

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today, the picturesque state of Colorado is home to approximately 5 million people and 3 million jobs. By 2040, the population is expected to increase by 47 percent to nearly 7.8 million, with the number of people age 65 and older representing approximately 1.4 million or 18 percent of the total. **Figures ES-1 and ES-2** illustrate growth anticipated in each Colorado Transportation Planning Region (TPR). Colorado is facing a growing demand for mobility and services throughout the state, in both its urban centers and rural areas. Transit services will be an essential piece of the state’s future transportation network, addressing the mobility needs of this increasing and aging population, as well as contributing to the economic, social, and environmental health of the state as it grows.

Figure ES-1. Colorado Population Growth 2013 to 2040 by Rural TPR (increments of 10,000)

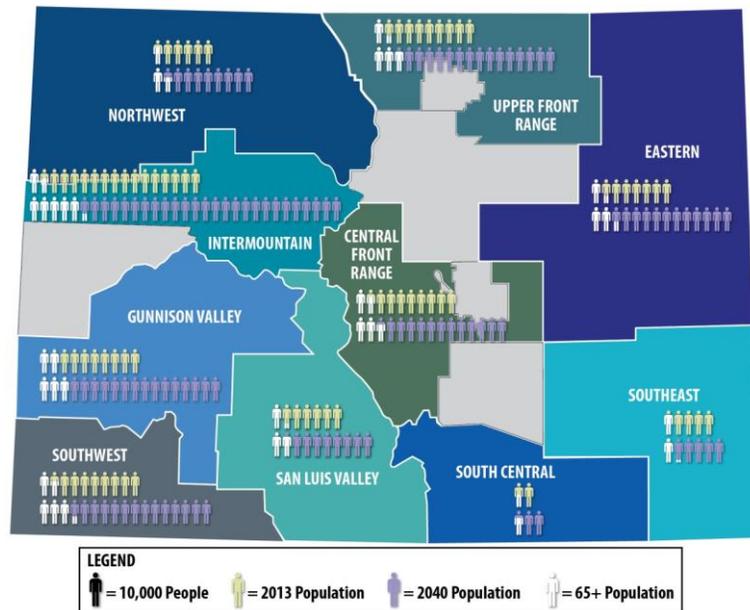
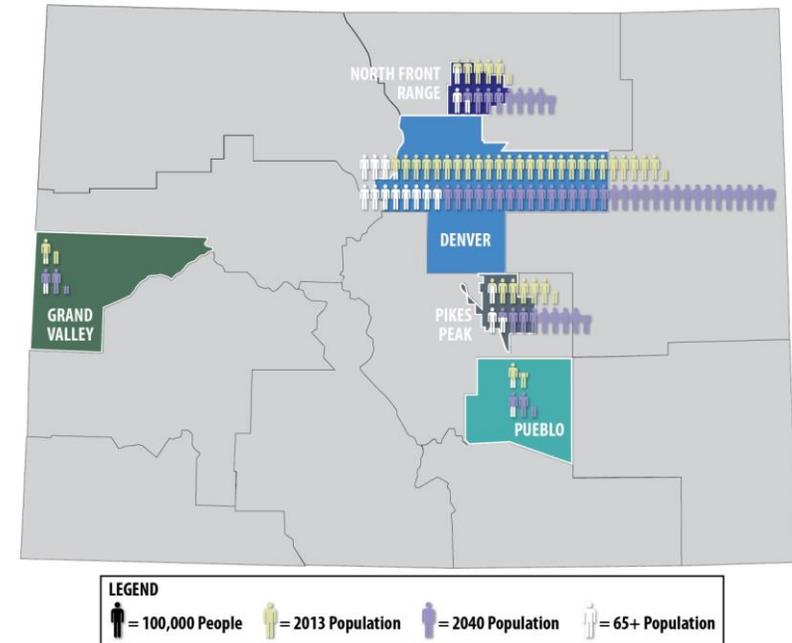


Figure ES-2. Colorado Population Growth 2013 to 2040 by Urban TPR (increments of 100,000)



COLORADO TRANSIT VISION
Colorado’s public transit system will enhance mobility for residents and visitors in an effective, safe, efficient, and sustainable manner; will offer meaningful transportation choices to all segments of the state’s population; and will improve access to and connectivity among transportation modes.

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Division of Transit and Rail (DTR) developed its first ever Statewide Transit Plan to address these future needs and guide CDOT’s future transit investments and actions. The planning process was informed by a Statewide Steering Committee, federal and state agency consultation, transit working groups in the 10 rural TPRs, and more than 20 public meetings with communities throughout the state, supplemented by online information and surveying. Transit needs were identified and

the recommendations for the future developed through a grass-roots approach and with the specific input of future users. Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) provides a new emphasis on performance-based planning and establishment of performance measures and targets. DTR worked with the Statewide Steering Committee to establish the goals, objectives, and performance measures shown in **Table ES-1**.

