



Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments

Communities Working Together

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Councilmember
Jill Gaebler,
City of Colorado
Springs

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

The world is definitely in a different place from where it was when I became the Chair in January. I had a message prepared to all of you about the many goals we set for 2020 and expressing my pleasure at being able to serve our region and its many citizens. Unfortunately, my initial “Letter from the Chair” went unpublished due to the State of Emergency Order for the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Today, I write to share just how very grateful I am of how our region has responded during this crisis, and how exceptionally proud I am of the response from PPACG. Throughout this crisis and the many changes to our daily lives, our work continues, and we have continued to provide Transportation Planning, Joint Land Use Study Implementation, administration of the PPRTA, Air and Water Quality Management, and our regular service to the Area Agency on Aging clients and citizens.

Staff members, especially our Area Agency on Aging staff has gone above and beyond their normal services for older adults. This exemplary work includes some significant highlights;

- Calling clients to provide reassurance and resources during a time of enormous stress and loneliness
- Coordinating with local senior apartments to provide support during the Stay-at-Home order and beyond
- Creating a new webpage of COVID-19 resources for older adults
- Collaborating with service providers to provide food and services for older adults in need
- Coordinating the distribution of federal COVID relief funds for senior services

This is just a short list of the ongoing work PPACG accomplishes on a daily basis to support our region, and I am honored to serve as the PPACG Chair, especially now, when our employees are making such a huge impact for so many of our citizens during these very uncertain times. PPACG continues to display how communities working together can do so much to support our region and its many communities during both the best and worst of times.

PPACG STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



A note from PPACG Executive Director Andrew Gunning

In October of 2018, the PPACG Board of Directors approved their first strategic plan after several months of work from the board, committees, and staff. As the first plan was developed, board members discussed that the plan would need to be updated and maintained to ensure it continued to represent the goals and actions of PPACG.

In the past two years much has changed in the region, including the recent rapid changes caused by Covid-19. This fall, we will be working together to update the strategic plan to reflect new opportunities and ideas, show the progress and accomplishments made so far, and refresh our goals to reflect today's challenges and opportunities.

2018 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Advocacy: Serve as an effective advocacy voice for common ground issues.

- Be a convener on community issues.
- Build coalitions with stakeholders.
- Prioritize efforts on influencing legislation, regulation and rule-making

Information Sharing: Serve as a significant resource for PPACG members to collect and share information with regional partners.

- Be a central digital/electronic hub for plans, studies and resources.
- Establish a protocol for standardization and sharing of data.
- Be a convener for members on cross-community issues.

Aging: Expand and extend senior access, awareness, education, and connectivity to support age-friendly communities and empower individual seniors.

- Coordinate, support and advocate for regional efforts to improve transportation for older adults.
- Strengthen and expand outreach and education efforts to seniors and the general public.
- Collect information and support regional network efforts to increase housing options that are accessible and affordable for seniors.
- Support and advocate for connectivity efforts for seniors.

Transportation: Maintain and improve a coordinated, validated plan for transportation needs across the PPACG region.

- Ensure coordinated transportation planning among entities within the PPACG MPO and between the MPO and Central Front Range TPR.
- Utilize performance based measurements to develop priority project lists.
- Explore and pursue all funding mechanisms to serve all modes of transportation in the PPACG region.

Program Excellence: Continue to excel in the key fundamental areas of PPACG: Military support, Environmental programs, Transportation, Area Agency on Aging, and regional communication and collaboration.

- Maintain and strengthen the excellent collaborative relationship with the military community in the region.
- Continue to support effective environmental programs that support regional efforts.
- Continue to support partnerships and relationships between CDOT and member entities.
- Continue to support current Area Agency on Aging programs.
- Enhance our strong, collaborative, regional Board of Directors by continuing to inform the board on the available opportunities.

TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN

2018 saw a record-breaking increase in traffic fatalities in the Pikes Peak Region. As a result, in 2019, PPACG asked local traffic engineers, county planners, and police how the agency could have the greatest impact on safety while avoiding duplication of other efforts, or in other words, “What is the regional agency best positioned to do?”. PPACG began working to identify how the regional agency could play a meaningful role in helping to improve the situation.

