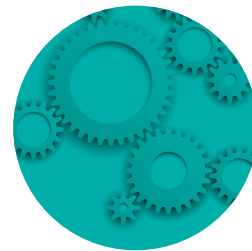




2025-2026 Budget and Work Program



What's inside?

This document contains the Denver Regional Council of Governments 2025-2026 budget, the fiscal guide for the operation of DRCOG from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. Additionally, the 2025-2026 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 aging and metropolitan planning organization. The biennial [Unified Planning Work Program](#) outlines the full scope of DRCOG's work as the metropolitan planning organization.

If you need digital accessibility assistance, submit a request at drcog.org/access or call 303-455-1000. Please expect a response within 72 hours (three business days).





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.

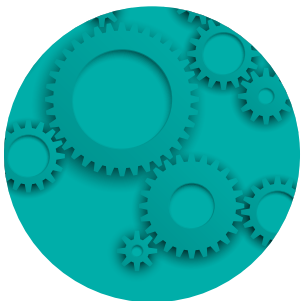
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Financial stewardship

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.

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Letter from the executive director

May 7, 2025

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 2025-2026. 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, 2025, through June 30, 2026. It supports work activities in the DRCOG metropolitan planning organization's Unified Planning Work Program, the Area Agency on Aging, Communications and Marketing, Executive Office, Administration and Finance, and Human Resources divisions.

Variations of note between the 2024-2025 and the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget include:

Revenues

- **Federal funding** includes an annual allocation of the \$199.7 million Environmental Protection Agency grant DRCOG was awarded in October 2024 for the building decarbonization program. The budget includes approximately \$46.5 million of spending on this program in fiscal year 2025-2026, accounting for a majority of the 162% increase in federal grants from fiscal year 2024-2025. Other programs contributing to the increase are the Build America Bureau grant, budgeted at \$500,000, and Transportation Improvement Program Set-Aside projects, budgeted at \$3.4 million. Additionally,

a rise in Veteran Directed Care program participation will increase federal revenue by approximately \$1.5 million. In total, federal revenue (excluding federal pass-through) will increase by approximately \$45.8 million.

- **State funding** will decrease by 6%, or \$413,000 in fiscal year 2025-2026. This is primarily a result of a decrease in funding from State Funds for Senior Services. Also, DRCOG will spend around \$111,000 less on the Regional Housing Strategy in fiscal year 2025-2026 as that grant comes to completion in March 2026.
- **Local or other funds** will increase by \$125,000, which is primarily the result of a budgeted \$101,000 increase in employer enrollment in the vanpool program.
- **In-kind services**, which reflect contributions from volunteers and partnering organizations, will decrease by approximately 9.3% in fiscal year 2025-2026 due to a decrease in Unified Planning Work Program expenditures. In-kind contributions are primarily received from the Regional Transportation District for the Unified Planning Work Program. A smaller amount is recorded for outside volunteers performing services within the Area Agency on Aging. The RTD in-kind is calculated to meet 75% of DRCOG's match obligation for Unified Planning Work Program.
- **The DRCOG Area Agency on Aging Reserve Fund** reflects the uncertainty of funding at both the federal and state level in the Area Agency on Aging. Funded by DRCOG cash, the approximately \$321,000 fund balances the budget and would allow DRCOG to retain

current Area Agency on Aging staff should there be additional funding cuts or a gap between amended contracts. The fiscal year 2024-2025 budget also included reserves for the Area Agency on Aging. The reserves have not been used yet in this fiscal cycle, and it is expected that some or all of the reserves will not be used in fiscal year 2025-2026 as DRCOG staff continue to aggressively pursue new and increased funding opportunities.

- **Member contributions** provide match for federal programs, legislative and lobbying activities, and Board-related expenses such as refreshments at Board meetings, the annual awards celebration, the Board Retreat, the quarterly City and County Managers Forum and the quarterly Small Communities, Hot Topics Forum. Due to economic uncertainty, member contributions will not increase in fiscal year 2025-2026, remaining at 2024-2025 levels.

Expenditures

- **Personnel expenditures** are budgeted with a 4% performance-based merit pool, drawing from an average among member jurisdictions surveyed, as well as information received from Employer's Council, DRCOG's government employment advisor. Health insurance premiums are renewed on January 1 of each year. The fiscal year 2025-2026 budget includes a 12% increase in medical premiums, as well as a \$135,000 increase in paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance premiums, or 0.9% of payroll. There is no budgeted increase for dental.