Table ES-1. Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures

Category	Goal/Objectives	Performance Measures
<p>System Preservation and Expansion</p>	<p>Goal: Establish public transit as an important element within an integrated multimodal transportation system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preserve existing infrastructure and protect future infrastructure and right-of-way ▪ Expand transit services based on a prioritization process ▪ Allocate resources toward both preservation and expansion ▪ Identify grant and other funding opportunities to sustain and further transit services statewide ▪ Develop and leverage private sector investments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Portion of CDOT grantees with Asset Management Plans in place for state or federally funded vehicles, buildings, and equipment by 2017 ▪ Percentage of vehicles in rural Colorado transit fleet in fair, good, or excellent condition, per Federal Transit Administration (FTA) definitions ▪ Annual revenue service miles of regional, interregional, and intercity passenger service
<p>Mobility/Accessibility</p>	<p>Goal: Improve travel opportunities within and between communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make transit more time competitive with automobile travel ▪ Create a passenger-friendly environment, including information about available services ▪ Support multimodal connectivity and services ▪ Enhance connectivity among local, intercity and regional transit services and other modes ▪ Strive to provide convenient transit opportunities for all populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of rural population served by public transit ▪ Annual revenue service miles of regional, interregional, and intercity passenger service ▪ Percent of agencies providing up-to-date online map/schedule information ▪ Annual small urban and rural transit grantee ridership compared to five-year rolling average

Category	Goal/Objectives	Performance Measures
<p>Transit System and Partnerships Development</p>	<p>Goal: Increase communication, collaboration, and coordination within the statewide transportation network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meet travelers' needs ▪ Remove barriers to service ▪ Develop and leverage key partnerships ▪ Encourage coordination of services to enhance system efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of grantee agencies reporting active involvement in local/regional coordinating councils or other transit coordinating agency
<p>Environmental Stewardship</p>	<p>Goal: Develop a framework of a transit system that is environmentally beneficial over time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions ▪ Support energy efficient facilities and amenities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of statewide grantee fleet using compressed natural gas, hybrid electric, or clean diesel vehicles or other low emission vehicles ▪ Passenger miles traveled on fixed-route transit
<p>Economic Vitality</p>	<p>Goal: Create a transit system that will contribute to the economic vitality of the state, its regions, and its communities to reduce transportation costs for residents, businesses, and visitors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the availability and attractiveness of transit ▪ Inform the public about transit opportunities locally, regionally, and statewide ▪ Further integrate transit services into land use planning and development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of major employment and activity centers served by public transit
<p>Safety and Security</p>	<p>Goal: Create a transit system in which travelers feel safe and secure and in which transit facilities are protected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help agencies maintain safer fleets, facilities, and service ▪ Provide guidance on safety and security measures for transit systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Percentage of vehicles in rural Colorado transit fleet in fair, good, or excellent condition, per FTA definitions ▪ Number of fatalities involving transit vehicles per 100,000 transit vehicle miles ▪ Percentage of grantees that have certified CDOT Safety and Security Plans that meet FTA guidance

What We Learned

The state of Colorado has over 55 urban and rural public transit providers, over 100 human service agencies providing transportation services, and many private transit providers.

The state’s system largely consists of demand response and fixed-route bus service. Several bus rapid transit lines and passenger rail systems supplement the bus network. The passenger rail system includes five light rail lines and four commuter rail lines in the Denver metropolitan area and two Amtrak passenger rail lines.

Table ES-2 summarizes key statistics about the state’s transit systems. Total annual operating expenses for public transit providers in Colorado are about \$530 million to carry approximately 120 million boardings. Fares cover about 26 percent of these costs, while the national average is about 33 percent.

Table ES-2. Transit System Characteristics

Key Statistic	Rural Planning Regions	Urban Planning Regions	Total
Annual Operating Expenses	\$81.5 M	\$454.2 M	\$535.7 M
Annual Boardings	15.7 M	106.6 M	122.3 M
2012 Population	819,346	2,715,359	3,534,705
Cost/Boarding	\$5	\$4	\$4.5

Sources:

Self-reported data from CDOT Transit Agency Provider and Human Services Surveys, 2013

2012 National Transit Database and Urban Area Profiles

Figure ES-3 illustrates the boardings per capita by TPR. As shown, the Denver (RTD) and Intermountain regions have the highest level of boardings per capita reflecting Denver’s large population center and Intermountain’s high resident and visitor transit use in the region.

The rural transit system currently consists of nearly 1,200 vehicles. When the urban area fleets are added, this number more than doubles to 2,500 vehicles. Over 80 percent of the fleet is in fair, good, or excellent condition.

Colorado’s demographic profile helps to understand where there is the highest relative need for transit in the state. **Figure ES-4** shows the result of a demographic analysis to identify the relative need for transit service.

