



DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

We make life better!



DRCOG Annual Report

Enhancing and protecting the quality of life in our region



Denver Regional Council of Governments Board of Directors

(December 2010)

Officers

- Rod Bockenfeld**, Chair
- James A. Taylor**, Vice Chair
- Dennis McCloskey**, Secretary
- Sue Horn**, Treasurer
- Ed Peterson**, Immediate Past Chair
- Jennifer Schaufele**, Executive Director

Adams County
Arapahoe County
Boulder County
City and County of Broomfield
City and County of Denver

Clear Creek County
Douglas County
Gilpin County
Jefferson County
Arvada
Aurora
Bennett
Black Hawk
Boulder
Bow Mar
Brighton
Castle Rock
Centennial
Central City
Cherry Hills Village
Columbine Valley
Commerce City
Dacono
Deer Trail
Edgewater
Empire
Englewood
Erie

Larry Pace
 Rod Bockenfeld
 Will Toor
 Dennis McCloskey
 John Hickenlooper
 Chris Nevitt
 Tim Mauck
 Jack Hilbert
 Jeanne Nicholson
 Kathy Hartman
 Marc Williams
 Bob Broom
 Sue Horn
 David Spellman
 Macon Cowles
 Rick Wilkins
 Wilma Rose
 Joe Procopio
 Todd Miller
 Ronald Engels
 Alex Brown
 Gale Christy
 Jim Benson
 Charles Sigman

 Adam Gardner
 Mike Spies
 Randy Penn
 Cheryl Hauger

Federal Heights
Firestone
Foxfield
Frederick
Georgetown
Glendale
Golden
Greenwood Village
Idaho Springs
Lafayette
Lakewood
Larkspur
Littleton
Lone Tree
Longmont
Louisville
Lyons
Mead
Morrison
Nederland
Northglenn
Parker
Sheridan
Silver Plume
Superior
Thornton
Westminster
Wheat Ridge

Joyce Thomas
 Kelly Morgan
 Lisa Jones
 Jim Wollack
 Kathryn Johnson
 Pat Opper
 Jacob Smith
 Ron Rakowsky
 Jackson P. Morgan Jr.
 John Buechner
 Ed Peterson
 Sherilyn West
 James A. Taylor
 Jackie Millet
 Katie Witt
 Bob Muckle
 Julie Van Domelen
 Richard Macomber
 Christopher Wolfe
 Sumaya Abu-Haidar
 Joyce Downing
 Mike Waid
 Cliff Mueller
 Fred Lyssy
 Debra Williams
 Val Vigil
 Nancy McNally
 Karen Berry

Governor's Non-voting Appointees to the DRCOG Board

Jennifer Finch, Colorado Department of
Transportation
 Susan Kirkpatrick, Department of Local Affairs

Table of Contents

Top **10** Ways

DRCOG Made a Difference in the Region in 2010

1	Metro Vision	2
2	Leadership	4
3	FasTracks	7
4	Advocating for the Region's Older Residents	8
5	Awards Dinner and Local Government Recognition	11
6	Advocacy	14
7	Helping the Region Get Around	15
8	Assisting Local Governments	20
9	Western High Speed Rail Alliance	23
10	Trend Setting	24
	DRCOG Board of Directors	26

1

Metro Vision

Metro Vision, DRCOG's long-range growth and land use plan, continues to be the regional leader in all things growth and futures-oriented. Strides were taken to increase Metro Vision's role and relevance through a number of important steps in 2010.

Incorporating Sustainability into Metro Vision

A major DRCOG activity in 2010 revolved around the incorporation of sustainability into Metro Vision. Coinciding with the update of the Metro Vision 2035 plan, the Board worked to identify sustainability concepts, goals and potential policy updates. Driven by direction from its 2009 Workshop, the Board worked throughout 2010 to identify six new draft sustainability goals.

The goals include the following:

- Increase the rate of construction of alternative transportation facilities
- Reduce the percent of trips to work by single-occupant vehicle to 65 percent by 2035
- Locate 50 percent of new housing and 75 percent of new employment within urban centers between 2005 and 2035
- Reduce regional per capita municipal and industrial water use
- Reduce regional per capita Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT) 10 percent between 2005 and 2035

- Reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector 60 percent between 2005 and 2035

Several new and revised Metro Vision policies address these goals, including:

- Urban Centers policy (refinement of existing Metro Vision element)
- Community Design policy (expansion of existing Senior-Friendly Development element)
- Water Conservation policy (new Metro Vision element)
- Transportation policy (refinement of existing Metro Vision element)

A public hearing was held in December on the Metro Vision update; Board action was scheduled in early 2011.

Region's Planners Provide Metro Vision Input

DRCOG hosted four Planner Idea Exchanges on potential Metro Vision policy updates. The meetings were designed to get input from local planning staff as DRCOG worked toward the adoption of a Metro Vision update in early 2011. The gatherings focused on:

- Draft goals of increasing the share of new housing and employment in urban centers;





- Community design, particularly relating to integrated land use and transportation planning; and
- Efficient use of natural resources and the DRCOG Board's draft sustainability goal of reducing per capita water consumption.

Two New Mile High Compact Signatories

The towns of Frederick and Silver Plume showed their commitment to Metro Vision by becoming the latest signatories to the Mile High Compact, a landmark voluntary agreement among Denver metro area municipalities and counties to work together on growth issues. The compact commits members to working together to manage and direct growth throughout the Denver metro area by adhering to the principles outlined in Metro Vision. Frederick became the 45th metro area community to sign the compact, and Silver Plume became the 46th. Counties and municipalities that have signed the compact represent around 90 percent of the region's total population.

Comcast Newsmakers Explores Metro Vision

DRCOG Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele appeared on the Comcast Newsmakers show in October on behalf of DRCOG. She talked about

Metro Vision and why it's important to the region's residents, from transportation and land use to planning for the aging of the Baby Boomer generation. Comcast Newsmakers is designed to showcase local elected officials, community leaders and non-profit organizations. The show aired locally for a month on CNN Headline News and then on Comcast's Video on Demand.