Due to expanded activities across the organization, the following positions are budgeted for fiscal year 2025-2026:

- 1) One position in the Executive Office for an office manager. As the organization grows, this position will help with various day-to-day office administration duties that the Executive Office, Human Resources,

and Administration and Finance divisions currently carry out.

- 2) Three positions in Administration and Finance, including a data analyst for the Area Agency on Aging business operations team (funded by state and federal grants), an additional staff accountant to assist with the increased billing and monitoring requirements that accompany a larger budget, and a grant manager to assist with grant applications, grant monitoring and grant implementation. The staff accountant and grant manager positions are funded with indirect dollars recouped through the federally approved indirect rate charged to grantors.
- 3) A senior travel modeler and senior safety planner in Transportation Planning and Operations. Both positions are also funded through the Unified Planning Work Program.
- 4) Eight remaining positions that will be filled for the building decarbonization program, all of which are paid for by Environmental Protection Agency grant dollars. Six are operational positions in Transportation and Planning Operations, and two are on the business operations side in Administration and Finance.

Due to the increased staffing, personnel costs will increase by 16%. As previously outlined, most of these expenses will be covered by grant funding.

- **Contractual expenses** will increase by a large margin due to the building decarbonization program, which accounts for \$45.35 million of the overall \$58.3 million contractual budget. The program's largest contract is a rebate and incentive contract that will total \$60 million over the term of the grant. Another large contract is for marketing services for the program, totaling \$14 million for the term of the grant. Again,

these contracts will be fully reimbursed by the grantor. There are additional contracts with the Transportation Improvement Plan Set-Aside projects and an increase in Veteran Directed Care contracts, as previously mentioned.

- **Non-personnel expenditures** are inclusive direct business expenses such as equipment, technology updates, license renewals and training. Also included are business insurance premiums of approximately \$287,000. Per the terms of the lease agreement, the rent obligation at 1001 17th Street increases slightly in June of each year. In fiscal year 2025-2026, DRCOG will pay \$1.13 million in rent obligation and common area maintenance charges.

The indirect rate for fiscal year 2025-2026 has been approved at 40.03% by the Federal Transit Administration. DRCOG's annual indirect cost allocation plan is prepared by independent auditors upon completion of the annual agency singular audit. It is then reviewed and approved by DRCOG's cognizant agency, the Federal Transit Administration. DRCOG's indirect costs are charged against direct personnel services and applied equally across all programs.

- **Capital outlay** includes \$75,000 for the reconfiguration of current office space to accommodate the growth of personnel at DRCOG and provide additional conference rooms for internal and external meetings. Also included is \$8,000 for new chairs throughout the office.
- **Pass-through funds** are received from federal and state agencies and fully expended through contractual agreements with service providers. The 1.5% (or \$248,000) decrease in pass-through funds is mainly from Older Americans Act and State Funds for Senior Services funding passed through to Area Agency on Aging providers. DRCOG staff are working with the state and providers to maximize service to member jurisdictions and advocate for

increased funds. Pass-through funds from the Federal Transportation Administration and from the state for Human Services Transportation continue to be healthy and active.

Fund balance

DRCOG's fiscal year 2025-2026 ending fund balance is projected to be approximately \$13.44 million. Approximately \$3.66 million of this fund balance reflects prepaid funds set aside for specific programs such as the Denver Regional Area Photography Project, 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 daily expense outlays while awaiting grantor payments. DRCOG's auditors have consistently recommended maintaining a fund balance equal to three months' operating expenditures. The auditors have assured DRCOG staff that the fund balance remains healthy but slightly behind ideal levels.

