



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

A Guide to the Transportation Planning and Programming Public Involvement Process

August 2025

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Introduction	1
Public Engagement Process	3
About CDOT	5
CDOT Responsibilities	6
Colorado's Transportation System.....	8
Organizational Structure.....	9
Planning Partners and Stakeholder Groups	10
Traveling Public	10
Local Governments and Regional Planning Partners	10
Tribal Governments	10
Transportation Planning Regions	12
Oversight and Advisory Committees	13
State and Federal Agencies	15
Land Management Agencies	17
Business Community	19
Other Stakeholder Groups	19
Transportation Planning and Programming Process	21
Elements of the Planning Process	22
Key Planning Products.....	24
Other Planning Engagement Opportunities	27
Consultation and Coordination	29
Approaches to Stakeholder Engagement	29
Non-Metropolitan Consultation	29
Tribal Consultation	29
Environmental Consultation	29
Coordination	30
Outreach to the Disproportionately Impacted Communities	31
Addressing Concerns Through the Public Involvement Process.....	31
Addressing Barriers to Participation	32
Public Outreach Tools and Techniques	36
Methods and Tools	36
Measures of Effectiveness	40
Conclusion	42
Back Cover	44

Introduction

This document provides a reference guide to the processes and techniques CDOT employs to educate and inform the public on transportation issues and methods to capture, incorporate, and respond to input collected.

Colorado is a socially, culturally, and economically diverse state that is facing exciting and challenging times for transportation. Coloradans already know that our state includes expansive farming and grasslands, busy urban centers, the vast Rocky Mountains, and significant geographic diversity - but lots of other people are discovering it too. The traveling public (users of the Colorado transportation system) depends on the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to get to their destinations by providing a safe, efficient, and reliable transportation system. The multimodal state transportation system serves a variety of needs, and a wide range of users, all of whom have an equal stake in creating a viable transportation system today and in the future.

Colorado's transportation system is key to a vibrant and globalized state economy. Transportation investments create and enhance access to jobs and freight movement, support increased trade, and improve Colorado's economic competitiveness. Public and stakeholder participation is a key ingredient in planning for and developing a multimodal transportation system.

CDOT has a long history of working with transportation stakeholders and the public to develop a transportation vision for Colorado. This vision is reflected in the Statewide Transportation Plan (SWP), which guides investment on Colorado's multimodal transportation system in a way that most effectively and safely moves people, goods, and information. The most recent version of the Statewide Transportation Plan can be found on the [CDOT website](#). Developing this vision involved consultation and coordination with a variety of stakeholders. CDOT views effective and ongoing public involvement as critical to ensuring the state transportation system continues to serve a wide range of users. CDOT invites a variety of stakeholders to participate in the planning process. The traveling public, neighborhood groups and associations, environmental groups, business community, agencies serving aging and disabled populations, educational institutions, low-income and minority communities, advocacy and interest groups, modal groups, and other state and federal agencies are just some of the stakeholders involved in transportation plans and projects.

The purpose of this document is to educate the general public and stakeholder groups on participating in transportation planning and programming processes while serving as a resource for CDOT staff and transportation planning partners. It provides information about the Department, stakeholders, [planning and programming processes](#), public involvement tools

and techniques, and the importance of public participation. Additionally, this document outlines the processes and techniques CDOT employs to solicit input from stakeholders and the public, keep them informed, and effectively capture, incorporate, and respond to feedback.

[The Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) under section Title 23 §450.210\(a\)](#) states that: “In carrying out the statewide transportation planning process, including development of the long-range statewide transportation plan and the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program), the State shall develop and use a documented public involvement process that provides opportunities for public review and comment at key decision points.” A full list of all relevant public involvement rules, regulations, and policies are provided in Table 1, below.

State/Federal	Document Citation
Federal Highway Administration, DOT	CFR Title 23 § 450.210 CFR Title 23 § 450.216 CFR Title 23 § 450.218
State of Colorado	Section 2 CCR 601-22-4.02

Table 1: State and Federal Regulations guiding public involvement.

This public involvement guide is consistent with the current federal requirements outlined in the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act \(IIJA\)](#) federal funding transportation bill. Additional information on transportation planning, programming, and public involvement is available on the CDOT website - www.codot.gov.

While there are no exact formulas to foster public involvement, there are innovative tools that make participation by the public easier and more convenient in these busy times.

