



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Transportation

# 2040 | Regional Transportation Plan

February 2015



## Eastern

*Transportation Planning Region*



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## A Message from your Eastern Transportation Planning Region Chairman

As Chairman of the Eastern Transportation Planning Region, representing Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington and Yuma 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 these goals and more. It recognizes current needs and priorities, while formulating solutions to keep pace with regional growth and changing conditions.

The Eastern 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 online and in 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 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 Eastern Transportation Planning 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. The 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 by it.

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 Eastern Transportation Planning Region's transportation future.

Sincerely,



Trent Bushner  
Chair, Eastern Transportation Planning Region

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The Regional Transportation Story for the Eastern TPR, describes the region’s unique characteristics, along with some of the key transportation conditions that help to define the Eastern TPR. The TPR transportation vision and goals are also identified.

## Landscape

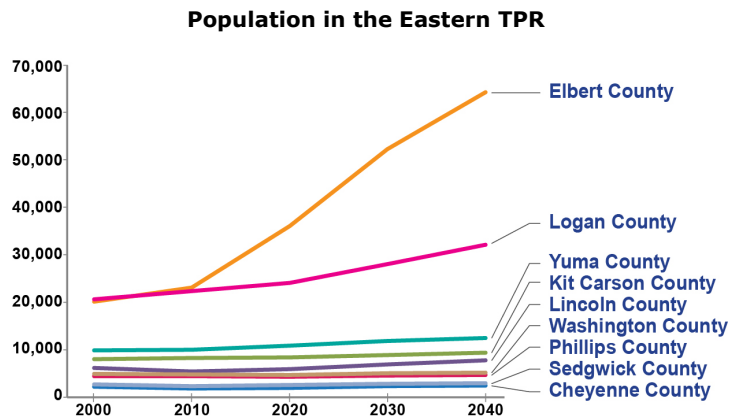
The Eastern TPR is the largest TPR in Colorado, with a terrain of rolling plains, a semi-arid climate, and temperatures varying widely—from more than 100° F in the summer to sub-zero in the winter. The South Platte River Basin traverses the region, providing a complex system of irrigation ditches and reservoirs that support agriculture, hunting, fishing, and recreation opportunities. On occasion, the region experiences severe weather, from snow storms to hail or tornadoes. 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.

## Population

Since 2010, the population in the Eastern TPR has remained fairly constant. The northwest corner of Elbert County—which is within commuting distance of Metro Denver—and Logan County experienced the most growth in the region. The population of the Eastern TPR is expected to grow by approximately 1.8 percent annually through the year 2040 (from 83,000 residents in 2010 to 141,000 residents by 2040), which is a higher growth rate than the statewide annual average of 1.5 percent. That population growth is concentrated in Elbert and Logan counties, with population growth in the other counties flat or stagnant. People 65 years of age or older—both in the Eastern TPR and statewide—make up the fastest-growing segment of the population.

*The region’s population is expected to increase from 83,000 residents in 2010 to 141,000 residents by 2040, with most of the growth expected to occur in Elbert and Logan Counties.*

*(Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs)*



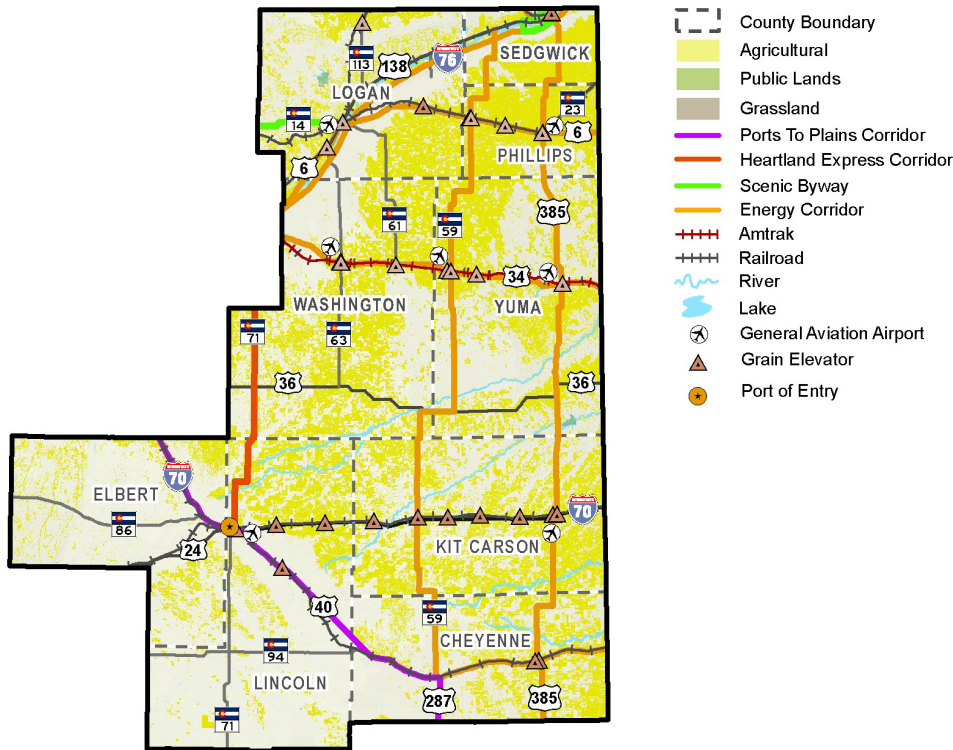
## Heard Around the Region

The people of the Eastern TPR value their rural way of life, which is supported by their local communities that offer a small-town atmosphere. Retirees are relocating to the area because they are attracted to the lower housing costs and the lifestyle. The increasing senior population will need better signing, lighting, accommodation of recreational vehicles, and public transportation options. Transportation options are especially vital for those without access to a vehicle or who cannot drive. A shortfall in transportation funding provides challenges to address critical infrastructure needs.

