



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Transportation

# 2040 | Regional Transportation Plan

February 2015

## Southeast

*Transportation Planning Region*





*Photos courtesy of CDOT except where noted.*

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## A Message from your Southeast Transportation Planning Region Chair

As Chair of the Southeast Transportation Planning Region representing Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, Bent, Prowers and Baca counties, it is my responsibility to ensure that our area's transportation needs and priorities are recognized, made easily accessible, and communicated to the public and key transportation decision-makers. This Regional Transportation Plan accomplishes this. The Regional Transportation Plan recognizes current needs and priorities, while formulating solutions to keep pace with regional growth and changing conditions.

The Southeast Transportation Planning Region began transportation plan development in May of 2013. This document is the reflection of Transportation Planning Region member input, various types of data and information, and broad public sentiment expressed in online and printed surveys and in responses to telephone town hall questions.

A Regional Transportation Plan that reflects the overall priorities and needs for our area is vital at a time of limited funding for transportation. This Regional Transportation Plan will help inform decisions the Colorado Department of Transportation makes about the state's transportation system.

This Regional Transportation Plan has been developed in tandem with the Colorado Department of Transportation's development of the Statewide Transportation Plan. These plans will be integrated, demonstrating the important role that transportation in the Southeast Region plays in the overall state transportation system. For example, the priority corridors and transportation needs identified in this plan have been rolled up into the statewide transportation plan.

This plan is intended to be a living, useful document that is referred to when transportation decisions are being made and as the Transportation Planning Region implements the action items listed in the final chapter of the Regional Transportation Plan. This Regional Transportation Plan will be revisited periodically by the Transportation Planning Region and others to ensure that we are on the right path toward accomplishing the vision and goals set forth in this plan.

Your familiarity with our Region's transportation needs and priorities and the challenges that we face is important now and into the future. I invite you to review this plan and become more engaged in the Southeast Region's transportation future.

Sincerely,



Dan Tate  
Chair, Southeast Transportation Planning Region

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## Landscape

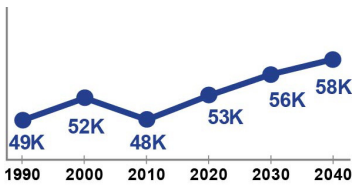
The Southeast TPR is a large region in Colorado bordering Kansas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. It has a terrain of rolling plains, a semi-arid climate, and temperatures that vary widely, from more than 100°F in the summer to sub-zero in the winter. On occasion, the region experiences severe winter storms. Recent years of drought conditions have contributed to powerful dust storms that create low visibility and hinder mobility. On the other hand, the region also experiences an above-average number of days of sunshine throughout the year. The changing and sometimes severe weather creates the potential for road closures due to adverse weather conditions.

*The potential for high wind in the region can lead to tornados, dust storms, and blizzards, all of which create dangerous driving conditions.*



Photo: Jane Stulp, *The Denver Post*, June 9, 2013

### Population in the Southeast TPR



*Population in the Southeast TPR is expected to grow at a significantly slower rate than the rest of the state. The region's population is expected to increase by 21 percent by 2040 compared to today. (Source: Colorado DOLA)*

## Population

In 2010, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) projected that the population of the Southeast TPR was expected to grow approximately 0.6 percent annually through the year 2040 (from 48,000 residents in 2010 to 58,000 residents by 2040), which is a significantly lower growth rate than the statewide annual average of 1.5 percent. However, instead of growing, the region saw an overall 3.15 percent decrease in population between 2010 and 2012. People 65 years of age or older—both in the Southeast region and statewide—make up the fastest-growing segment of the population.

## Heard Around the Region

The people of the Southeast TPR value their rural way of life, which is supported by highly productive agriculture lands and a small-town atmosphere with nearby services. The area is experiencing drought conditions, which is hindering population and job growth.

The increasing senior population will necessitate better signing, lighting, accommodation of recreational vehicles, and public transportation services (alternatives to driving).



## Economic Vitality

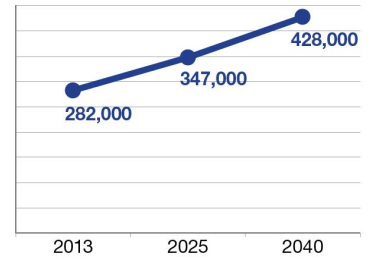
Transportation and the economy are closely related. The mobility of people and goods contribute to economic opportunities. Many of the major components of the economy in the Southeast TPR are dependent on the transportation infrastructure. For example, the top industry for employment in the TPR is agriculture. Farm-to-market access is crucial to the success of the agricultural industry. Other economic generators that depend on transportation include energy, advanced manufacturing, and tourism. The top commodity exports from the region include grain, gravel, sand, petroleum refining products, livestock, and prepared livestock feed, all of which are moved by truck freight. Commodity exports are expected to grow by 0.5 percent annually through 2040.

The region has several recreational opportunities for residents and tourists that contribute to the economic vitality. These attractions include Bent’s Old Fort, John Martin Reservoir and State Park, several other lakes, national grasslands, Granada War Relocation Center (Camp Amache), and the Santa Fe Trail Scenic and Historic Byway.

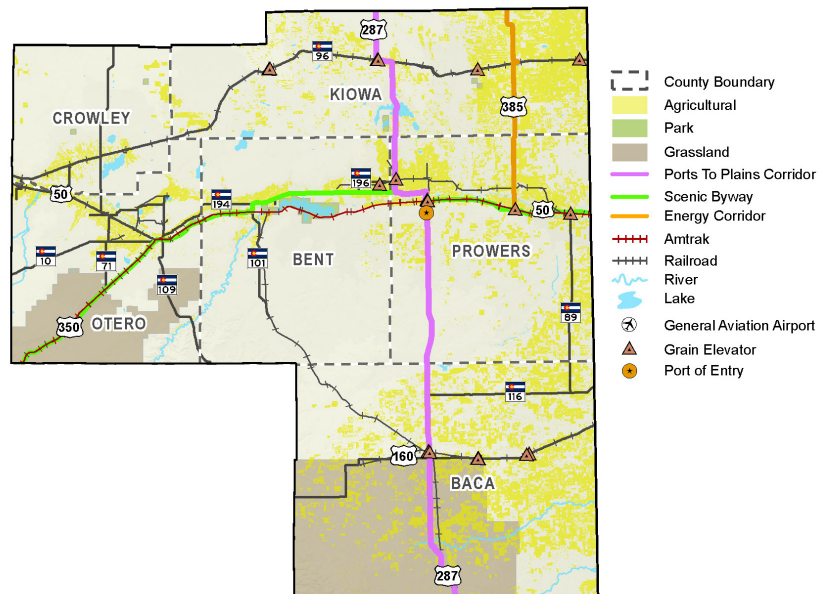
The Ports-to-Plains Corridor—a 2,300-mile economic development corridor between Texas and Alberta, Canada—traverses the region along US 287 and is an important conduit for trade in and through the region. The Southeast TPR has a relatively high volume of truck traffic (approximately 24 percent of vehicles on state highways are trucks). This is more than twice the statewide average of 9 percent and indicates the important role the Southeast TPR plays in a growing freight economy. Trucks make up almost 60 percent of the vehicles on US 287 between Eads and Wiley, Colorado, and truck traffic is expected to grow at a rate of 1.6 percent annually through 2040.

Freight rail is also a key mode for commodity import and export. Freight rail in the region includes the Victoria Southern, Cimarron Valley, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway.

**Truck Traffic in the Region**



*The region is expected to experience significant growth in daily truck traffic. By 2040, the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by trucks in the region will increase by 52 percent.*



## Heard Around the Region

The local industries of agriculture, manufacturing, energy and natural resources development, tourism, and hunting tend to be transportation intensive. These industries fluctuate based on influences from the national and global economies.

There is significant truck traffic in the region. The Ports-to-Plains Corridor has exceeded the predictions for truck traffic volumes. Due to their weight, trucks have much greater impacts on road conditions and maintenance needs. Slow-moving and oversized loads create a need for passing lanes and shoulders. Farm-to-market mobility is critical to the agricultural industry in the area. While large trucks and slow-moving farm equipment are common in Southeast Colorado, many people in the region are concerned about their effect on mobility and pavement quality.

