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Introduction

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has a long history of working with transportation stakeholders and elected and appointed officials to develop a transportation vision for Colorado. This vision is reflected in the 2045 Statewide Transportation Plan (SWP).

With limited funding available, the vision of the SWP is to guide investment for Colorado’s multimodal transportation system in a way that most effectively and safely moves people, goods and information. Developing this vision involves continual consultation and coordination with stakeholders, the general public, local officials, federal agencies, and non-profit organizations. Each voice is vital to the development and implementation of this statewide vision for Colorado that addresses the transportation needs and priorities of this unique state.

In compliance with the most recent federal transportation authorization bill known as The Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act or “FAST Act” and to ensure the state’s rural voices are heard, CDOT facilitates a process to ensure that non-metropolitan local elected and appointed officials are able to fully participate in statewide transportation planning and programming.

CDOT values the participation of local officials and works to continuously improve collaboration with local governments in all aspects of statewide transportation planning and programming.

The Code of Federal Regulations under section Title 23 §450.210(b) states that:

“The State shall provide for non-metropolitan local official participation in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The State shall have a documented process for consulting with non-metropolitan local officials representing units of general purpose local government and/or local officials with responsibility for transportation that is separate and discrete from the public involvement process and provides an opportunity for their participation in the development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP.”

This document addresses the requirement per 450.210(b) that the consultation process that CDOT undertakes with local officials will be reviewed at least once every five years. It was created as a resource for non-metropolitan local officials to ensure continued communication and collaboration across Colorado’s non-metropolitan counties.
Consultation Process Goals

The goals for conducting a comprehensive consultation process for non-metropolitan local officials are to continue to:

- Ensure the voices of rural elected officials and stakeholders are placed on equal footing as those in urban areas, and;
- Support non-metropolitan local officials by providing information and staff resources as needed to make informed transportation planning and programming decisions;
- Develop opportunities for increased non-metropolitan local official involvement in the planning and programming processes, and;
- Seek comments and ideas on how participation in the planning process can be increased by non-metropolitan local officials.

Ten Rural Transportation Planning Regions

Colorado is predominately rural in nature with most major metropolitan areas located along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. Approximately 80 percent of the state’s population resides in these metropolitan areas. However, urban areas only represent approximately 20 percent of the state’s total land area, which means that approximately 80 percent of the state’s land area is rural. Colorado’s population, employment rate and economy are growing. Because these trends are expected to continue for the next 25 years it is important for CDOT to understand the current conditions of the state’s transportation system in order to plan for a sustainable and prosperous future. Figure 1 illustrates some of the demographic changes in Colorado.

**FIGURE 1. COLORADO’S CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS**

![Population and Employment Growth Chart]

**COLORADO POPULATION GROWTH**

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<td>2015</td>
<td>5,156,722</td>
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<tr>
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A **42%** increase in Colorado’s population is expected between 2015 and 2045

**COLORADO EMPLOYMENT GROWTH**

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<td>2045</td>
<td>5,049,174</td>
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A **60%** increase in Colorado’s employment is expected between 2015 and 2045

*Source: DOLA*
Local elected and appointed officials represent units of county, municipal, or special-purpose local government entities. The planning process begins at the local level with involvement from the business community, residents and local officials within Colorado’s Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs).

Ten of the fifteen TPRs are considered non-urban and five are designated as Metropolitan Planning Organizations, which are located in urban areas with a population of 50,000 or more. The 15 TPRs are shown in Figure 2.

**FIGURE 2. COLORADO’S TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REGIONS**

Metropolitan Planning Organizations
1. Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
2. Denver Regional Council of Governments
3. North Front Range MPO (Greeley-Fort Collins-Loveland)
4. Pueblo Area Council of Governments
5. Grand Valley MPO (Grand Junction)

Rural Transportation Planning Regions
6. Eastern
7. Southeast
8. San Luis Valley
9. Gunnison Valley
10. Southwest
11. Intermountain
12. Northwest
13. Upper Front Range
14. Central Front Range
15. South Central
Each TPR is comprised of representatives from municipalities and counties within their established boundaries. Per state regulations (2 Code of Colorado Regulations 601-22), TPRs are defined as: “geographically designated areas of the state with similar transportation needs that are determined by considering transportation commonalities.” Boundaries of each TPR are described in each update of 2 CCR 601-22, which the Colorado Transportation Commission approves. State law enables officials from the counties and municipalities within a rural TPR to form a Regional Planning Commission (RPC) through an intergovernmental agreement. (All but the Eastern TPR are organized as RPCs. Eastern TPR is a coordinating body for two councils of government.) Transportation planning activities with the TPRs are coordinated by the CDOT Division of Transportation Development (DTD) and with the CDOT Engineering Regions. About every five years, each RPC/TPR develops and adopts a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) in coordination with their respective CDOT Engineering Region and DTD.