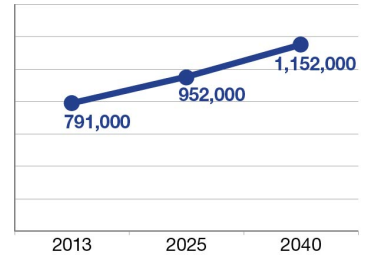


## Economic Vitality

The top industry for employment in the Eastern TPR is agriculture, followed by advanced manufacturing. The Eastern Plains of Colorado is home to one of the most productive farming and ranching areas in the country. It is also one of the fastest growing energy production regions in the state for oil and gas, wind, and ethanol. The top commodities by value exported from the TPR are grain, livestock, and industrial chemicals. Commodity values are expected to grow by 5 percent annually through the year 2040. The Eastern TPR has a relatively high amount of truck traffic—approximately 25 percent of daily vehicle traffic is trucks. This is nearly triple the statewide average of 9 percent and indicates the important role the Eastern TPR plays in a growing freight economy. Freight rail is also a key mode for commodity import and export. The Eastern TPR is served by the Union Pacific Railroad, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, the Kyle Railroad, and the Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado Railway.



## Truck Traffic in the Region



The region is expected to experience growth in truck traffic. By 2040, the daily VMT by trucks in the region will increase by approximately 46 percent.

(Source: CDOT)

## Scenic Byways

There are two scenic byways in the region that also contribute to the economic vitality of the area. The Pawnee Pioneer Trail traverses the prairie and is anchored by the Pawnee Buttes. The South Platte River Trail is a 19-mile loop that was the main route westward in the 19th century.

## Heard Around the Region

Local industries—such as agriculture, manufacturing, energy, and natural resources development—tend to be transportation intensive. The Eastern TPR is experiencing increased energy production, including oil and gas, wind, and ethanol. Farm-to-market mobility is important to the success of the agricultural industry in the area. The transportation network in the Eastern TPR plays a critical role in the statewide transportation network by linking raw materials to the Front Range in support of various manufacturing industries.

## Multimodal Transportation System

The multimodal transportation system in the Eastern TPR includes numerous state highways, seven general aviation airports, three local/human services transit providers, three intercity bus services (with a stop in Sterling), and multiple rail lines. In addition, the California Zephyr Passenger Rail (Amtrak) travels through the Eastern TPR, with a stop in adjacent Morgan County.



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. At the same time, where rural highways enter towns, bicycle safety is an important consideration since the road transitions to a local street and cyclists may have to compete directly with motor vehicles for space on the road.

Intercity bus plays a vital role in the multimodal transportation system, providing mobility options, especially for those without access to cars or who are unable to drive. Transit services connect residents and employees to medical care, jobs, and school.

## Multimodal Transportation System At-A-Glance

**3,291** lane miles—14.3 percent of the state system

**3.2** million vehicle miles traveled per day—4.1 percent of state VMT

**3** local/human services transit providers

**3** intercity bus providers:

- Greyhound: Denver, Burlington
- Black Hills Stage Lines: Denver to Omaha
- Burlington Trailways: Denver, Brush, Fort Morgan, Sterling, Omaha, Chicago

**1** passenger rail service—Amtrak (California Zephyr)

**7** general aviation airports:

- Colorado Plains Regional
- Kit Carson County
- Holyoke Municipal
- Limon Municipal
- Sterling Municipal
- Wray Municipal
- Yuma Municipal

## Roadway Drivability and Bridges

Characteristic of rural regions, the Eastern TPR has a high ratio of highway lane miles relative to its population and volume of vehicular travel. The TPR's population makes up 1.6 percent of the state of Colorado, yet it has 14.3 percent of the state highway lane miles and 4.1 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.

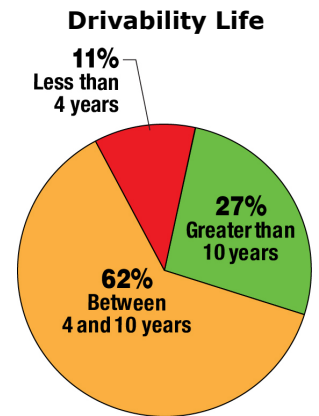
A highway with a DL of greater than 10 years is considered to have a high DL, while a highway with a DL of less than four years is considered to have a low DL. A DL is considered moderate when it is between four and 10 years. In the Eastern TPR, approximately 89 percent of highways have a DL of high or moderate, while approximately 11 percent of highways have a low DL.

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.

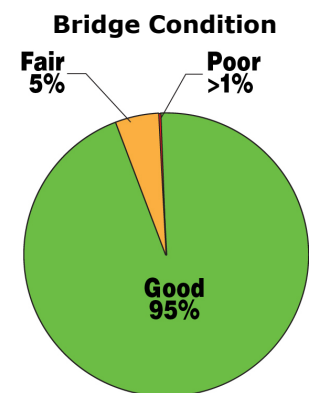
Unacceptable driving conditions mean drivers have to reduce speeds to compensate for unsafe factors, navigate around damaged pavement, or endure rough rides. By reporting pavement conditions using DL, CDOT is able to identify which roadways will reach unacceptable driving conditions and then determine 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.