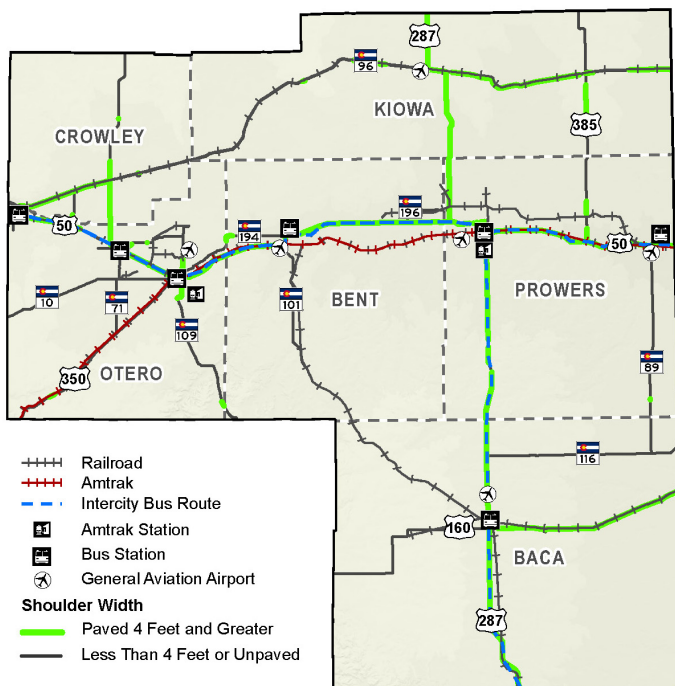
## Multimodal Transportation System

The multimodal transportation system in the Southeast TPR includes state highways, transit, six general aviation airports, and several rail lines. There are approximately nine local/human services transit providers and two intercity bus service providers operating in the region. In addition, Amtrak's Southwest Chief travels through the Southeast TPR between Chicago and Los Angeles, with stops in La Junta and Lamar.

Although State Highway (SH) 96 is a regional bicycle route supporting long-distance recreational rides and events such as Pedal the Plains, bicycle use on state highways in

the region is not particularly prevalent. This may be due to the lack of shoulders on long stretches of many non-interstate highways. Improved shoulders would benefit the needs of all road users, including bicyclists. Additionally, other infrastructure improvements, such as side paths, protected bike lanes, and other techniques, can greatly improve safety—particularly where bicyclists and motor vehicles compete for space on the road.

Intercity bus providers play a vital role in the multimodal transportation system, providing mobility options to the traveling public, especially for those without access to a car or who are unable to drive. It also enhances system capacity and improves system efficiency. Transit services connect residents, employees, and visitors to major activity centers for jobs, schools, shopping, medical care, and recreation, contributing to the economic vitality of the area.



## Multimodal Transportation System At-A-Glance

**1,592** lane miles—6.9 percent of the state system

**1.2** million VMT per day—1.5 percent of state vehicle miles traveled

**6** general aviation airports—Eads, La Junta Municipal, Lamar Municipal, Las Animas/Bent County, Springfield Municipal, Holly Municipal

**9** local/human services transit providers

**2** intercity bus providers:

- Greyhound—Denver to Dallas with stops in Rocky Ford, Lamar, and Springfield
- Village Tours—BeeLine Express Pueblo to Wichita, Kansas, with stops in Fowler, Rocky Ford, La Junta, Las Animas, Lamar, and Granada

**1** passenger rail service—Amtrak, the Southwest Chief

## Roadway Drivability and Bridges

Characteristic of rural regions, the Southeast TPR has a high ratio of highway lane miles relative to its population and traffic. The TPR's population makes up 1.0 percent of the state of Colorado, yet it has 6.9 percent of the state highway lane miles and 1.5 percent of the annual VMT in the state.

### Drivability Life

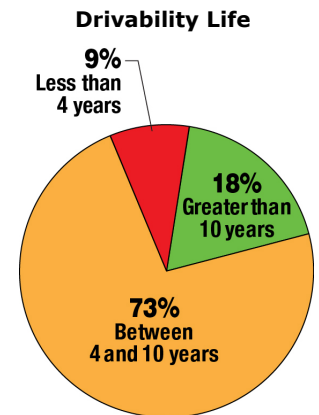
Pavement condition is described in terms of drivability. Drivability is a function of roadway smoothness, pavement distress, and safety. Drivability life (DL) is an indication, reported in years, of how long a highway will have acceptable driving conditions.

A highway with a DL of greater than 10 years may be considered to have a high DL, while a highway with a DL of less than four years is considered to have a low DL. A DL is considered moderate when it is between four years and 10 years. In the Southeast TPR, approximately 91 percent of highways have a DL of high or moderate, with a remaining life of four or more years. While approximately 9 percent of highways have a low DL with less than four years of drivability life.

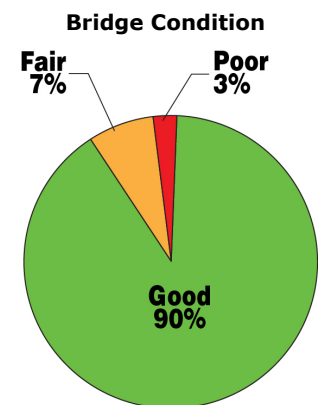
DL will improve the system by taking a more consistent and pragmatic approach to surface treatment. This means strategically utilizing limited surface treatment funds to maximize cost-benefit and minimize unacceptable driving conditions. Unacceptable driving conditions mean drivers have to reduce speeds to compensate for unsafe factors, navigate around damaged pavement, or endure rough rides. By reporting pavement conditions using DL, CDOT is able to identify which roadways will reach unacceptable driving conditions and then determine the most appropriate method of repair. The DL method also will proactively direct financial resources toward maintaining pavement to extend the life of a road and avoid or delay more costly rehabilitation or reconstruction. DL will result in a statewide network with the most drivable roads across the entire pavement network, due to routine surface treatment.

### Bridges

Bridge condition is an important element of the transportation system. The region's system has 192 bridges maintained by CDOT. Bridge condition in the TPR is relatively good, with 97 percent of bridges being in good or fair condition. The small number of bridges rated as poor are still operational and safe, but may not meet current design standards or are weight restricted.

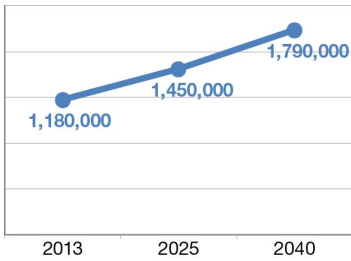


(Source: CDOT 2014)



(Source: CDOT 2011-2013)

### Total Vehicle Miles Traveled



Total VMT in the region likely will grow at an annual rate of 1.6 percent. (Source: CDOT)

### Traffic and Safety

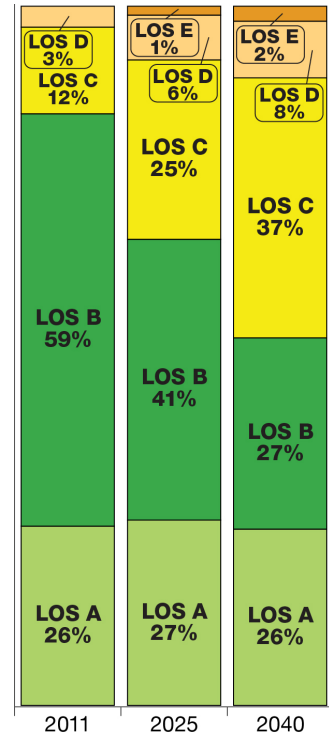
Traffic in the Southeast TPR is growing. Between 2013 and 2040, the VMT in the region is estimated to grow at an annual rate of 1.6 percent. This is the same as the growth rate anticipated for the state.

Roadway Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of congestion delay. It can be thought of as a grading scale where LOS A is excellent and implies high levels of mobility and ease of maneuverability. LOS F represents failure and indicates that the road is experiencing heavy traffic volumes, significant congestion, and stop-and-go conditions. Grades of LOS A through LOS D are considered acceptable.