Transportation Planning in Colorado

CDOT conducts a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative (3C) multimodal transportation planning process in accordance with federal and state requirements. The process reflects a performance-based approach to planning and incorporates extensive use of data and analysis to inform decision-making. Included in the 3C process is the development of both short-term and long-term goals and performance objectives for the multimodal transportation system, the identification of strategies to achieve these performance objectives, and priorities for investment in programs and projects.

The identified goals, performance objectives, and priorities for investment in programs and projects are included in the SWP, RTPs, and a four-year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The RTPs inform the development of the STIP, which reflects the short-term project needs and priorities over a rolling four-year time frame.

The planning process is a continuous and includes the development of a new or updated SWP, RTPs, 10-year Transportation Vision and the four-year STIP. The priority projects included in the 10-Year Vision are informed by the regional transportation plans. The statewide list of projects allows our state to better understand the full extent of our transportation needs. The four-year STIP to communicate to the public, planning partners, CDOT staff, and other stakeholders the needs and priorities for major investments over a 10-year timeframe.

FIGURE 3. ELEMENTS OF YOUR TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROCESS
Transportation Commission Policy – updated periodically, at least every four years

- The Governor appoints the 11 members of the Transportation Commission, which is established under state statute. The Commission sets policy and guides the planning process.

- Transportation Commission policy includes goals, performance measures, and objectives in the areas of safety, infrastructure condition, system performance, and maintenance, which are incorporated into Policy Directive (PD) 14.0.

- PD 14.0 guides the distribution of resources in the SWP, TDP, STIP, and CDOT’s annual budget. PD 14.0 is updated periodically to reflect new or updated measures and objectives.

- The development of goals, performance measures, and objectives is based on the results of data collection, needs analysis, revenue forecasts, and information gathered from CDOT’s existing plans.

Revenue Projections and Program Distribution – new every four years

- State and federal revenue projections are developed for the minimum 20-year time horizon of the SWP and RTPs.

- Annual short term revenue projections are developed for CDOT’s annual budget.

- Program Distribution is developed based on forecasted revenues, the funding needed to achieve performance objectives, and planning partner input.

- Program Distribution outlines the estimated assignment of forecasted revenues to programs for the minimum 20-year time horizon of the SWP.

- An annual budget is developed and adopted in the spring of each year. The annual budget is based on updated revenue forecasts and on updated information regarding funding needed to achieve performance objectives. The annual budget for each year replaces Program Distribution as the fiscal constraint for that year in the STIP.

Identify Needs and Gap – updated periodically, at least every four years

- Data collection and an analysis of needs are conducted to assess the current and future transportation conditions and demands for the next 10 and 25 years, including projection of system condition, congestion, safety, vehicle miles traveled (VMT), population, and other demographic information. Findings from the Statewide Travel Model, including scenario analysis, are incorporated.

- Funding needs are identified, including money needed to achieve established performance objectives and the gap between needs and forecasted revenues.

- Data and analysis are also used to identify trends and themes for further consideration and discussion in the SWP, RTPs, and other CDOT plans.

- Some of the data used in the SWP and RTPs can be viewed on the Your Transportation Priorities webpage, a ‘one-stop-shop’ for all plan related documents including the Statewide Transportation Plan, Statewide Transit Plan, corridor based fact sheets and other valuable planning resources.
Plan Integration / Statewide Performance-Based Transportation Plan – *new or updated every four years for SWP and RTPs*

- **RTPs** with a minimum 20-year time horizon are developed or updated for each of the state’s 10 rural Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs) and five MPOs. MPOs develop plans in cooperation with CDOT, while CDOT assists the TPRs in developing their RTPs. RTPs identify a vision for the region, priorities for needs, programs or projects, and strategies for achieving the vision. The development of RTPs includes significant stakeholder and public outreach.

- **Modal Plans** are developed or updated for transit, rail, aviation, and bicycle/pedestrian modes.

- **Functional Plans** are developed or updated for specific transportation functions, including the Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Statewide Transportation System Management and Operations Plan, Risk-Based Asset Management Plan, State Highway Freight Plan, and Multimodal Freight Plan.

- The **2045 Statewide Transportation Plan** includes a 10-year and 20-year planning horizon and was developed incorporating the results of data collection and needs identification, goals, performance measures and objectives, and a tremendous amount of public engagement. The 2045 SWP integrates the RTPs, modal plans, and functional plans.