DRCOG Ends Wastewater Treatment Planning Activities

After an 18-month review and assessment of its wastewater treatment planning program, DRCOG decided to terminate the program at the end of 2010. The program began with federal funding 30 years ago, but funding has declined through the years and the cost had been borne principally by the DRCOG general fund. Since 2001, the cost to DRCOG has exceeded half a million dollars. DRCOG, with its regional planning responsibilities, will continue to review Colorado Water Quality Control Commission agendas to identify issues of regional significance. On those issues, DRCOG will make recommendations to the Board and then provide appropriate comments to the commission. The reviews focus on ensuring planning area boundaries, facility service areas, and facility location, sizing and timing are consistent with Metro Vision.

2

Leadership

As one of the nation's three oldest regional planning organizations, DRCOG has become a model around the nation.



Board Honors Service

Several Board members were honored for five years of service to DRCOG in 2010. In January, Gilpin County Commissioner Jeanne Nicholson and Clear Creek County Commissioner Harry Dale were each honored, as was Lakewood Council Member Ed Peterson in October. Golden Mayor Jacob Smith noted his service anniversary in December. Each received a commemorative clock in recognition of the milestone.



Sustainable Communities Planning Grant

When the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a sustainable communities regional planning grant program, DRCOG didn't hesitate to take the lead in hosting meetings and coordinating a Denver metro area application that included regional planning and implementation activities for mixed-use development centered on regional transit corridors. DRCOG, along with the Metro Mayors Caucus and the Colorado Tomorrow Alliance, brought together 62 public, private and nonprofit partners, representing diverse experience in housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation and infrastructure improvements, to submit the application. The consortium included 30 local governments representing 83 percent of the region's population and 32 public/private organizations that committed \$27 million in funding to leverage the grant request. Regrettably, the application was not selected for initial funding, but the effort cemented the region's reputation for cooperation and coordination and laid the groundwork for future endeavors. The region has received preferred status in the planning grant program, giving us a leg up in a new round of funding.



HUD Listening Session Opportunity: DRCOG Tells its Story

DRCOG Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele attended a HUD Listening Session in Denver in late February, which was designed to allow HUD to gather thoughts and ideas about its sustainable communities planning grant program. Schaufele shared DRCOG's 55-plus years of experience in regional collaboration and accomplishments. She further urged, in a follow-up letter to Deputy Secretary Ron Sims and Regional Director and former DRCOG Board Member Rick Garcia, that HUD use regional planning agencies to move the initiative forward.



Schaufele Appointed to Presidential Rank Review Board

Jennifer Schaufele was appointed in May by Office of Personnel Management Director John Berry to serve on the 2010 Presidential Rank Award Review Board in Denver. She joined nine other prominent private citizens representing a variety of occupational fields on the review board, including DRCOG Board Member and Boulder Council Member Macon Cowles. The review board met in May to evaluate and rate nominations for the Presidential Rank Awards Program, which recognizes career members of the Senior Executive Service for exceptional performance over an extended period of time.

2010 Officers Elected

In February, the Board elected its 2010 officers. Arapahoe County Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld was elected chair, while Littleton Council Member Jim Taylor was chosen as vice chair. Rounding out the officer slate were Broomfield Council Member Dennis McCloskey as secretary, Bennett Mayor Sue Horn as treasurer and Lakewood Council Member Ed Peterson as immediate past chair.

Board Workshop Sets Course for 2010

The annual Board Workshop in February set DRCOG's course for 2010. Held in town and at DRCOG to save money, the workshop drew a large crowd of Board members and alternates. A panel of former Board members attended to share their experiences in regionalism, giving the current Board a sense of the organization's history. Break-out sessions on Saturday focused on how the Board works together successfully.

Governors' Institute on Community Design

The Denver region was selected as one of several cities nationwide to benefit from the Governors' Institute on Community Design. Experts from inside

outside Colorado convened in Denver in early June to talk about transportation, land use and air quality. The Governors' Institute, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and EPA, brings together leading practitioners and academicians in the fields of government, design, development and regional economics to help each state's executive team make informed choices as they shape the future of their states. Having such a forum in the metro area was a great opportunity for regional leaders and timely, given the DRCOG Board's discussions and work to update Metro Vision. The event was convened by the Regional Air Quality Council to advance the region's understanding of ways to improve air quality through such efforts as connecting transportation and land use planning.

Census Bureau Recognizes DRCOG

The U.S. Census Bureau recognized DRCOG efforts to promote and share information about the 2010 Census by presenting a participation certificate to Chair Rod Bockenfeld. Larry Mugler of the Denver Regional Census Center made the presentation and shared the region's 73 percent mail participation rate in the Census. Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele also served on Gov. Ritter's Complete Count Committee for Colorado.





Gubernatorial Forum

Once again, DRCOG collaborated with business groups -- the Metro North Chamber of Commerce, the Arvada Chamber of Commerce, the West Chamber Serving Jefferson County and the Jefferson Economic Council -- in hosting a mid-September gubernatorial forum. Candidates John Hickenlooper, Dan Maes and Tom Tancredo attended and addressed the crowd of nearly 350 local government, community and business leaders.



Portland Leadership Exchange

DRCOG Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele was selected as one of 150 business and civic participants in the Denver Metro Chamber's 2010 Leadership Exchange to Portland in September. The exchange examined economic development, sustainability, renewable energy, land use and density, regional government, healthcare policy and access, and education.

International Visitors

Frequently, DRCOG is asked to host international visitors learning about democracy and local government in the United States. In June, a multi-nation delegation met with Board officers Rod Bockenfeld, Sue Horn and Ed Peterson, along with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and local government representatives. The delegation represented Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Lithuania. In September, DRCOG hosted a 20-member delegation from Bulgaria's Ministry of Environment. The primary purpose of their visit was to explore the role of government agencies in developing environmental policy, but they also wanted to learn about the process of governing at the local, state and federal levels.