Respectfully submitted,



Douglas W. Rex
Executive Director

Budget

Fiscal year 2025-2026 budget summary and comparison

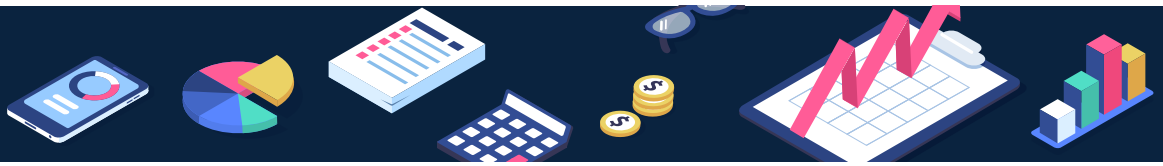
Description	2023-2024 actuals	2024-2025 budget	2025-2026 budget
Beginning balance	\$11,238,822	\$13,345,299	\$13,395,299
General funds	\$8,215,036	\$9,532,646	\$9,855,966
Program obligations	\$3,539,333	\$3,539,333	\$3,539,333
Revenues			
Member contributions	\$2,098,900	\$2,099,000	\$2,099,000
Federal grants	\$22,188,563	\$28,248,394	\$74,080,162
State grants	\$5,969,279	\$6,882,173	\$6,469,136
Local or other funds	\$1,851,794	\$1,568,874	\$1,694,288
In-kind services	\$1,079,520	\$1,439,865	\$1,305,192
DRCOG Area Agency on Aging Reserve Fund	\$0	\$ 272,600	\$320,868
Interest/investment income	\$95,662	\$50,000	\$50,000
Pass-through grant funds	\$20,703,302	\$17,007,814	\$16,759,813
Total revenues	\$53,987,020	\$57,568,720	\$102,778,459
Total funds available	\$65,225,842	\$70,914,019	\$116,173,758
Expenditures			
Personnel	\$15,851,253	\$17,664,463	\$20,494,454
Contractual services	\$10,313,915	\$16,012,933	\$58,308,354
DRCOG cash	\$1,079,520	\$1,909,000	\$1,381,669
Non-personnel	\$3,932,553	\$4,864,510	\$5,701,169
Capital outlay	\$30,000	\$80,000	\$83,000
Pass-through grant funds	\$20,703,302	\$17,007,814	\$16,759,813
Total expenditures	\$51,880,543	\$57,518,720	\$102,728,459
Ending balance	\$13,345,299	\$13,395,299	\$13,445,299
General funds	\$9,532,646	\$ 9,855,966	\$9,783,042
Program obligations	\$3,812,653	\$3,539,333	\$3,662,257

Notes: The beginning balance for the fiscal year 2024-2025 budget is based on fiscal year 2023-2024 actuals.

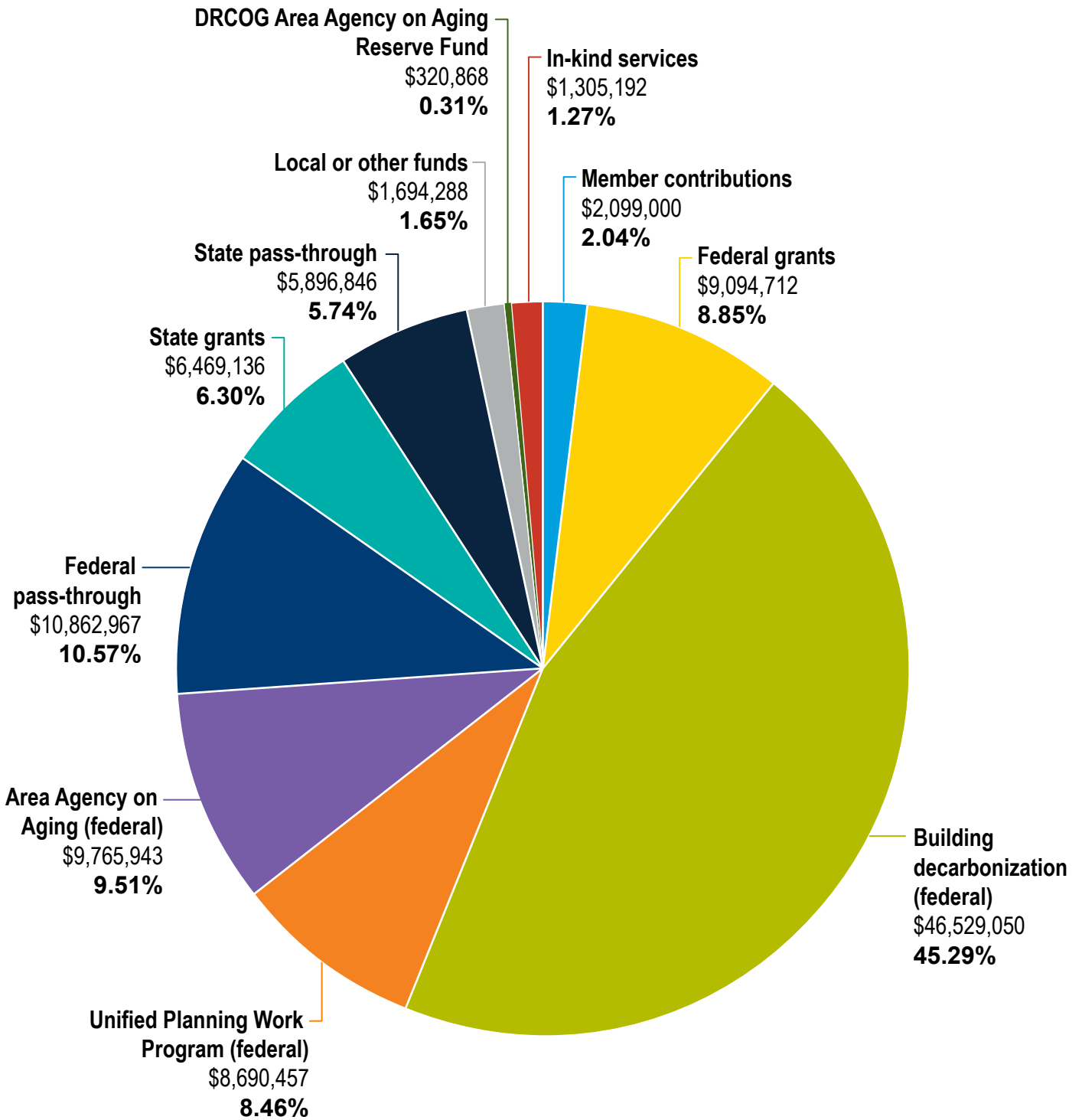
Program obligations are prepaid funds set aside for specific programs: Guaranteed Ride Home, Denver Regional Aerial Photography Project and regional vanpool.