- The 2045 SWP identifies a vision, goals, measures, and performance objectives for the transportation system, future needs for the system, trends affecting transportation, an investment strategy, and strategic actions to achieve the vision and goals.

- CDOT’s 2045 SWP and RTPs and other CDOT plans can be found at this link: [www.codot.gov/programs/your-transportation-priorities.gov](http://www.codot.gov/programs/your-transportation-priorities.gov).

10-Year Transportation Vision – *updated periodically*

- Developed in tandem with the SWP, the 10-Year Vision connects current and future funding realities to deliver an effective and efficient transportation system that works for Colorado.

Strategic Policy Implementation – *continuous process*

- Implementation of strategic actions that arose from other CDOT plans, CDOT policies, or public input are monitored for the 2045 SWP. Many of the strategic actions align with one of the SWP goals of safety, mobility, economic vitality, and maintaining the system.

- Implementation of strategic policy actions that address multiple 2045 SWP goals are tracked. For example, the 2045 SWP strategic policy action of improving the resiliency and redundancy of the transportation system addresses safety, mobility, and economic vitality.

Performance Measures and Monitoring – *continuous process*

- Performance measures and progress on the SWP strategies are reported to communicate progress to the public and planning partners, identify the need to modify performance objectives, and inform investment decisions including the development of the annual budget.
The Statewide Transportation Improvement Development Program (STIP) – updated annually

- The STIP identifies capital and non-capital transportation projects and programs proposed for funding, as well as all regionally significant transportation projects.
- The STIP incorporates Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) for each MPO.
- The STIP must be fiscally constrained.
- Since 2016, CDOT has updated its STIP annually in order to always provide a full four-year plan of projects recognized by FHWA and FTA. This process allows for more flexibility in moving projects forward or backward to address shifting priorities or emergencies.
- The currently adopted 2021-2024 STIP is available on the CDOT website for public viewing.
- For more information regarding the development of the STIP see the Project Priority Programming Process (4P) and STIP Development Guidelines.

FIGURE 4. STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS FLOWCHART

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program Development Process

- CDOT selects and prioritizes the projects in cooperation with each MPO and TPR for inclusion in the TIP and the STIP respectively. The STIP is updated and re-adopted annually. The STIP development process includes meetings at the county, TPR and region level.
- TIPs are approved by the MPOs and the Governor and are included in the STIP.
- Approved MPO TIPs are included in the STIP without modification.
- The Draft STIP is developed and released by the Transportation Commission for public review and comment.
- The Transportation Commission holds a statewide public hearing on the draft STIP.
- The Transportation Commission adopts the STIP.
- Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration approve the STIP.
- The STIP is readopted annually to include an additional year.

Public Involvement
Opportunities for Engagement

Statewide and regional transportation planning and programming processes depend on a wide range of standing bodies to help guide the transportation decision making process. In addition to the Transportation Commission, the following boards and advisory committees contribute to Colorado’s transportation planning process:

**Colorado Transportation Commission**

CDOT manages the state’s transportation system under the direction of the Transportation Commission. The commission is comprised of 11 commissioners who represent districts in both urban and rural areas of the state. Each commissioner is appointed by the Governor, confirmed by the Colorado Senate, and serves a four-year term.

The Transportation Commission’s responsibilities and duties include developing and adopting the CDOT budget, approving the SWP and STIP; advising and providing recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on the transportation policy of the state; formulating general policies on how the department manages, maintains, operates, and constructs the state highway system; and other policy and decision making duties. The Transportation Commission meets monthly.

**Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC)**

Created by state law (43-1-1104, C.R.S.), the STAC advises CDOT on the needs of the transportation system in Colorado and reviews and comments on all RTPs, amendments, and updates submitted by the TPRs. Under state regulation (2 CCR 601-22), the STAC also reviews and comments on transportation-related issues and conflicts; integration and consolidation of RTPs into the SWP; improvements to modal choice and system continuity; and proposed TPR boundary revisions.

The STAC also provides regional perspectives on transportation mobility issues requiring interregional and/or statewide solutions.

STAC members represent the ten rural TPRs and five MPOs throughout the state. The Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute Indian Tribes are non-voting members of the STAC and are members of the Southwest TPR.

Non-metropolitan STAC representatives are on equal footing with their metropolitan counterparts and serve to complete the statewide perspective needed to help guide CDOT in effectively administering its resources. The STAC meets monthly the week after the monthly Transportation Commission meetings.

**Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC)**

The TRAC was formed in January 2011 to advise the newly created Division of Transit and Rail (DTR). TRAC works with DTR staff to develop and promote the DTR’s vision, policies, and priorities for transit and rail services in Colorado.