Through these conversations, we determined two important things.

1. That although funding is always scarce, local engineers, planners, and police have meaningful programs in place for making travel safer with infrastructure improvements and traditional enforcement.

2. There has not been any data driven and consistent way of addressing driver choices as a serious and worsening cause of major crashes.



It was decided that a traffic safety messaging campaign - data driven and executed by an experienced consultant – could help reduce traffic fatalities in the Pikes Peak Region, and PPACG was in a unique position to provide it for the region as a whole. In mid-2020, Drive Smart Colorado, a non-profit with vast experience in public messaging and driver safety education, was hired to execute the campaign.

During the late summer and early fall of 2020, traffic safety ads will focus on impaired and distracted driving as leading causes of serious injuries and fatalities on our region’s roadways. We hope that our 2020 and 2021 data will reflect this work.

Welcome to PPACG – New Employees

Jennifer Horn joined PPACG as a Care Planner within the AAA Family Caregiver Center. She served as an intern for the past year through Newman MSW, and we are excited for her to join us permanently.



Jennifer brings with her a wealth of experience and insight for older veterans and members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Laura Crews is our new Mobility Coordinator. She comes with great experience from Chattanooga, TN and had been working at the Chattanooga Area Food Bank for many years. She says “I am



excited about working with seniors to identify better ways to improve their quality of life and keep them mobile and working on creative solutions to bridge gaps in services.

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments is responsible for coordinating water quality planning across our region, and one of those requirements is the development of a water quality management plan (also known as the Clean Water Act's "208 plan"). We need to update the plan every ten years for submission to the State and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. For the past two years, PPACG has been working to update our 2010 "208 plan" with the help of our Water Quality Management Committee, Brown and Caldwell, and regional partners.

On August 10th we met with the State's Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) and presented our changes to the newly revised watershed plan. WQCC responded positively with only a few questions, and with hopes that our 208 plan will encourage other organizations throughout the state to participate in a regional process as well. The plan was approved unanimously.

The 208 Plan is intended to assist local, state, and federal decision makers prioritize and provide information to help guide the region in addressing water quality issues. This helps assure decisions made at the local and state levels are consistent with planning requirements and have the information necessary and up-to-date.

Our work isn't over yet. Next is to implement the recommendations stated within the plan, beginning with educating the general public on this document.

If you are interested in viewing our final 208 plan, you can find it online at www.ppacg.org/water-quality-plan/

IN MEMORY



Former Woodland Park Mayor Neil Levy passed away August 1.

Neil Levy became mayor of Woodland Park in 2014 and held the position proudly until April 2020. During his time as mayor, many public improvements were accomplished, including the construction and opening of the Woodland Aquatic Center — an achievement he was very proud of. He was also a regional leader, serving from 2014–2020 on the PPACG Board of Directors as a member and also serving time as vice-chair of the Board.

Andrew Gunning, PPACG Executive director, said "Neil was a true gentleman, a genuinely caring and compassionate person, and a great leader and collaborator (in addition to being a great family man, restaurateur, and baseball coach)." PPACG joins many others in our sorrow at his passing and will continue to hold on to the memory of this great man.

AGE FRIENDLY PIKES PEAK PORTAL

[HTTPS://AGEFRIENDLYPIKESPEAK.ORG/](https://agefriendlypikespeak.org/)

The PPACG Area Agency on Aging, the Innovations in Aging Collaborative and Age Friendly Colorado Springs are proud to announce the release of the new Age Friendly Pikes Peak resource portal.

The Age-Friendly Pikes Peak portal provides resources for older adults, caregivers and family members to age in place. The resources here are primarily nonprofit and civic organizations.

The City of Colorado Springs joined the network of Age Friendly States and Communities in March of 2016. The Age-Friendly Colorado Springs Action Plan created goals for working to create a community that enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. The plan helped set goals that would make our region a place where it is easy for older people to stay connected to people that are important to them.



2020 CENSUS

The U.S. Census Bureau's STOP THE KNOCK campaign is underway. It's an effort to encourage Coloradans to respond to the Census now to lessen the possibility of a Census employee knocking on their door this month to obtain Census responses.



