

Peer Exchange: Regional Highlights

Economic Development

Austin

- CAPCOG is writing a new [comprehensive economic development strategy](#) (CEDS) and should be close to completion by next year.
 - CAPCOG's CEDS shares a couple of themes with our CEDS (Workforce Development, Infrastructure and Resiliency).

Phoenix

- MAG decided to sunset their Economic Development Committee and never were an Economic Development District, nor did they have a CEDS

Seattle

- Seattle has a very active Economic Development District and has developed an online engagement hub for direct public input for their [Regional Economic Strategy](#) update, which was adopted in 2021 and will be updated in 2026.

Housing

Austin

- City of Austin is a national leader in understanding housing needs with very effective policies in land use to promote affordable housing (affordability unlocked, see <https://data.austintexas.gov/stories/s/Affordable-Housing-Development/wk3m-4vb2/>).
 - Have been successful in raising funds to support affordable housing (<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/housing-and-planning-department/policy-plans-data>) and tracking and reporting progress.
 - Austin has worked around constraints from the state. So, it could be an interesting place to discuss local control.
- Many of the suburban jurisdictions have been less active than the Denver region on trying to figure out their role in regional solutions. However, suburbs of Round Rock and Pflugerville are interesting in that they have fairly traditional zoning yet have managed to create some diverse and affordable housing.

- Travis County (ex-urban Austin) is also home to this community, <https://mlf.org/community-first/>.

Phoenix

- [Housing Phoenix Plan](#)
 - Includes a [city housing assessment](#)
 - No regional assessment has been conducted.
 - [Affordable Housing Development Resources](#)
- Maricopa Association of Governments' [Homelessness Program](#)
 - Maricopa Regional [Continuum of Care](#)

Seattle

- A lot of overlap between [PSRC's](#) work and DRCOG's work
- PSRC developed a [regional housing strategy](#) a few years ago (chance to dive into what has worked and what hasn't)
 - The way the region and counties do their housing and growth allocation process in coordination with cities is interesting in the topic of housing goals that roll up to a regional need.
 - The suburban context is similar to the Denver region, and it's possible to see opportunities for some close-in Denver suburbs to have a future like Kirkland, Everett, and Redmond.
- Recent state legislation has created new requirements for local governments related to land use and housing (including needs assessments, upzoning, middle housing).
 - Legislation is predicated by more carrot-based funding approaches like Prop123 funding
- Subregional housing-focused collaboration ([ARCH](#))
- City of Seattle's Comp Plan Update ([One Seattle Plan](#)) has been very focused on changes to zoning in single family neighborhoods
- There are some new sub-county/cross county housing collaboratives that are interesting, and all have very different perspectives.

Older Adults

Austin

- CAPCOG provides traditional AAA services, similar to DRCOG

Phoenix

- AAA services are provided by a separate non-profit and governed by a volunteer board.
- Notable programs include:
 - 24-hour help line
 - A licensed [Behavioral Health Program](#) helps older adults manage their mental and emotional health.
 - The [Senior Adult Independent Living \(SAIL\)](#) program provides case management and in-home services to older adults and adults with disabilities who live in the community and need assistance with their daily activities.
 - [Health Promotion](#) - The Agency offers a wide variety of evidence-based healthy living classes (both virtually and in person) to promote physical activity and wellness.
 - [MOSAIC](#) - Elder Refugee Program
 - [DOVES](#)- helps survivors of late-life domestic violence, sexual assault and elder abuse, age 50 and older, overcome the unique challenges older victims face as they flee their abusers and work toward self-sufficiency.

Seattle

- Traditional AAA role (care coordination, case management, etc.)
- Age Friendly association
 - The City of Seattle joined the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities in July 2016. [Age Friendly Seattle](#) is now implementing its second five-year strategic framework.
- Clinical support role is interesting.
 - Aging and Disability Services, in collaboration with the Northwest Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Center, aims to positively impact the healthcare system for older patients and their families through targeted outreach and education.

Transportation

Austin

- In 2020, Austin passed transportation funding referendum called [Project Connect](#).
 - Includes funding for public transportation, sidewalks, urban trails, bikeways, safe routes to school, roadway maintenance and other capital improvements.
 - It also included [\\$300 million of anti-displacement funding](#).
 - Austin has one passenger rail line and is trying to expand.

Phoenix

- [Prop 479](#) and MAG's role.
- It could be interesting to learn about heat adaptation, resilience, water supply, etc.
- Phoenix and Tucson regions are working on [intercity rail](#).
- Phoenix is a leader in innovative transportation technology
 - extensive testing/deployment of vehicle technologies
 - [connected vehicles](#),
 - [5.3-mile test bed](#) just north of Phoenix,
 - [automated vehicles](#)

Seattle

- Through [Sound Transit 3](#), the region is trying to implement a multi-line rail network. Also, there is an emphasis on station area planning and growth management.
- King County is implementing a multi-line BRT network, [Rapid Ride](#).
- WA legislature recently passed a comprehensive funding package: <https://www.psrc.org/media/9606>.
- Seattle is a leader in [urban freight innovation](#) and [curbside management](#)