Figure ES-3. Boardings per Capita by Transportation Planning Region

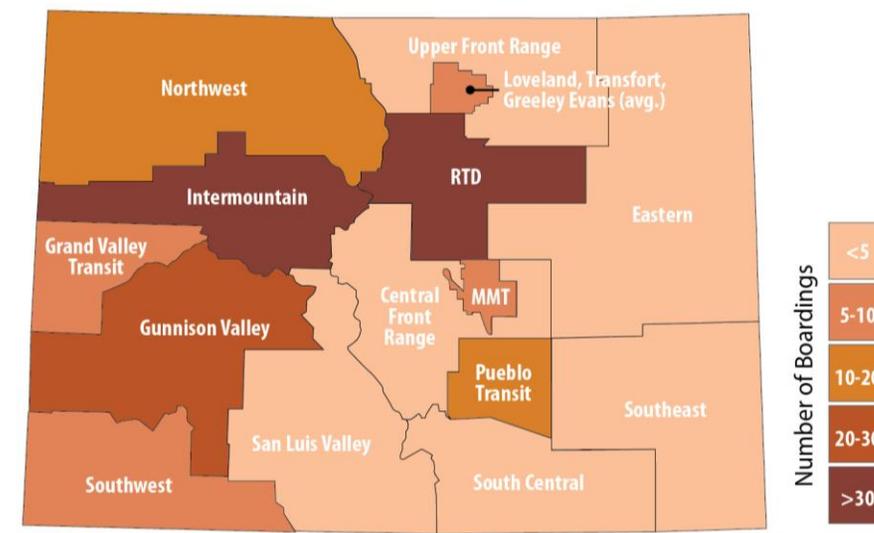
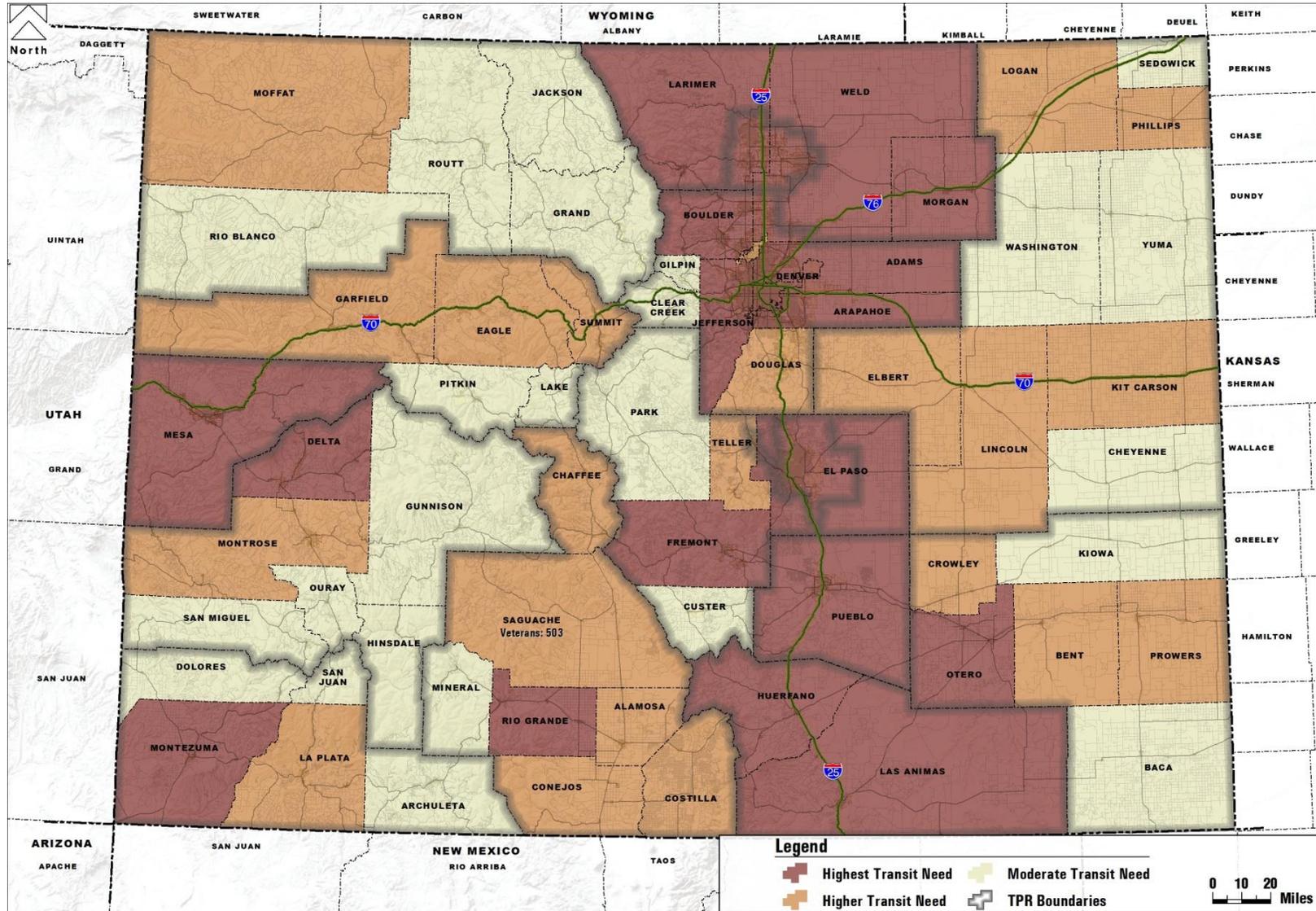


Figure ES-4. Compilation of the Transit Need and Propensity Indicators by County



Transit Need Index produced through aggregate ranking of over 65, zero vehicle household, minority, limited english proficiency (LEP), disabled, and veteran populations.