DRCOG cash includes \$320,868 for the DRCOG Area Agency on Aging Reserve Fund, which provides temporary support for personnel expenses due to loss of funding while new funding is pursued or in contract negotiations.

Budget

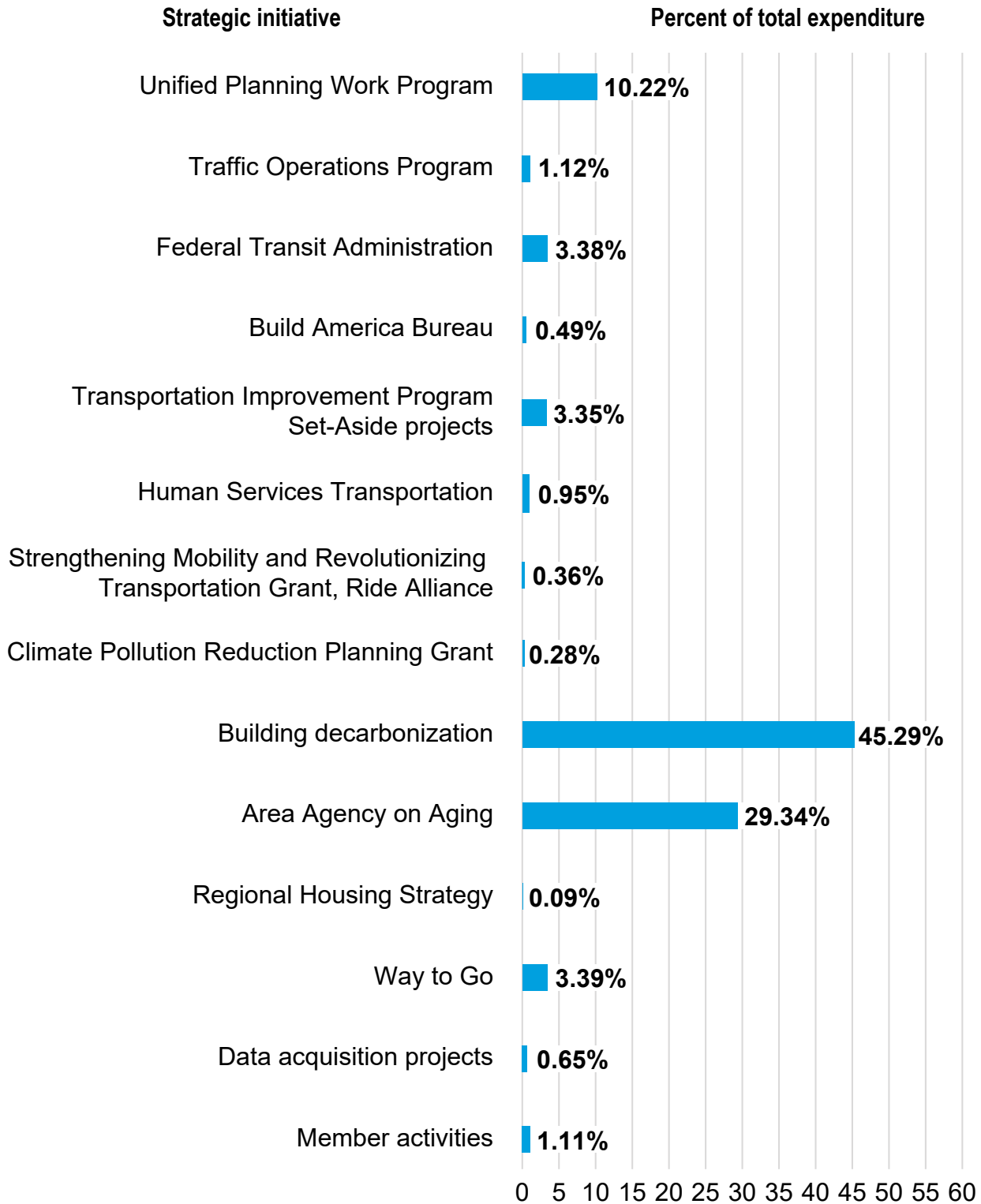


Fiscal year 2025-2026 funding





Fiscal year 2025-2026 expenditures by strategic initiative



Budget



Fiscal year 2025-2026 expenditures by strategic initiative (continued)

Strategic initiative	Percent of total	Amount
Unified Planning Work Program	10.22%	\$10,500,879
Traffic Operations Program	1.12%	\$1,149,544
Federal Transit Administration	3.38%	\$3,469,742
Build America Bureau	0.49%	\$500,000
Transportation Improvement Program Set-Aside projects	3.35%	\$3,437,500
Human Services Transportation	0.95%	\$975,313
Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation Planning Grant, Ride Alliance	0.36%	\$366,717
Climate Pollution Reduction Grant	0.28%	\$284,313
Building decarbonization	45.29%	\$46,529,050
Area Agency on Aging	29.34%	\$30,139,034
Regional Housing Strategy	0.09%	\$89,645
Way to Go	3.39%	\$3,482,617
Data acquisition projects	0.65%	\$666,385
Member activities	1.11%	\$1,137,720
Strategic initiatives total	100.00%	\$102,728,459

Note: The Area Agency on Aging total includes the \$320,868 for the DRCOG Area Agency on Aging Reserve Fund.

Budget



Fiscal year 2025-2026 strategic initiatives funding summary

Strategic initiative	Federal	Federal pass-through	State	State pass-through	Local or other funds	In-kind services	DRCOG Area Agency on Aging Reserve Fund	Member contributions: cash match and DRCOG funded	Total
Unified Planning Work Program	\$8,690,457	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$28,300	\$1,200,453	\$0	\$581,669	\$10,500,879