Public Engagement Process

CDOT facilitates a transportation planning process that incorporates the public and stakeholder input. In developing plans and programs, CDOT follows a process that is “continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive to the degree appropriate” ([23 United States Code \[USC\] §135](#)) and involves a wide range of stakeholders. CDOT uses the input gathered from the public along with data to identify the issues, needs, and priorities for a better multimodal transportation system. This information is used to make informed decisions on transportation improvements and strategies with limited funding. These collaborative and inclusive discussions during the planning process result in planning and programming that consider all transportation modes, both construction and non-construction based solutions, and the needs of all users of the system. This process also emphasizes the broadening of engagement to include as many stakeholders as possible.

The following principles guide all CDOT public involvement efforts:

- **Early and continuous involvement.** Provide timely information about transportation issues and decision-making processes to stakeholders early and throughout the process.
- **Timely and accurate information.** Provide access to the most current and accurate transportation related information available to the traveling public.
- **Information accessibility.** Provide planning and programming information in a variety of forms including visual/print, digital, web-based, and social media, allowing stakeholders easy access to information and influence decisions. Additionally, planning materials will be translated into Spanish for areas of the state with high numbers of Spanish speakers.
- **Involve low-income, minority, disabled and veterans communities.** Engage a wide range of communities through creative and innovative public involvement techniques that are appropriate for the community.
- **Reasonable access.** Provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities upon request and ensure meeting locations are accessible per the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#).
- **Diversified approach.** Understanding that no single method or technique is optimal for every stakeholder group, CDOT considers stakeholder needs in providing communication flexibility and innovation to ensure easy and equitable information access.

- **Enhancing stakeholder relationships.** Expanding upon long standing relationships and actively engaging new stakeholder groups is an evolving process and one that CDOT continually improves and expands upon.
- **Incorporation of public comments.** CDOT appreciates the comments and input received through outreach efforts. Comments are considered and incorporated, as appropriate and help guide planning, programming, and outcomes.
- **Timely Responses.** CDOT understands that slow responses to public comment send the message that the public's input is not important. Therefore, staff attempts to respond to comments received quickly and lets stakeholders know how input is used.
- **Process review.** CDOT reviews and solicits comments periodically from all interested parties on the effectiveness of the public involvement process and any proposed changes.

About CDOT

CDOT's mission is to provide the best multimodal transportation system for Colorado that most effectively and safely moves people, goods, and information.

These are exciting but challenging times for transportation in our state. Increasing population and employment are putting greater demand on the existing statewide transportation system. By 2050, the state's population is estimated to reach 7.4 million, a 24% increase from 2024. Eighty five percent of the total population, 6.3 million, will reside along the Front Range. Alongside this population growth, Colorado is expected to add approximately 43,000 new jobs annually over the next decade. An aging population poses additional pressures on the state's transportation system, and accounting for the needs and abilities of this section of the population will be increasingly important over the next two decades. (Source: DOLA, 2024).

CDOT aligns its plans with [Policy Directive 14.0](#) (PD 14), which establishes the overarching policy and objectives for the development and implementation of Colorado's Statewide Transportation Plan. PD 14 helps guide the strategic planning process via a collaborative public process and provide performance measures and targets to measure the success of the Department's efforts to improve in three key goal areas:

- **Advancing Transportation Safety:** No matter where you're going or how you're getting there, Colorado is committed to providing you a safe and efficient transportation network so you arrive at your destination safely.
- **Fix Our Roads:** Prioritize strategic investments in Colorado's highways to improve infrastructure conditions.
- **Sustainably Increase Transportation Choice:** Provide alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel that increase choices and reduce air pollution from transportation.

CDOT Responsibilities

CDOT owns, operates, and maintains the State Highway system, which includes roadways in both rural and urban areas, many of which serve as main streets or key arterial roads in local communities. Colorado's Highway System extends more than 23,000 highway lane miles, 3,500 bridges, and 22 tunnels. This system handles 34 billion vehicle miles of travel each year. A subset of the State Highway System is made up of National Highway System (NHS) routes, consisting of 4,500 centerline miles, both interstate and non-interstate. All NHS facilities are routes designed as important to the nation's economy, defense and mobility. NHS facilities can be either on-system (CDOT owned, operated, and maintained), or off-



Colorado's Transportation System

In addition to highways, bridges, and tunnels, CDOT is responsible for building, maintaining, and operating:

- 1,852 Geohazards
- 4,600 Vehicles
- 1,013 Buildings
- 5,946 Culverts
- 26 Rest Areas
- 1,825 Traffic Signals
- 4,175 Intelligent Transportation System Device

Each CDOT engineering region is charged with transportation project design, construction, and maintenance functions for their portion of the state. The CDOT engineering regions are shown in Figure in the CDOT Organization section.

CDOT is also responsible for the management and allocation of a variety of grants going towards transportation development, maintenance, and operations across the state.