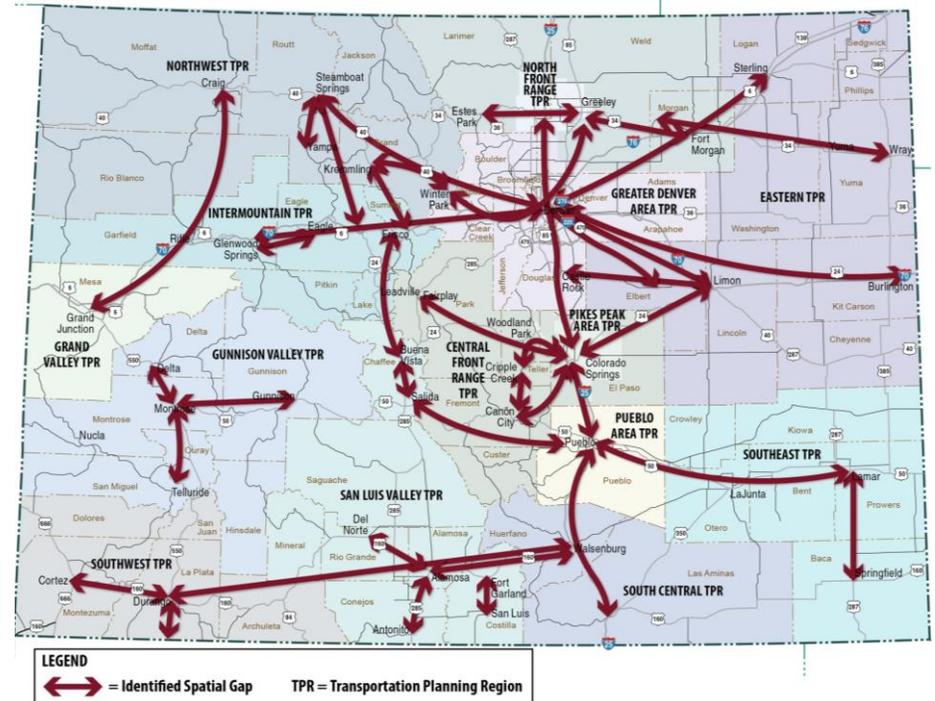
Transit Service Gaps and Needs

Public transit is an integral part of Colorado’s multimodal transportation system providing mobility to thousands of residents and visitors throughout the state. However, today’s service providers continue to face many challenges. Regional and interregional service gaps exist between urban centers and outlying rural areas, an often critical connection for employment and medical trips. Coordination among service providers is limited and in some cases non-existent. Hours and frequency of service are limited, especially in the evenings and on weekends making connections difficult. A lack of funding, regional governing structures, coordination agreements, and cost sharing makes it extremely difficult to expand service to meet the future growing demand.

Across the state, transit providers face challenges with inconsistent operating funding, demands for capital funding, ongoing maintenance of fleets and facilities, and compliance with MAP-21, the current federal transportation authorization. **Figure ES-5** illustrates the spatial gaps identified through development of the regional and statewide transit plans.

CDOT and the transit agencies providing service across the state must consider commuters, transit-dependent users, and the Millennial generation when planning and implementing transit services.

Figure ES-5. Statewide Regional and Interregional Spatial Service Gaps



The Future

The future transit service network consists of existing transit services, including those under construction, and future recommended bus, rail, and human services transportation designed to address user needs across the state in a comprehensive and integrated way. The proposed transit network includes specific recommendations from the Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan, State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan (State Rail Plan), Regional Transit Plans, Interregional Connectivity Study, and Advanced Guideway System Feasibility Study.

The proposed bus network includes:

- ▶ 2 interregional express bus routes; currently unfunded
- ▶ 1 intercity bus route; currently unfunded
- ▶ 26 regional routes; currently unfunded
- ▶ 17 essential services routes; currently unfunded

Proposed passenger rail services include the following:

- ▶ Commuter rail services between Fort Collins and the RTD North Metro end of line per the North I-25 EIS, between Denver and Colorado Springs, and between Colorado Springs and Denver. No funding has been identified for any of these proposed services. CDOT is currently updating cost information for the line between Fort Collins and North Metro Commuter Rail.
- ▶ The State Rail Plan identifies several proposed intercity passenger rail projects based on previous studies and

stakeholder input. However, no funding or plans for expanded service are currently in place. Projects range from upgrades to existing Amtrak facilities to providing new passenger rail services.