Traffic Operations Program	\$1,149,544	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,149,544
Federal Transit Administration 5310	\$748,842	\$2,720,900	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,469,742
Build America Bureau	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500,000
Transportation Improvement Program Set-Aside projects	\$3,437,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,437,500
Human Services Transportation	\$0	\$0	\$500,000	\$475,313	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$975,313
Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation Planning Grant, Ride Alliance	\$366,717	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$366,717
Climate Pollution Reduction Grant	\$284,313	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$284,313
Building decarbonization	\$46,529,050	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$46,529,050
Area Agency on Aging	\$9,765,943	\$8,142,067	\$5,879,491	\$5,421,533	\$80,000	\$50,000	\$320,868	\$479,132	\$30,139,034
Regional Housing Strategy	\$0	\$0	\$89,645	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$89,645
Way to Go	\$2,607,796	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$820,082	\$54,739	\$0	\$0	\$3,482,617
Data acquisition projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$666,385	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$666,385
Member activities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$99,521	\$0	\$0	\$1,038,199	\$1,137,720
Total funding summary	\$74,080,162	\$10,862,967	\$6,469,136	\$5,896,846	\$1,694,288	\$1,305,192	\$320,868	\$2,099,000	\$102,728,459

Note: The funding summary does not reflect \$50,000 in projected interest income.