Transit

CDOT helps support around 60 urban and rural public transit providers; which includes local routes, regional transit, and interregional transit; in addition to roughly 40 human services transit providers. Overall, these providers as well as other transit providers in Colorado produce approximately 100 million revenue miles per year.

CDOT implemented [Bustang](#) in 2015, an interregional express bus service that runs along I-25 between Fort Collins, Denver, and Colorado Springs and on I-70 between Glenwood Springs and Denver, connecting major local transit services and providing an alternative to commuters throughout the state.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

CDOT operates a number of bicycle and pedestrian facilities which include shoulders and dedicated bike lanes. CDOT also maintains four trails across the state consisting of approximately 57 miles.

Freight

Freight on the State Highway System is key to Colorado's economic prosperity because it represents the economy in motion. Efficient and reliable truck deliveries allow businesses, residents, and visitors to get the right products to the right people at the right time at a reasonable cost.

The State Highway System includes 975 centerline miles of primary freight corridors. Colorado also has 5.02 miles of Critical Urban Freight Corridors and 127.99 miles of Critical Rural

Freight Corridors, which are public roads in rural and urban areas that provide access and connection to the interstate freight system.

Additionally, Colorado's freight transportation includes all modes of freight movement-highway, aviation and rail. Fourteen out of Colorado's 26 unique intermodal facilities deal in freight and freight activities, facilitating the transition of freight from one mode of transportation to another.

Aeronautics

Colorado's system of 76 public-use airports, including two seaplane bases, serves our state's local communities with a variety of services ranging from commercial air transportation, emergency medical evacuation, aerial firefighting, aerial agriculture application, flight training, and high-altitude flight testing.

Organizational Structure

CDOT's operations are organized into Divisions, Branches, Offices, and Regions that focus on specific functions and roles. CDOT is also organized into five Engineering Regions that are responsible for planning, design, construction, maintenance and operations of the state highways within that geographic area, as shown in Figure 2.

.