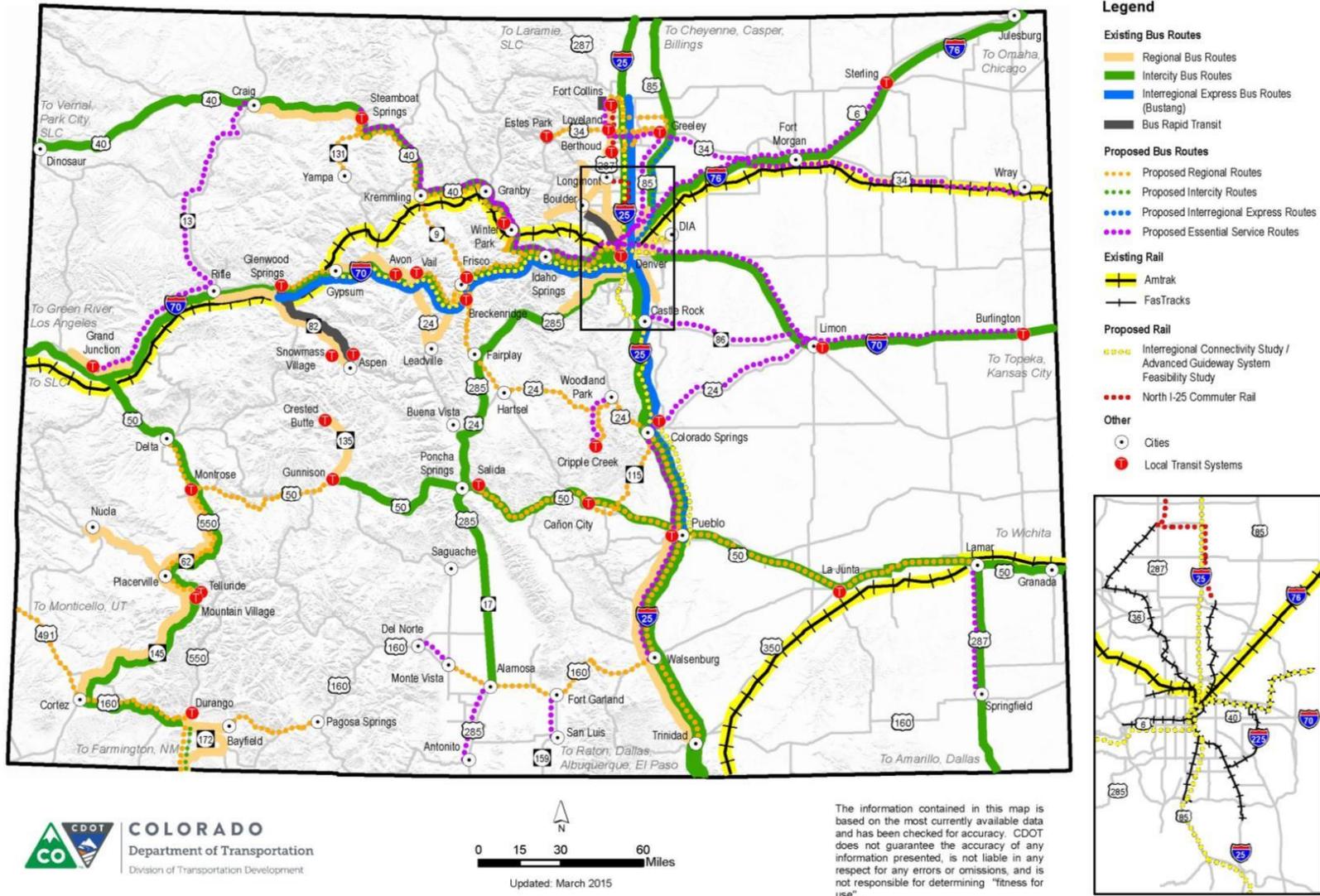
- ▶ The State Rail Plan identifies three high-speed transit connections although no funding or plans for expanded service are currently in place.
- ▶ Together, the Interregional Connectivity Study and the Advanced Guideway System Feasibility Study represent the state’s vision for a comprehensive future high-speed transit system. No funding has been identified for this proposed system.

Proposed human services transportation projects include the following enhancements in select regions throughout the state:

- ▶ Expand service area
- ▶ Provide service in areas currently not covered
- ▶ Increase span of service to cover evenings and weekends
- ▶ Initiate volunteer drive program
- ▶ Improve coordination with public transit agencies and other human services transportation providers

Figure ES-6 illustrates the existing and proposed statewide bus and passenger rail network. One key thing to keep in mind is that while the future transit system network of existing and proposed services indicates transit coverage throughout much of the state, this does not indicate the services adequately address the needs.