3

FasTracks

DRCOG's relationship with FasTracks continued in 2010, with DRCOG supporting FasTracks in a number of ways.

2009 Annual FasTracks Review

In July, DRCOG held a public hearing on the Regional Transportation District's (RTD) 2009 Annual Report to DRCOG on FasTracks, as vested by state statute. Incorporating comments from the hearing, DRCOG prepared its 2009 Annual FasTracks Review and Determination Report. The Board accepted the findings of the report and approved modifications to the FasTracks 2010 financial plan. The findings note schedule changes for nearly all FasTracks corridors, ranging from one- to three-year extensions and recent completion of environmental documents. The review found laudable progress by RTD on environmental documentation and right-of-way agreements, noting that RTD needs to continue progress on right-of-way. In its review of the 2008 Annual Report, the DRCOG Board called for RTD to be more conservative in the assumptions used for the next financial plan; the DRCOG staff's current review found the plan more realistic and an improvement over the previous plan. If changes to the assumptions in this financial plan occur in the future, RTD will need to reflect them in subsequent annual reports for DRCOG Board consideration.

DRCOG Represented on DUSPA

Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele continued serving as the DRCOG Board's representative on the Denver Union Station Project Authority

(DUSPA) 13-member (11 voting; 2 nonvoting) Board of Directors, focused on ensuring Denver Union Station (DUS) becomes the multimodal transportation hub long envisioned. DUSPA is the entity responsible for financing, acquiring, owning, equipping, designing, constructing, renovating, operating and maintaining the Denver Union Station redevelopment project.

Union Station Construction Progress Celebration

Jennifer Schaufele represented DRCOG in September at the Denver Union Station Construction Celebration, hosted by DUSPA, RTD and the City and County of Denver. Under a hot September sun in her hard hat, she wielded a shovel and moved some dirt. The event was held on the west side of the historic station where the future commuter rail station will be located. The event called attention to the progress being made to turn Denver Union Station into the region's FasTracks centerpiece and multimodal hub. At year's end, a number of steps were being taken at DUS to move the station closer to completion.



FasTracks Funding

In 2008, the DRCOG Board doubled its funding commitment in principle to FasTracks corridors from \$60 to \$120 million. To honor that commitment, DRCOG programmed \$5.5 million to RTD and \$2.5 million to Denver Union Station in fiscal year 2010.

4

Advocating for the Region's Older Residents

DRCOG is recognized statewide for its leadership in the area of senior services and advocacy, with 2010 being a sterling example. The DRCOG Area Agency on Aging (AAA) serves the Denver region of Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin and Jefferson counties.

Community Conversations

Beginning in August and running through the fall, DRCOG's AAA held community conversations about aging throughout the region. DRCOG met with citizens of all ages to talk about the needs and challenges of older adults and to hear ideas on how best to meet those needs and challenges. Conversations also covered what older Coloradans need to live and age in their communities successfully. The effort was designed to give key feedback as a DRCOG Area Plan on Aging is developed. The plan, scheduled for completion at the start of 2011, will guide DRCOG's work to serve older adults and assist in making funding decisions. In addition, the plan provides information on an assessment of the needs of older adults and outlines strategies to meet them.



Did You Know?

Ombudsman Program

*The Ombudsman Program currently has **54** volunteer ombudsmen. The program continued its efforts to protect the rights of more than **16,900** residents in the **351** nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the region.*

Network of Care

In April, DRCOG debuted its Network of Care, a community-based website that puts older adults in touch with the right senior services at the right time by visiting <http://DRCOG.NetworkofCare.org>. The site was received enthusiastically by the aging

community. Network of Care enhances the DRCOG AAA's information and assistance efforts with features that allow older adults, and their caregivers and loved ones to:

- Search a service directory of community services;
- Browse a library of unbiased, evidence-based information on more than 4,000 health topics;
- Look for assistive devices in a database, which details more than 21,000 tools and devices;



- Explore a host of links, which connect to websites for government programs and nonprofit organizations that specialize in aging;
- Use the bill-tracking section of the website to follow state and federal legislation about aging; and
- Create a private online file of custom information in the site's My Folder section.

DRCOG AAA staff made presentations throughout the region on Network of Care and its features, and continue to be available to make presentations.



Senior Service Providers Selected

DRCOG contracted with local providers for services to older adults for the July 1, 2010, - June 30, 2011, fiscal year. As the AAA, DRCOG receives and administers Older Americans Act and state funding to provide services to older adults and their caregivers throughout the region. DRCOG allocated more than \$9 million to services for seniors, including nutrition services, in-home care, legal assistance, transportation, health promotion, and counseling services, and ombudsman services, among others. A Request for Proposals was distributed early in 2010 to solicit proposals from local community service providers for various services. Forty-one proposals from 27 different organizations came in, requesting more than \$11 million. The proposals were vetted by the Advisory Committee on Aging, based on established criteria and policy. It is estimated that DRCOG is reaching more than 300,000 seniors with these services in the current fiscal year.

Making Use of Every Cent

DRCOG AAA staff reported in August there was no carryover of the more than \$8 million in Older Americans Act money contracted out to metro area service providers for the 2010 state fiscal year. The region's providers spent every penny DRCOG gave them toward addressing the needs of seniors in the Denver region.

Change in Contracting Saves Money

The Advisory Committee on Aging decided to

Did You Know?

Aging Service Numbers



*DRCOG's AAA provided funding for the ombudsman and information assistance programs and prioritized service needs to fund **25** service providers with over **\$9** million from the state and federal government. Funding covered everything from meals to eyeglasses and hearing aids to transportation to the doctor.*

one-year) for service providers, starting in 2011. This will save internal administrative funds at DRCOG and provide cost savings to service providers. As long as federal and/or state funds do not experience cuts, this change gives service providers more certainty and helps them in their planning.