CDOT Engineering Regions

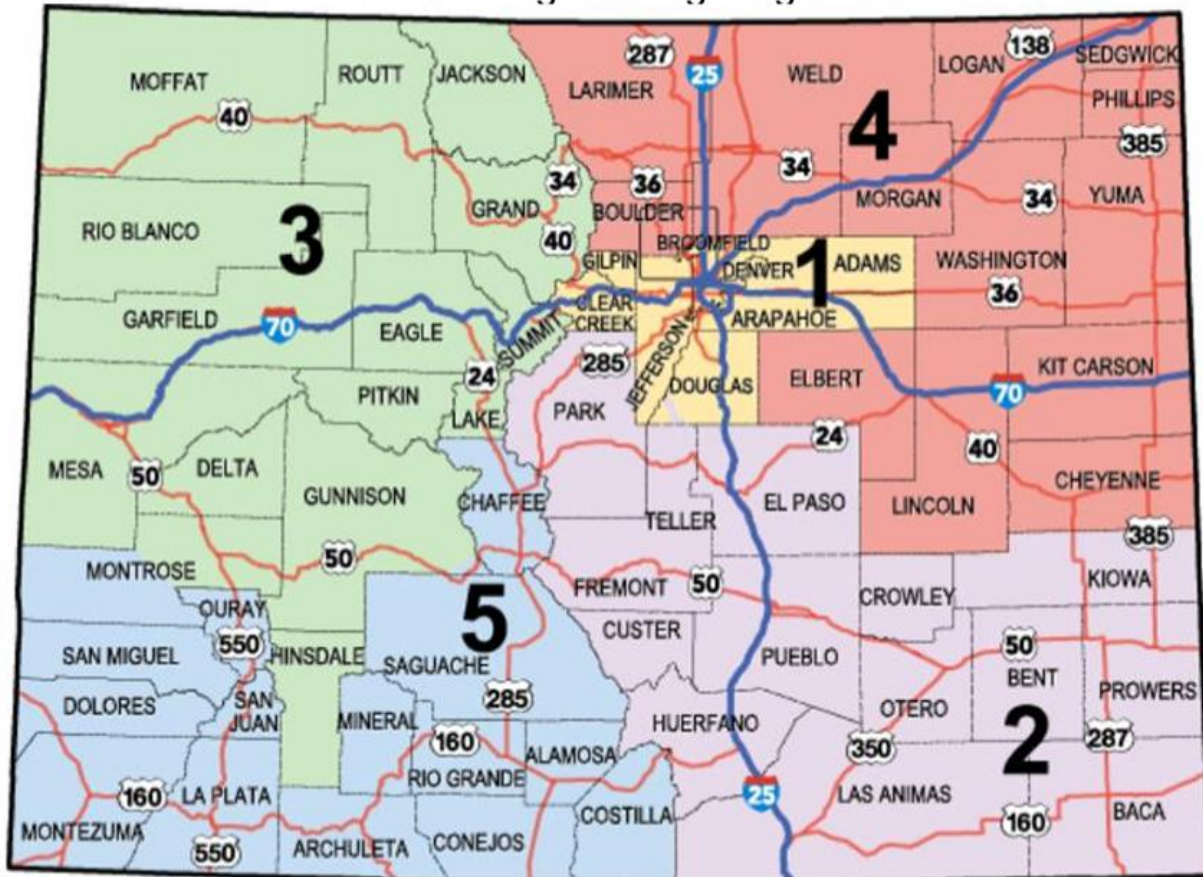


Figure 2: Map of CDOT Engineering Regions

CDOT is connected to several transportation enterprises (businesses owned by the State of Colorado), but each enterprise has its own structure and management. For more information on specific enterprises and CDOT divisions, refer to CDOT's [Transportation Planning Manual](#) or [website](#).

[Click here to view a current CDOT Organizational Chart.](#)

Planning Partners and Stakeholder Groups

CDOT works diligently to identify and expand outreach to a growing number of stakeholders representing a wide range of interests statewide.

CDOT values and cultivates relationships among a wide range of planning partners and stakeholders. CDOT coordinates planning activities with the following organizations and groups, among others. The relationship of these planning partners and groups to CDOT is outlined in Figure 2.

Traveling Public

The traveling public includes all users of CDOT infrastructure. This includes drivers (and passengers), transit users, freight shippers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and others.

Local Governments and Regional Planning Partners

CDOT involves local governments throughout the planning process. The needs and issues from all areas of the state, both rural and urban, are considered through local government outreach. Outreach is conducted with cities, counties, Tribal Governments, transportation planning regions, metropolitan planning organizations, advisory committees, local officials, State and Federal agencies, and business communities, among others.

Tribal Governments

CDOT adheres to federal regulation ([CFR Title 23 §450.212\(2\)\(c\)](#)), which establishes consultation requirements with tribes for statewide planning and programming. This regulation states “For each area of the State under the jurisdiction of an Indian Tribal government, the State shall develop the long-range statewide transportation plan and STIP in consultation with the Tribal government and the Secretary of Interior.” Colorado has two Native American Tribal Governments, the [Ute Mountain Ute](#) and the [Southern Ute](#) Tribes. Colorado’s Indian Tribal Governments have voting status on the STAC and are represented by the Southwest TPR. Native American Tribal Governments participate in the monthly STAC meetings. In addition to this, the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs has developed a [State-Tribal Consultation Guide](#) that applies to all governmental agencies.



Figure 3: CDOT Planning Participants

Transportation Planning Regions

Regional transportation planning in Colorado is conducted within each of 15 Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs), whose boundaries are determined in state planning rules and are based on having similar transportation needs and issues. Local governments within each TPR usually participate in a Regional Planning Commission (RPC) that is incorporated through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for the purpose of conducting transportation planning in their region. CDOT coordinates with each RPC in statewide transportation planning. Details and contact information for each RPC and planning region is available through CDOT's [TPR at a Glance](#) document.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)

MPOs are federally mandated urban transportation planning organizations that serve the role of RPC for the five urban TPRs that include a Census urbanized area with a population of 50,000 or more people. MPOs are responsible for developing Long Range Regional Transportation Plans that guide the use of transportation funding within each region.

The five MPOs in Colorado include the following:

1. [Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments](#) (Colorado Springs)
2. [Denver Regional Council of Governments](#) (Greater Denver Area)
3. [North Front Range MPO](#) (Greeley, Fort Collins, Loveland)
4. [Pueblo Area Council of Governments](#) (Pueblo)
5. [Grand Valley MPO](#) (Grand Junction)

Rural Transportation Planning Organizations

Transportation planning within the rural TPRs are conducted by an RPC, whose members include the local governments within each TPR. These organizations provide CDOT with valuable understanding of regional context and local transportation concerns, and which help target public involvement activities and focus planning efforts. The ten Rural TPRs in Colorado include the following:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 6. Eastern | 11. Intermountain |
| 7. Southeast | 12. Northwest |
| 8. San Luis Valley | 13. Upper Front Range |
| 9. Gunnison Valley | 14. Central Front Range |
| 10. Southwest | 15. South Central |

Colorado's Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs) as of Summer 2024 are shown in Figure 4. More information is available in the [TPR at a Glance](#) document.