### Bridge Condition

Bridge condition is an important element of the transportation system. The Eastern TPR has 387 bridges that are maintained by CDOT. The bridge condition in the region exceeds the state's goal. Less than 1% of the bridges in the TPR are rated as poor. They are operational and safe, but either they do not meet current design standards or requires a weight restriction.



(Source: CDOT, 2014)



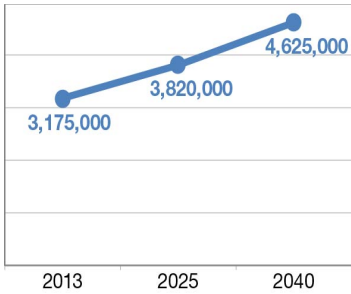
(Source: CDOT, 2011-2013)

## Heard Around the Region

Communities are located far from each other, resulting in long travel distances for employment, medical services, and shopping. Snow and ice removal is an essential need in the region so that social and economic activities can continue.

There is not enough transit funding available to provide the level of transit service that the region requires. The multimodal needs and desires of residents in the Eastern TPR include intercity bus service on I-70, I-76 and US 34; 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.

### Total Vehicle Miles Traveled



A vehicle mile of travel (VMT) equals one vehicle traveling one mile. (Source: CDOT, 2014)

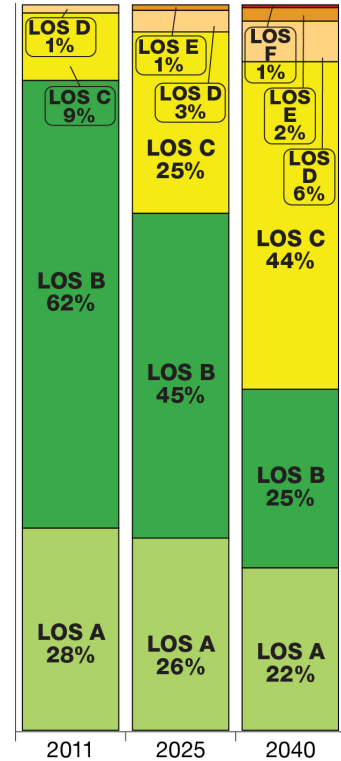
## Traffic and Safety

Traffic volume in the Eastern TPR is growing. Between 2013 and 2040, the VMT in the region likely will grow at an annual rate of 1.4 percent. This is slightly lower than the 1.6 percent 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 for roadways, 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 Eastern TPR are expected to remain relatively free of congestion within this time period. The one exception: SH 86 near Kiowa and Elizabeth is anticipated to have unacceptable levels of congestion by 2025.

For the period from 2010 to 2011, the average crash rate in the region was 0.73 crashes per million VMT. This rate is significantly lower than the statewide average of 1.70 crashes per million VMT for the same time period. The two most prominent crash types in the Eastern TPR for 2010 through 2011 are wild animal collisions and rollovers.

### Regional Level of Service



(Source: CDOT, 2013)

Very little congestion exists on the state highway system today in the Eastern TPR; and, while it will increase in the future, congestion is not expected to be a significant problem even by 2040.



## Recent Accomplishments

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

- I-76: Sedgwick to Nebraska Line—Concrete reconstruction, \$62.3M
- US 24: Lincoln County—Bridge replacement, \$1M
- US 40/US 287: Kit Carson and Hugo East—Concrete reconstruction, \$21M
- I-70: Agate to Kansas line—Concrete slab replacement, \$2.7M
- US 34: East of Wray—Timber bridge replacement, \$3.4M
- SH 138: Timber bridge replacement, \$1.6M
- Increased transit service for workforce transportation needs



*Highway construction  
cone zone on I-76*

## Heard Around the Region

Traffic safety is a fundamental priority for transportation at the local, regional, and state levels. Shoulder additions, pavement maintenance, and strategic improvements, such as turning lanes, are keys to improving safety and are highly desired by residents in the region. Oversized loads frequently travel in the area, impacting mobility for other travelers on the narrow roads. Many drivers report needing to move completely off the road to let a large vehicle pass them.

State highways often serve as main street in many communities in the Eastern TPR, adding to safety concerns. Large trucks and slow-moving farm equipment are common in Eastern Colorado; many people in the region are concerned about their impacts on mobility and pavement quality. Trucks weigh more than passenger vehicles and have a greater impact on road conditions and maintenance needs. Slow-moving trucks create a need for passing lanes, while oversize loads emphasize the need for shoulders.

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## Key Takeaways

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

- Agriculture remains the primary industry in the region.
- The region is experiencing increased energy production, including oil and gas, wind, and ethanol.
- Freight movement is increasingly characterized by larger trucks and heavier loads.
- The region is producing raw materials that are needed to support the manufacturing industries in the Front Range.
- Attracted by the lower housing costs and the rural lifestyle, retirees are relocating to the area.
- Many residents and workers in the region experience long commutes.
- Like the state overall, the average age of the population in the Eastern TPR is increasing.
- The regional transportation system in the Eastern TPR provides a needed connection to Front Range industries for their suppliers.
- Improving roadway pavement condition and economic development are issues of top importance.

## Transportation System Vision and Goals

The visions and goals for the future Eastern TPR transportation system, including transit, are listed below. The Eastern TPR developed a multimodal vision and goals for its future 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

The vision of the Eastern TPR is to enhance the unique character and quality of life found in northeast and east central Colorado by maintaining and improving the region's transportation network. This is essential to support dynamic local and regional economies based on agriculture, oil and gas production, domestic and international trade, recreation, and tourism.