AAA Evaluation

DRCOG's AAA was evaluated in 2010 by the Colorado Division of Aging and Adult Services, State Unit on Aging, and DRCOG was told "You and your staff are to be commended for the quality of services provided to the consumers in your area." This was the second year in a row that no compliance issues were cited in the evaluation – the DRCOG AAA was the only AAA in the state to receive that finding.

Protecting our Region's Older Adults

Every day, the DRCOG AAA does vital work to protect our region's older adults through its Ombudsman Program, which protects the rights and well-being of residents of metro area long-



term care facilities. AAA staff are often asked to do very difficult things under difficult circumstances. There are many examples of their work, but one notable example during 2010 occurred in September

when staff were called on to relocate residents after the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment suspended the license of an assisted living facility in Aurora. DRCOG ombudsman staff members were instrumental in successfully relocating the residents in less than four hours.

Boomers and Beyond Housing Symposium

DRCOG and the Home Builders Association of Metro Denver's 50+ Housing and Remodelers Council hosted the inaugural Boomers and Beyond Housing Initiative Symposium in November. The event featured Dr. John Migliaccio, director of

research for Mature Market Institute, and stakeholders from the Home Builders Association of Metro Denver's 50+ Housing and Remodelers Council, the Denver Board of Realtors, the DRCOG AAA, the American Institute of Architects, and the University of Colorado Gerontology Program. Migliaccio shared highlights of three strategic reports examining:

- Housing for the 55+ Market: Trends and insights on Boomers and Beyond,
- 55+ Housing: Builders, Buyers and Beyond, and
- Tapping Home Equity in Retirement.

Serving as a Model

DRCOG was selected to be a major participant in a National Association of Regional Councils – National Association of Area Agencies on Aging webinar on Successful Regional Strategies for Integrating the Aging Population into Livable Communities. DRCOG represented the urban perspective during the webinar and was selected to participate as a model for integrating aging issues into regional planning efforts.



5

Awards Dinner and Local Government Recognition

Once every two years, the region celebrates its accomplishments at the DRCOG Awards of Excellence Dinner. The 2010 celebration, held at the Infinity Park Event Center in Glendale, used the theme "Let the stars come out..." Emcee TaRhonda Thomas of 9News kept the event agenda moving along as a number of stars were honored for their contributions to the region.



Top Regional Award Goes to...

...long-time Arvada community leader Lorraine Anderson, the 37th recipient of the John V. Christensen Memorial Award. Anderson received the award from DRCOG Chair and Arapahoe County Commissioner Rod Bockenfeld as he recognized her 24 years of service to local government, beginning with her election as an Arvada council member in 1984. He cited her extraordinary energy and attention to local and regional issues. In addition to serving on a host of local, regional and state efforts, Anderson chaired DRCOG in 2004 and served on the Board of Directors for 16 years.



The Christensen Award was first presented in 1973 to honor the late John V. Christensen, an Arapahoe County commissioner and one of DRCOG's co-founders.

Ed Peterson Honored for Leadership

DRCOG Immediate Past Chair Ed Peterson was honored with the Outgoing Chair Award at the awards dinner. Rod Bockenfeld presented the award in recognition of Peterson's service to the region as chair of DRCOG in 2009. Bockenfeld spoke of Peterson's regional focus throughout his leadership, as he encouraged the Board of Directors to look at the effects of its decisions and actions in the areas of transportation, growth, sustainability, water quality and older adult issues. He further cited Peterson's work to build camaraderie and kinship among DRCOG Board members with the goal of seeing that "we're many jurisdictions, but only one region."



Distinguished Service Awards Presented

Twelve metro area residents were honored with Distinguished Service Awards for their efforts on behalf of DRCOG and the region. Recipients included the following area residents.

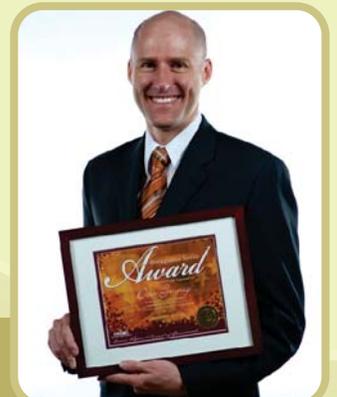
- **Heather Balsler**, Louisville deputy city manager, for her service as chair of the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee in 2008 and 2009 and on a variety of other regional transportation efforts such as the U.S. 36 Mayors and Commissioners Coalition.



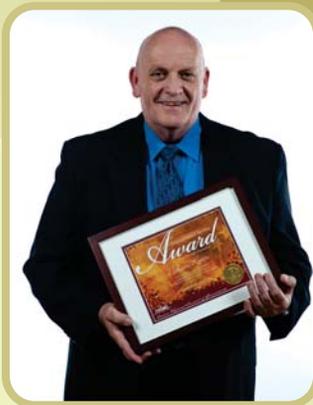
- **Dr. Carl Clark** (CEO), **Theresa Baiotto** (Executive Assistant) and **Tracy Herrera** (Director of Procurement and Communications), of the Mental Health Center of Denver, for their leadership in promoting transportation options and alternatives to MHCD employees.
- **Pat Corbo**, volunteer with DRCOG's Ombudsman Program, for her three years of service on behalf of older adults in long-term care facilities and her work mentoring other program volunteers.



- **Russell George** (Colorado Department of Transportation Executive Director), **Pam Hutton** (CDOT Chief Engineer) and **Karla Petty** (Federal Highway Administration Colorado Division Administrator), for their management and oversight of the highway transportation projects delivered under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.
- The late **Paul Grundemann**, former director of operations for Centennial Water & Sanitation District, for his commitment and leadership to the region on water quality issues.
- **Dan Grunig**, executive director of Bicycle Colorado, for providing input on bicycle and pedestrian issues as a member of a number of DRCOG and regional committees and work groups, including the Transportation Advisory Committee.



