

DRCOG / CEO Partnership for EPA CPRG One-Pager

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Background

The Colorado Energy Office (CEO) is the state recipient of the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) planning grant, and the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) is the MSA recipient for the Denver region. Both CEO and DRCOG will file a Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) with the EPA by March 1, 2024 that will outline priority measures that will qualify them and other eligible entities (i.e. local governments) to apply for implementation grants by April 1, 2024.

CEO has been conducting outreach and modeling for state-level actions as part of its update to the [Colorado Greenhouse Gas Roadmap](#), and has been engaging stakeholders about [local government actions](#), both of which will inform the state PCAP. As the state planning grant recipient, CEO is required to include actions that local governments can implement in its PCAP. CEO held three virtual stakeholder meetings with local governments and other key stakeholders in November, and conducted a survey about local government actions for the PCAP. Some of the key themes expressed included a need for staff capacity to implement strategies locally, an interest in project funding in addition to funding for policy work, and suggestions to strengthen the focus on equity in the strategies. Based on this, CEO will be refining and fleshing out its action list, and issuing draft PCAP language for local governments in January for additional feedback.

DRCOG has been engaging with their stakeholder steering committee members on a monthly basis to gauge insight and feedback to inform their PCAP. An equity subcommittee has been convened to support and guide the strategy development process and ensure that PCAP strategies address the needs of low income and disadvantaged community (LIDAC) members in the region; this subcommittee has met three times to date, and co-chairs from the subcommittee have joined the DRCOG Project Management Team. DRCOG has also held two virtual public meetings for community members to educate the public on the CPRG program and elicit feedback regarding the eight PCAP measures. Along with these engagements, DRCOG has a [Social Pinpoint site](#) to receive feedback throughout the CPRG program process. The primary themes of the input received from the public forums and equity committee include ensuring that strategies support the long-term maintenance of affordable housing; spur the development, including through training and placement programs, of good-paying, long-term careers supporting this transition; address split incentive issues between landlords and tenants; address human health problems such as air quality and exposure to extreme heat; and support greater access to transportation networks and services and active transportation infrastructure.

As part of stakeholder engagement to inform their PCAPs, both CEO and DRCOG have heard clearly from local governments and other key stakeholders a desire to understand if we are coordinating, and what our plans are to apply for implementation grants as soon as possible so they can plan accordingly.

Plans for partnership

We wanted to share that DRCOG and CEO are working together closely to determine a strategy for applying for implementation grants that can be successful given the many criteria of the EPA program, and that can enable the greatest benefit for a wide variety of local governments and key stakeholders across the state given the likelihood of few grants per state. **At this time, our intention is to explore forming a coalition to apply for one or possibly two implementation grants, given EPA's preference for coalitions. Nevertheless, this collaboration could result in one or more applications submitted either in coalition or individually.**

We are interested in considering applications for multiple components that we believe would have widespread benefits for climate action in the DRCOG region and statewide, including:

- **A local climate action accelerator subgrant program:** This program would provide technical assistance in the form of staff or consulting support to local governments to adopt local climate policies and strategies. By participating in the program, local governments would become eligible and prioritized for centrally administered incentive programs. *(please see separate one-pager for more information)*
- **One or more centrally administered incentive programs, such as:**
 - Front Range Beneficial Electrification (FRBEN) proposal for a one stop shop building energy program
 - Multimodal transportation infrastructure grant fund
 - Infrastructure grants for transit-oriented affordable housing

We are eager to collaborate with local governments and other stakeholders to refine these ideas and make an application as successful as possible, including incorporating your input and working with you on letters of commitment to demonstrate our regional and statewide collaboration.

Next steps

- DRCOG will be hosting meetings with stakeholders on January 2nd and 11th to workshop grant application ideas, including those outlined here.
- CEO will issue draft PCAP measures for local governments for stakeholder input in January.
- Please reach out with any questions: christine.berg@state.co.us and mnesbit@drcog.org.