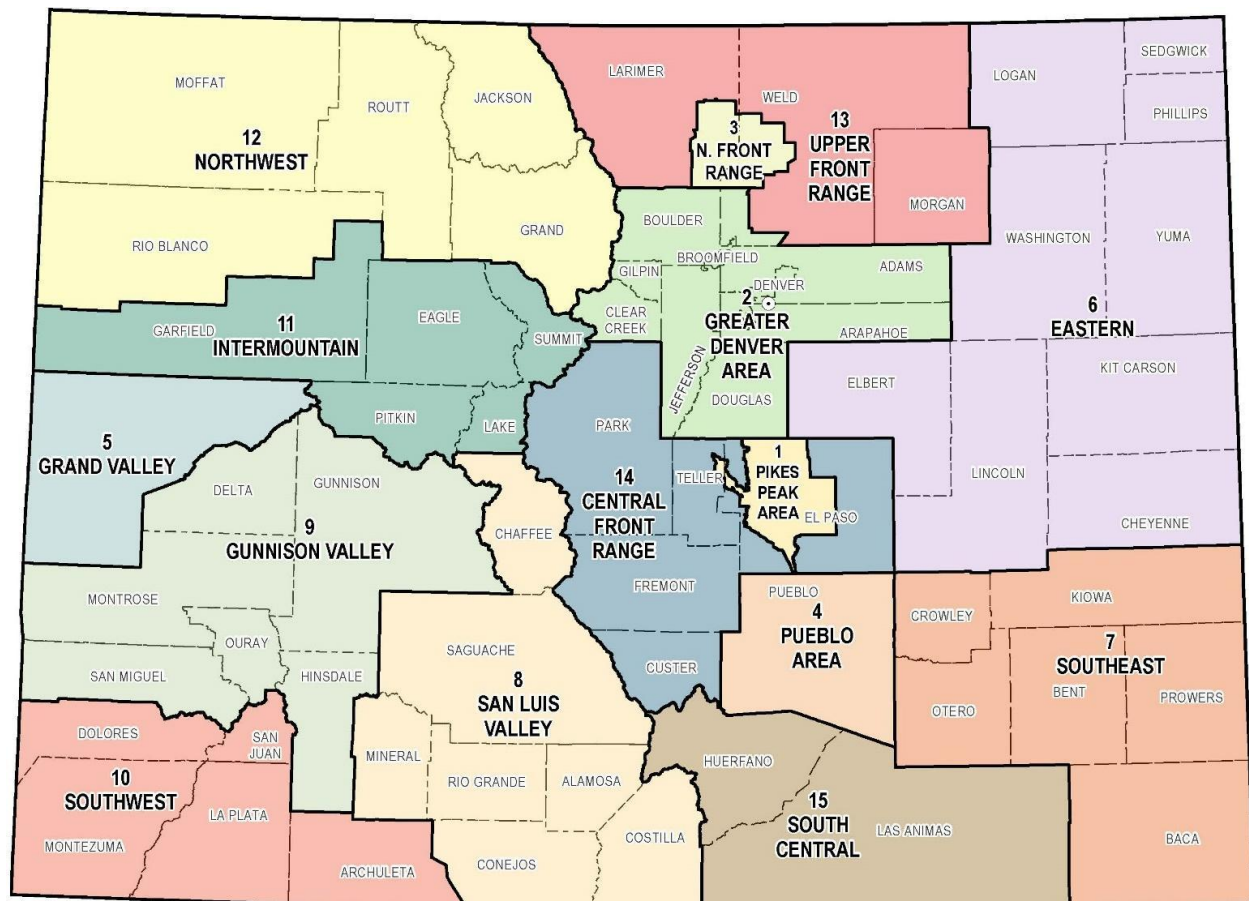


Figure 4: Map Of Colorado's Urban (1-5) and Rural (11-15) Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs)

Oversight and Advisory Committees

CDOT also works in conjunction with several oversight and advisory committees that assist in the planning process on both a regional and statewide level.

[Transportation Commission of Colorado \(TC\)](#)

CDOT manages the state's transportation system under the direction of the Colorado Transportation Commission. The commission includes 11 commissioners appointed by the Governor to represent both urban and rural areas of the state, as shown in Figure 5.