### Transportation System Goals

To support this vision, the Eastern TPR has developed the following goals:

- Implement strategies to improve safety for all modes of transportation, such as the addition of shoulders and turn lanes.
- Improve pavement conditions on interstates and state highways for more efficient farm-to-market movement of goods.
- Encourage proper routing for hazardous materials and oversized vehicles.
- Continue to seek increased funding for improving highway, air, rail, and transit systems and services.
- Promote vibrant communities while supporting agriculture and tourism.
- Provide transit service for the transit-dependent population within the region.
- Enhance air freight and passenger service for the region.
- Preserve rail service and facilities to promote the economic vitality of the region.

### Transit Vision

In the Eastern TPR, the transit vision is to provide an efficient, safe, and accessible transit network that serves the needs of individual communities while making future investment decisions to enhance the quality of life of Eastern Colorado residents.

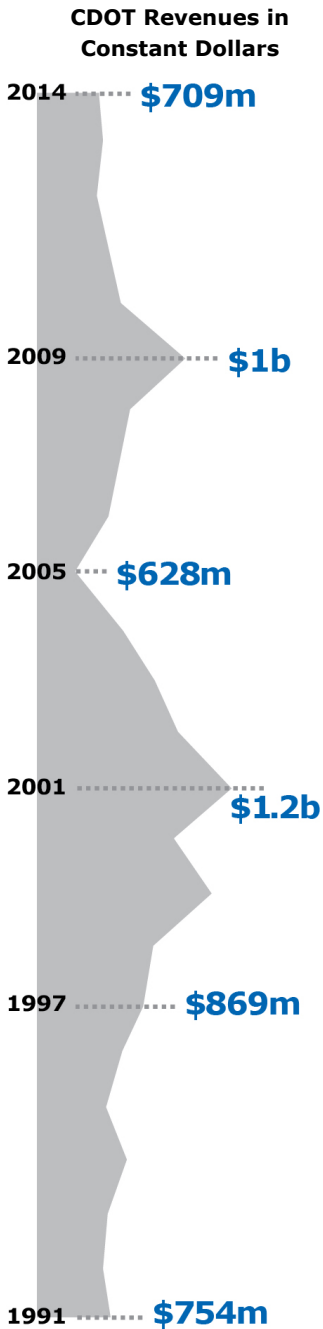
### Transit Goals

The transit vision is supported by the following five goals:

- Increase access to medical services within the region and to larger service areas.
- Expand transit services to meet identified needs.
- Provide transit service for the transit-dependent populations within the region.
- Maximize (maintain) existing transit services to meet current and future transit needs.
- Increase the awareness of mobility services among elected officials, agencies, clients, and the public to encourage greater utilization of existing transit services.

# Chapter 2

## Changes Affecting Regional Transportation



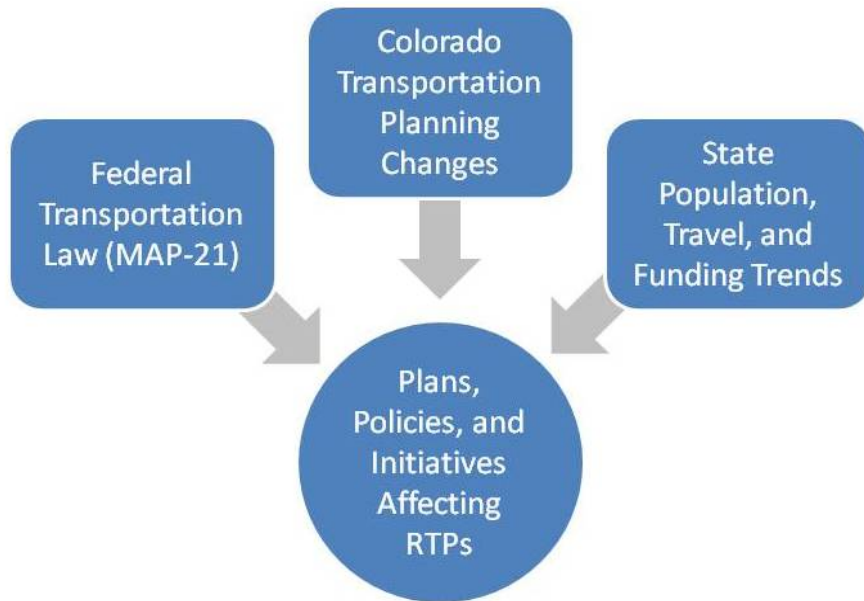
m = millions    b = billions

*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 several plans, policies, programs, and initiatives since the 2035 plan that affect transportation in the Eastern TPR 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

### Factors Affecting Regional Transportation



### 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 vehicle miles traveled (VMT). In 2011, 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. Planning 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 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 and plan 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 Eastern 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's plans should address as many of them as appropriate. While the Eastern 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 Plan. In addition, the Eastern 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 Eastern TPR. Transportation planning provides the framework for investment in a transportation system that will keep the Eastern 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 Eastern 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 Eastern 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 Eastern 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 Eastern TPR so that investments can be made accordingly. The implementation mechanism for the RTP is the STIP, a capital improvement program that identifies which transportation projects have been approved for funding. 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 RTPs and the Statewide Transportation Plan are intended to be updated periodically to remain meaningful references for the TPR members and other interested parties.