- **Nolan Knox**, former director of nutrition services for Volunteers of America, for his more than 20 years of dedicated service to the region's older adults and partnership with the DRCOG Area Agency on Aging.
- **Kathie Novak**, former mayor of Northglenn, for her promotion and support of regionalism as president of National League of Cities and as a member of the DRCOG Board of Directors.



Distinguished Service Awards are presented to individuals who contribute outstanding efforts to the Denver region and its communities, and to DRCOG's programs and activities. The council has been honoring outstanding achievements for more than 30 years.

Local Governments Recognized for Innovation

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/Public Education.

Planning with Vision: Integrating Transportation with Land Use

Gold Award: Planning and Zoning for Transit-Oriented



Development along the 13th Avenue Light Rail and Colfax Avenue Corridors. City of Lakewood.

Silver Award: Envision Wheat Ridge Comprehensive Plan. City of Wheat Ridge.

Bronze Award: Eastlake Station Transit-Oriented Development Master Plan Report. Cities of Thornton and Northglenn; RTD; and Adams County School District 12.

Collaboration

Gold Award: U.S. 36 Mayors and Commissioners Coalition. Cities of Louisville, Boulder and Westminster; Boulder County; Town of Superior; City and County of Broomfield; 36 Commuting Solutions.

Silver Award: Paradigm Project: A Blueprint for Change. Boulder County; City of Lafayette; City and County of Denver; National Renewable Energy Laboratory; and HBA Architects.

Bronze Award: Brighton Water Delivery Project. Cities of Thornton and Brighton.



Community Outreach/Public Education

Gold Award: New Zoning Code. City and County of Denver.

Silver Award: Golden Vision 2030: Our Town, Our Future. City of Golden; Orton Family Foundation; and the Local Advisory Committee for the Initiative.

Bronze Award: Water Quality and Environmental Programs Public Outreach Initiative. City of Aurora.





Advocacy

In 2010, DRCOG continued its efforts to effect state and federal policy with its legislative advocacy program.

Support for Livable Communities Act of 2009

In February, the DRCOG Board authorized sending letters to Colorado's senators expressing DRCOG's support for the Livable Communities Act of 2009. The bill, approved by Congress, focuses on helping local communities plan and create better and more affordable places to live, work and raise families through comprehensive regional planning and implementation, affirming many of the principles contained in Metro Vision. The sustainable communities planning grant program, also discussed in the leadership section, is an outgrowth of this legislation.

Sharing DRCOG's Experiences in Washington

Executive Director Jennifer Schaufele presented DRCOG's experiences in the area of livable communities at the House of Representatives Livable Communities Task Force in Washington, D.C., in late February. Schaufele made the presentation while in Washington for the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) Summit of Regions Conference.

DRCOG Opposes Ballot Initiatives

The DRCOG Board took an early position opposing the tax-cutting measures contained in Proposition

101, Initiative 60 and Initiative 61 in February. The action reflected the Board's position that changes to state and local fiscal structures would seriously hamstring the ability of state and local governments to function; overturn the will of local voters; eliminate thousands of jobs; and have a disastrous impact on Colorado's economic recovery. The measures were defeated by voters in the November 2010 general election.

2010 Federal and State Legislative Policy Statements

Early in 2010, 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 2010 General Assembly Bills

As part of its long-running advocacy program, the DRCOG Board received monthly reports on issues to come before the Colorado General Assembly during the 2010 session. By keeping up with legislation affecting the region and local governments, the Board took positions on bills that were relayed to legislators.



7

Helping the Region Get Around

DRCOG may be known best for its work in the transportation arena and 2010 saw many achievements in that regard.



Another Successful Bike to Work Day

Clear skies and pleasant temperatures greeted the more than 17,000 cyclists who hit the streets for Bike to Work Day 2010 on June 23. The goal of the annual event is to introduce more metro area residents to the advantages of bicycle commuting. The average cyclist on Bike to Work Day traveled nearly 9 miles one way; that kept 295,259 miles from being driven by car and more than 65 tons of CO₂ from those vehicles from entering Colorado's beautiful blue skies. The regional event is coordinated by DRCOG RideArrangers but involves a host of regional partners, including the businesses and organizations that offered morning commute breakfast stations.

The success of Bike to Work Day 2010 was enhanced by a new year-round website for the event, developed by DRCOG RideArrangers, and available at <http://www.drcog.org/biketowork>. One of the site's most exciting features is an interactive map featuring bike routes, information about breakfast stations, group rides and more. Cyclists can isolate their specific bike routes and zoom in to get a greater level of detail and information for Bike to Work Day and for other trips around the year. Eliminating the need to print maps and other support materials that can be found on the site saves money and trees, and made Bike to Work Day 2010 leaner and greener.



New RideArrangers Website Connects Commuters

DRCOG RideArrangers unveiled its new website (<http://www.drcog.org/ridearrangers>) in the summer to great response. The site's new look and feel are only a part of the enhanced features for commuters. As a regional service, any member government, transportation management association or employer can use a portal to include all these features on their own websites or intranet. The site allows users looking for carpool matches to create a profile and list different kinds of trips for which they need partners (commute trips, occasional trips, special events, etc.). They can send messages to potential partners directly through the site, which helps protect privacy, and they can track how they commute each day and calculate both savings and carbon footprint from the information.



Update of the Regional Transportation Plan

As 2010 closed, the Board held a public hearing on the update to the 2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan, which guides the long-range development of a multimodal transportation system for the region. The update incorporates new Metro Vision sustainability goals and revised transportation policies and action strategies. It also includes revised revenue estimates and project information for the Fiscally Constrained 2035 Regional Transportation Plan and associated air

quality conformity determinations. The Fiscally Constrained plan was amended early in 2010 to reflect a number of changes, including the addition of the initial phase of the Jefferson Parkway, SH93 to SH128. Board action on the update was scheduled early in 2011.