Census takers are currently knocking on doors to follow up with households that have not yet responded to the 2020 Census. The door-to-door operation is scheduled to end on September 30.

Households can still respond now by completing and mailing back the paper questionnaire they received, by responding online at 2020census.gov, or by phone at 844-330-2020.

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

20 YEARS

John Hanson reached his 20th anniversary with PPACG on May 1. He was hired in 2000 as a GIS Planner. He had several positions in Texas and Utah before coming to PPACG.

Barb Watson started with PPACG in June of 2000. She started as Office Manager and served the Board as their Executive Secretary and was Facilities Manager until 2008 when she became the Human Resources Manager.

15 YEARS

Rick Sonnenburg started with the PPRTA on May 2, 2005. His previous experience included several governmental entities throughout the USA. Rick was the first employee hired into the PPRTA program.

Beverly Majewski joined PPRTA on May 19, 2005 as Pikes Peak RTA Finance Manager. She came to the RTA with a lot of financial experience in Colorado Springs and Oregon. At one point, she managed both the RTA and the PPACG finances.

5 YEARS

Michele McGill started with PPACG in January of 2015 as a temporary accountant and by July her position was made into a regular position. She came to PPACG with many years of senior level accounting experience.

Lucy Jacobs started with PPACG as a temporary employee for the Insurance Program as Insurance Specialist. When the program was dissolved, she was hired into a new position as Volunteer Coordinator in August 2015.

Barbara Sigmon started with PPACG as a temporary employee for the Insurance Program as Insurance Specialist. When the program was dissolved, she was hired into a new position as Case Manager in August 2015.

Brian Potts started with PPACG in October 2015 as a JLUS Planner under the new JLUS Program. He was promoted to JLUS Manager in August 2016.

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU!

MOBILITY COORDINATION

Many older adults find themselves challenged with getting from point A to point B for functional and social purposes. They may not have access to reliable transportation, public resources or are unable to drive due to health reasons. They are dependent on family, friends and service providers to help them get to the places they need to go. People in rural areas and small towns may be impacted even more because the transportation options are even more limited.

In 2018, PPACG Area Agency on Aging (AAA) conducted a study among seniors in our region. This study analyzed many factors that contribute to quality of life. Of the factors evaluated, seniors reported that overall transportation and availability of affordable housing were the main challenges they faced. The study showed that only 15% of seniors in our region rated our public transit system as excellent or easy to navigate. Similarly, according to our Age-Friendly Colorado Springs Survey in 2016, 65% of respondents felt that the city does not have accessible or convenient public transportation.

Mobility Coordination describes how we are working with providers to create innovative programs to support older adults to maintain their independence. Over the next several years, we will be dedicated to closing the transportation gap in our area so that older adults can have the freedom and quality of life they deserve.



MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT OCTOBER 15-DECEMBER 7

Medicare is the federal health insurance program for people who are 65 or older and those who are eligible for Social Security based on a disability. Every year, during the Medicare Annual Open Enrollment Period, people on Medicare have a chance to make changes to their prescription drug coverage (Part D) or Medicare Advantage Plan for the following year.

PPACG State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) counselors provide one on one counseling to help Medicare clients review all of the options available to them in order to make the best decision for their coverage. SHIP counseling is free and counselors do not sell or endorse any insurance, so they can provide an objective view of the options. All are trained and certified by the state and by Medicare and have many years of experience.

With the presence of Covid-19 there may be changes to the dates or process. Please keep an eye out for future updates from us as we approach October.

On March 16th PPACG joined other non-essential businesses in the transition to work from home, putting our first quarter newsletter on hold. This meant that the major accomplishments and exciting events from early 2020 were never shared with our community members. We want to recognize the hard work and exciting projects that we missed getting to show you earlier this year and the following pages highlight just a few.

2020 LEGISLATIVE SESSION JANUARY-JUNE 2020

2020 was an interesting year for the Colorado State Legislature. The legislative session convened on January 8th, recessed on March 14th due to Covid-19, resumed the session May 26th and adjourned for the year on June 15, 2020. In that time 652 bills were introduced. The Board Legislative Committee met weekly during the session to review bills and determine if they were PPACG issues and to discuss what positions to take if they are in the PPACG wheelhouse.