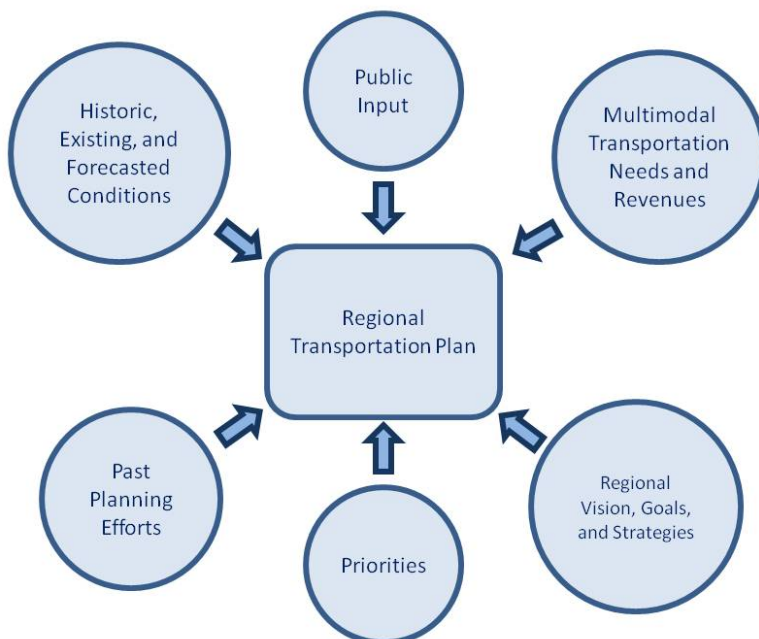
### What is a Regional Transportation Plan?

A Regional Transportation Plan 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



## TPR

### Representatives

There are nine counties and numerous communities, as well as two councils of governments included in the TPR planning area. The TPR representatives include:

#### Counties:

- Cheyenne County
- Elbert County
- Kit Carson County
- Lincoln County
- Logan County
- Phillips County
- Sedgwick County
- Washington County
- Yuma County

#### Municipalities:

- Akron
- Arriba
- Bethune
- Burlington
- Cheyenne Wells
- Crook
- Eckley
- Elizabeth
- Flagler
- Fleming
- Genoa
- Haxtun
- Holyoke
- Hugo
- Julesburg
- Kiowa
- Kit Carson
- Limon
- Merino
- Ovid
- Otis
- Paoli
- Peetz
- Sedgwick
- Siebert
- Simla
- Sterling
- Stratton
- Vona
- Wray
- Yuma

## Development of the Plan

The TPR is responsible for establishing regional priorities and needs, developing the multimodal RTPs, and coordinating ongoing planning with CDOT. The 2040 RTP for the Eastern TPR was developed and adopted by the TPR 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, C.R.S.) 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 plan 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 TPR 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.

### **Integration of Other Plans and Initiatives**

The RTP for the Eastern TPR is one of 15 RTPs in the state. While these are stand-alone documents, they also are key components of the Statewide Transportation Plan. For the needs and priorities identified at the local level to be considered in the state's overall transportation planning process, integration of the 15 RTPs must occur. Likewise, the statewide modal and operational plans developed by CDOT (such as the Transit Plan and Strategic Highway Safety Plan) must be integrated with the Statewide Transportation Plan. This integration allows for a holistic look at transportation needs.

A full list of the regional, modal, and operational plans that are integrated to form the Statewide Transportation Plan is below. These plans are available on CDOT's planning website for review.

#### **Plans that support a statewide multimodal transportation system:**

- Regional Transportation Plans
- Statewide Transit Plan
- Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Colorado Aviation System Plan
- Eastern TPR, Regional Coordinated Transit & Human Services Plan

#### **Plans that support the economic vitality of the state:**

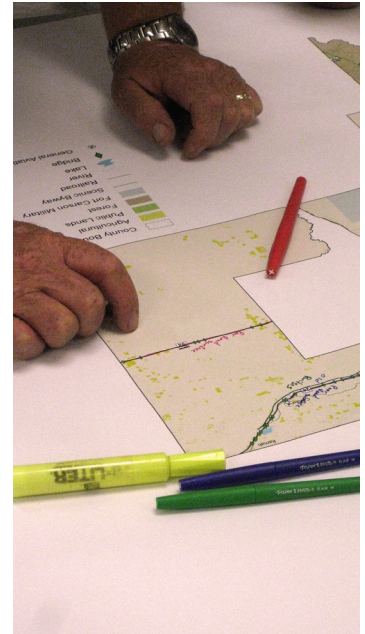
- Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan
- Statewide Freight Plan
- Colorado Airports Economic Impact Study

#### **Plans that assist in identifying maintenance needs for the existing transportation infrastructure:**

- Risk-Based Asset Management Plan
- Colorado Bridge Enterprise 10-Year Program Plan

#### **Plans that aim to get more out of the existing system by focusing on traveler safety and operational improvements:**

- Strategic Highway Safety Plan
- Integrated Safety Plan
- Transportation System Management and Operations Plan



## 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 plan 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 Eastern TPR. A total of **53** survey responses were received from the Eastern TPR. Results of the survey, combined with data, were employed by the Regional Planning Commission to select high priority transportation corridors for their TPR. This public input also was used to illustrate the unique local characteristics of each TPR in Chapter 1 of the plan. Survey questions and popular responses for the Eastern 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** Gets me to work and/or vital services
- #3** Helps economic development

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

- #1** Improving roadway pavement condition
- #2** Improving economic development
- #3** Reducing congestion

#### In light of today's limited funds for transportation, what should be the focus of CDOT efforts?

- #1** Maintain the existing transportation system
- #2** Make safety improvements
- #3** Add shoulders
- #4** Expand highways by adding lanes
- #5** Offer more choices for travel (transit, bike, pedestrian)

### Telephone Town Hall

A telephone town hall is an interactive public meeting conducted over the telephone. On May 1, 2014, **9,773** residents in the Eastern 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 **3,042** people participated, both listening and commenting on the topics discussed. This exercise provided an opportunity to vet the work done by CDOT and the Regional Planning Commission with the broader public before proceeding to finalize important components of the plan. 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? |
|--|--|---|
| <p><b>49%:</b> Safety</p> <p><b>30%:</b> Gets me to work or vital services</p> | <p><b>72%:</b> Maintain the existing system</p> <p><b>26%:</b> Safety improvements</p> | <p><b>81%:</b> Improving the pavement</p>   |

## 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 is 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



### 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 Stakeholder Engagement

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 stakeholders of 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 plan emphasizes planning for transportation corridors in the Eastern 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 on 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 stakeholders of 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 Eastern 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.