The majority of highways in the TPR are expected to remain relatively free of congestion within this time period. Congestion is not expected to be a significant problem even in 2040, as shown in the following figure.

For the period 2010–2011, the average crash rate in the region was 0.97 crashes per million VMT. This rate is significantly lower than the statewide average of 1.70 for the same time period. The two most prominent crash types in the Southeast TPR for 2010–2011 were animal collisions and rollovers.

### Regional Level of Service



(Source: CDOT 2013)

### Heard Around the Region

Communities are located far from each other, resulting in long travel distances for employment, medical services, and shopping. Potential alternate routes tend to be limited and unable to handle heavy truck traffic. As a result, isolation and lengthy detours are concerns, especially in severe winter weather conditions. Snow and ice removal is an essential need in the region so that social and economic activities can continue.

Existing transit services need to be maintained. New transit services are needed to provide connectivity from the region to Pueblo and Colorado Springs. Other needs and desires of residents in the Southeast TPR include multimodal investments like local public transit, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian improvements that provide options for local travel; and on-demand van service for elderly, disabled, and other residents to access health care and social opportunities.

## Recent Accomplishments

Transportation is constantly changing in the Southeast TPR. Several projects completed since the prior RTP addressed transportation needs in the region, including:

- US 287: Corridor improvements (\$55.6 M)—Reconstruction, improved safety and mobility
- US 50: Corridor improvements (\$46.2 M)—Resurfacing, passing lanes, safety, drainage, and bridge upgrades
- SH 96: Corridor improvements (\$20.6 M)—Resurfacing, widen shoulders, and improved safety



*Photo by Loco Steve © Creative Commons, 2.0 Generic via Flickr.*

## Heard Around the Region

Traffic safety is a fundamental priority for transportation at the local, regional, and state levels. In the Southeast TPR, state highways have higher travel speeds and cover large expanses of rural landscapes, yet in many communities, these same highways also serve as Main Street through town.

Many of the highways in the area are two lanes with limited shoulders. Oversized loads frequently travel in the area, impacting mobility for other travelers on the narrow roads. Shoulder additions, pavement maintenance, and strategic improvements, such as turning lanes, are key to improving safety and are highly desired by residents in the region.

## Key Takeaways

The Southeast TPR is unique in many ways. The following takeaways were identified by TPR members during the planning process and considered in the preparation of the RTP's recommendations:

- Agriculture remains the primary industry in the region.
- The region is experiencing increases in oil and gas production in Kiowa County and region-wide growth in wind energy development.
- Expected growth in manufacturing will place new demands on the transportation system and the ability of the region to move freight and employees safely and efficiently.
- Freight movement is increasingly characterized by larger trucks and heavier loads. The region experiences the highest levels of truck traffic in the state as a percentage of total VMT. The movement of industrial and agricultural freight along US 50, the Ports-to-Plains Corridor (US 287), and other freight routes is critical to the local and state economy.
- Many residents and workers in the region experience lengthy commutes due to long distances between home and work.
- Similar to statewide trends, the average age in the Southeast TPR is increasing.
- Amtrak has been considering changes to its route structure and may remove or relocate the Southwest Chief from the Southeast Region. Many residents of the area have expressed the importance of retaining Amtrak's Southwest Chief passenger rail service to maintain connections to other parts of the nation. The Southwest Chief is not only a mobility alternative for interstate travel, it also serves to define the region's identity.
- The proposed US 287 Reliever Route will increase safety and quality of life on Lamar's Main Street and create opportunities for local tourism.
- Pending environmental clearances on US 50, opportunities will be created for the development of shovel-ready projects along the corridor and establish a future vision for the corridor.
- Multimodal needs and desires of residents in the region include investments in bicycle and pedestrian facilities, local public transit and on-demand van service for elderly, disabled, and other residents to access health care and social opportunities.
- Snow and ice removal are essential needs in the region so that social and economic activities can continue during adverse weather.
- Time and again, residents and business owners in the Southeast Region have expressed the need for good pavement quality on state highways. In rural areas, pavement maintenance often trumps the desire for additional roadway capacity or other improvements. Pavement quality affects highway safety, ride comfort, and accommodation of truck traffic.
- Rural highways experience relatively high travel speeds, limited passing opportunities, frequent animal crossings, blizzards, and other potential safety hazards. Shoulder additions, pavement maintenance, and strategic improvements, such as turning and passing lanes, are crucial to improving safety and are highly desired by residents in the region.
- Improving economic development and improving the roadway pavement condition are top issues of importance to the TPR.

## Transportation System Visions and Goals

The visions and goals for the future Southeast TPR transportation system, including transit, are listed below. The Southeast TPR developed a multimodal vision and goals for its transportation system based on the region's Transportation Story and the data presented in this plan. A regional transit working group—including public and private transit agency representatives, elected officials, and others—developed the transit vision and goals in two of its three meetings conducted to guide and direct development of the regional coordinated transit plan. The transit vision and goals are included because transit is an important part of the regional transportation system.

### Transportation System Vision and Goals

The vision of the Southeast TPR is to have a transportation system that will accommodate the region's rapidly growing multimodal transportation needs through a combination of capacity improvements in congested corridors, safety and traffic management improvements elsewhere on the transportation system, and the provision of local and regional public transportation. Transportation development will accommodate and enhance the region's high quality of life, while preserving the environmental conditions that make the region a great place to live, work, and visit. The transportation system supports economic development by providing mobility for people and goods, as well as multimodal access to services. The 2040 RTP envisions a systematic approach to implementing the transportation plan that is understood and supported by the people of the Southeast TPR.

- Goal 1: Strengthen the economic vitality of the region.
  - Sub-goal A: To maintain the region's agricultural-based economy through development of the transportation infrastructure
  - Sub-goal B: To enhance tourism and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the region through development of transportation infrastructure
- Goal 2: Develop multimodal transportation options to improve mobility and support economic development.
  - Sub-goal A: To improve east-west linkages to connect the region to its markets in Colorado and Kansas and other areas of the country
  - Sub-goal B: To create better north-south linkages to access markets in Canada and Mexico
  - Sub-goal C : To improve air, rail, intercity, bus, public transit, and bikeway facilities and services throughout the region, in addition to highways
  - Sub-goal D: To support and advocate for the preservation, enhancement, and continued operation of the Southwest Chief passenger rail service through southern Colorado

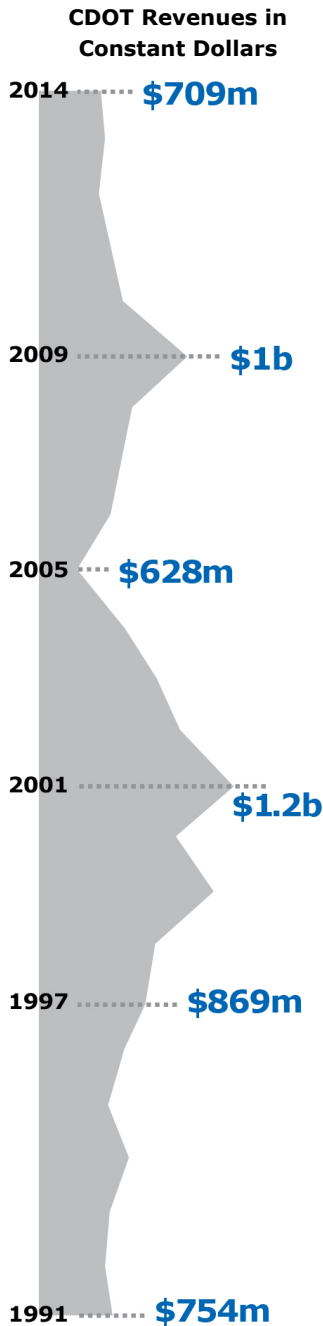
### Transit Vision and Goals

Provide the opportunity for residents of southeast Colorado to experience an enhanced quality of life by providing an efficient, safe, and accessible transit network that serves the needs of the region's citizens, businesses, and communities.

