



# **DRCOG's Boomer Bond**

**Brad Calvert, Metro Vision Manager**

**May 23, 2016**



# Communities for Lifelong Living

- **Communities can facilitate or create barriers to successful aging**
- **Infrastructure and services prevent premature institutionalization**
- **Senior independence also reduces burden on caregivers**
- **Age-friendly communities benefit all ages**





# Boomer Bond – Key Elements

- 1. Community assessment tool to facilitate local dialogue and identify age-friendly/livable community priorities**
- 2. A readily-accessible inventory of policies, strategies and tools for local governments to consider**





## Customize your Search

Are you looking for resources to help your community plan for seniors?

- Any -	General
Housing	Mobility and Access
Support Services	Community Living

### Resource Type

Select Some Options

### Title

Report an Issue

Search

The Boomer Bond Resource Directory can guide you in creating age-friendly communities with guidelines and best practices from Colorado and beyond. If you work for a local government, are an elected official, or a citizen trying to learn more about what might make your community a better place to thrive for people of all ages, this resource directory can assist you. We welcome [feedback](#) on the resources curated here.



**DRCOG'S BOOMER BOND  
ASSESSMENT TOOL**



# Why an Assessment Tool?

- “Conversation starter” at the local level (including partners)
- Provide structure to what can be an overwhelming conversation
- Help focus efforts to engage the general public

Boomer Bond Assessment Tool



**DRCOG**  
DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
*We make life better!*

EXISTING Public Sidewalk Elements	A LOT of improvement needed	MODERATE improvement needed	A LITTLE improvement needed	Fully accommodated
Continuous sidewalk system providing access to essential services for older adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimum sidewalk width of five feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ADA ramps at intersections	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visual and physical cues at ramps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level landings where driveways intersect public sidewalks to retain a level path for pedestrians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimal tripping hazards from uneven surface or protruding objects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signage to direct pedestrians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buffer between sidewalk and street (e.g. planting strips, on-street parking, bike lanes)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Boomer Bond Assessment Tool

- **Initially developed by group of ~60 stakeholders**
  - **Elected officials**
  - **Architects**
  - **Planners**
  - **Human service professionals**
  - **Citizens**
- **Intentionally created an instrument geared toward local government staff/operations**
- **“Beta-tested” by 3 communities**

