

Importance:

The percentage of the region's population that is 60 years and older will more than double between now and 2035. The pending retirement of the baby boomer generation, specifically, will put severe strains on the senior services network. DRCOG, local governments and other senior organizations are working to better understand and prepare for how the aging of the population will affect demand for services and for more elder-friendly communities.

Background/Key Issues: As the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the Denver region, DRCOG is responsible for planning and funding for the delivery of services to older adults pursuant to the federal Older Americans Act (OAA) and the state Older Coloradans Act. The most recent plan, covering 2007-2011, is available upon request.

The first of the baby boomers (those born in 1946) became eligible for services from DRCOG in 2006. This demographic phenomenon ensures that demand for aging services (such as those listed below), which already exceeds available capacity, will continue to grow.

- ▶ advocacy for seniors in long-term care facilities;
- ▶ senior nutrition programs;
- ▶ in-home services (homemaker and personal care);
- ▶ family caregiver support;
- ▶ transportation services;
- ▶ health promotion clinics;
- ▶ mental health clinics; and
- ▶ emergency preparedness.

The 2006 reauthorization of the federal Older Americans Act (OAA) included language calling for Area Agencies on Aging to work with state and local governments to plan for livable communities for a growing older adult population. However, no funds were allocated for this new initiative.

Federal funding essentially has remained stagnant for several years. With inflation, a greater number of persons over 60, and the increased needs associated with people living longer, the purchasing power of OAA funding has decreased. The National Association for Area Agencies on Aging estimates that just to keep pace with inflation and projected growth of the older population, at least a 12 percent funding increase is needed in FY 2009-10 for OAA services at the national level.

Issues Paper

Planning and Funding for Aging Services

State funding increased significantly early in the decade, thanks to the efforts of a coalition of senior advocates of which DRCOG and the state's other AAAs have been an integral part. Since then, funding has fluctuated, suffering cuts during the decade's two recessions. This past legislative session, funding was reduced by \$1 million for FY 2009-10.

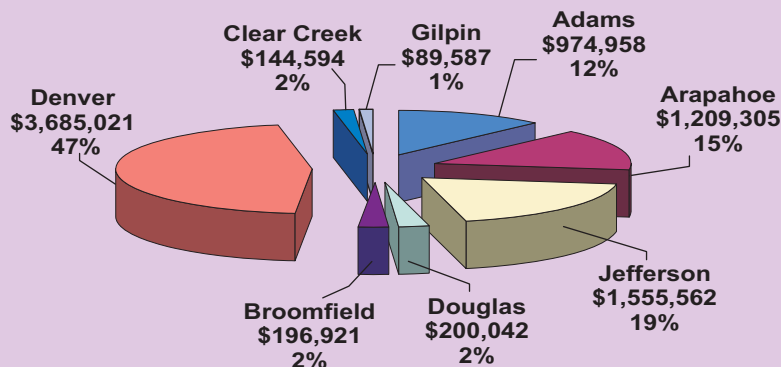
Status (as of July 2009):

DRCOG has earned a reputation as a statewide leader in advocacy for older adults. We will continue to work for increased funding for senior services at both the federal and state levels and to plan for and fund innovative programs to better meet the growing and changing needs of older adults.

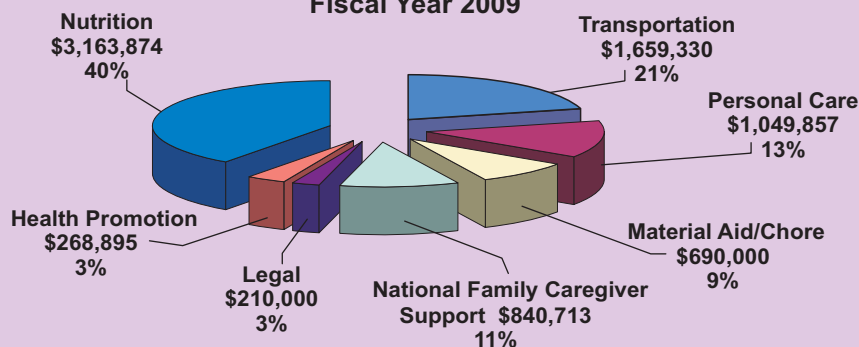
Currently we are working with other advocates to garner support for just-introduced federal legislation (S.1257/H.R. 2852), "Project 2020, Building on the Promise of Home and Community Based Services Act of 2009." We also are working with advocates to promote a long-term funding strategy with state policy makers.

TOTAL STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS (Budgeted)

DRCOG Aging Funding By County
Fiscal Year 2009



DRCOG Aging Funding by Service Category
Fiscal Year 2009



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