- Maximize transit services and facilities to meet existing transit needs and those in the future
- Evaluate the need for additional transit service and facilities to meet unmet needs
- Maintain service of the Amtrak Southwest Chief passenger train through southeast Colorado
- Increase regional and intra-regional service for medical, employment, and educational trip purposes
- Increase coordination among state, regional, local public, non-profit, and private entities to more effectively achieve shared community goals

# Chapter 2

## Changes Affecting Regional Transportation

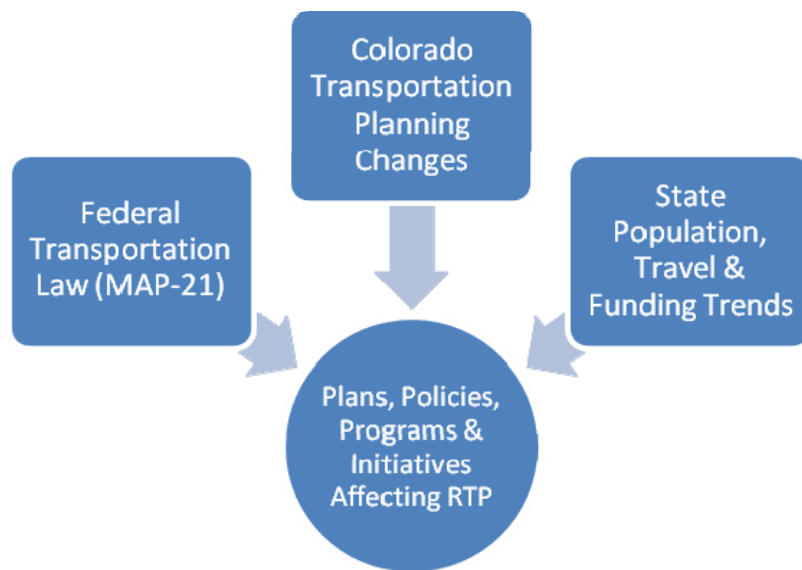


m = millions    b = billions

*When adjusted for inflation and construction costs, CDOT's annual revenues, since 2009, have declined in purchasing power to pre-1991 levels. Sharp fluctuations in annual revenues make it challenging to plan ahead beyond a few years.*

This chapter discusses policies and trends that affect the Region's RTP. Colorado has developed plans, policies, programs, and initiatives since the 2035 plan that affect transportation in the Southeast Region and statewide. These changes respond to several trends affecting transportation in Colorado:

- Current state trends in population growth, travel demand, and transportation funding
- The federal transportation authorization bill, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21), reauthorizes federal funding for transportation while placing a new emphasis on measuring how well each state meets its goals and objectives
- Colorado revised transportation regulations, state law changes, and Transportation Commission policies



### Federal Transportation Law, MAP-21

Signed into law on July 6, 2012, MAP-21 marked the first time that a federal transportation authorization law outlined national transportation goals and required states to measure how well they addressed those national goal areas. States are required to ensure resources are distributed to meet objectives. The law established national goals for safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement and economic vitality, and reduced project delivery delays.

Besides authorizing transportation funds, MAP-21 also consolidates funding programs, permits different financing mechanisms, and provides for streamlined environmental reviews. A link to MAP-21 can be found at CDOT's planning website.



## State Trends Affecting Transportation Planning

Colorado's population is growing. This growth will increase the number of transportation system users and the VMT. In 2013, the population of Colorado was 5.1 million people. By 2040, the population is expected to increase to 7.8 million people (DOLA). In 2013, there were 78 million VMT per day on the state highway system. In 2040, there are projected to be 115 million VMT each day on the state highway system.

To support this growth along with an expanding and changing economy, Colorado's state transportation system needs additional revenue to balance maintenance, safety, mobility, and limited expansion. CDOT's challenge is having enough revenue to help the transportation system function at its potential. The gas tax, the main source of funding for Colorado's roads, is assessed at a flat per-gallon rate that has not increased in 20 years. That means that with increasing construction costs, the buying power of the gas tax is decreasing.

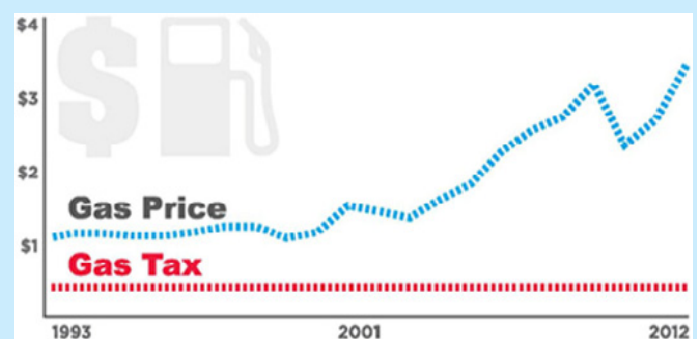
To get more out of the transportation system in the face of limited revenues, CDOT is focusing on maintaining assets, managing traffic flows, and encouraging multimodal choices like transit, bicycling, and walking. While the RTP focuses on regional priorities for highway improvements, other transportation plans incorporate other modes of travel. Guidance from all of these individual planning documents is combined in the Statewide Transportation Plan so that it can provide comprehensive guidance on statewide transportation planning decisions.



*With more people living in and traveling through Colorado, necessities such as snow removal are increasingly important for safety and the economy.*

## Growing Transportation Demand, Flat Funding Source

The Colorado transportation system is funded primarily by the state and federal gas taxes at a rate of 22 cents per gallon and 18.4 cents per gallon, respectively. These rates have not increased at all since 1993. With vehicles becoming more fuel efficient and with expected growth in population and VMT, revenue from the gas tax cannot keep up with transportation demand.



## State Transportation Policy Changes

The Colorado Legislature passed a bill entitled Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery (FASTER) in 2009 to provide additional funds for transportation, primarily through increased vehicle registration fees. FASTER funds are to improve safety and replace poor bridges. A provision in the legislation also designates the distribution of FASTER funds into the State Transit and Rail Fund. Grants to local governments for transit projects, such as new bus stops, bike parking, maintenance facilities or multimodal transportation centers, and transit projects of state and inter-regional significance are funded by the State Transit and Rail Fund. Total FASTER funding is approximately \$200 million per year, according to the CDOT Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Budget.

CDOT planning regulations were updated to reflect the emphasis in MAP-21 on meeting the national goals and the additional planning factors in FASTER. The planning regulations, 2 CCR 601-22, can be accessed at CDOT's planning website.

Revised in 2015, CDOT's Policy Directive (PD) 14 provides an overall framework for the transportation planning process through which a multimodal, comprehensive Statewide Transportation Plan is developed that optimizes the transportation system by balancing preservation and maintenance, efficient operations and management practices, and capacity improvements. PD 14 performance objectives will guide distribution of resources for the Statewide Transportation Plan, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and the annual budget. The directive is in alignment with national goals in MAP-21. It also reflects CDOT's risk-based asset management program that incorporates a business approach intended to optimize investment for maintenance and preservation of CDOT transportation assets based on both risk and performance assessment. PD 14 will be revised periodically as federal regulations for MAP-21 become effective and as CDOT further refines its performance objectives. To review PD 14, see CDOT's planning website.

## How does the Southeast TPR respond to these national goals, plans, policies, programs, and initiatives?

The Statewide Transportation Plan is effectively a roll-up of the rural TPR and urban Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) plans. For CDOT to address the national goals and federal and state planning factors, the region plans should address as many of them as appropriate. While the Southeast TPR is not subject to specific performance measures, this RTP addresses these goals where applicable. Truck freight, pavement and bridge condition, system reliability, safety, and supporting economic vitality have been emphasized in this RTP. In addition, the Southeast TPR has identified several multimodal priorities, including improvements for transit and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.



# Chapter 3 Planning Purpose & Processes

This chapter discusses the purpose of developing an RTP and the process that was used to develop a plan for the Southeast TPR. Transportation planning provides the framework for investment in a transportation system that will keep the Southeast TPR moving forward, growing, and adapting with the needs of its residents for decades to come. It will be used to guide important decision-making for the next 25 years, but with a particular emphasis on the next 10 years.

The purpose of the Southeast TPR's RTP is to provide guidance and direction related to the regional transportation vision, needs, and priorities based on input from the public and data gathered throughout the planning process. It allows the people of the Southeast TPR to communicate their needs and desires for transportation in their region, and, in response, to understand what they can expect from CDOT for funding and project completion. The Southeast TPR has actively developed the RTP to accurately reflect the perspectives of the public and serve the region's transportation needs over the long term.

