor's Office, the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, and DRCOG. Using funds made available in SB22-215, DRCOG has contracted to deliver support to its communities and locations with underserved populations to identify opportunities for Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding for areas such as broadband, water (supply, quality and drought mitigation), transportation, resiliency and disaster preparedness, affordable and secure clean energy, and energy efficiency.

## Way to Go

Way to Go is a foundational regional partnership between DRCOG and eight transportation management associations that reduces traffic congestion and improves air quality through education, marketing and outreach to encourage non-single-occupant vehicle travel. As the work environment and commute behavior continues to evolve post-pandemic, Way to Go outreach and marketing will augment promotion of telework, walking and biking with a renewed emphasis on transit, carpooling and vanpooling.

## Public engagement

Through its ongoing public engagement initiative, DRCOG provides people-centered planning, projects and services by proactively offering opportunities for the region's residents to learn about and engage with DRCOG. DRCOG staff will continue to build on efforts using online tools and new tactics, while initiating new community partnerships and leveraging the Civic Advisory Group to expand the range of voices offering input.







# Communities and residents

## Bike to Work Day

DRCOG will once again work with partners across the region to promote Bike to Work Day in June. Organized by the Way to Go program, the event is the second-largest of its kind in the country, and introduces people to bike commuting in a fun, supportive environment, resulting in long-term behavior change.

## Boomer Bond

DRCOG's Boomer Bond Assessment tool and online resource directory help communities become more age-friendly. DRCOG will continue to help communities with assessments and technical assistance for implementation strategies.

## Smart Region Initiative

DRCOG continues to maintain an active partnership with the Colorado Smart Cities Alliance and other organizations in the Smart City space, including Smart Cities Connect which frequently hosts its annual conference in Denver. DRCOG staff continue to search out best practices and innovations in key focus areas, including mobility, connectivity, health and aging, safety and resilience, and energy. A mostly weekly e-newsletter – the Somewhat Weekly Smart Region Syllabus is available for anyone interested in subscribing to it, including Board directors.

## Small Communities, Hot Topics

Started in 2014, the Small Communities, Hot Topics forum provides an opportunity for DRCOG staff to relay timely and targeted information about programs, opportunities and developing trends relevant to the region's smaller communities.

## Legislative affairs

DRCOG provides ongoing analysis of the potential effects and benefits of proposed legislation that may accrue for all DRCOG activities, with a specific emphasis on transportation funding and funding and policy for aging services. DRCOG's legislative team is always available to provide insights on the effects of proposed legislation on the mission, vision and daily activities of DRCOG and any potential effects on member communities.

## Ride Alliance trip exchange

The Area Agency on Aging piloted a transportation trip exchange developed under the Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative. Staff and partners are evaluating the exchange's strengths and weaknesses and making adjustments before planning for a full program launch.

## Area Plan on Aging webinar series

DRCOG's Area Agency on Aging staff is working with the county councils on aging and city commissions on aging across the region to help them advocate for older adults at the local level. Area Agency on Aging staff will provide a series of webinars to share the 2024-2027 Area Plan on Aging and the results from the recent Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults.

## 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program

Transportation Planning and Operations staff will complete the Transportation Improvement Program calls for projects and programming decisions for fiscal years 2024-2027 and the TIP adoption process including a public hearing and Board action. DRCOG staff will begin administering approved TIP Set-Aside programs.

## Advanced Mobility Partnership

DRCOG convenes regional and local participation in the Advanced Mobility Partnership to evaluate, prioritize, coordinate and implement Mobility Choice Blueprint tactics and other transportation technology innovations and initiatives. DRCOG staff is also working with regional partners to explore processes to collect, manage, maintain and share regional transportation data.

## Metro Vision

Metro Vision serves as the foundation for DRCOG's regional planning programs and initiatives. In 2023-2024, DRCOG's Board of Directors will consider amendments to align the plan with regional implementation partners' strategies and initiatives.

# Communities and residents



## Community visits

Metro Vision, the region's shared vision for its future, is implemented through collective contributions and efforts at the local level. DRCOG's Regional Planning and Development staff are eager to take stock of local initiatives and projects that strengthen the Denver region. Staff is refreshing its approach to community visits after a few years of modified engagement due to the pandemic. Staff use community visits as an opportunity to support DRCOG's member governments in their efforts to advance well-planned development, connect them to data and resources to enhance their work, and celebrate their successes.