TRAC members are representatives from public and private transit providers, railroads, interest groups, planning partners, counties, cities, and the general public. The TRAC meets quarterly following the STAC meeting.

**Colorado Freight Advisory Council (FAC)**

In an effort to better address goods movement, create a more collaborative environment, and respond to guidance provided in MAP-21 and in collaboration with the private sector and planning partners, CDOT established a new Colorado FAC in 2015. The FAC will provide a continuing platform for the freight industry, other parties interested in freight, and
the public to raise issues enabling CDOT and the FAC to make well-informed decisions and recommendations based on multiple freight perspectives. The FAC is currently working on governance items such as mission and charter.

**Transportation Environmental Resource Council (TERC)**

CDOT and FHWA formed the TERC in 2002 to provide a forum for local, tribal, state, and federal agencies to discuss state transportation decisions and plan for environmental stewardship. The complexities and hurdles of environmental stewardship and transportation needs highlight the need for collaboration at the earliest planning stages. TERC meetings allow members to get ahead of interagency challenges.

**Colorado Aeronautical Board**

The Colorado Aeronautical Board provides guidance and direction on all aviation matters in the state to the Colorado Division of Aeronautics. The Board sets aviation policy to develop and maintain the Colorado aviation system and provides financial grants to local governments to improve safety, maintain existing airport infrastructure, and develop aviation services throughout the state.

Appointed by the Governor to serve three-year terms, the Colorado Aeronautical Board represents both governmental and aviation-interest constituencies. At the direction of the Colorado Aeronautics Board, the Colorado Division of Aeronautics consults with local governments on issues relating to local land use planning to maintain consistency with the State Aviation Systems Plan, regional system plans, or areas and activities of state interest. The Colorado Aeronautics Board meets at least four times a year.

**Colorado Bridge Enterprise (CBE)**

The General Assembly created the CBE as a government-owned business to provide dedicated funds for bridge repair and reconstruction. The purpose of the CBE is to complete the repair, reconstruction, and replacement of bridges that have been designated as structurally deficient, functionally obsolete, and rated as poor. The members of the CBE Board are the members of the Colorado Transportation Commission. All meetings of CBE Board are open to the public. The CBE Board of Directors meets monthly immediately following the Transportation Commission meetings.

**Colorado High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE)**

The government-owned business enterprise, HPTE, was created as part of Senate Bill 09-108 (also known as Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery or FASTER). The enterprise pursues public-private partnerships and other innovative and efficient means of completing strategic surface transportation infrastructure projects.

The enterprise is governed by a seven-member board. Four members are appointed by the Governor, each of whom has professional expertise in transportation planning or development, local government, design-build contracting, public or private finance, engineering, environmental issues, or any other area that the Governor believes will benefit the board. Additionally, the Transportation Commission appoints three members. The enterprise board, with consent of the CDOT Executive Director, then appoints an enterprise director. The four non-Transportation Commission Governor appointed HPTE members are to represent the following planning areas: the North Front Range MPO, Denver Regional Council of Governments, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, and I-70 Mountain Corridor. The HPTE meets after Transportation Commission meetings. All meetings are publicly announced and open to the public.
Coordination with Rural Stakeholders

CDOT coordinates planning activities with non-metropolitan local officials throughout the state using a variety of forums, most significantly through the RPCs/TPRs.

Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs)

As previously discussed under the Transportation Planning in Colorado section of this document, RPCs are comprised of elected and appointed officials from each TPR. RPCs are responsible for establishing regional priorities and developing the multimodal RTPs. RPCs serve as a valuable means of communication among local governments within each TPR and as a channel of communication with CDOT about transportation planning and programming processes.

Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute

Colorado has two Tribal Governments, the Ute Mountain Ute and the Southern Ute. As members of the Southwest TPR, both tribal governments have voting status on the STAC and participate in monthly STAC meetings.

Additionally, joint cooperative meetings between Colorado’s Tribal Governments, CDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the departments of transportation of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah take place every year, or as needed, to discuss transportation issues specific to Tribal Governments. The Southern Ute develops a Tribal TIP (TTIP) that the Tribal Council approves. The TTIP is included by reference in the draft STIP.

As outlined in the Tribal Coordination Plan Technical Memorandum, CDOT coordinates with the tribal governments on transportation planning to ensure consistency between CDOT and tribal safety and transportation plans and in developing the STIP.

Local Government Advocacy Organizations

The CDOT Office of Policy and Government Relations partners with Colorado Counties, Inc. (CCI) and the Colorado Municipal League (CML) to provide information to educate and engage their members on transportation related issues. Additionally, CDOT works with CCI and CML when specific issues arise requiring attention.