The Colorado Transportation Commission and CDOT will refer to this document to assist in their planning and decision making. With limited dollars available, it is important to have a plan that establishes transportation priorities for the Southeast TPR so that investments can be made accordingly. The implementation mechanism for the RTP is the STIP, a four-year, federally required, fiscally constrained program to identify projects. The STIP is based on RTPs developed by each region to establish a direct link between the corridor-based transportation needs and priorities expressed in the RTP and the selection and funding of specific system improvements.

The intent is for the RTPs and the Statewide Transportation Plan to be updated periodically to remain meaningful references for Regional Planning Commission (RPC) members and other interested parties.

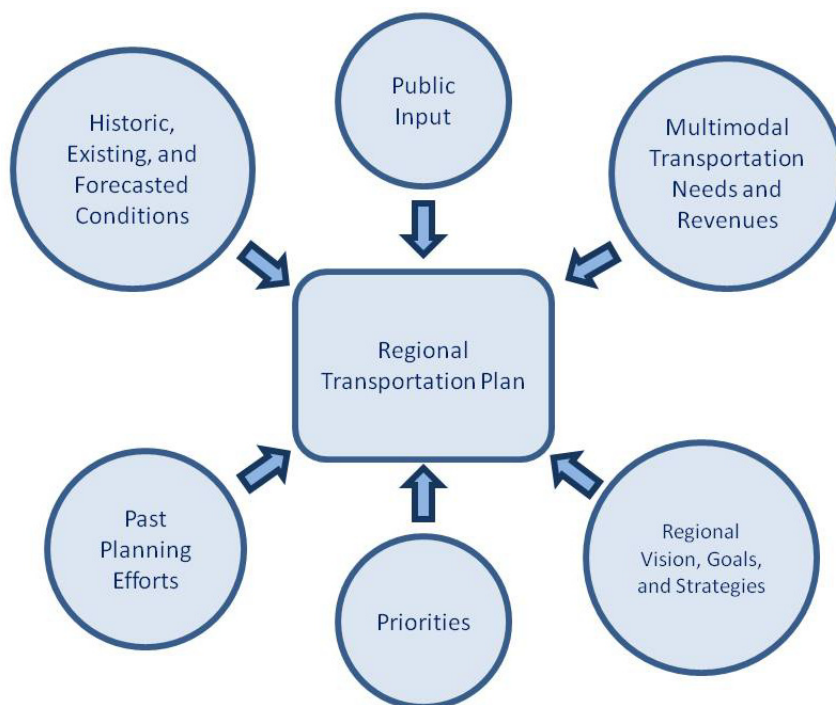
## What is a Regional Transportation Plan?

An RTP creates the transportation vision and framework for maintaining and improving all modes of transportation in the region, including motor vehicle transport, air travel, transit, rail, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian routes.

It identifies corridor-based transportation improvement goals, strategies, and priorities that support the TPR's economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and quality of life.

Using both data and broad public input, the RTP includes an overview of existing conditions and regional forecasts that impact transportation, while identifying solutions that address issues via projects, initiatives, and partnerships.

## Components of a Regional Transportation Plan



## Members of the Regional Planning Commission

Comprised of elected and appointed officials from the TPR, the RPC is responsible for establishing regional priorities and needs, developing the multimodal RTPs, and coordinating ongoing planning with CDOT.

### Counties:

- Baca County
- Bent County
- Crowley County
- Kiowa County
- Otero County
- Prowers County

### Municipalities:

- Campo
- Eads
- Fowler
- Granada
- Holly
- La Junta
- Lamar
- Las Animas
- Manzanola
- Olney Springs
- Ordway
- Rocky Ford
- Sheridan Lake
- Springfield
- Sugar City
- Swink

## Development of the RTP

The 2040 RTP for the Southeast TPR was developed and adopted by the RPC through a concerted and efficient approach that combines data analysis with comprehensive public involvement to simultaneously meet local transportation needs and achieve statewide performance-based targets.

### Federal and State Regulations

Legislation and policies at the state (43-1-1103, CRS) and federal (23 USC 134/135) levels require the development of a comprehensive, long-range Statewide Transportation Plan that encompasses at least a 20-year period and incorporates the priorities and the needs of the TPRs across the state. MAP-21 requires states to align their own transportation goals with those defined by the law. MAP-21 goals include safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement/economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and reduced project delivery delays. CDOT's PD 14 goals include safety, infrastructure condition, system performance, and maintenance and are in alignment with the national goals.

In accordance with state transportation planning rules (2 CCR 601-22), the Statewide Transportation Plan also must be financially feasible so that it portrays a realistic transportation future based on reasonably anticipated funding. In Colorado, RTPs are prepared to include supplemental revenue scenarios and priorities in case additional funds become available.

Every four years, CDOT conducts an update of the Colorado Statewide Transportation Plan. This plan serves as a long-range planning tool incorporating statewide trends and issues. RTPs are developed to inform the Statewide Transportation Plan and to prioritize regionally specific transportation matters.

### RTP Planning Process Components

In developing the RTP, the process evaluated the current and predicted future conditions of the region's transportation system and identified problems and potential solutions. Anticipated changes in the region's population, economy, and travel were considered so that future transportation investments are sensitive to changing conditions in the region. Key elements in developing the RTP include:

- Creating TPR profiles that illustrate current and anticipated conditions
- Updating the region's transportation vision and goals from the 2035 RTP
- Refining and prioritizing transportation corridors
- Evaluating a range of revenue scenarios
- Integrating the RTP with other modal plans and the Statewide Transportation Plan

Actions also have been identified to provide direction for future decision-making and to monitor progress. Each of these plan components was developed in collaboration with members of the RPC over the course of six meetings held between June 2013 and June 2014. Information developed as a part of the planning process can be viewed at CDOT's planning website.



## Public Engagement

The purpose of public engagement is to create meaningful opportunities for the general and traveling public to learn about statewide and regional transportation issues and comment on transportation concerns and priorities. Over the course of the RTP development process, CDOT sought input from the public in defining the regional transportation needs and priorities for highways, transit, rail, and other programs throughout the state. This public input will influence the selection of specific future projects in the STIP. Results of the public engagement process are below.

### Public Survey

A survey was offered via the Statewide Transportation Plan's website so that the general and traveling public could provide valuable feedback about priorities in the TPR. The survey was available statewide in both electronic and hard-copy format and contained questions specific to the Southeast TPR. A total of **142** survey responses were received from the Southeast TPR. Results of the survey, combined with data, were employed by the RPC to select high-priority transportation corridors for their TPR. This public input also was used to illustrate the unique local characteristics of the Southeast TPR in Chapter 1 of the RTP. Survey questions and popular responses for the Southeast TPR are below. To see the full list of questions and survey results, go to CDOT's website for Statewide Planning.

#### Why is transportation important to you?

- #1 Moves people and goods safely
- #2 Supports existing businesses
- #3 Helps economic development

#### What transportation issues matter most to you?

- #1 Improving economic development
- #2 Improving roadway pavement condition
- #3 Increasing transit options

#### What do you feel makes your region unique?

- #1 Agriculture
- #2 Sense of community
- #3 Rural living with nearby amenities
- #4 Tourism
- #5 Innovation and creativity

### Telephone Town Hall

A telephone town hall is an interactive public meeting conducted over the telephone. In May 1, 2014, **4,832** residents in the Southeast TPR were called on the phone and invited to participate in a discussion with local leaders and CDOT staff. This created a valuable connection with members of the public who might otherwise be uninvolved. A total of **820** people participated, both listening and commenting on the topics discussed. This exercise provided an opportunity to vet the work done by CDOT and the RPC with the broader public before proceeding to finalize important components of the RTP. Below are some of the outcomes of the conversation with the public.

What is most important to you about transportation?	How should CDOT invest limited dollars?	What kinds of transportation improvements can best help the economy in your area?
<b>46%:</b> Safety	<b>57%:</b> Safety improvements	<b>63%:</b> Improving the pavement
<b>31%:</b> Economic Development	<b>24%:</b> Maintain the existing system	<b>20%:</b> Improving rail service

## Other Public Engagement Tools

Several other methods were used to share information with the public and allow for dialogue outside of formal engagement. These include popular social media applications and an interactive website.