Through a revamped program, the DRCOG team will visit member government communities and hear from local government staff. The ultimate goals are to strengthen staff-level relationships, connect member governments to technical assistance and resources and identify opportunities to elevate their work. Community visits are one of many ways that DRCOG complements and informs programming and engagement so it meets the needs of its diverse communities. With the programmatic refresh, DRCOG staff can sustain and enhance its approach as needed.

## Older Adult Refugees and Friends

In 2022-2023, the Older Adult Refugees and Friends program will continue to reduce isolation and increase community connections with older adults from refugee and immigrant communities. The program provides educational opportunities, exercise activities and time to socialize. The program will also continue to help older adults access technology and provide case management and resource navigation to ensure older adults from refugee and immigrant communities are connected with resources in their area. In addition, the program will continue to increase understanding of cultural considerations among other DRCOG programs and its contractors by providing training and technical assistance.





# Communities and residents

## Regional housing strategy

The rising cost of housing is at the forefront of considerations for the Denver region. While several of DRCOG's member governments are assessing housing needs and planning for future housing supply, many solutions may require or benefit from regional coordination. Staff expects to help develop a regional housing strategy focused on future housing investments to anticipate the changing needs across the region and provide pathways shared among local partners.

DRCOG's unique position as a local government convener, steward of regional growth forecasts and facilitator of transportation investments provides a solid foundation for developing collaborative approaches. As DRCOG staff continues to reassess forecasted growth, its local governments need well-designed considerations to address diverse and evolving housing needs and a range of related issues. A regional housing strategy will help local governments collaboratively leverage existing and planned investments in transportation, support an aging population, and efficiently consider the allocation of resources to ensure the region's residents can find a place to call home.

The tasks ahead are complicated yet achievable. Together with the DRCOG Board of Directors, staff will develop a scope for a regional housing strategy, identify and secure funding, and develop a shared work plan for effective implementation.

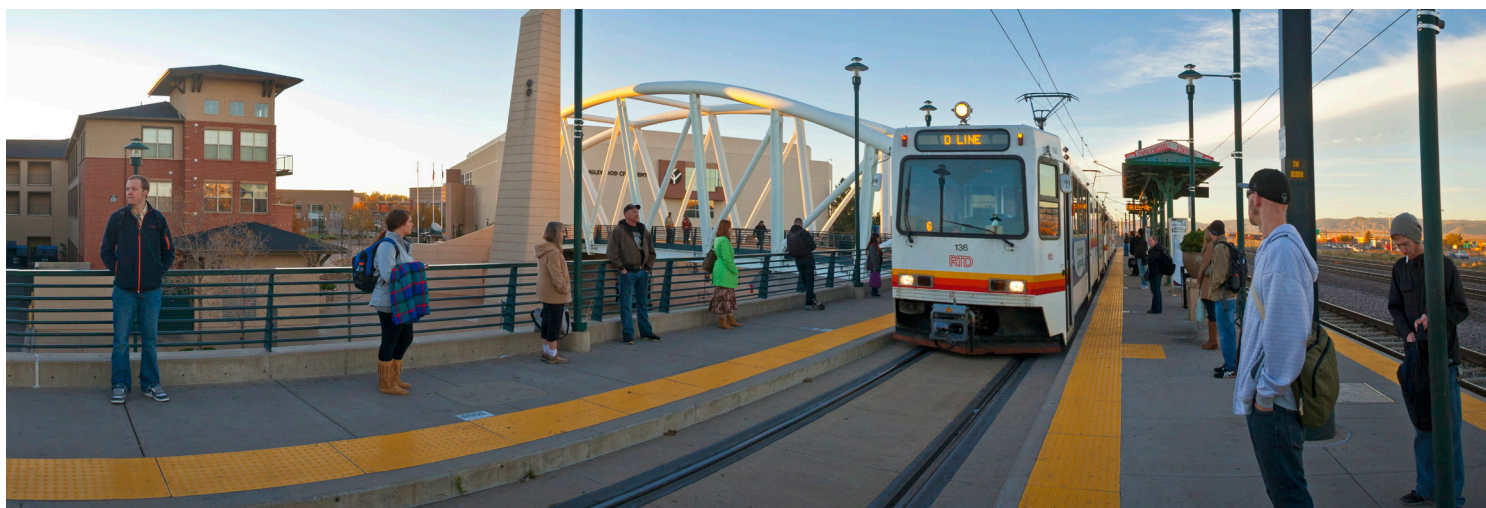


Photo courtesy of Regional Transportation District.