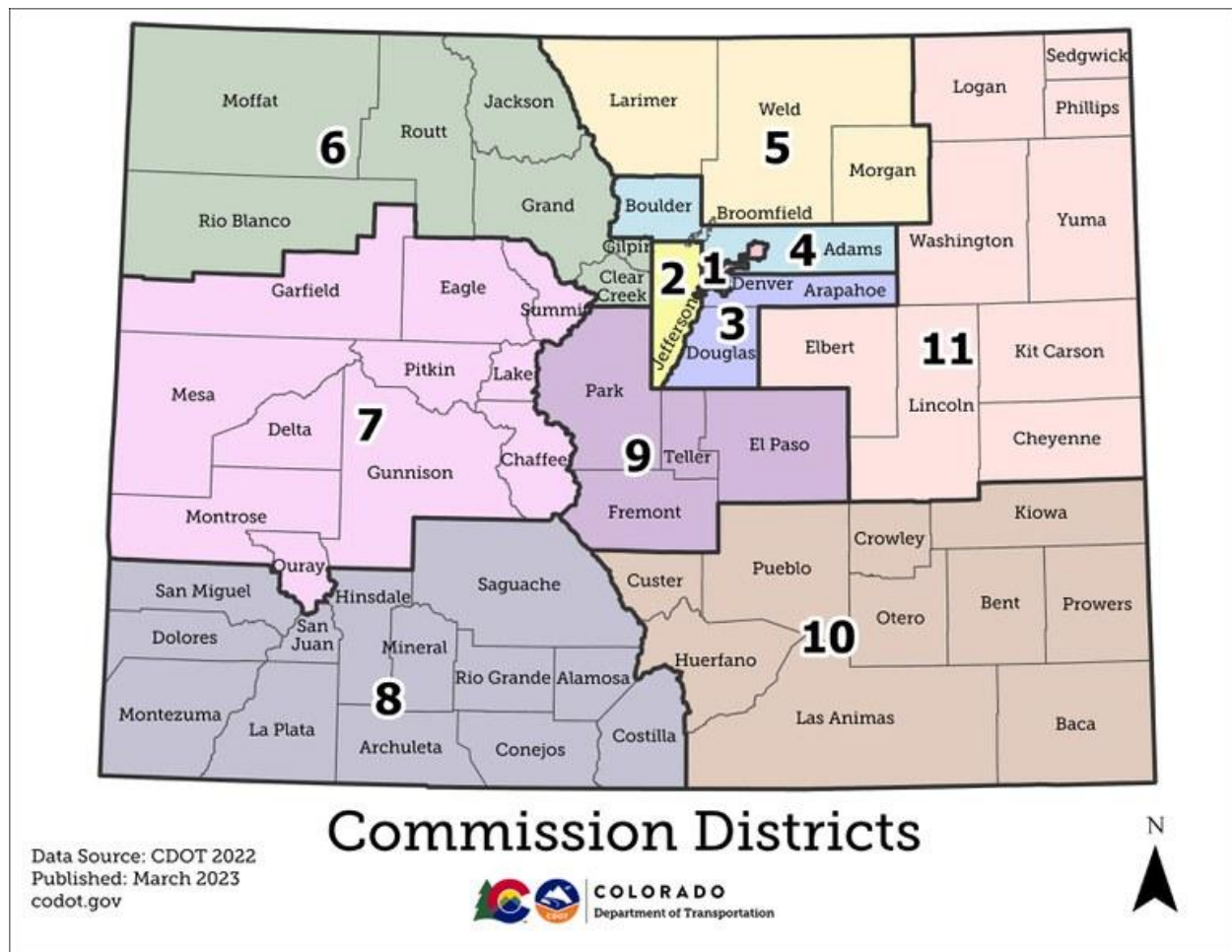


Figure 5: Map of Transportation Commission Districts of Colorado

Transportation Commission responsibilities include approval of the statewide transportation plan and statewide transportation improvement program; adopting CDOT budgets and approving expenditures; advising the Governor and Legislature on transportation issues; and, adopting policies on CDOT management and decision processes.

[Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee \(STAC\)](#)

Created in state statute, the STAC provides regional perspectives on transportation issues. STAC members include one representative from each TPR and Tribal Government. Representatives often include local elected officials and planning staff. The STAC provides a forum for discussion of state and regional transportation issues and a means to advise CDOT and the TC on policies and programs.

[Transit and Rail Advisory Committee \(TRAC\)](#)

The Transit and Rail Advisory Committee was formed in January 2011 to advise and partner with the Division of Transit and Rail in developing, advising, and promoting the division's vision, policies, and priorities on current and future initiatives and program emphasis areas.

[Freight Advisory Council \(FAC\)](#)

Formed in 2015, the FAC guides CDOT on freight issues and coordinates with private sector partners. The FAC provides a platform for freight industry representatives, businesses, and the public to coordinate on freight issues and advise CDOT.

[Transportation Environmental Resource Council \(TERC\)](#)

CDOT and FHWA formed the TERC in 2002 to provide a forum for local, state, tribal, and federal agencies to discuss state transportation decisions and plan for environmental stewardship.