### [www.ColoradoTransportationMatters.com](http://www.ColoradoTransportationMatters.com)

This is the interactive website dedicated to the development and presentation of the Statewide and Regional Transportation Plans. The information provided allows the public to explore topics based on their own interests. There are multiple avenues for providing feedback, and the questions, comments, and other input received through the website were used to define priorities and highlight areas of potential improvement in both the transportation system and the planning process.



### Facebook and Twitter

The use of social media throughout the plan development process provided opportunities for the public to learn about and comment on the RTP as it was created. Facebook and Twitter profiles were deployed to solicit feedback, but also to promote upcoming public events and other opportunities for robust public involvement.



## Environmental Resource Agency Consultation

The link between transportation planning and the environment is of the utmost importance. Stakeholder engagement during the planning process that facilitates input on key environmental issues or concerns can serve as foundational information for future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies and aid in streamlining documentation.

In accordance with state and federal regulations, CDOT conducted a statewide interagency environmental discussion to identify environmental concerns or issues with the Regional Priority Corridors. Key participants included state and federal agencies, TPRs, and MPOs. These discussions were conducted via two webinars; the first focused on purpose, intent, and a collaborative identification of key information to be presented, and the second focused on interagency input. Based on the input provided, examples of potential mitigation strategies could include: wildlife crossings designed to reduce vehicular collisions, habitat conservation for threatened or endangered species, and construction of sound barriers.

Outreach to environmental advocacy groups also was conducted via a webinar. Information was shared about the development of the Statewide Transportation Plan and RTPs, how CDOT is addressing state and federal planning factors, development of various modal plans and policies, and key initiatives. One of those initiatives is the CDOT Sustainability Program that includes: (1) collaboration with the Colorado Energy Office, the Regional Air Quality Council, and other groups to develop a market and infrastructure for compressed natural gas and other alternative fuel vehicles; (2) creation of a greenhouse gas model; and (3) innovations in design and construction.

During development of the RTP, corridor profiles were modified to include environmental characteristics and concerns and to develop any environmental implementation actions if desired. For further information on environmental stakeholder participants and corridor profiles go to CDOT's planning website. To review implementation actions identified by the TPR, go to **Chapter 6, Implementation Actions and Moving Forward**.

# Chapter 4 Regional Priority Corridors

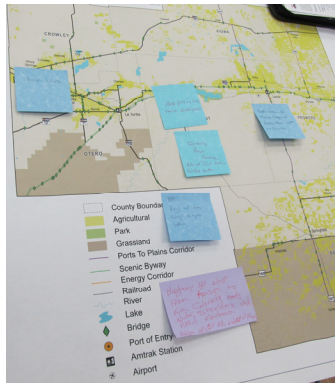
## Regional Priority Corridors

A Regional Priority Corridor is a corridor that has been selected by the TPR as having high importance to the region's transportation system or it is important because of a need for near-term improvements.




This RTP emphasizes planning for transportation corridors in the Southeast TPR. This approach, called corridor-based planning, is being used for the 2040 statewide and regional transportation plans. Corridor-based planning connects the long-term vision of a transportation corridor with the goals, solutions, and strategies that the TPR has identified to attain the vision. Strategies are classified into specific benefit categories. Benefit categories provide a mechanism to recognize the needs of a corridor and track progress.

This long-range transportation plan guides the shorter-term STIP. The STIP is a fiscally constrained plan that identifies funding for and the scheduling of specific transportation projects and programs. The corridor-based structure of this transportation plan provides long-term flexibility to respond appropriately to changing transportation issues with specific projects in the STIP. Defining transportation needs at the corridor level gives the TPR flexibility in implementing particular solutions on specific transportation issues.

A Regional Priority Corridor is a corridor that has been selected by the TPR as having high importance to the region's transportation system or it is important because of a need for near-term improvements. While all corridors contribute to the system, some corridors connect to more cities, access recreation and tourist destinations, carry more traffic, support the industries that contribute to the economic vitality of the region, and provide multimodal options such as transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Selection of Regional Priority Corridors highlights the region's transportation needs and priorities and creates linkages to funding priorities among corridors. Through the corridor prioritization process, the Southeast TPR confirms the relative importance of the corridors in the region with state officials, stakeholders, and decision makers and communicates its priorities for the dedication of resources by the Colorado Transportation Commission.



## Southeast TPR Regional Priority Corridors

-  US 50 from I-25 in Pueblo to the Kansas state line
-  US 287 from the Oklahoma state line to the Kiowa/Cheyenne county line
-  SH 96 from the Pueblo/Crowley county line to the Kansas state line



## Priority Corridor Selection Process

Selection of the Regional Priority Corridors was a collaborative process with TPR members and stakeholders involving a series of meetings that included several steps and considerations. Transportation leaders' understanding of the daily travel experience in the region brought important insight into the characteristics of the corridor. As a result of this process, the most pressing transportation issues and project needs were identified.

The process began with a review of the Southeast TPR Profile and the prioritization of the corridors in the 2035 RTP. Multimodal activity on the corridors was acknowledged through the existing CDOT plans for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit services. Public input, gathered through an online public survey and telephone town hall, also helped define and confirm the region's overall priorities. The economic vitality supported by the corridor and other unique characteristics, such as Scenic Byway designations, also were considered.

All of the corridors identified as a high priority in the previous 2035 plan were carried forward into this RTP. Even though some improvements have been made on these routes in the recent past, these corridors continue to be critical to the mobility of the region.

## Corridor Profiles

The Southeast TPR has developed a corridor profile for each corridor in the region. Development of the 2030 and 2035 RTPs included extensive work on the corridor profiles. The 2040 Plan builds upon those efforts by updating the corridor profiles to reflect the changes that have occurred since adoption of the 2035 plan.

The primary purpose of a corridor vision (contained within the corridor profiles) is to look toward the future and describe how the corridor can meet the community's desired transportation needs. Other elements of these corridor profiles include: the community's general values of the corridor, its primary type of travel, its characteristics, the industries it supports, and the types of improvements that will be needed in the future. The corridor goals describe general objectives that the corridor needs to attain to meet the vision. The corridor strategies describe discrete types of improvements intended to reach those goals.

The benefits associated with each of the strategies listed on the corridor profile will be used to track and report on progress toward corridor goals after plan adoption. The complete set of corridor profiles for the Southeast TPR can be accessed at CDOT's planning website.

## Function of Corridor Prioritization

Selection of the Regional Priority Corridors will guide future decisions for the use of resources in the Southeast TPR. The importance of Regional Priority Corridors is further validated by the collaborative process by which they were identified, involving key stakeholders and grassroots interests in the region. The overall prioritization of corridors also helped to inform the subsequent and critical discussion around transportation needs and priorities when or if revenues are more or less than expected.