# Communities and residents

## Regional corridor plans

DRCOG will coordinate and lead multimodal corridor planning efforts for priority corridors identified in the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan. These efforts include planning for regional bus rapid transit projects.

## 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan

DRCOG will conduct an amendment cycle for the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan that will include considering any jurisdiction or agency-requested plan amendments.

## Community-based transportation plans

DRCOG staff will work with member governments and community groups on planning efforts to improve mobility options for low-income and disadvantaged populations. The grassroots effort will focus on identifying local communities' most important transportation challenges and developing strategies to overcome them. The first planning effort will be complete in fall 2023. DRCOG staff will also conduct the next selection process for two additional planning efforts.

## Regional data acquisition projects

DRCOG facilitates and manages cost-effective partnerships and projects that acquire foundational datasets including imagery, lidar, planimetric data and land cover in support of local and regional planning.

## Civic Academy

DRCOG continues this valuable program, formerly known as Citizens' Academy, to build civic capacity and engagement. Through the seven-week course, DRCOG staff facilitate education and discussions about essential regional issues like transportation, growth and economic vitality, housing, civic engagement and more.

## Innovative mobility

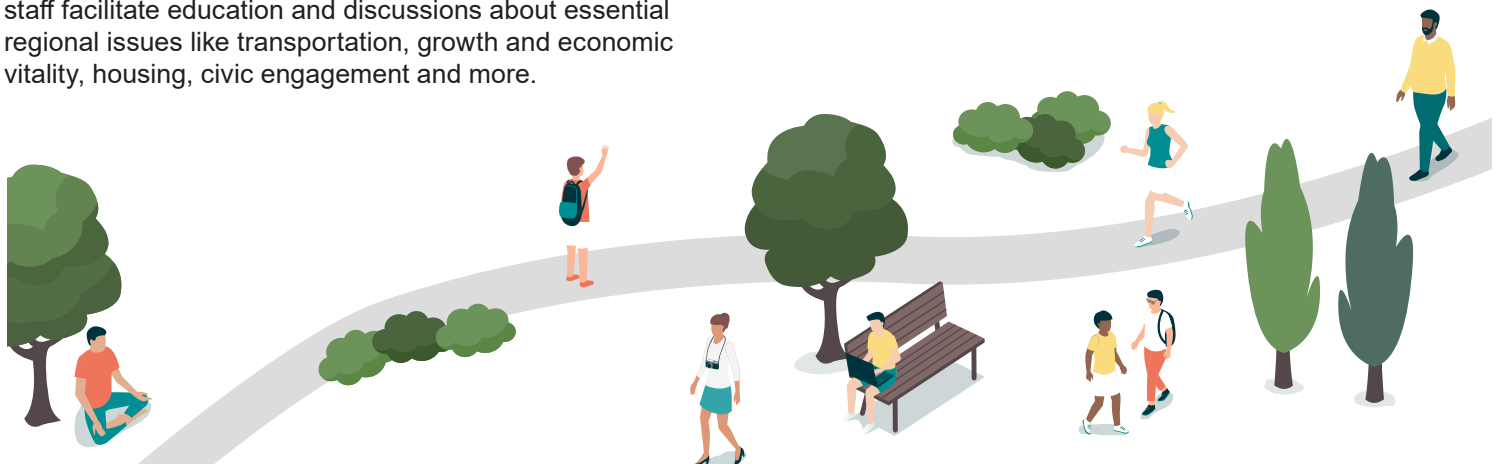
The Innovative Mobility Transportation Improvement Program Set-Aside facilitates planning for and developing innovative solutions for mobility challenges throughout the region, with a particular focus on innovative mobility preparedness, planning, demonstrations and pilots. Through a cohort model, the program engages regional partners to prepare and invest in innovative mobility solutions. The set-aside program will identify and deploy innovative mobility solutions throughout the region.