Preventing/Avoiding TIP Project Delays

Reflecting its commitment to timely implementation of projects in the Transportation Improvement Program or TIP, in January the Board of Directors approved the findings of a report on TIP project delays for 2009. The report included information from project sponsors about reasons for the delays and action plans demonstrating implementation commitment.

TIP Policy Funding to Facilitate Member Government Planning

The Board approved a commitment of \$300,000 in the 2012-2017 Transportation Improvement Program to be used as seed funding to a revolving fund pool. The pool will be used for CDOT to provide project development assistance on local sponsors' TIP projects before intergovernmental agreements are completed. The idea for the concept came from a recent TIP Policy Work Group, and it is designed to help projects move through the steps needed to acquire federal funding. DRCOG staff will work with CDOT staff on procedural detail and obtain approval from the Federal Highway Administration.

Did You Know?

Signal Street Projects and Numbers



In 2010, the traffic signal program implemented revised signal timing/coordination plans for **11** corridors with a total of **177** traffic signals.

These efforts caused an estimated reduction of: **670,000** hours of travel delay and **1.4** million pounds of pollutants emitted; a savings of about **315,000** gallons of fuel; and, a user savings of about **\$14.1** million.

Currently, there are more than **3,700** traffic signals in the region maintained and operated by **38** different jurisdictions.

Through assistance from the traffic signal program, now there are more than 2,400 traffic signals on key corridors connected to a traffic signal control system, which assists in monitoring and maintaining the signal timing/coordination plans that have been implemented.

Board Recommends FASTER Road Safety Projects

Early in 2010, the Board approved a list of CDOT-proposed projects using Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery (FASTER) safety funds for fiscal years 2011-2013. The three CDOT engineering regions that cover all or a portion of the DRCOG area identified \$140 million in projects; the DRCOG Board approved those in the DRCOG area. CDOT worked with its planning partners to prepare the list. FASTER (SBo9-108) established road safety surcharges to be embedded in vehicle registration fee increases and a portion of the revenues to be distributed to CDOT for road safety projects. In 2009, DRCOG Board members and staff helped by drafting the FASTER legislation.

Continued Efforts on American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Being a good steward of the region's 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds led DRCOG to continue to monitor ARRA projects for savings that could be reallocated and redirected to other projects. In addition, DRCOG held a public hearing and approved projects to be constructed by CDOT with ARRA funds.



Possible Follow-up Economic Recovery Program

Substantial discussion about a federal stimulus program for 2010 prompted DRCOG to prepare for the possibility in the first quarter of 2010. DRCOG took such actions as initiating a call for local government projects, and scheduling and holding a public hearing in March on potential projects to receive any available funds. DRCOG took the preparations to be ready, although no bill made it through Congress.



Did You Know?

RideArrangers

Number of businesses served: **1,327**

Number of people in the ridematching database: **4,471**

Number of vanpoolers: **405**

Companies participating in telework programs: **183**

Number of families added to the Schoolpool database: **13,552**

Companies participating in Guaranteed Ride Home: **657**

Number of registrants for Bike to Work Day: **17,093**



Public Involvement in Regional Transportation Planning Adopted

In April, the Board adopted Public Involvement in Regional Transportation Planning, which outlines DRCOG Board public involvement policies and goals, and responds to state and federal regulations pertaining to public involvement in the metropolitan transportation planning process. A public hearing on the document was held in March.

Transit Element of the 2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan

Also in April, the Board adopted the Transit Element of the 2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan. The Transit Element reflects current transit services, coordination activities, planning needs and priorities in the region. The element is required to support applications for federal assistance by providers of transit to the elderly and persons with disabilities and in rural areas. A March hearing allowed the public to comment on the Transit Element.

Quick Implementation on Transportation Formula Funds

The availability of approximately \$50 million of fiscal years 2010/2011 unprogrammed federal transportation formula funds led DRCOG to a process to get the funds out quickly to community projects. DRCOG opened a call for projects, and

held a June public hearing before deciding in July on 21 quick implementation projects to receive the funding. The list included the U.S.-36 HOT lane TIFIA-challenge project, the I-225/Colfax Avenue interchange reconstruction, the Pecos grade separation, South Broadway reconstruction, Denver Union Station and Highline Canal Trail at the Iliff Avenue underpass, among others.

DRCOG Lays Groundwork for Coming TIP

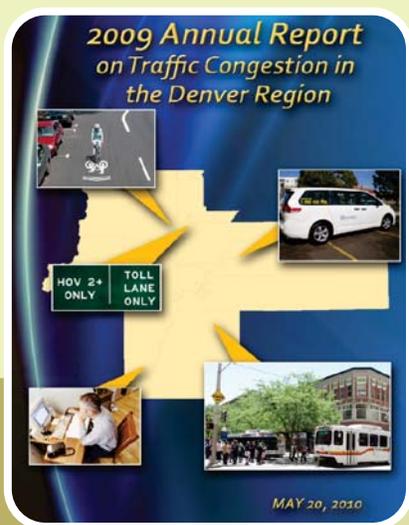
With a new TIP on the horizon in 2011, the Board laid the foundation by approving the Transportation Improvement Program Preparation Policy, which serves as the rules for all items relating to the TIP, including how the TIP will be developed, how DRCOG will select projects, how amendments will be processed, etc. A TIP Policy Work Group put in long hours reviewing and recommending policy changes to the document, especially those dealing with sustainability-related topics. DRCOG also held several workshops for local governments on the TIP to help staff prepare applications and learn about what it means to receive federal funds.

Clean Audit

DRCOG received a super clean audit of the consolidated planning grant program. CDOT audited three randomly selected months of the grant program and, after reviewing every transaction in those months, stated that "everything was perfect." In addition, DRCOG's general audit resulted in no findings or questioned costs and DRCOG's federal programs were in compliance with federal requirements.