Figure ES-6. Existing and Proposed Statewide Bus and Rail Network



Transit agencies across the state have identified the need to invest in their transit assets, including the replacement and expansion of fleet, administrative space, bike and pedestrian facilities, parking facilities, stops and stations, and transfer centers. MAP-21 requires that all FTA grantees develop a certified transit asset management (TAM) plan that inventories all assets and prioritizes investments. CDOT is assisting in the development of TAM plans to enable agencies to pursue state and federal funds for replacement and expansion of their capital projects.

The Funding Picture

Transit funding in Colorado is a complex partnership among federal, state, and local agencies. State funding comes primarily from Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery Act of 2009 (FASTER), which dedicates approximately \$15 million annually to transit in Colorado. Federal funding comes from a variety of transit, rail, and other transportation programs, including the FTA, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation, Veterans Transportation Service, and Older Americans Act. Local funds come from a community's general fund or in some cases from a dedicated transportation sales tax.

In 2013 state funding accounted for 23 percent of rural capital revenues but just one percent of rural operating revenues. In the urban areas, state funding accounted for just one percent of capital revenues and no operating revenues. Colorado ranks 25th in the nation in terms of state support for transit.

Current transit funding levels are expected to grow slowly or even decline in the future as shown in **Figure ES-7**. Federal funds are subject to legislative or program changes. Federal gas tax revenues

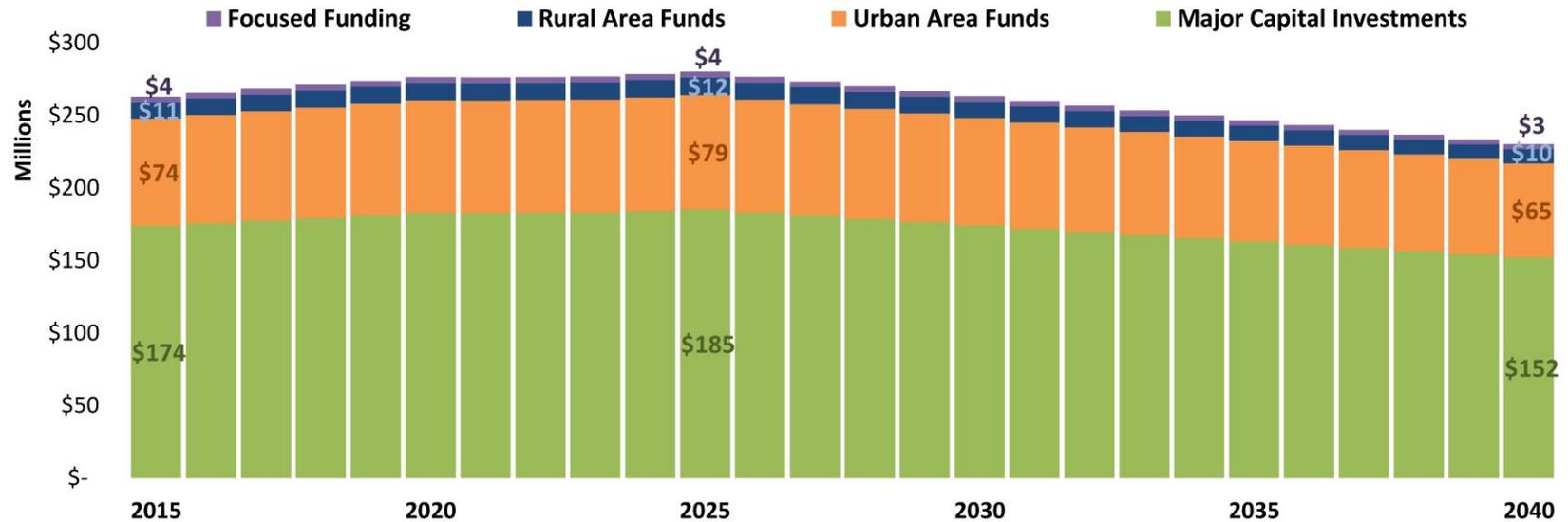
are not keeping pace with inflation and are not expected to increase in the future. State funding for transit is likely to remain stable over the long run, but current legislation does not enable this cap to be raised. Over the next 25 years, this \$15 million funding is projected to be able to purchase \$7 million worth of transit investments.

The rural Regional Transit Plans project a gap between forecasted operating revenues in 2030 and anticipated operating expenses needed to maintain current systems and services. More than \$192 million may be needed in 2030 for rural transit providers to maintain existing service levels. High priority investments and strategies identified by regional agencies could be implemented at an additional cost of \$30 million between now and 2030. However, revenues are projected to fall short of these future needs resulting in a potential funding gap of over \$107 million in 2030. That gap could grow to over \$163 million by 2040 (see **Figure ES-8**).

Given the magnitude of potential future funding shortfalls throughout the state, alternative revenue sources will more than likely be necessary to continue to fund improvements and to meet the growing needs of visitors, residents, businesses, elderly, veterans, low-income, and other transit-dependent populations.