## Technical assistance program

DRCOG provides resources, data analysis, and best-practice guidance to incorporate inclusive and equitable approaches to community planning. DRCOG staff will continue to offer technical assistance to support communities with plan implementation.

## Regional Transportation Demand Management Strategic Plan

DRCOG staff and partners involved in developing the Regional Transportation Demand Management Strategic Plan are evaluating existing programs, practices, partnerships and policies and identifying and prioritizing actions and activities to support transportation demand management in the Denver region. Transportation demand management includes strategies, activities and investments that help people use the transportation system more efficiently to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. Through its Transportation Planning and Operations division and Communications and Marketing's Way to Go program, DRCOG coordinates regional transportation demand management investments and behavior change efforts in the Denver region.



# Financial stewardship

## Audit

An analysis and report resulting in findings related to DRCOG's financial health and compliance with grant management guidelines, the audit will commence in July for the prior fiscal year.

## DRCOG budget

A foundational annual product, the budget process begins in January and concludes with final approval by the Board of Directors in May. The budget directs financial decisions made throughout the fiscal year.

## Compliance

To ensure the integrity of grant operations, DRCOG has added a new position (fiscal specialist, grant compliance) to the Administration and Finance team. The position conducts Area Agency on Aging field audits to ensure compliance (both programmatic and fiscal) by DRCOG contractors. In fiscal year 2023-2024, the accounting department will add an additional position to conduct internal audits of programs across DRCOG. The position will identify and address any potential weaknesses in DRCOG's fiscal operations.



# Business operations

## Increase Area Agency on Aging funding

Diversifying funding continues to be a priority for the Area Agency on Aging and essential to keep pace with the growing demand for services. Staff will partner with Denver Health to improve health outcomes for patients by connecting them with needed community services like nutrition, transportation and in-home services. The Area Agency on Aging will also partner with other health providers and payers and work with national partners to advocate for including payment for community services in Medicare.

## Board collaboration assessment

An annual improvement activity, DRCOG's Board of Directors uses the Board Collaboration Assessment to provide feedback on collaboration with directors, committee structure and leadership.

## Geographic information systems data development

Through an annual partnership with local governments, DRCOG creates regional datasets including information on employment, housing, open space and zoning in support of local and regional planning.

## Regional Crash Consortium

DRCOG staff will convene stakeholders interested in improving the quality of crash data. Crash data accuracy is essential to identifying and solving safety issues in the region's transportation system.

## Accessibility improvements

DRCOG will continue to improve the accessibility of its services, programs and activities, and will review and update practices related to internal and external communications. As outlined in the new state requirements, staff will develop a plan and begin implementation to ensure better access by July 2024.

## Website refresh project

DRCOG staff will complete redevelopment and redesign of DRCOG's primary website and consolidate other web properties. The web refresh project will raise DRCOG's public visibility, improve access to its services and programs, and improve the security of its digital properties.

## Virtual server cloud project

Moving local virtual servers to the cloud will enhance staff's teleworking experience and reduce operating costs. Using cloud-based virtual servers aligns with DRCOG's business continuity strategy in the event of an emergency.

## Area Agency on Aging infrastructure improvements

In 2022, DRCOG worked with a vendor to build ASPIRE, a data collection and reporting system, to reduce the administrative burden on staff and improve data quality. DRCOG received a SB21-290 grant in 2023 to add functionality to ASPIRE — specifically, the ability to track how often referrals lead to services provided to clients. Additionally, staff will implement a new contractual payment and tracking system.

## Story maps

DRCOG's staff develops data visualizations to engage stakeholders around planning and transportation topics, using informative and easy-to-explore web maps and infographics. In 2021, staff added story maps to DRCOG's visualization toolbox, launching a Complete Streets story map. Story maps enhance spatial analysis with narrative and photography to provide context to what might otherwise seem like abstract concepts. During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, DRCOG staff will develop a Regional Vision Zero story map to help residents, planning professionals and elected officials better understand the context around the region's High-Injury Network and critical corridors.

## Office reconfiguration

The post-pandemic hybrid working environment at DRCOG continues to evolve with the recent adoption of a desk hoteling policy. Having only a portion of DRCOG staff in the office on any given day has allowed DRCOG to add staff without adding desks or requiring more physical space. Staff are also exploring how the hybrid work arrangement might facilitate development of a different office layout to accommodate more team interaction across and within divisions.