Annual Report on Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region

DRCOG produced its annual report on Traffic Congestion in the Denver Region. It follows up on annual reports prepared the past three years through the DRCOG Congestion Management Program. The report discusses the potential reversal of a trend in decreasing vehicle miles traveled throughout the region. It also discussed regional air quality and energy sustainability.



2010 Traffic Signal System Update

The Board adopted the Traffic Signal System Improvement Program 2010 Update, which guides the expenditure of federal funds to implement cost-effective improvements to the traffic signal system in the region over the period of fiscal years 2011 through 2016. The action approved allocation of \$3.4 million for 2011, and approved funding to increase to \$3.7 million annually in fiscal years 2012 through 2015.

8

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 2010 that did just that.

Short Courses Tackle Regional Issues

DRCOG continued its popular Short Course Series, geared toward providing local elected officials and local government staff an in-depth look at the challenges and issues facing the region. Topics covered included Metro Vision, transportation, and aging issues. Short Courses are offered annually.



Littleton Council Member and DRCOG Vice Chair Jim Taylor received certificates for attending all three classes in the series.



Planning Commissioners Workshop

DRCOG held another of its popular workshops for almost 70 planning commissioners in early August. The all-day event focused on popular and timely topics, and included a plenary session on the new federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities.

Elected Officials Recognized for Short Course Completion

DRCOG Chair Rod Bockenfeld presented certificates to elected officials who completed DRCOG's 2010 Short Course Series. Lakewood Council Member and DRCOG Board Alternate Karen Kellen; Federal Heights Councilmember, DRCOG Board Alternate and former DRCOG Chair Sharon Richardson; Wheat Ridge Council Member and DRCOG Board Alternate Joyce Jay; and

DRCOG Orientation

DRCOG offered two orientation sessions in 2010 to give an overview of DRCOG's responsibilities, activities and programs. The orientation sessions are designed with DRCOG Board members and alternates, local elected officials, local government staff members and others in mind.

DRCOG, Metro Mayors Caucus Team Up

DRCOG and Metro Mayors Caucus co-sponsored a class on "Promoting Energy Efficiency in your



Community” in December. The class explored retrofit programs as ways for communities to spur the economy while increasing the comfort and efficiency of both residential and commercial buildings. The class also explored Property Assessed Clean Energy or PACE programs, one financing model enabling cities and counties to offer low-interest loans for energy efficiency upgrades.



Workshop on Station Area/Urban Center Planning

In late July, DRCOG held a workshop for local government staff helping them become familiar with guidelines for TIP funding of urban center and transit station projects.

Geared to communities interested in pursuing the funding, the workshop explored how station area/urban center planning relates to the region’s vision and goals for sustainability; eligibility; required scope; and application scoring.

Regional Data Summit

More than 100 people representing member governments and partner agencies attended DRCOG’s second annual Regional Data Summit in January. The summit focused on coordinated

regional data sharing among local, state and federal government agencies, not-for-profit



organizations, academia and the private sector. Noted geospatial data expert Peter Batty was the keynote speaker, addressing the geospatial revolution. Pilot projects and tangible results were the top priorities identified by the group for 2010.



Educational Alliance

DRCOG added a university to its educational alliance. Kaplan University became the newest member of the educational alliance, which offers local governments and their employees tuition discounts. Also participating are Colorado State University Global Campus and Regis University.

Did You Know?

Elevator Inspections

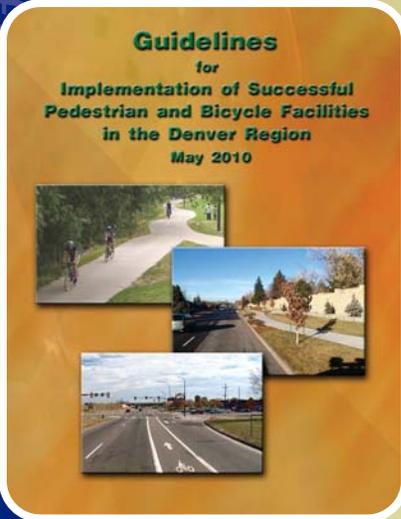


DRCOG did routine inspections on **2,842** elevators in **23** jurisdictions, twice during the year, for a total of **5,684** inspections. DRCOG also performed dozens of new installation inspections and safety test witnessing, additional duties of the inspectors.

DRCOG employs four full-time and one part-time inspector. Inspectors have to be nationally recertified annually and licensed by the state annually. The combined experience of the elevator inspectors in the elevator industry is over **120** years.

ROI Letters

Annually, DRCOG sends letters to its member governments detailing the return on investment each community receives as a member of DRCOG. The letters are also useful because they show the breadth and depth of the programs and activities at DRCOG, making sure local governments are aware of all that is going on at DRCOG.



Pedestrian and Bicycle Guidelines

Key pedestrian and bicycle policies, and facility design

guidelines are covered in a new report released by DRCOG in 2010. Guidelines for Successful Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities in the Denver Region serves as a convenient reference for communities planning for bicyclists and pedestrians. The booklet includes:

- recommended policies to be considered by local governments and implementing agencies,
- design considerations and
- land development principles.

Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning

DRCOG worked with local government staff to update the Regional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. The involvement by metro area cities and counties was vital. The plan moved on for approval by the State and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the fall so local governments could then apply for FEMA funds for projects that mitigate the effect of natural hazards in our area and improve public safety. The plan identifies 14 natural hazards – from avalanches to pandemic flu – that have a history of adversely affecting people, property and the environment.

Follow DRCOG on Twitter

DRCOG is active on Twitter, generating more than 200 followers now with little fanfare. Twitter users can find DRCOG @DRCOGorg, and become a follower to get the latest news in transportation, regional planning, aging, and more.



Did You Know?

FIRE Tests

1,016 fire candidates were tested through DRCOG's Firefighter Intraregional Recruitment and Employment Program, and **18** were hired out of the pool.