## Eastern TPR Regional Priority Corridors (not in priority order)



I-70: E-470 to Kansas state line



I-76: US 85 to Nebraska state line



US 24: Elbert County to Limon



US 34: SH 71 in Brush to Nebraska state line



US 287: Oklahoma state line north to Limon



US 385: Cheyenne Wells to Nebraska state line



SH 71: I-70 to Nebraska state line



SH 86: I-25 Castle Rock east to I-70



## 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 Eastern 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 halls 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.

The result of the regional priority corridor identification process in the Eastern TPR is that all the corridors that were previously identified as high priority continued to be high priority. In addition, SH 86 from the Town of Kiowa to I-70 was designated as a high priority.

## Corridor Profiles

The Eastern TPR has developed a corridor profile for each corridor in the region. Development of the 2030 and the 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 Eastern 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 Eastern 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 Eastern TPR

(not in priority order)

## **US 34: SH 71 in Brush to Nebraska state line**

**A**

### *Corridor Characteristics*

- Agriculture
- Truck and rail freight
- Tourism
- Grain elevators
- Access to Colorado Plains Regional Airport

### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Improve shoulders and add passing lanes
- Accommodate growth in freight traffic
- Improve intersections at grain elevators
- Maintain airport access

## **SH 71: I-70 in Limon to Nebraska state line**

**B**

### *Corridor Characteristics*

- Heartland Expressway
- Truck and rail freight
- Agriculture
- Energy
- Tourism

### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Expand to Super 2 standards
- Mitigate energy development impacts
- Add shoulders, passing and turn lanes
- Support economic development

## **SH 86: I-25 in Castle Rock to I-70**

**C**

### *Corridor Characteristics*

- Heavy commuting on western portion
- Transition from urban to rural
- Agriculture
- Truck freight
- Tourism
- Energy
- Serves as main street in Kiowa

### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Support commuter travel
- Support economic development
- Accommodate increasing freight traffic
- Increase pavement life
- Add shoulders and turn lanes
- Improve safety

## **I-70: E-470 to Kansas**

**D**

### *Corridor Characteristics*

- Critical Front Range and interstate connector
- Truck freight—primary commercial corridor
- Heavy tourism, agricultural, and energy traffic
- Denver International Airport access

### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Accommodate growth in freight traffic
- Maintain statewide connections
- Optimize pavement condition
- Support commuter and tourism travel

## **US 287: Oklahoma state line to Limon**

**E**

### *Corridor Characteristics*

- National Ports-to-Plains Corridor designation
- Truck & rail freight
- Agriculture
- Commercial activity

### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Accommodate growth in freight traffic
- Maintain optimal pavement condition
- Support economic development

## **US 385: Cheyenne Wells to Nebraska state line**

**F**

### *Corridor Characteristics*

- High Plains Highway designation
- Airport Access: Kit Carson County, Haxtun Municipal, Holyoke Municipal, and Wray Municipal
- Energy production
- Freight corridor—oversize loads
- Agriculture

### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Support economic growth
- Eliminate shoulder deficiencies
- Maintain airport access
- Accommodate growth in freight traffic

### I-76: US 85 to Nebraska state line G

#### Corridor Characteristics

- Gateway to Colorado
- Critical interstate freight connection
- Regional bus
- Heartland Expressway
- Agriculture
- Serves state prison in Sterling

#### Corridor Goals & Strategies

- Maintain optimal pavement condition
- Support economic development
- Accommodate growth in freight traffic