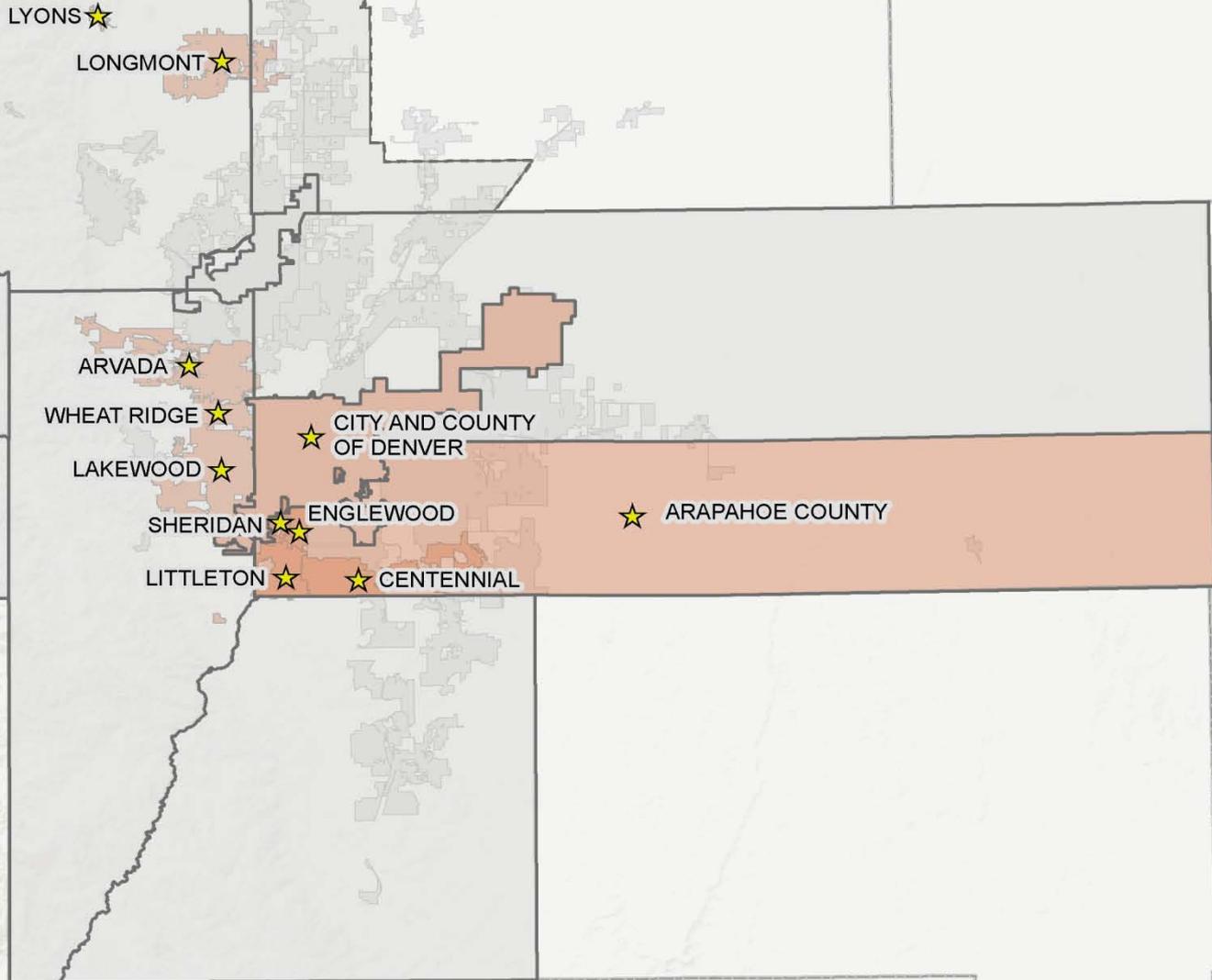




# Boomer Bond Topic Areas

Topic Area	Brief Description
<b>Mobility and Access</b>	<b>Design of public sidewalks, streets, and intersections; available transportation options; access to mixed use districts; and driver safety</b>
<b>Housing</b>	<b>Availability of a variety of affordable housing options; visitability and universal design; programs to support development of housing options</b>
<b>Community Living</b>	<b>Accessible gathering spaces and parks; engagement and volunteer activities; programs to assist in remaining/reentering workforces; safety and security; emergency preparedness</b>
<b>Support Services</b>	<b>Programs to maintain independence; preventive health care; home maintenance and chore services</b>

# Boomer Bond Assessment Communities (11)





# DRCOG Roles in Assessment

- **Assessment is “locally owned”**
- **DRCOG roles:**
  - **Process design**
  - **Community connector**
  - **Resource for local staff leading initiative**

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# Community Commitment Overview

- **Typical organizational commitment to complete assessment: 4 – 8 months**
- **Lead staff person(s) can/has come from any department – key qualities:**
  - **Capacity to commit time and energy**
  - **Cat herding / effective pest**
  - **Willing to learn about items outside their usual purview**



# Community Commitment Overview

## **Roles for other staff members:**

- **Leadership group**
- **Providing input on specific questions**
- **Learning about their colleagues' work and other local initiatives**
- **Coordinating with internal/external partners**
- **Reconciliation process**
- **Collaborate on potential next steps**



# A Few Key Messages

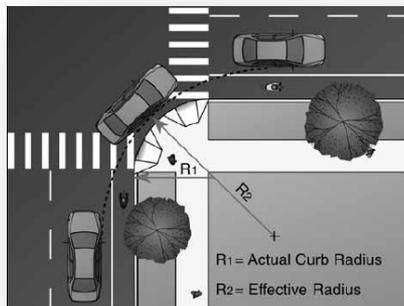
- **Not just about services programs provided by city or county**
- **The Assessment is not the deliverable – ideally it should inform something else**
- **DRCOG will not review/evaluate results**