These non-partisan advocacy organizations serve and represent Colorado’s cities, towns, and counties to offer assistance to county commissioners, mayors, and council members to encourage local governments to work together on common issues.

Political Advocacy Committees

Staff from the Office of Policy and Government Relations engages, as needed, with Colorado’s political advocacy committees by providing information when asked and monitoring agendas to determine if CDOT attendance might be helpful at meetings.

In Colorado, Club 20, Action 22, and Progressive 15 are county-level Political Advocacy Committees that represent various regions throughout Colorado. These committees were formed to advocate for common regional interests and present a unified political voice.
Other Planning Resources and Information

Office of Policy and Government Relations

CDOT’s Office of Policy and Government Relations provides resources and outreach to officials at the federal, state, and local levels as well as to external partners of CDOT local officials. Local governments are one of CDOT’s most active and vocal constituencies because the transportation planning process is a locally driven, grassroots effort.

CDOT Division of Transportation Development (DTD) Planning Liaisons and Regional Planners

CDOT’s Local Government Liaisons and Regional Planners attend the meetings of CDOT planning partners, the 10 rural TPRs and five MPOs, to share pertinent information with local officials, take information from the planning partners back to CDOT, and provide other assistance and support. A link to a list of CDOT planning staff contacts is provided in Appendix A.

Internet Resources

The recently updated CDOT website is an invaluable resource for local and government officials alike for detailed and up-to-date information. The website is home to links and documents covering a vast array of CDOT projects and programs.

CDOT recently launched the Transportation Planning Toolkit series which helped CDOT planning partners to learn a range of transportation planning concepts conversations around the Idea-to-Improvement with a self-paced and topic approach.

The 2045 SWP includes a 10-Year Vision component that fostered better communication between all stakeholders involved in the planning process and CDOT most robust public engagement effort to date.

The 2045 Statewide Plan website is a key resource for all planning partners and local officials.

Data, documents, and the 10-Year Vision and CDOT’s accountability dashboard provide the public and local agencies with accessible and
engaging tools in order to discuss and address transportation issues. All RTPs and other CDOT plans are also available on the Statewide Plan website.

Local Technical Assistance Program

Another resource for non-metropolitan local officials is the Colorado Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP), which serves as the local technology transfer effort of the FHWA’s Office of Technology Partnership Programs.

Colorado LTAP bridges the gap between research and practice by conducting training sessions and demonstrations and by serving as a clearinghouse for information related to state-of-the-art technology in the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges.

The mission of Colorado LTAP is to foster a safe, efficient, environmentally sound transportation systems by improving skills and increasing knowledge of the transportation workforce and decision makers.

The program serves state, county, and local highway and transportation personnel. The Colorado LTAP is sponsored by FHWA, CDOT, and the University of Colorado at Boulder.

CDOT’s Division of Transit & Rail (DTR) and Transit Plans

Since its conception in 2009, DTR has been responsible for planning, developing, operating, and integrating transit and rail into the statewide transportation system. To that end, it developed the Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan, which made CDOT eligible for Federal Railway Administration funds after its approval by the Colorado Transportation Commission in March 2012.

After the adoption of this plan, DTR began the development of the Statewide Transit Plan, which was approved in March 2015. This plan establishes a framework for creating an integrated statewide transit system and prioritizes transit investment. In addition to the Statewide Transit Plan, CDOT and our Planning Partners develop Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plans for each TPR on a four year cycle. These plans are intended to meet all CDOT and Federal Transit Administration planning requirements for funding eligibility while planning for Colorado’s transit needs.

Lastly, rural elected officials can participate in a range of different project-specific transit planning efforts, including transit station location plans, new service plans, regional rail planning activities.
## Appendix A: Additional Resources and Helpful Links

### Contact Information

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<td><a href="https://www.codot.gov/programs/your-transportation-priorities/assets/appendixh_environmentaljustice.pdf">https://www.codot.gov/programs/your-transportation-priorities/assets/appendixh_environmentaljustice.pdf</a></td>
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## Statewide Transportation Plan Technical Memoranda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Link</th>
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<td>Plan Integration</td>
<td><a href="https://www.codot.gov/admin/programs/your-transportation-priorities/assets/appendixd_planintegration.pdf">https://www.codot.gov/admin/programs/your-transportation-priorities/assets/appendixd_planintegration.pdf</a></td>
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<td>Public Involvement</td>
<td><a href="https://www.codot.gov/programs/your-transportation-priorities/your-transportation-plan/discovery-process">https://www.codot.gov/programs/your-transportation-priorities/your-transportation-plan/discovery-process</a></td>
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