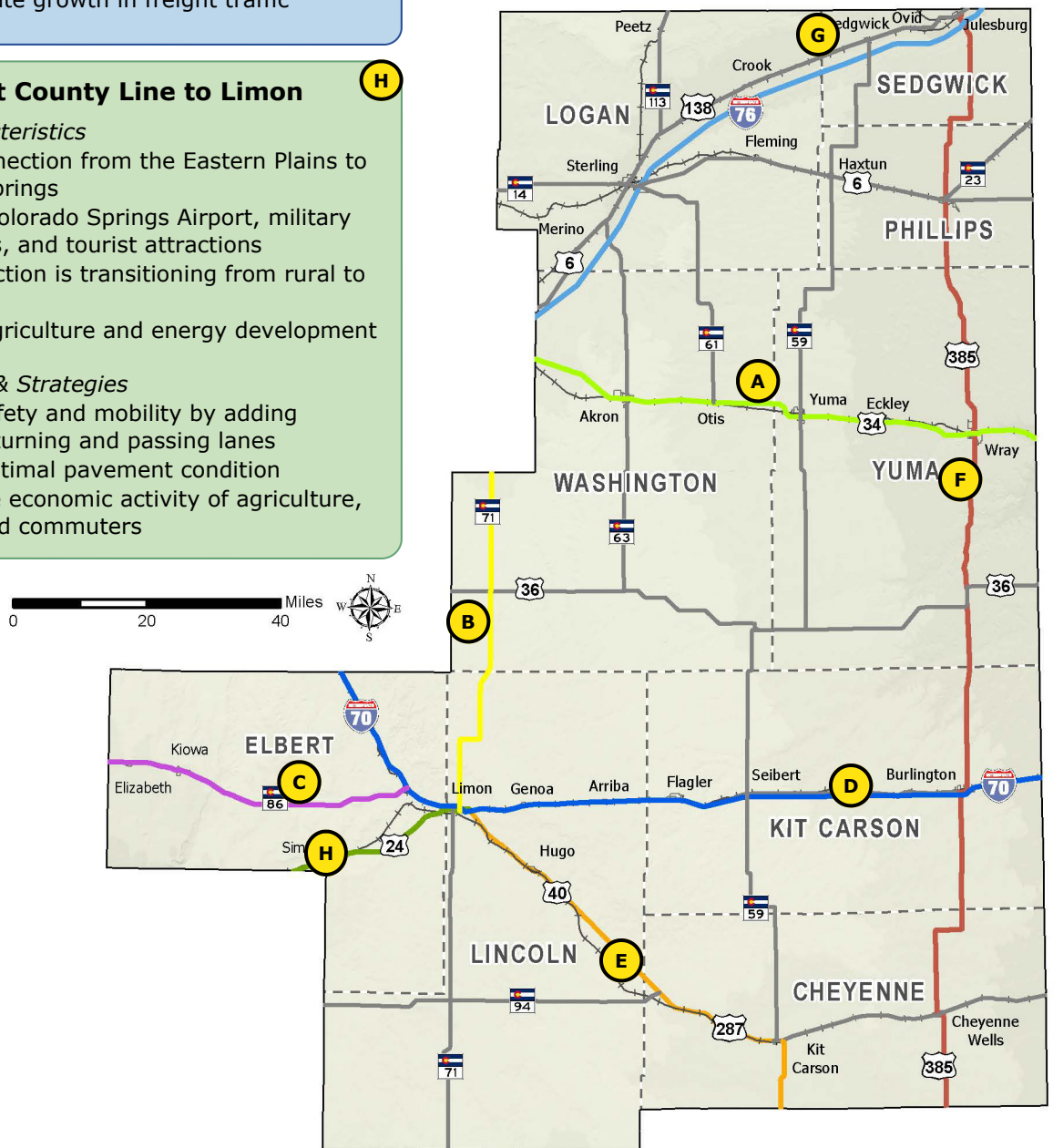
### US 24: Elbert County Line to Limon H

#### Corridor Characteristics

- Critical connection from the Eastern Plains to Colorado Springs
- Access to Colorado Springs Airport, military installations, and tourist attractions
- Western section is transitioning from rural to urban
- Supports agriculture and energy development

#### Corridor Goals & Strategies

- Improve safety and mobility by adding shoulders, turning and passing lanes
- Preserve optimal pavement condition
- Support the economic activity of agriculture, tourism, and commuters



# Chapter 5

## Transportation Needs and Revenue

In this plan, the Eastern 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 that allows them to focus on those priorities that could be realistically accomplished, but also to have a contingency plan in case they receive 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 Eastern TPR were considered throughout this planning effort. Some of these needs are discussed in **Chapter 1, Regional Transportation Story**. These include:

- Support freight movement to encourage agriculture, manufacturing, and energy production industries, particularly where connections can be enhanced to the Front Range.
- Improve roadway pavement condition to attract new economic development.
- Accommodate a growing cohort of aging and retired residents.
- Provide safe and efficient transit options, including transportation to the Front Range for medical services.

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 and applicable plans 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 Eastern Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan. Transit needs include filling gaps in service that occur in the late evening and early morning hours and during high-need times. Transit providers in the TPR stressed the need for more operating funds. Transit expenses in the Eastern TPR are forecast to outpace the growth in transit revenues.

### 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:

- I-70
- I-76
- US 24
- US 34
- 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 Eastern TPR. Published approach, improved ground transportation, onsite weather reporting equipment, emergency access improvements, and pavement maintenance were some of the needs identified for these airports: Holyoke, Sterling, Colorado Plains, Wray, Yuma, Limon, and Kit Carson.

## 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 improvement categories, such as wider highway shoulders or pedestrian safety at key crossings, are multimodal improvements related to highway projects. Bicycle and pedestrian needs for the Eastern TPR noted during meetings 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. 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 Eastern TPR are:

- I-70 and I-76
- US 24, US 34, US 40, US 287, US 385
- SH 14 and SH 71

## Rail

Cost estimates for statewide-level needs for rail improvements are available in the Colorado State Freight and Rail Passenger Plan. 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. This would apply to the Kyle short line track from Limon to the Kansas border. Such a program could benefit agriculture and other industries, promote economic development in rural Colorado, and save taxpayer monies from excess highway truck usage. In addition, the Union Pacific line from Denver to the Kansas border is near capacity. The following rail lines are located in the Eastern TPR:

- Passenger rail: Amtrak California Zephyr—with a stop in Ft. Morgan
- Freight rail: Kyle; Union Pacific; Burlington Northern Santa Fe; Nebraska, Kansas & Colorado

More information about statewide and regional modal plans is available on CDOT's statewide transportation planning website.



*Additional at-grade crossing equipment and addressing issues of safety and security are among the Eastern 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 allocation 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.