During the session, board members and legislative committee members met up with our legislators in Denver to talk about the 2020 PPACG Legislative Priorities.

This annual roundtable provides an opportunity for PPACG members and regional legislators to talk face to face during a time that is often tightly packed. This face to face time during the session helps our legislators and our board members work together on issues in our region.



2045 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN APPROVED JANUARY 2020

The PPACG Board approved the 2045 Long-range transportation plan (LRTP) in January. The LRTP provides the foundation for all other aspects of transportation decision-making by establishing the vision and goals for regional transportation, evaluating the system as a whole, and identifying strategies for implementation. The primary purpose of the plan is to develop a strategy for the best use of public funds in meeting community goals. This plan maps out the fiscally constrained transportation projects anticipated in the next 25 years.

FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT CENTER

CAREGIVER PAMPERING DAY FEBRUARY 2020

Each year, the Family Caregiver Support Center hosts a caregiver pampering day for more than 100 of the family caregivers in our community. The goal of the day is to give thanks to regional caregivers for all the work that they do and to provide an opportunity for them to relax and be pampered. The 2020 theme was “Take a Leap - finding your balance as a caregiver”. Volunteers from business across the region gather together to provide a variety of activities. With over 60 volunteers in attendance on the day of the event, and countless others involved in planning and coordination with our sponsors, the day showcased our dedication and support of local caregivers.



AIR QUALITY REPORT

RELEASED APRIL 2020



PPACG is the lead air quality planning agency for the Pikes Peak Region. We review current and emerging air quality issues and goals, conduct public outreach and education, and develop plans to improve air quality.

The 2013-2019 Pikes Peak Region Air Quality Report: Monitoring and Trends provides an overview of data trends and their impacts in the Pikes Peak region for the six air quality criteria pollutants over the last six years.

This report covers Ozone, Carbon Monoxide, Lead, Nitrogen Dioxide, Particulate Matter and Sulfur Dioxide. We provide details on each pollutant, data trends for the Pikes Peak Region, explain the health impacts of each pollutant and provide tips you can use to reduce each.

2020 PPACG Meeting Schedule

September - November

September

- 19th** 9:00 AM PPACG Board of Directors
- 17th** 1:30 PM TAC Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting
- 24th** 9:00 AM Aging Regional Advisory Committee Meeting
- 29th** 9:30 AM Mobility Coordinating Committee Meeting
- 30th** 1:00 PM Air Quality Technical Committee Meeting
- 30th** 3:00 PM Community Advisory Committee Meeting

October

- 14th** 9:00 AM PPACG Board of Directors
- 15th** 1:30 PM TAC Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting
- 22nd** 9:00 AM Aging Regional Advisory Committee Meeting
- 22nd** 2:00 PM JLUS Implementation Committee
- 27th** 9:30 AM Mobility Coordinating Committee Meeting
- 28th** 1:00 PM Air Quality Technical Committee Meeting
- 28th** 3:00 PM Community Advisory Committee Meeting

November

- TBD Due to Holiday** 9:00 AM PPACG Board of Directors
- 19th** 1:30 PM TAC Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting
- 24th** 9:30 AM Mobility Coordinating Committee Meeting
- 25th** 1:00 PM Air Quality Technical Committee Meeting
- 25th** 3:00 PM Community Advisory Committee Meeting
- TBD Due to Holiday** 9:00 AM Aging Regional Advisory Committee Meeting

Meetings may be online

Please check committee agenda for location

Information on meeting locations can be found under the committee meeting materials at www.ppacg.org

Area Agency on Aging Webinar Class Schedule

Medicare 101

- September 10 at 5:30 PM
- September 14 at 5:30 PM
- September 21 at 9:00 AM
- September 24 at 5:30 PM

Social Security 101

- September 28 at 4:00 PM
- November 9 at 4:00 PM

Ent Retirement Series 4:00 PM

- September 21 Medicare, Who Me?
- September 28 - Social Security
- October 5 - Estate Planning
- October 19 - Meaning and Purpose

Events details and registration available at www.ppacg.org/events