Communities and residents



Collaboration with peer agencies

Serving as host for the Sacramento Area Council of Governments visit in June 2024 inspired the Board and staff to begin exploring the possibility of conducting a visit for DRCOG's Board of Directors and key staff. DRCOG staff are working with the Performance and Engagement Committee to identify a peer city to visit in early 2026.

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 Livable Centers technical assistance

Metro Vision articulates the importance of aligned land use and mobility options. Through the Livable Centers program, which is supported through the Transportation Improvement Program Set-Aside, local communities have the opportunity to examine key locations where more intentional land use considerations can leverage existing and future transportation investment. Matched with land use and transportation consultants, local governments can receive targeted planning consultation and technical assistance to transform important hubs in their communities.

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. In 2025, DRCOG staff added a series of artificial intelligence workshops for local governments, as suggested by the managers.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act regional grants navigator program

Launched in 2023, the program is a partnership among the governor's office and all councils of government in the state, including DRCOG. DRCOG has contracted to deliver support to its communities and in the first two years of the program has been responsible for attracting more than \$56 million in Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding to the region for projects such as broadband, water (supply, quality and drought mitigation), transportation, resilience 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. With a new transportation demand management strategic plan in place, Way to Go will continue to promote carpooling, vanpooling, transit, biking and walking, as well as telework. The Colorado Clean Commute marketing and outreach campaign will highlight tax credits available to employers for promoting commute options in the workplace.



Communities and residents



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. A major update to the public engagement plan will be completed in 2025, with added emphasis on approaches and tools for staff across the organization. These engagement efforts will focus on building new partnerships to ensure input from people and communities across the region.

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. The signature summer event is complemented by Winter Bike to Work Day in February, a celebration of those who bike throughout the year.

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 have established a community visits program 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 to meet the needs of the region's diverse communities.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

With the acceptance of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy by the Economic Development Administration, and with unanimous support from the Board, staff are undertaking an effort to secure designation as an Economic Development District and develop an Economic Development District Advisory Committee, as outlined by the Board. With designation comes modest funding from the Economic Development Administration, which will allow for more hands-on support and technical assistance, especially for the region's smaller, more rural communities.

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. In 2025-2026, DRCOG staff will switch to shorter quarterly meetings for a deeper look at a single topic. One of the quarterly meetings will remain in-person.

Legislative affairs

DRCOG staff provide 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. In fiscal year 2025-2026, DRCOG will explore the formation of a Board Legislative Committee to assist staff with legislative action throughout the year.

Caregiver Support Program

Family caregivers play an essential role in the quality of life and well-being of their loved ones, but it can be a demanding job. Caregivers experience emotional stress, financial burden, physical challenges, loneliness and isolation. The Area Agency on Aging supports caregivers and helps them navigate systems, understand resources and learn valuable tips and tools. Caregivers can also receive respite service so they can take care of their mental, physical and social needs.

Bus Rapid Transit Partnership

The Denver region has committed to implementing a regional bus rapid transit network consisting of 11 corridors by 2050 as part of DRCOG's Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan. Regional partners have formed a Bus Rapid Transit Partnership to lead the implementation of the network and coordinate work on corridor planning and project development.



Photo courtesy of Regional Transportation District.

Regional Housing Strategy

DRCOG's work to strengthen regional collaboration to address housing needs will continue this year. Through the development of a Regional Housing Strategy, DRCOG staff will formulate a set of regionally scaled collective actions for addressing housing across the region. Building from the foundation of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, these actions will prioritize current housing shortfalls while building policies and programs to respond to anticipated future demand. With a robust implementation framework, the Regional Housing Strategy will leverage existing and planned investments in transportation, support an aging population and consider the efficient allocation of resources to ensure the region's residents can find a home in a challenging housing market. Ultimately, DRCOG staff will incorporate the Regional Housing Strategy into Metro Vision to ensure a sustainable approach to addressing housing affordability in the region.