## Eastern 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 Eastern TPR is in CDOT Region 4, which is projected to receive approximately \$11.0 million of Regional Priority Program (RPP) funding in FY 2016 and a total of \$110.0 million by the end of the first 10 years. This is split between other planning areas within CDOT Region 4, including the Upper Front Range TPR and the North Front Range MPO and Denver Regional Council of Governments.

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. RPP funding is often combined with other funding sources to fund individual projects.

### Baseline Revenue Scenario

The Eastern TPR discussed where RPP funds could be used to address transportation priorities with the current funding. The TPR employed an online survey to validate the importance of the priority corridors, which are discussed in Chapter 4, and to guide project decision-making during the first 10 years of the plan. The survey asked TPR members to list three corridors that could be considered for available funding. Each TPR municipality and county was invited to complete one survey. The results confirmed the importance of all of the previously identified Regional Priority Corridors. The Eastern TPR and CDOT Region 4 will continue to work together to determine where the best transportation investments will be made, using the Priority Corridor list as a guide. The survey results are available for review on CDOT's planning website.

The following TPR members participated in the survey:

- Arriba
- Bethune
- Cheyenne County
- Town of Elbert
- Elbert County
- Elizabeth
- Flagler
- Genoa
- Holyoke
- Hugo
- Julesburg
- Kiowa
- Town of Kit Carson
- Kit Carson County
- Limon
- Lincoln County
- Logan County
- Ovid
- Paoli
- Phillips County
- Sedgwick County
- Siebert
- Vona
- Wray
- Yuma County
- City of Yuma

Due to 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 taxpayers' dollars. This will be accomplished through CDOT's Risk-Based Asset Management Program.

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

The Eastern TPR identified which CDOT programs—including snow and ice removal, roadway maintenance, and bridge maintenance—are most important to the region and should receive high priority in the event of less-than-expected revenues. The TPR determined that maintenance and preservation of the existing system is its 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.

### **Additional Revenue Scenario**

To prioritize improvements with the availability of additional funds, the Eastern TPR used a potential ballot initiative to develop a reasonable funding scenario with increased transportation revenue devoted to regional projects. Within this scenario, the region planned for an additional \$50 million to \$100 million. The result of this process identified a list of projects within the TPR. This list is available for review on CDOT's Statewide Transportation Planning website. With TPR concurrence, the list will be among the documents consulted if future revenues exceed expectations.

## Statewide Multimodal Needs

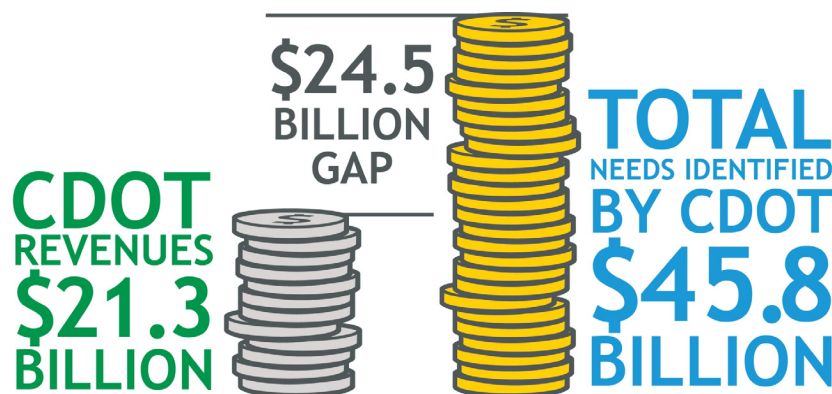
The needs and priorities that are identified at the regional level are combined with the needs of other regions to make up the transportation needs of the state. Concurrently developed with the RTPs, the statewide transportation planning process emphasizes multimodal needs made up of costs for highway, transit, freight, rail, aviation, and non-motorized modes of transportation for the first 10 years of the plan. The horizons for statewide 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 Eastern 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 component of 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 reveals a funding gap. For the 10-year planning horizon, from 2016 until 2025, the gap between projected revenues and the estimated cost of transportation improvements 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.

### 25-Year System Funding Gap (2016-2040)



*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.**

*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

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 Eastern TPR's vision, goals, and corridor profile strategies and benefits. 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 TPR to actively promote the RTP.

### Implementation Actions for the Eastern TPR

| Implementation Action  | Strategies/Benefits                                | Applicable RTP Goals  |
|--|--|---|
| Develop strategies to advance the understanding of the importance of the transportation system in the Eastern TPR on the economic vitality of the Front Range. | Economic Development, Freight, System Preservation | <i>"Continue to seek increased funding for improving highway, air, rail, and transit systems and services."</i>               |
| Develop strategies to increase economic development and address the impacts from the pass-through of truck freight and passenger car movement.                 | Economic Development, Freight, Operations          | <i>"Improve pavement conditions on interstates and state highways for a more efficient farm-to-market movement of goods."</i> |
| Learn more about high-speed train systems as a method to move people to the Denver International Airport (DIA) from Eastern Colorado.                          | Rail, Aviation, Economic Development               | <i>"Preserve rail service and facilities to promote the economic vitality of the region."</i>                                 |

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## Corridor Strategies and Benefits

The actions discussed in this chapter are linked with benefits identified in the RTP Corridor Profiles. The Corridor Profiles are available for review on CDOT's planning website. The benefits include aviation, pedestrian and bicycle, transit, 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.

## Moving Forward with the RTP

After adoption of the RTP, the Eastern 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 progress on the plan based on these implementation actions can help the TPR decide whether to add or remove actions, as appropriate.



*Landscape of Eastern Colorado*

*Photo credit: © Kevin Anderson, Creative Commons, 2.0 generic in Flickr*

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