9

Western High Speed Rail Alliance

Several events in 2010 demonstrated DRCOG's commitment, as a founding member of the Western High Speed Rail Alliance, to exploring the benefits of high-speed rail for the Denver region and the greater Rocky Mountain West region. DRCOG is one of the founding members of the Alliance, which also includes as members the Maricopa Association of Governments, the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County, and the Utah Transit Authority. The Alliance complements the Colorado-focused efforts of the Rocky Mountain Rail Authority and CDOT's state rail plan.

DRCOG Hosts High-Speed Rail Meeting

In June, DRCOG hosted a discussion on the creation of a high-speed rail network throughout the intermountain west. The luncheon brought together business interests to hear Western High Speed Rail Alliance Executive Director Tom Skancke leading a discussion of the benefits, technology, and need for coalition-building behind a high-speed rail network. He covered how a high-speed rail partnership is essential for economic development, travel and tourism, and sustainability. More than 100 people packed DRCOG's sold-out event.

Alliance Holds First Conference

The Western High Speed Rail Alliance held its first annual high-speed rail conference in Las Vegas in October. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood headlined a distinguished list of speakers and expressed the view that he expects 80 percent of American cities to be connected by high-speed rail in 25 years.

Board Briefed on High-Speed Rail

Tom Skancke returned to Denver in November to brief the Board on the Alliance. The Alliance was formed in 2009 to acquire funding to study rail connectivity between the five megacities of the intermountain region: Denver, Salt Lake City, Reno, Las Vegas and Phoenix. Skancke served as a member of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission.

In making his presentation to the Board, Skancke announced the Alliance received more than \$1 million to study a potential western connection between California and the intermountain west. In addition, the Alliance is exploring connection possibilities with the midwest and northwest.



10

Trend Setting

When created by concerned leaders in 1955, DRCOG became one of the nation's first examples of regional and collaborative organizations. The organization that set trends back in 1955 still does today.

Denver Regional Solar Map

At the end of 2010, DRCOG took live the Denver Regional Solar Map, its new Internet tool for checking solar energy savings potential. The website allows residents and building owners in the metro area to quickly check their building's rooftop



capacity for solar photovoltaic (PV) energy savings and then connect with solar installers, including solar thermal providers. Shortly after the site debuted, media stories generated so much interest there were temporary waits on the site to get information. At the conclusion of the map's first two weeks, 657 visitors had used the site with 4,402 page views.

The project is not only expected to bolster adoption of renewable energy in the region, but job creation by connecting contractors to building owners. A public-private partnership developed the map. With a New Energy Economic Development grant from Gov. Ritter's Energy Office, DRCOG and Woolpert, Inc. linked DRCOG's high-resolution digital aerial photography for the region and Light

Detection and Ranging data or LIDAR with Woolpert's expertise to develop base data behind a web portal. The Colorado Solar Energy Industries Association also provided information for the effort and its membership is responding to questions and inquiries from consumers.

Live Work Play 2011

In December, DRCOG began its brand-new and much-anticipated awards program, Live Work Play 2011. The program celebrates great places and livable communities in the Denver metro area and features two months of People's Choice voting on the Live Work Play website at <http://www.liveworkplay2011.com>. The program focuses on mixed-use and mixed-income urban centers and will culminate with the live announcement of a Live Work Play 2011 People's Choice winner April 13, 2011.



Who Is TOD in Metro Denver?

At year's end, DRCOG's Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Program released results of its recent research on "Who is TOD in Metro Denver?" The program has conducted research on the question, with the third and final segment concluded in late 2010. It is the first original research in the Denver region to benchmark how

people's attitudes, perceptions and behaviors are changing as rail transit is expanded and local governments implement TOD. The research includes data from separate surveys of business, employees and residents.



The new TOD website also will host a number of videos in 2011 to stimulate public discussion about TOD, and to add context and depth to the information presented in the Who is TOD? study.

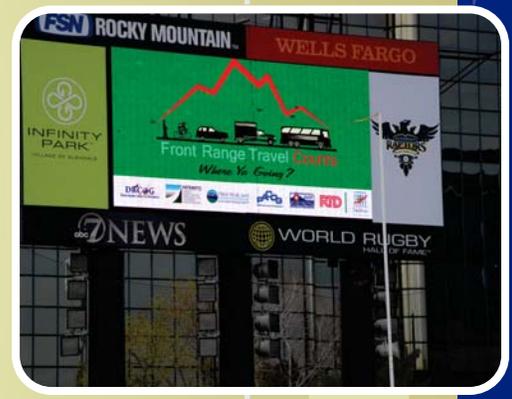
Focus: The Travel Model

DRCOG has completed a new, next-generation regional travel model, known as Focus. Focus possesses enhanced sensitivity to a range of regional policy issues. DRCOG is one of five metropolitan planning organizations in the nation to have the new class of model. The entire travel modeling profession is re-examining the way models work and DRCOG's new model represents the very latest research and thinking. The model has been used thus far to assist with the Regional Transportation Plan analysis and Transportation Improvement Program submittals for bicycle and pedestrian projects and station area/urban center area plans, and in evaluating the effects of sustainability alternatives.

Front Range Travel Counts

In 2010, the partnership continued between DRCOG, the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Pueblo Area Council of Governments, CDOT, and RTD on Front Range Travel Counts. The project includes the first in-depth study of urban household travel behavior covering all of Colorado's Front Range. Surveying continued in 2010, with results expected in early 2011. The results of the effort will help survey partners plan for future transportation needs along the Front Range.

Approximately 12,000 households along the Front Range were randomly selected and asked to identify where and how they travel on a specific, designated travel day. Later phases of the study will look at commercial vehicle trips, and trips to special facilities, such as airports.





DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

We make life better!



02-11

1290 Broadway, Suite 700, Denver Colorado 80203-5606
P: 303-455-1000 – F: 303-480-6790
drcog@drcog.org – www.drcog.org