Climate Pollution Reduction

In 2024, DRCOG received \$199.7 million through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant program to provide grants and rebates to homeowners to install heat pumps, electric water heaters, and electric cooktops and ranges to improve indoor air quality and public health. The program, which will be fully operational in fiscal year 2025-2026, also includes workforce and job creation, business development, and supply chain improvements.



Photo courtesy of Regional Transportation District.

Communities and residents



Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Action Plan implementation

In October 2022, the DRCOG Board adopted the Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Action Plan, which identified initiatives to address greenhouse gas mitigation across the Denver region. Addressing parking standards to encourage more efficient land use patterns is one of the initiatives identified in this plan. To support local governments through the process of assessing parking needs and use, DRCOG plans to conduct a region-wide parking utilization study to assess parking patterns and use of existing parking facilities. The study will illuminate opportunities for lowering parking standards and guide future work to support local governments in their efforts to update land development standards related to parking.

Active Transportation Plan

DRCOG staff will update the regional Active Transportation Plan. The plan guides the development of the region's bicycle and pedestrian network, with a focus on connecting urban centers and other activity nodes.

Metro Vision

Metro Vision serves as the foundation for the regional planning programs and initiatives. In the coming year, DRCOG will initiate an update to the plan by incorporating emerging work in regional housing and transportation coordination and continue to align with regional implementation partners. As plans move forward for the Economic Development District designation, DRCOG staff will look to coordinate those activities with the economic vitality aspects of Metro Vision.

Regional corridor planning

The Corridor Planning Program advances projects and priorities identified in the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan. It focuses on developing concepts and priorities for multijurisdictional regional corridors. DRCOG staff will lead a new call for corridor planning projects in fiscal year 2025-2026.

2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan

DRCOG staff have initiated next major update of the Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan, and work will proceed through fiscal year 2025-2026. The update will consider changes in population and employment forecasts, travel patterns, and remote work dynamics. It will be informed by other regional efforts, including the Regional Housing Strategy, Active Transportation Plan and Regional Multimodal Freight Plan.

Community-based transportation plans

DRCOG staff will continue to work with member governments and community groups on planning efforts to improve mobility options for low-income and disadvantaged populations. The grassroots effort focuses on identifying local communities' most important transportation challenges and developing strategies to overcome them. DRCOG staff will begin work on the projects selected through the most recent solicitation process.



Communities and residents

Regional data acquisition projects

DRCOG staff facilitate and manage cost-effective partnerships and projects that acquire foundational datasets, including imagery, lidar, planimetric data and land cover, in support of local and regional planning. DRCOG staff are also working with regional partners to explore processes to collect, manage, maintain and share regional transportation data.

Civic Academy

DRCOG continues to offer an engaging program to build civic capacity and engagement. The curriculum of the seven-week program integrates the themes of Metro Vision to allow participants to explore and discuss essential regional issues like transportation, growth and economic vitality, housing, civic engagement and more. In addition to learning about the dynamic nature of these issues, the program includes skill-building activities to support participants in their civic pursuits. The program culminates in participants' development of action plans for further engagement in timely and relevant issues in their communities.

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.

Transit Design Standards Toolkit

As part of the Complete Streets initiative, DRCOG staff will develop a toolkit for local agencies and partners to use to facilitate transit and bicycle or pedestrian design standards for land use development near or adjacent to transit and other multimodal corridors. Design standards will include flexible options for improving safe and efficient access to transit and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



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. Due to the increase in funding streams and complexities in grant management that accompany a growing budget, the Administration and Finance division is adding both a contract specialist and staff accountant to its team. These important support positions will ensure DRCOG remains in compliance with federal and state requirements.

DRCOG budget

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

Cyber HIPAA audit

DRCOG underwent a cyber Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act audit in 2024, with favorable results. The Information Technology team will continue to review and implement recommendations suggested by the auditing firm.



Stabilize Area Agency on Aging funding

Diversifying funding continues to be a priority for the Area Agency on Aging and is essential to keep pace with the growing demand for services. The Area Agency on Aging will participate in a collaborative program, the Community Care Hub National Learning Community, to develop a community-clinical team and will address community disparity goals, needed workflow changes, new payment codes and the systems needed to operationalize sustainable Community Health Integration Services in the region. The goal for fiscal year 2025-2026 is to provide more community services like transportation, nutrition and in-home services through partnership with health payers and care providers. The Area Agency on Aging will also adapt to reduced state and federal funding by prioritizing those most in need, prioritizing the core services of the Older Americans Act and sustaining services with fewer dollars. Staff will work with the Colorado Association of Area Agencies on Aging to advocate for increased state and federal funding for services and will advocate for increased funding during the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act.

