Planning for Regional Sustainability

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RMLUI’s 19th Annual Land Use Conference
Who is DRCOG?
Mission statement

- DRCOG is a place where local officials can work together to solve the region's problems
What is Metro Vision?

Goal: Protect the quality of life that makes our region such an attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family.
Three key elements

- Growth & Development
- Environment
- Transportation
- Plus chapter on implementation
Metro Vision and sustainability

• Urban growth boundary
  - Increase density 10% between 2000 and 2035

• Limits on large-lot development
  - Maintain at 3% of all households

• Urban centers
  - Compact, mixed-use, pedestrian- and transit-friendly

• Balanced, multi-modal transportation system
  - FasTracks will add 122 new miles of light and commuter rail
Renewed focus on sustainability

- **Study sessions**
  - Nov 2008: Climate change
  - Jan 2009: Energy sustainability
  - Jul 2009: Best practices from other regions

- **DRCOG/ULI public officials workshop (June 2009)**
  - Implementing sustainable development locally

- **Information and resources on DRCOG Web site**
  - [www.drcog.org/sustainability](http://www.drcog.org/sustainability)

- **2009 DRCOG Board Retreat**
  - Incorporate sustainability into next major update of Metro Vision 2035
Sustainability Cafés

• Purpose
  - Obtain stakeholder input on the issue of regional sustainability
  - Ensure that stakeholder concerns and aspirations are understood and considered in the DRCOG Board’s decision-making process
Café discussion questions

• What would a sustainable Denver region look like?

• What principles should guide DRCOG policy and funding decisions to promote a more sustainable region?
Common themes

- education
- infrastructure
- sustainable
- public
- conservation
- partnerships
- business
- government
- life
- collaboration
- housing
- mobility
- cost
- level
- funding
- water
- growth
- quality
- goals
- use
- transport
- partnerships
- education
- cooperation
- sustainability
- energy
- agriculture
- recreation
- investment
- people
- meet
- individual
- communities
- land
- balance
- modes
- competition
- development
- school
- efficient
- federal
- incentives
- denver
- integrated
- local
- practices
- use
- growth
- solution
- promote
- green
- options
- especially
- versus
Survey results: Top-ranked potential guiding principles

- Provide a variety of transportation options
- Promote efficient use of energy; water; other natural resources
- Integrate land use and transportation planning
- Reduce fossil fuel consumption and increase renewable energy utilization
- Seek integrated solutions that create multiple economic; social; environmental benefits
- Promote shift from driving to alternative modes
Subsequent Board actions

- Refined the list of 30 sustainability concepts from the Cafés down to 17
  - 11 concepts that current plans and programs already address
  - 6 additional concepts within DRCOG’s purview, but not currently addressed

- Identified related goals
  - 3 existing Metro Vision goals
  - 6 new goals
New sustainability goals (draft)

- Increase the rate of construction of alternative transportation facilities
- Reduce the percent of trips to work by single-occupant vehicles to 65% by 2035
- Locate 50% of new housing and 75% of new employment within urban centers
- Reduce per capita water use 13.5% by 2030
- Reduce regional per capita vehicle miles traveled 10% by 2035
- Reduce per capita transportation greenhouse gas emissions 60% by 2035
Goal relationships

- Urban centers
- Alternative transportation facilities
- Water use
- Mode share
- Vehicle miles traveled
- Transportation greenhouse gas emissions
- Other factors (fuel efficiency, gas prices, etc.)
Next Steps

- Refine goals and related policy/strategy updates that will . . .
  - Be incorporated into Metro Vision 2035 update
  - Help inform development of TIP policy and RTP category funding allocations
    - One of many factors to be considered
  - Lay the groundwork for continuing discussions about regional sustainability
Lessons learned

• Start with education
• Obtain stakeholder input early
• Recognize current areas of strength
• Focus on measurable goals
• You don’t have to do everything in one plan update
  - Planning as an ongoing process
Questions?

www.drcog.org/sustainability