



INTRODUCTION

The Denver Regional Mobility & Access Council celebrated a number of milestones in 2008. DRMAC marked its second year as a project of the Colorado Nonprofit Development Center (CNDC), hired its first Executive Director and summer intern, updated and printed the *Getting There Guide* in paper and electronic format, and began and concluded studies that were important to the mobility of residents in the Denver metropolitan region.

After several years of work and effort to establish the organization, formulate a mission, and bring together stakeholders from across the region, DRMAC was able to take the first step forward into actions that will benefit the region and bring us closer to our vision of mobility and access for all.

FUNDING

DRMAC cultivated its relationship with the Getting There Collaborative, an organization formed by the Rose Community Foundation and the Colorado Health Foundation and was successful in securing funding for 2008 from this organization.

This funding was a general operating grant designed to provide DRMAC with the monies necessary to create an office and staff the position of Executive Director. It also paid for a pedestrian access study and allowed DRMAC to update and reprint the *Getting There Guide*.

Then, in the Spring, DRMAC applied for funding under the new Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Job Access-Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedoms funding initiatives. This money was made available by the FTA and coordinated by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and the Regional Transportation District (RTD) under a joint agreement.

The funding was approved by DRCOG and is administered by the RTD with whom DRMAC now has a contract for the two-year funding cycle. These funds will allow DRMAC to pay for staff and develop projects which will enhance the coordination of transportation under the Americans with Disabilities Act and are paid under a reimbursement arrangement with the RTD.

The acquisition of this funding has been instrumental in DRMAC's ability to develop projects, hire staff, and continue the organization's efforts at establishing itself as the Regional Coordinating Council for the Denver Metropolitan area.

STAFFING

With the funding firmly secured, DRMAC was able to hire its first staff person, Executive Director Wendy Band. Wendy's experience in the nonprofit arena and understanding of human services issues, coupled with her background as a lawyer, gave the Board confidence in her ability to step into the role as Executive Director.

Wendy began a process of educating herself on the transportation issues being addressed by DRMAC and helped to establish the "face" of DRMAC. She also was instrumental in finding an office space, generating a phone number and fax line, and responding to emails and phone calls from members and prospective members.

To assist during the update of the *Getting There Guide*, Wendy worked through a college internship program to identify a candidate who came to DRMAC during the summer. This individual did a great deal of the "behind-the-scenes" work updating the information presented in the Guide.

DRMAC was pleased to have the services of Wendy Band during this year as our Executive Director, putting a face to the organization.

BRANDING

DRMAC took the opportunity presented by the hiring of Wendy Band as Executive Director to develop a new brand identity. This was accomplished through the hiring of a local marketing firm to assist with the creation of a new logo as well as the development of a newsletter.

Working through the Council's Marketing Committee, Wendy brought forward a recommendation for a new logo which represented the organization better. This logo presents a cleaner, more modern impression of the organization to our members and potential members alike.

In addition, in the fall of 2008, DRMAC issued the first official newsletter of the organization, the *Mobility Messenger*. As an introductory newsletter, the publication included information about the organization and its members as well as highlighted recognition for the organization from the Rose Community Foundation.

Recognition of the role that DRMAC is playing in the community came from the Colorado Transit Association, CASTA, when DRMAC was invited to participate in a session at their fall conference. The session

on coordination was well attended and further emphasized the work being done by DRMAC in the region.

In the fall, the Denver Regional Council of Governments expanded participation on its Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to include a specialized transportation provider. Lenna Kottke, the Executive Director of Special Transit was selected and now serves on the TAC. This change to the committee was largely due to the increasing influence that DRMAC has had on coordination in the region and its standing in the community.

These efforts have successfully elevated DRMAC as the Regional Coordinating Council and presented a cleaner, more professional image to the community.

PROJECTS

There were several initiatives that began or concluded in 2008. Each focused on mobility and access and proved to be an essential part of the mission of the organization.

The project that concluded in 2008 was the Pedestrian Access Study initiated in 2007. After several months of research and networking among the various local entities involved in the issue, it was determined that while the premise of our study was a good one, there were several other such studies going on and that a continuation would not serve any benefit to the organization or the community.

As a result, the Pedestrian Access study was closed with a final report issued in the summer of 2008.

The Federal *United We Ride* initiative is a program which seeks to foster the development of efforts to coordinate transportation and in 2008 it came out with a proposal called *One Vision, One Call*. This proposal seeks to foster the development of a single unified contact center for the coordination of transportation.

A single unified contact center has been a concern of DRMAC for a number of years now. Members of DRMAC have been involved in similar projects with the National Academies of Sciences and through the American Public Transportation Association and by using this expertise, DRMAC sought to develop a local effort.

The result was the creation of the Call Center Technology Task Force which is headed by Sylvia Labrucherie of the Colorado Department of Transportation. This task force began meeting in 2008 and is working

on developing the framework for achieving the *United We Ride* vision of a single unified call center for transportation coordination.

Over the past few years, a number of hospitals moved from their Denver locations to a new medical campus in Aurora at the old Fitzsimmons military complex. The result has been a significant increase in distance travelled by customers of many of the transportation providers who are members of DRMAC.

Because of the nature of the campus, a study was undertaken by the medical facilities, working with the City of Aurora and other stakeholders, to assess the impact of traffic in the area. Members of DRMAC participated in these meetings and it was quickly determined that the scope of these projects was too narrow.

Recommended by Board President, Tex Elam, a study project was proposed that would review the issue of transportation to and from the Anschutz/Fitzsimmons Medical Campus. Because the campus is a distinct and relatively isolated area, meaning that there are few non-campus medical facilities nearby, a study would be able to garner unique and specific information which could be valuable in identifying potential avenues of coordination.

The basic elements of this study have been developed and DRMAC is now in the process of funding a consultant to bring this study to fruition.

As a result of its efforts, DRMAC was also given a seat at the table of the Statewide Coordinating Council, established by the Colorado Department of Transportation to facilitate coordination efforts at the statewide level. Our Board President, Tex Elam, represents DRMAC on this body.

Finally, DRMAC and its members participated in the SilverPrint project which is a group that was brought together to review services available to seniors in the state. Transportation is a significant element of this effort and DRMAC sees this project as beneficial. The Council is working to provide assistance to SilverPrint and continues to have a presence at the meetings.

SUMMARY

The Denver Regional Mobility & Access Council had an exceptional year in 2008. From hiring staff to recreating its brand and image, from closing one study to opening two more, and from acquiring funding to creating an office, the organization took several major strides forward in its effort at moving ahead in achieving its vision for the region.

With these efforts, DRMAC has firmly established itself as the regional coordinating council for the Denver Metropolitan area and is working at bringing more of the region's stakeholders to the table.

The Board and Council are pleased with the results of the efforts in 2008 and are looking forward to expansion and enhancement in 2009.