Board collaboration assessment

The Board collaboration assessment gives DRCOG's Board of Directors the opportunity to provide feedback on collaboration with directors, committee structure and leadership.

Geographic information systems data development

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

Regional Crash Data 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.

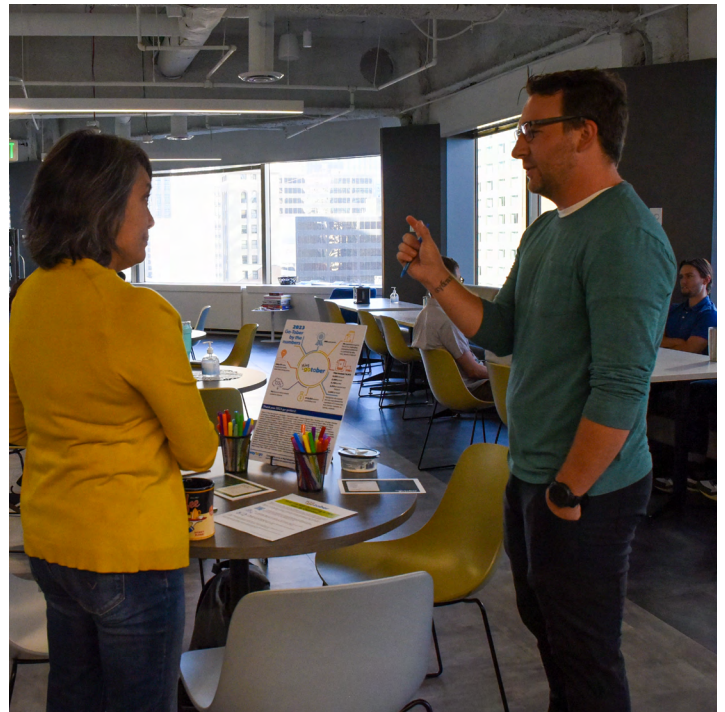
Story maps

DRCOG staff develop data visualizations to engage stakeholders around planning and transportation topics using informative and easy-to-explore web maps and infographics. Story maps, a special addition to this suite of tools, enhance spatial analysis with narrative and photography to provide context to what might otherwise seem like abstract concepts.

Business operations

Integrating accessibility best practices

In July 2024, a new state accessibility law went into effect, raising the standard for public entities to provide digital products that are perceivable, operable and understandable. DRCOG staff developed a plan, policies, procedures and training to ensure that accessibility is fully integrated into how the organization does business. Staff launched a new, fully accessible website in 2024 and continue to work on remediation of DRCOG's most important documents for a wider audience. In the coming year, DRCOG staff will continue to refine methods for prioritizing, testing and remediating digital products.



Skilled workforce



Professional certification

To support professional development and enhance networking opportunities that benefit the organization, DRCOG reimburses up to \$600 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.

Training and development

DRCOG has a legacy of investing in staff through training and development. DRCOG maintains a cloud-based learning management system where employees can access a library of tens of thousands of training classes. Additionally, DRCOG offers on-site, remote and hybrid live training for staff. These training classes are recorded and stored on the learning management system for employees who cannot attend live to access on their own schedule.

Employee Engagement and Satisfaction Survey

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

Continuing education

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

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

Internships

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.



Supervisor training

In January 2025, DRCOG started a new Supervisor Training Program for supervisors to enhance their skills. Cohorts of no more than seven managers take online courses on 11 distinct topic areas, including conflict management, emotional intelligence, creativity and positivity to support employees, and critical thinking and problem-solving. Each cohort completes one topic area and then gathers over a meal with a member of the leadership team to discuss key points and share their perspectives on the topic. DRCOG's monthly all-supervisor meetings complement this offering by providing instructions on foundational concepts like hiring, budgeting and adherence to policy.



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. COG Cares offers a variety of events 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 contribute hundreds of hours each year to "make life better" across the region by supporting organizations such as Bienvenidos Food Bank, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado and Denver Rescue Mission. In addition, staff come together for meaningful activities like holiday card-making and gift-giving for veterans and older adults.





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