### Regional Priority Corridor Factors

- TPR Profile data
- Project needs
- 2035 corridor priority information
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit plans
- Public input

## Regional Priority Corridors for the Southeast TPR

### SH 96: Pueblo/Crowley county line to Kansas state line A

#### *Corridor Characteristics*

- Connection with Ports-to-Plains Corridor
- Serves as major east-west alternative to US 50 and I-70
- Route accommodates school bus travel, wind energy services, agriculture, freight, and tourism
- Multimodal corridor

#### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Enhance safety for bicyclists and motorists
- Support agricultural and energy economic development
- Maintain or improve pavement conditions
- Eliminate shoulder deficiencies
- Expand transit service

### US 50: I-25 in Pueblo to the Kansas state line B

#### *Corridor Characteristics*

- Linkage between Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor
- Alternate to I-70 for interstate freight movement and tourist travel
- Arkansas Valley has rich agricultural and environmental amenities
- Major travel corridor for local and through traffic
- Serves as Main Street in many towns
- Intercity bus service

#### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Accommodate increases in freight and tourist/recreation traffic
- Increase safety and local mobility
- Support economic development, maintain environmental quality
- Provide regional bus service

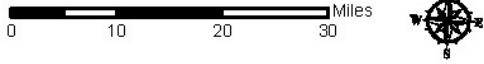
### US 287: Oklahoma state line to Kiowa/Cheyenne county line C

#### *Corridor Characteristics*

- Ports-to-Plains Corridor
- Key linkage for international freight movement between U.S. and Mexico
- Agriculture, energy, and tourism/recreation access
- Intercity bus service

#### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Maintain statewide transportation connections
- Accommodate growth in freight traffic
- Support economic development in energy, agriculture, and tourism
- Provide regional bus service between Campo and Lamar
- Provide regional essential bus service between Lamar and Springfield



# Chapter 5

## Transportation Needs and Revenue

In this plan, the Southeast TPR has identified a range of transportation needs through the year 2040 and has prioritized regional issues that are most important to the transportation system, particularly for the next 10 years. Because of the limited availability of funding for transportation, the TPR must have a plan to focus on those priorities that could be realistically accomplished, but also to have a contingency plan in case the TPR receives more or less transportation funding. In this chapter, funding scenarios have been applied to the TPR's priorities to give decision makers a vantage point of possible future scenarios related to three assumptions for future revenue: baseline revenue, less-than-baseline revenue, and additional revenue.

The results of scenario planning are particularly important for the first 10 years of the planning horizon. Within this period, both transportation needs and funding availability are more predictable. In addition, the identification of priorities for the first 10 years aligns with development of a four-year STIP. The STIP is a federally required, fiscally constrained program of projects.

### Regional Multimodal Needs

Multimodal issues and regional trends for the Southeast TPR were considered throughout this planning effort. All these modes contribute to the transportation system within the TPR. Some of these needs are discussed in **Chapter 1, Regional Transportation Story**. These include:

- SH 96 is part of the TransAmerica Trail, a cross-country bicycle route that draws bicycling enthusiasts riding their bikes across America.
- The Amtrak Southwest Chief, which provides passenger rail service from Los Angeles to Chicago via Lamar and La Junta, is in peril of being rerouted away from Colorado.
- The transportation system needs to accommodate a high volume of truck freight, including oversized loads.

Highway and multimodal needs are described in **Chapter 4, Regional Priority Corridors**. Detailed needs for transit, aviation, freight, and rail have been developed through CDOT modal plans. The modes are discussed below and are not in priority order.

### Highway Corridors

Highway corridor needs include adding passing lanes, widening shoulders, enhancing safety, and improving pavement condition. **Chapter 4, Regional Priority Corridors** describes the highway and multimodal needs for the Regional Priority Corridors, which are designated as such because of their importance to the region's transportation system or because of a need for short-term improvements. In addition, strategies and benefits for every highway corridor in the region are listed in the corridor visions.

### Transit

Transit needs and services and funding gaps are described in the Southeast Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan (2014). Transit needs include filling gaps in service while maintaining existing Amtrak passenger rail service. Increasing services for access to jobs, recreation, education, health and human services, and medical facilities is particularly important to the region. To address these needs and maximize existing services, the TPR will need to establish better coordination among transit service providers of the region.

### Transit Needs

Transit needs include expanding service between communities; increasing access to jobs, recreation, education, health/human services, and medical facilities; promoting transit; and integrating general public transit with human services on the following corridors:

- SH 96
- US 50
- US 287

## Aviation

Statewide estimates to fund aviation needs are detailed in the 2011 Colorado Aviation System Plan for the general aviation airports within the Southeast TPR. Improved ground transportation, fuel services, weather reporting equipment, emergency access improvements, and pavement maintenance were some of the needs identified for the six general aviation airports in Lamar, La Junta, Las Animas, Springfield, Holly, and Eads.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian

Plans that specifically address bicycle and pedestrian needs and strategies are conducted at the state level in the Colorado Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. However, some changes that improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility, such as wider highway shoulders or pedestrian safety at key crossings, are related to highway projects. Bicycle and pedestrian needs for the Southeast TPR noted during plan development include wider shoulders and pedestrian crossing improvements at intersections in towns.

## Freight

The Colorado Freight Plan contains a broad discussion of the Colorado Freight Corridors and measures to improve freight movement throughout the state. The freight plan has a statewide list of potential projects for the first year, but no costs are associated with the potential projects. Projects proposed in the Freight Plan aim to address needs for intersection and geometric improvements, the addition of pullouts and passing lanes, as well as shoulder widening, and general safety improvements.

Colorado Freight Corridors are roadways that are critical to the inter-regional, intra-state, inter-state, or national freight movement, and play an important role in the regional and state economy. The designated Colorado Freight Corridors in the Southeast TPR are:

- US 50
- US 160
- US 287
- SH 10

## Rail

The Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan discusses statewide-level needs for rail improvements and includes cost estimates for making those improvements. This document recommends that Colorado create a Short Line Assistance Program, as some states have done, to modernize the rail system to accommodate 286,000-pound railcars and increase allowable speeds on short line railroads. Such a program could benefit agriculture and other industries, promote economic development in rural Colorado, and save taxpayer monies from excess highway truck usage. The following rail lines are located in the Southeast TPR:

- Amtrak, Southwest Chief (Passenger rail)
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe (Freight rail)
- Victoria Southern (Freight rail)
- Cimarron Valley (Freight rail)



*At-grade crossing equipment and issues of safety and security are among the Southeast TPR's priorities for improving the rail system.*

## Statewide Regional Priority Program Distribution

In the adopted program distribution, the Colorado Transportation Commission sets aside \$50 million per year statewide in Regional Priority Program (RPP) funding to distribute these funds to CDOT regions. The statewide formula for the distribution of RPP funds to the CDOT regions is based on a calculation of 50 percent population, 35 percent on-system lane miles, and 15 percent on-system truck VMT.

## Southeast TPR Priorities for Funding

The TPR used three funding scenarios to prioritize transportation improvements. These scenarios are based on the Statewide Revenue Scenarios, discussed on the following pages. The Southeast TPR is in CDOT Region 2, which is projected to receive approximately \$11.6 million of Regional Priority Program (RPP) funding in FY 2016 and a total of \$116 million by the end of the first 10 years. This is split between other planning areas within CDOT Region 2, including the Central Front Range TPR, South Central TPR, the Pueblo Area, and the Pikes Peak Area.

While there are several different sources of funding available for addressing transportation needs within the TPR, the RPP is the most flexible funding source for CDOT Regions to use with input from the TPRs. RPP funding is intended to help the TPRs address their regional transportation priorities. The TPR expects RPP funding may be combined with other funding sources to fund individual projects.

### Baseline Revenue Scenario

The Southeast TPR discussed how RPP funds should be used to address transportation priorities with the current funding availability. The Baseline Revenue Scenario is a forecast of reasonably expected resources for CDOT as a component of the 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan. Based on the adopted statewide RPP distribution and the Statewide Baseline Revenue Scenario, the Southeast TPR used a planning estimate of **\$1.8 million** per year in RPP funds for the first 10 years of the plan. For planning purposes, the TPR doubled the amount of possible RPP funding for a total of **\$36 million**. The regional priority corridors, discussed in Chapter 4, were used to decide which locations should be considered for funding during the first 10 years of the plan. The TPR decided to prioritize the RPP funding this way:

### Southeast TPR Priorities for RPP Funds

Priority Corridor	Amount
US 287	\$14 Million
US 50	\$14 Million
SH 96	\$8 Million
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$36 Million</b>

Due to the limited funding, the majority of dollars identified in the baseline scenario will be dedicated to maintaining and preserving the system. CDOT is developing processes to identify critical needs and help maximize returns on taxpayer dollars. This will be accomplished through CDOT's Risk-Based Asset Management Program.

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### **Less-Than-Baseline Revenue Scenario**

With less money available, some CDOT programs—such as snow and ice removal, bridge maintenance, and roadway maintenance—could be reduced. The Southeast TPR identified which CDOT programs should be prioritized in the event of less-than-expected revenues. The TPR determined that roadway maintenance is their top priority. This recommendation will be one of the factors considered for future project selection should there be a decrease in funding available to the TPR for transportation improvements from any funding resource, including RPP.