Figure ES-9 presents sketch-level estimates of the potential revenues that could be generated by enabling alternative revenue sources in the rural areas of Colorado. These estimates are intended to provide an approximate gauge of the potential value of alternative revenue sources in closing future funding gaps. The exact amount of revenues that could become available depends on voter approval, implementation of the particular funding mechanism, and local limitations and policy choices.

Figure ES-7. Projected FTA Revenues –2015–2040 (Year of Expenditure Dollars)



Focused Funding: Section 5310 Elderly & Disabled | Section 5316 JARC | Section 5317 New Freedom | Section 5308 Clean Fuels

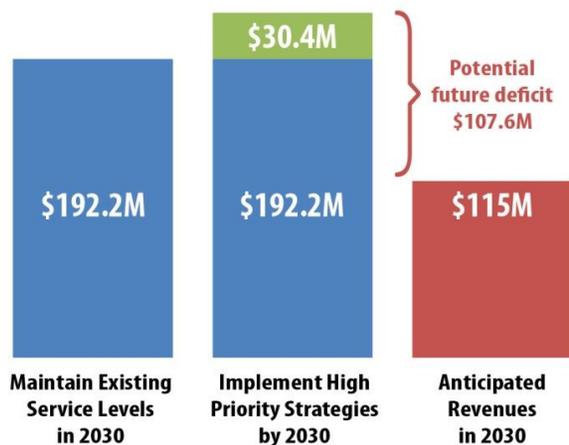
Rural Area Funds: Section 5311 Nonurbanized | Section 5311(b)(2) RTAP

Urban Area Funds: Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula | Section 5303 Metropolitan Planning | Section 5313(b) & Section 5304 Statewide Planning

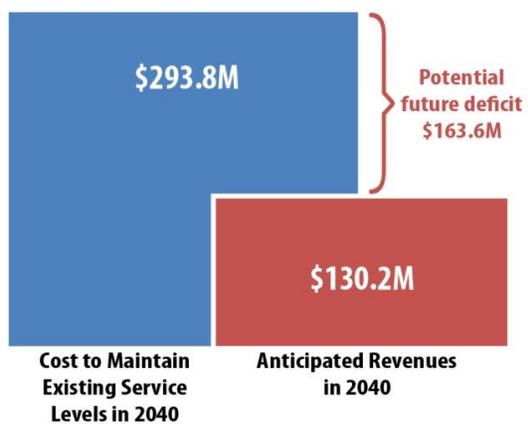
Major Capital Investments: Section 5309(b)(1) New Starts | Section 5309 Fixed Guideway | Section 5337 - State of Good Repair | Section 5339 - Bus and Bus Facilities | Section 5309 Bus Allocation

**** Capital investment programs such as New Starts are not guaranteed and funding levels will vary in the future. Estimates presented here for illustrative purposes only.**

Figure ES-8. Forecast Operating Revenues and Expenses for Rural Providers – 2030 & 2040

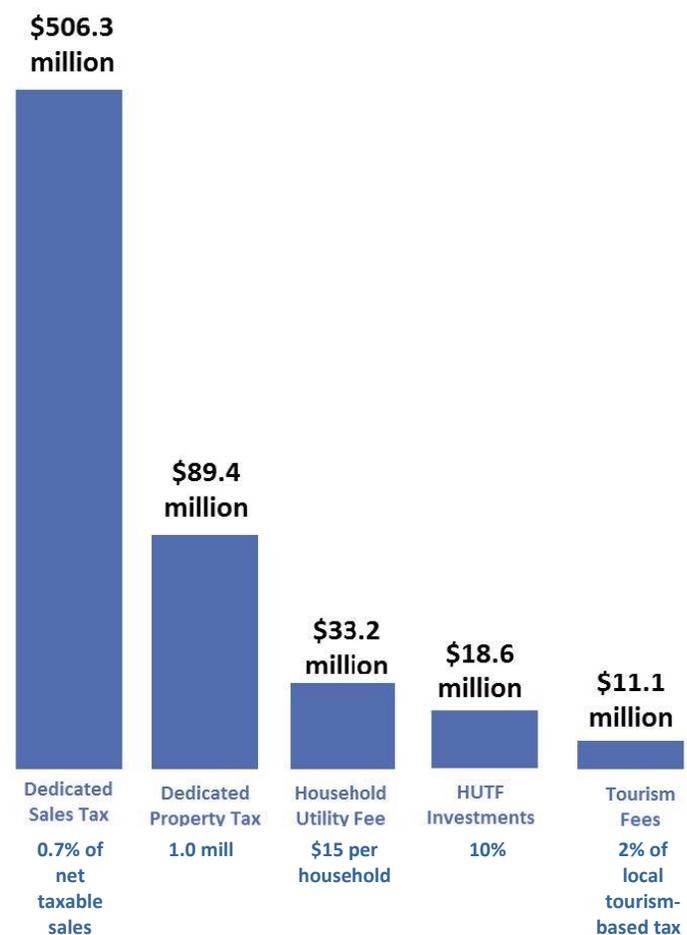


Order of magnitude estimates based on projected operating and administrative expenses and revenues to 2040. Reference regional TPR plans for complete estimates and methodology.



