

Description

Every two years, the Denver Regional Council of Governments facilitates the acquisition of high-resolution aerial imagery for the region. Since 2002, the project has been providing a common base map for Denver Regional Aerial Photography Project members and partners to use for mapping, planning and analysis.

The 2022 project encompassed approximately 6,000 square miles and included 3-inch, 6-inch and 12-inch imagery. Additionally, the 2022 project offered a buy-up option for Nearmap imagery, a subscription service that provides four additional snapshots of the metro area.

DRCOG’s level of participation keeps partner costs low, providing valuable data at a fraction of the cost. Program costs include imagery acquisition, post-processing, custom order delivery and DRCOG project management.

Challenges

The primary challenge in 2022 was the weather. Persistent snow in the foothills delayed collection of those areas until very late in the spring. To minimize impact to the production schedule, the flight area was split into two pieces for processing. The resulting imagery is snow-free (meeting the specification) but suffers from radiometric (color/tone) differences along the seam between the early spring and the late spring flight.

By the numbers

Value of data provided to members	\$998,000
Average cost paid by DRCOG members	\$21,000
Total number of partners	49
Number of participating member counties	7
Number of participating member cities/towns	32
Number of regional partners	10
Amount of 3-inch imagery acquired	1,447 square miles
Amount of 6-inch imagery acquired	1,225 square miles
Amount of 12-inch imagery acquired	3,364 square miles
Number of partners receiving supplemental Nearmap imagery	26

What’s new in 2022?

During the 2022 project, DRCOG and Sanborn staff responded to a partner request for less “building lean” in high priority areas. Building lean occurs when a photo was taken from an angle other than directly overhead, which causes the building to appear to lean into and obscure adjacent features like roadways when taking a birds-eye view. This effect worsens with taller buildings, so we prioritized a solution in areas like downtown Denver and the Denver Tech Center. In these locations, Sanborn staff performed a “true-ortho” process so that the tallest buildings have no lean. This process has historically been time-consuming and expensive, but through Sanborn’s technological innovations, staff were able to add it to the 2022 project with no additional cost.

At the request of partners, DRCOG staff made a new projection option available in 2022. Delivering data in Web Mercator, in addition to traditional State Plane formats, enables partners to streamline loading their imagery into ArcGIS Online for their webmaps.

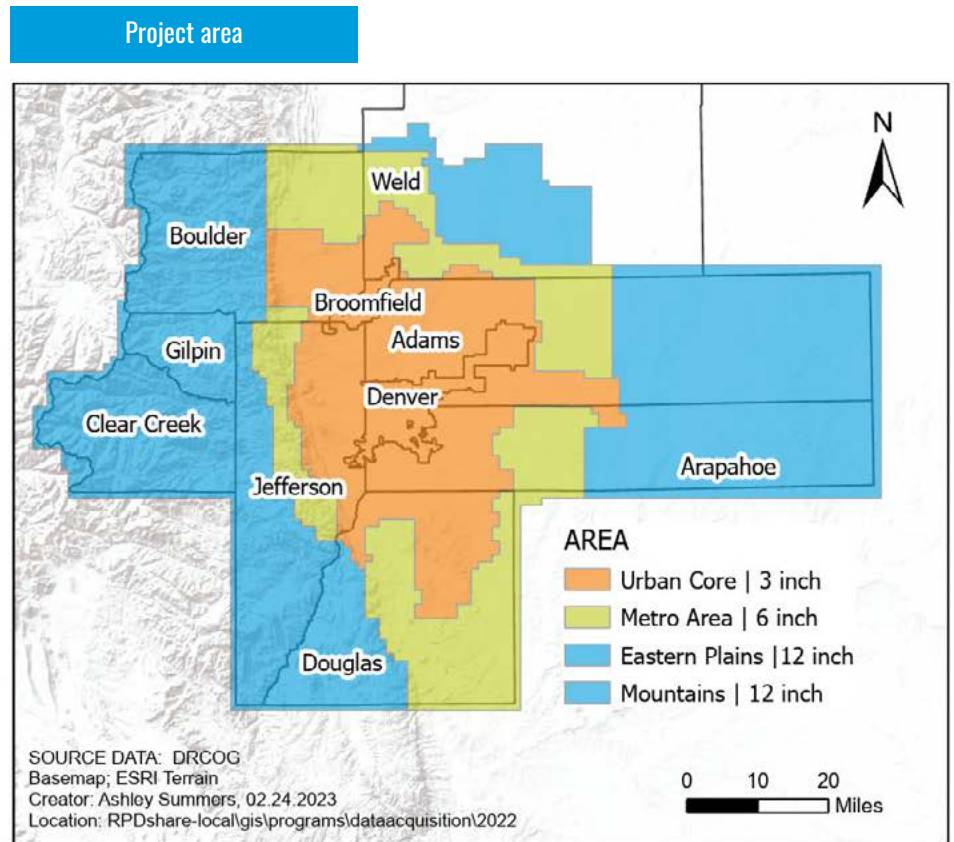
Finally, DRCOG staff invested in additional check points for it’s independent verification of positional accuracy. This behind-the-scenes process confirms that the imagery meets specifications for aligning with features on the ground.

Vendors

Custom imagery was acquired, processed and delivered as tiles and services by the [Sanborn Map Company](#). [Nearmap](#) provided a subscription to their ortho and oblique imagery.

Accessing data

Current Denver Regional Aerial Photography Project imagery is available for purchase from DRCOG and Sanborn Map Company. Historical imagery is available for free download from the [Regional Data Catalog](#).



Funding partners

- Colorado Department of Transportation
- Regional Transportation District
- Denver Water
- Adams County
- City and County of Broomfield
- Clear Creek County
- City and County of Denver
- Douglas County
- Gilpin County
- Jefferson County
- City of Arvada
- City of Aurora
- Town of Bennett
- City of Boulder
- City of Brighton
- City of Castle Pines
- City of Castle Rock
- City of Centennial
- City of Cherry Hills Village
- City of Commerce City
- City of Dacono
- City of Englewood
- Town of Erie
- City of Federal Heights
- Town of Firestone
- Town of Frederick
- City of Glendale
- City of Golden
- City of Greenwood Village
- City of Lafayette
- City of Lakewood
- City of Littleton
- City of Lone Tree
- City of Longmont
- City of Louisville
- Town of Morrison
- City of Northglenn
- Town of Parker
- Town of Superior
- City of Thornton
- City of Westminster
- City of Wheat Ridge
- United Power
- Metro Water Recovery
- South Suburban Parks and Recreation
- South Metro Fire Rescue
- E-470 Public Highway Authority
- Pinery Water and Wastewater District
- Consolidated Mutual Water

Questions?

Contact Ashley Summers, DRCOG director of strategic implementation, at 303-480-6746 or asummers@drcog.org.

Visit the [website](#).

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