### **Additional Revenue Scenario**

The Southeast TPR identified which corridors in the region would receive funding if additional revenues became available. Within this additional revenue scenario, the TPR planned for an additional \$40 million to \$50 million. The result of this process identifies that additional funds would be spent on these corridors:

- US 287
- US 50
- SH 96

For further information, refer to CDOT's planning website.

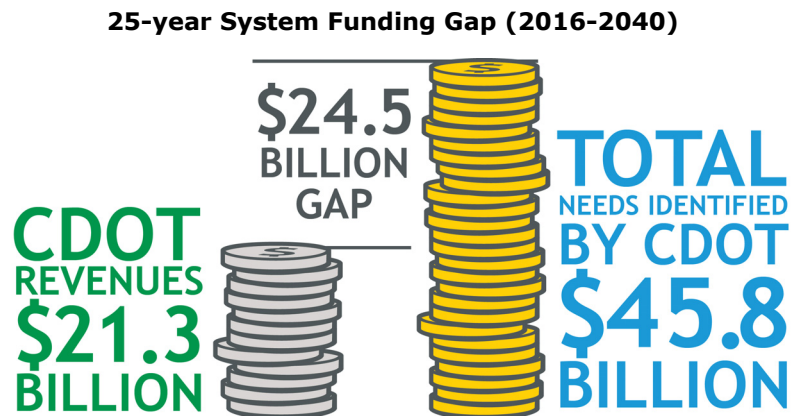
## Statewide Multimodal Needs

The needs and priorities that are identified at the regional level are combined with the needs of other regions to make up the transportation needs of the state. Concurrently developed with the RTPs, the statewide transportation planning process emphasizes multimodal needs made up of costs for highway, rail, transit, freight and passenger rail, aviation, and non-motorized modes of transportation for the first 10 years of the plan. The horizons for statewide transportation planning match those of the regions (10-year and 25-year). Factors considered in identifying needs include: preserving transportation infrastructure and assets (i.e., pavement and bridges), addressing safety and operational concerns, and expanding the transportation system. Similar to the Southeast TPR regional multimodal needs, the statewide transportation needs were derived from relevant data and stakeholder input.

The Colorado Transportation Commission considered variations of assumptions for projected future funding and adopted a statewide baseline revenue scenario as a forecasting tool for the 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan. Besides making reasonable projections for future revenues, good planning also requires preparing for when revenues are more or less than projected.

Future projections show baseline revenues will fall short of addressing all of the statewide transportation needs. Comparing cost estimates for statewide needs to the baseline revenue scenario reveal a funding gap. For the 10-year planning horizon, from 2016 until 2025, the gap between projected revenues and the estimated cost of transportation improvement needs is \$8.8 billion.

For the longer-term, 25-year planning horizon, the projected revenues are \$21.3 billion while the total identified needs are estimated to cost \$45.8 billion. This results in an approximate \$24.5 billion funding gap. CDOT will have to consider other revenue sources, such as public-private partnerships and tolling, to close this funding gap and fulfill future statewide transportation needs.



*Estimated amounts in 2016 dollars. Source: CDOT 2014*



## Statewide Revenue Scenario Planning

The 2040 forecast includes three revenue scenarios: baseline, additional, and less-than-baseline. The Colorado Transportation Commission adopted the baseline scenario as the expected revenue projection for the Colorado Statewide Transportation Plan (TC Resolution #3070). This statewide forecast forms the basis for projections of revenues for the TPR.

### Less-Than-Baseline Revenue Scenario

- No federal or state General Fund transfers

Under this scenario, revenues in 2016 would drop from \$1.4 billion to \$1.2 billion and then hold steady at about \$1.2 billion per year through 2040. **This represents an estimated 15-percent decrease from the Baseline Revenue Scenario over the period extending to 2040.**

*Source: March 2014  
Transportation Commission  
Revenue Projection Packet*

### Baseline Revenue Scenario

- Based on current law and current economic assumptions
- Average annual National Gross Domestic Product increases by 2.5 percent
- Federal transportation revenues increase 1 percent per year for fiscal years 2016 to 2020.
- Federal revenues and General Fund transfers are adjusted from 2021 to 2040 to match the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) forecast
- Off-the-top transfers are based on CDOT projections
- Senate Bill 09-228 will create a transfer of funds to CDOT in fiscal years 2016 to 2020

Except for the brief addition of SB 09-228 funds during the time period from 2016 to 2020, baseline revenues are projected to be flat, at around \$1.3 billion per year, rising to just under \$1.4 billion per year in 2040. More recent forecasts of revenues, however, suggest that funds from SB 09-228 may be substantially reduced or eliminated. The latest forecast calls for only a little over \$100 million as compared to the nearly \$800 million over five years included in the Baseline Revenue Scenario.

*Source: Colorado Transportation  
Commission Resolution #3070*

### Additional Revenue Scenario

- Baseline revenue scenario
- SB 09-228 revenues anticipated in 2016 through 2020 would be replaced by some other revenue source of similar magnitude.

Under this scenario, revenues in 2021 would increase from \$1.3 billion in the Baseline Revenue Scenario to \$1.5 billion per year and increase to nearly \$1.6 billion in 2040. **This represents approximately a 10-percent increase from the Baseline Revenue Scenario over the period extending to 2040.**

*Source: March 2014  
Transportation Commission  
Revenue Projection Packet*

# Chapter 6 Implementation Actions and Moving Forward

## Implementation Actions

The following discussion contains information about actions that the TPR will take to implement its RTP. Implementation actions are meant to be near-term, practicable measures related to the Southeast TPR’s vision, goals, and strategies. Actions presented below are likely to be initiated before the next update of the RTP and will have limited funding needs, focusing primarily on education, coordination, research, and advocacy. The following actions have been developed as a way for the RPC members to actively promote the RTP.

### Implementation Actions for the Southeast TPR

Implementation Action	Strategies/ Benefits	Applicable RTP Vision and Goals
Support efforts to keep the Amtrak Southwest Chief on its current alignment through southeastern Colorado.	Transit, Rail, Economic Development	Goal 2, Sub-goal D: To support and advocate for the preservation, enhancement, and continued operation of the Southwest Chief passenger rail service through southern Colorado
Increase coordination between CDOT and local governments throughout project development and delivery.	Leveraging partnerships	Transportation System Vision: "...The 2040 Transportation Plan envisions a systematic approach to implementing the transportation plan that is understood and supported by the people of the Southeast TPR."
Explore new funding opportunities.	Leveraging partnerships	Goal 1, Sub-goal A: To maintain the region’s agricultural-based economy through development of the transportation infrastructure  Goal 1, Sub-goal B: To enhance tourism and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to the region through development of transportation infrastructure

The actions discussed in this chapter are linked with benefits identified in the RTP Corridor Profiles. The Corridor Profiles are mentioned and included as an appendix to **Chapter 4, Regional Priority Corridors**.

Benefits include: Aviation, Pedestrian and Bicycle, Capacity, Economic Development, Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability, Freight, Operations, Rail, Safety, and System Preservation. Another benefit, Leveraging Partnerships, was added to potential implementation actions in recognition of the importance of additional support for transportation funding.

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## **High Priority Transit Strategies**

In addition, the Southeast Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan identified several high priority transit strategies for implementation over the next 15 to 20 years to guide the region in making meaningful investments in transit. These strategies address the transit needs identified in the region through surveys, Transit Working Group meetings and public input. Each strategy falls in line with the regional transit vision and goals, and supports the overall statewide transit vision, goals and objectives. Strategies include, but are not limited to coordination activities, maintaining, expanding and/or enhancing of transit service, and facility improvements. For more information on the high priority transit strategies for the Southeast TPR, please see the Southeast Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Coordinated Plan on CDOT's planning website.

## **Moving Forward with the RTP**

After adoption of the RTP, the Southeast TPR will use implementation actions to monitor progress and will re-evaluate its actions accordingly. The TPR also will work with CDOT to develop activities that carry forward implementation actions. This will keep the plan actionable. In addition, regularly assessing programs on the plan based on these implementation actions can help the TPR decide whether to add or remove actions, as appropriate.

**To find out about how you can get involved in the Southeast TPR's ongoing transportation planning process, please visit CDOT's planning website.**