# A Few Key Messages (cont.)

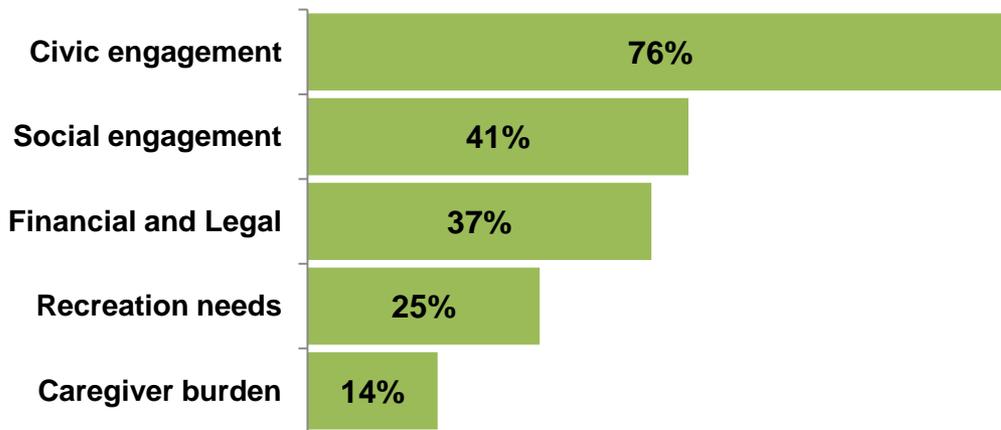
- **“Don’t Know” is a likely, but hopefully temporary answer**
- **Important to balance the identification with needs with current successes**
- **Reconciliation may be the most important step**



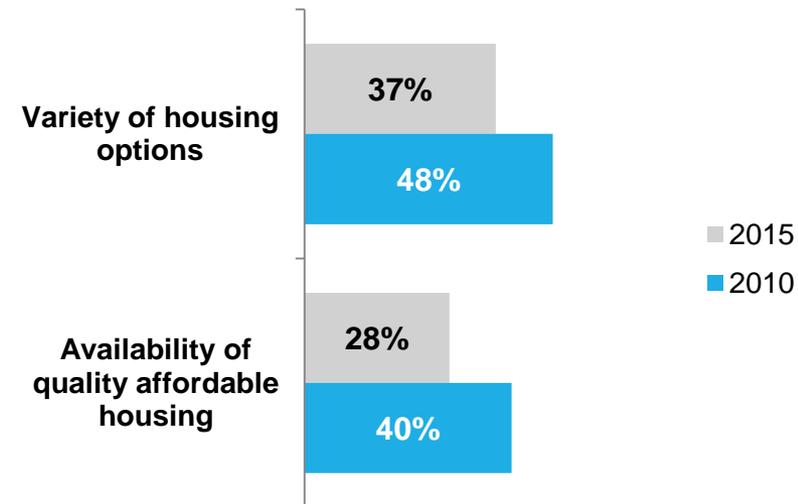


# Best Practice – Pair with CASOA

2015 CASOA – Older Adult Needs



“Excellent” or “Good”



***Together: Opportunity to move toward effective implementation***



**USER FEEDBACK**



# User Feedback To Date: +

- **Helped build awareness and education among staff**
- **Created an atmosphere of collaboration**
- **Motivated staff/agencies that don't typically think about these issues (particularly when paired with CASOA)**
- **Assessment helped clarify and set priorities among staff**
  - **Can pull from online resource directory**



# User Feedback To Date: -

- **Length and time commitment**
- **Some staff were defensive, reluctant to participate (redundancy of questions)**
- **Many communities don't provide services directly – process to find out what's available and then how to meet identified needs**
- **DRCOG role:**
  - **Suspicion – DRCOG “grading” us**
  - **Absence from process**



# EARLY SUCCESS STORIES



# Early Success Stories

- **New Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance in community with severe housing shortage**
- **Additional senior housing added to housing authority portfolios**
- **Redesign of community website – clearer path for older adults looking for services**
- **Activation and increased effectiveness of local Senior Commission**



# Early Success Stories (cont.)

- **New/revised codes: visitability and universal design**
- **Enhanced relationship between law enforcement and older adult community**
- **Increased funding for code enforcement – assistance in targeted areas**
- **New community resource center for older adults and caregivers**



# Lessons learned so far...

- **Aging conversation more personal than most planning topics**
  - May alienate some and be a great motivator for others
- **Comprehensive assessment can be overwhelming**
  - Few (if any) instances of single staff capacity
  - Small steps, incremental change and the aging “lens” are key successes
- **Every community/circumstance is different**
- **Regional resources can advance local initiatives – but not without challenges**



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