Order of magnitude estimates based on projected operating and administrative expenses and revenues to 2040. Reference regional TPR plans for complete estimates and methodology.

Figure ES-9. Estimates of Potential Funds Generated Through Alternative Revenue Mechanisms



Order of magnitude estimates based on 2012 statewide revenue. Reference regional TPR plans for complete estimates and methodology.

What It Means

Population growth, changing demographics, and transportation and land use trends are increasing Colorado's demand for transit services. Current funding sources are not expected to keep pace with this growth in demand. As a result, the state must strategically invest its limited funds to ensure that the existing system is maintained and that identified needs and gaps are addressed.

To assist with the strategic investment, this plan developed a set of Implementation Actions intended to provide a consistent and transparent guide for CDOT transit priorities and investments. Implementation Actions align with the plan's goals and objectives and will guide implementation of Colorado's statewide transit vision. CDOT also developed performance measures to gauge progress toward meeting the State's transit goals. DTR staff will evaluate and report the performance measures annually as part of CDOT's Annual Performance Report.

With limited funds, maintenance of existing transit service is currently the top priority.

The following implementation actions will guide CDOT's transit investments over the next 20+ years.

System Preservation and Expansion

Implementation Actions:

- ▶ Allocate state and federal funds that maintain (preserve), maximize (enhance), and expand the statewide transit system by investing in identified local, regional, and statewide transit needs.
- ▶ Create a statewide transit capital asset inventory of parks-and-rides, vehicles, and facilities.
- ▶ Develop a sample asset management template for grant partners to use.
- ▶ Update the State Rail Plan to remain eligible for FRA funding.

Mobility and Accessibility

Implementation Actions:

- ▶ Fund and operate Interregional Express (IX) Bus Service beginning in 2015.
- ▶ Support system improvements through dynamic technology-based enhancements.
- ▶ Coordinate and support efforts to implement multimodal transportation infrastructure improvements that meaningfully integrate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit connectivity to the state's transportation network.
- ▶ Develop and invest in coordination strategies that improve mobility for all Colorado's citizens.
- ▶ Consider the role of transit in meeting the mobility needs of the multimodal transportation system.
- ▶ Distribute the results of the Statewide Transit Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities and work with local human service agencies and transit providers.

Transit System Development Partnerships

Implementation Actions:

- ▶ Collaborate with public and private transit agencies, state agencies, and local human service agencies to coordinate regional services (planning and operation) for all users.
- ▶ Assist in creating local and/or regional coordinating councils, as requested, and participate as part of the Organizing Work Group of the Colorado Mobility Action Coalition (CMAC).
- ▶ Develop recommendations for policies and procedures that support the review and consideration of transit and rail in CDOT projects and activities.
- ▶ Work with grant partners to provide meaningful assistance, information, education, and compliance support for the grant application and contracting process.

- ▶ Provide technical assistance and financial support to Colorado Association of Transit Agencies in the development of transit information and services.
- ▶ Coordinate with federal and state agencies to leverage, access, and coordinate use of the various available transportation funds.
- ▶ Assist TPRs and local providers to develop and coordinate marketing and education efforts to improve public, elected official, and agency knowledge of the transit services available.
- ▶ Update State Management Plan per FTA regulations.

Environmental Stewardship

Implementation Actions:

- ▶ Coordinate with state and local agencies and assist agencies in implementing low emission vehicles and energy conservation practices.
- ▶ Assist agencies with activities to encourage and promote transit use.
- ▶ Incorporate guidance into the NEPA Manual on environmental clearance procedures for FTA funded transit projects and provide technical assistance to grantee agencies.
- ▶ Implement enhancements to improve transit travel time.

Economic Vitality

Implementation Actions:

- ▶ Plan for and position the state for transit and rail investment opportunities.
- ▶ Assist and support local efforts to better connect individuals with job assistance, employment, and other vital services.
- ▶ Partner with the Workforce Transportation Task Force of the State Coordinating Council to develop a template for demonstrating the economic benefits of coordinated transit

in providing workers transit access to training and employment.

- ▶ Work with the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee and TPRs to develop materials that demonstrate the benefits of transit services to the state and local economy.

Safety and Security

Implementation Actions:

- ▶ Provide assistance to all agencies with the development of a safety and security plan consistent with FTA requirements.
- ▶ Work with transit providers to implement measures that improve the safety and security of those using public transit.

Over the next several years, CDOT will work with planning partners, transit providers, and stakeholders around the state to implement the vision and actions of this important plan.

Thank you to the Statewide Steering Committee members and stakeholders from around the state who provided input to shape this plan. Your time and dedication to creating a safe and sustainable transit system in Colorado is appreciated!