# Skilled workforce



## Professional certification

In order to support staff's professional development and enhance networking opportunities that benefit the organization, DRCOG reimburses up to \$400 for each employee for approved job-related professional memberships and certifications.

## Doug'n Donuts

Doug'n Donuts is an informal monthly town hall providing an opportunity for DRCOG staff to gather socially and interact with DRCOG's executive director, Douglas W. Rex, and the senior management team. Employees are encouraged to ask questions, offer suggestions and learn about activities, developments and policies.

## Third Thursday Lunch and Learn

Once-a-month lunchtime learning opportunities provide DRCOG staff with a midday diversion that provides interesting, intellectually stimulating presentations on a variety of topics from DRCOG partners, Board members and subject-matter experts

## Training and development

DRCOG has a legacy of investing in its staff through training and development opportunities. Auzmor is a web-based learning management system that employees can use as their schedule allows, as opposed to during a set time in a classroom or meeting space for training. DRCOG also partnered with Go1, the world's largest training content hub. Go1 maintains over 100,000 training classes from which DRCOG's Human Resources division, division directors and managers have developed a custom training library specific to employee needs.

## Employee Engagement and Satisfaction Survey

An annual improvement opportunity, the Employee Engagement and Satisfaction Survey facilitates staff feedback on their overall experiences at DRCOG, their work groups, supervisor, division director and the executive director.

## Equity Action Committee

DRCOG's Equity Action Committee is an internally focused advisory group that works closely with Human Resources and senior management on diversity and equity topics.

## Peer resource exchange

After successfully implementing Microsoft Teams during the pandemic for remote collaboration, staff are further leveraging the platform to share tools, resources and best practices with each other.

## Continuing education

In addition to its tuition reimbursement program, DRCOG maintains relationships with a number of institutions of higher education that offer employees tuition discounts.

**Partnerships:** Claremont-Lincoln University, Colorado Christian University, Colorado State University-Global Campus, DeVry University and Regis University. DRCOG has recently formed a partnership with All Campus, a company that offers tuition discounts at 25 colleges and universities (including University of Southern California, Carnegie Mellon University, DePaul University, and Johns Hopkins University) to DRCOG employees and their families.

## Internship site

DRCOG maintains relationships with several institutions of higher education, serving as an internship site for students completing their degrees.

**Partnerships:** Metropolitan State University of Denver, University of Central Florida, University of Colorado Denver, University of Denver, Regis University.





## Licensed clinical social worker sponsorship

DRCOG offers a licensed clinical social worker sponsorship program to eligible employees, affording them the opportunity to advance their careers while working in their field.

The candidate must hold a master of social work degree and complete a rigorous training program consisting of 3,360 hours of work over a two-year period and 96 hours of supervision by a licensed clinical social worker, of which 48 hours must be engaged in one-on-one practice with the supervisor. Candidates are then eligible to take the licensed clinical social worker exam.

Generally, individuals who are interested in becoming certified need to independently find a qualified sponsor and pay them for their services. Through the sponsorship program, DRCOG is investing in its candidate employees while offering staff members who already hold licensed clinical social worker designations the opportunity to help their coworkers and earn an additional financial incentive for their added work.

This program, which was suggested by DRCOG employees, serves as a differentiator when recruiting staff for the Area Agency on Aging program.





# Skilled workforce



## COG Cares

COG Cares is a service-based employee volunteer program that organizes and implements volunteer activities and events for staff. It's a way for DRCOG employees to connect with and give back to the region's communities, and to build teamwork skills across work groups and divisions. A variety of events are organized at least quarterly throughout the year, giving staff the opportunity to participate based on interest, ability, schedule, weather and location.

True to DRCOG's tagline, staff have contributed hundreds of hours each year to "make life better" across the region by supporting organizations such as Café 180, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, Frontline Farming, Bienvenidos Food Bank and Project C.U.R.E. In addition, staff comes together for meaningful activities like holiday card-making and gift-giving for veterans and older adults.

While the pandemic limited the number of opportunities available for in-person volunteering, COG Cares returned re-energized with a full slate of activities planned for the coming fiscal year, including opportunities to help with homebuilding, park maintenance and improvement, preparing and delivering meals, and food drives.







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