[Colorado Aeronautical Board \(CAB\)](#)

Created by state statute in 1991, the CAB includes seven members appointed from specific geographic areas of the state and defined aviation constituencies. Under the direction of the CAB, CDOT's Division of Aeronautics administers the Colorado Aviation Fund, which includes statutory aviation fuel tax reimbursements to airports, and a discretionary grant program to support aviation infrastructure, safety and education. The CAB also oversees the Division's preparation of the State Aviation Systems Plan.

State and Federal Agencies

CDOT involves many state and federal agencies throughout the planning process including land management, environmental resource, and regulatory agencies.

Federal Partners

CDOT's primary federal partners are the [Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\)](#) and the [Federal Transit Administration \(FTA\)](#).

- [Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\)](#) administers federal highway funding programs and regulates transportation planning and investment activities. FHWA approves expenditure and reimbursement of federal funds by CDOT. State and regional transportation plans and planning activities are governed by federal laws and regulations and are reviewed by FHWA.

- [Federal Transit Administration \(FTA\)](#) administers federal transit funding and oversees planning and operations of transit agencies. FTA provides grants and distributes funds directly to transit agencies and approves funds that are passed through CDOT to local transit agencies.

Other federal agency partners include:

- [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#)
- [U.S. Department of Energy](#)
- [U.S. Department of Defense](#)
- [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)

State Agencies

Planning activities are also coordinated with state agencies responsible for safety, trade and economic development, demographics, and energy.

- [Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade \(OEDIT\)](#) - This state office works to promote economic development and international trade through such state incentives such as enterprise zone tax credits and job training grant programs. This office also works with other state agencies like CDOT on projects of mutual interest.
- [Colorado Department of Local Affairs \(DOLA\)](#) - The Department of Local Affairs provides services and programs to assist local governments by providing local and regional data (some culled from the U.S. Census) and administering block grants for recovery from federally-declared disasters, such as the 2013 floods which damaged 486 miles of state highways.
- [Colorado Energy Office \(CEO\)](#) - This office promotes innovative energy production and efficient energy consumption that benefits the economic and environmental health of the state. CDOT coordinates with the office to distribute grants to promote greater use and infrastructure for alternative-fuel vehicles, such as those fueled by electricity, natural gas, and hydrogen.
- [Colorado State Patrol](#) - The Colorado State Patrol (CSP) is a law enforcement agency that protects life and property, enforces traffic laws, and provides public safety services, such as safety inspections and community education.
- [Colorado Broadband Office](#) - The Colorado Broadband Office leads the statewide effort to expand broadband coverage and quality for all Coloradans. Access to

affordable and reliable broadband service is critical to advancing Colorado's economic growth and competitiveness. This office supports the development of a statewide digital communications infrastructure through public-private partnerships to meet the growing demand for broadband access in the key sectors of public safety, education, health care, transportation and for all Coloradans.

Statewide Security Agencies

IIJA legislation and [23 CFR 450.216\(e\)](#) requires development of the link between transportation and security. Colorado continues to engage and develop functional relationships between agencies with security and emergency management responsibilities.

CDOT is committed to engage in further outreach with:

- [Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management](#)
- [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration \(FMCSA Colorado Division\)](#)
- [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(Region VIII Denver Office\)](#)
- [Colorado State Patrol](#)

Land Management Agencies

Land management agencies are unique stakeholders and offer strategic partnership opportunities. CDOT coordinates with state and federal land management agencies during the planning process through activities that seek agency input on regional and statewide vision and priorities. CDOT is committed to building upon its established relationships with the following land management agencies.

[Bureau of Land Management](#)

The Bureau of Land Management administers 8.3 million acres of public lands along with 27 million acres of mineral estate, which are primarily concentrated in the western portion of the state. The Bureau of Land Management's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

[National Park Service](#)

The mission of the National Park Service is to promote and regulate the use of the national parks while conserving their scenery, natural and historical features, and wildlife. The National Park Service is responsible for about 381,000 acres, about two percent of Colorado's lands.

[U.S. Forest Service](#)

The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The U.S. Forest Service manages 11 national forests and 2 national grasslands within Colorado, consisting of 14.5 million acres, or 22 percent of Colorado's lands.

[Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife](#) (CPW)

As a Division of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, CPW is Colorado's primary agency focused on protecting and caring for the state's natural resources, including 43 parks, management of approximately 218,000 acres of state park lands and 684,000 acres of wildlife landscapes, and management of the state's 960+ wildlife species. In addition to providing outdoor recreational opportunities and managing more than 350 state wildlife areas for public recreation, the division also regulates hunting and fishing activities, conducts research to improve wildlife management activities, provides technical assistance to landowners concerning wildlife and habitat management, and develops programs to protect and recover threatened and endangered species.

Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agencies

Environmental resource and regulatory agencies are defined as having both environmental permitting authority and environmental resource protection oversight. IIJA places special emphasis on incorporating environmental considerations and involving resource agencies in the planning process. CDOT obtains the input from environmental resource and regulatory agencies through consultation meetings and discussions that focus on the relationship between regional priorities and environmental resources.

[U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#)

The Civil Works Program of the Corps has an environmental mission that ensures all U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects, facilities, and associated lands meet environmental standards. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also regulates all work in wetlands and waters of the United States, such as highway construction. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a very active environmental program under both its military and civil programs.

[U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's mission is to protect human health and the environment. To ensure that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's facilities and practices reflect its mission, the agency implemented a range of strategies to reduce the environmental impact of their facilities and operations, from building new, environmentally sustainable structures to improving the energy efficiency of older buildings. The agency's primary resources are air and water. It is also concerned about hazardous waste.

[U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#)

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is to work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The agency's primary resources are threatened and endangered species and migratory birds.

[U.S. Department of the Interior](#)

The U. S. Department of the Interior is responsible for the management and conservation of most federal land and natural resources, and the administration of programs relating to Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and territorial affairs. The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs coordinates with local and state governments on wide-ranging projects, activities and programs of mutual interest.

[Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment](#)

The Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (CDPHE) divisions of air, water, and waste are committed to protecting and preserving the health and environment of the people of Colorado. The agency's primary areas of concern are air and water. It is also concerned about hazardous waste.

[State Historic Preservation Office](#)

The State Historic Preservation Office identifies and safeguards endangered and high-value historic properties. These could be properties located within a planning corridor; therefore, CDOT needs to look to the State Historic Preservation Office for historic preservation considerations in transportation planning. Additionally, IIJA requires that state planning agencies consult with agencies responsible for historic preservation to develop participation plans that provide reasonable opportunities for interested parties to participate in plan development.

Business Community

Transportation planning and programming have a significant impact on Colorado's business community. Therefore, CDOT welcomes the voice of the business community and not only strives to address concerns raised during the transportation planning and programming processes, but seeks opportunities for partnership and collaboration. Many urban areas have established organizations, such as the [Downtown Denver Partnership](#), that CDOT can work with to strengthen the local economy and guide development.

Other Stakeholder Groups

Local Government Advocacy Organizations

Organizations such as [Colorado Municipal League](#) and [Colorado Counties, Incorporated](#) are nonprofit and nonpartisan advocacy organizations that assist local governments at all levels by providing services and resources to help improve the functions of local governments and encourage local governments to work together on common issues.

Political Advocacy Committees

In Colorado, [Club 20](#), [Action Colorado](#), and [Progressive 15](#) are county-level Political Advocacy Committees that represent various regions throughout Colorado. These groups advocate for common regional interests and present a unified political voice. Outreach and coordination between CDOT and political advocacy committees is commonly achieved through special meetings and the use of existing standing committees.

Environmental Advocacy Organizations

Environmental advocacy organizations, such as the [Colorado branch of Environment America](#) and the [Southwest Energy Efficiency Project](#), work to protect the environment by educating and mobilizing citizens and providing assistance to environmental organizations. While these organizations do not have regulatory authority, they serve as strong advocates for specific environmental areas of concern.

Transportation Mode Advocacy Groups

Modal groups are defined as groups with primary interests in advocating for a particular transportation mode. These groups include, but are not limited to, bicycle and pedestrian groups, passenger rail organizations, and transportation management organizations. An example of these advocacy groups is [Bicycle Colorado](#), a nonprofit organization that works to represent the needs and interests of cyclists and champion bike-friendly efforts across the state.

Transportation Corridor Coalitions

Corridor-specific coalitions are often non-profit organizations representing citizens, local governments, and businesses along a specific roadway corridor. These coalitions advocate with a unified voice for improvements along the corridor while also providing construction scheduling information and other useful mobility related information. There are a number of these groups throughout the state, including those that represent the [West Line Lightrail Corridor](#), [South Denver](#), and the [I-70 Mountain Corridor](#).

Other Community Groups

Partnering with existing community groups is an effective way to garner higher levels of support and engagement with the public. Examples of these groups include neighborhood associations, non-profits, and faith-based organizations. These groups are important aspects of local communities and have established themselves as a resource, and thus may help to improve trust and bridge gaps between CDOT and other larger organizations and the people CDOT is trying to reach.

Transportation Planning and Programming Process

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 a number of products and plans used throughout the planning process. Several key documents guide major decisions throughout the typical four-year planning cycle, including the Statewide Plan (SWP), the 10-year Transportation Development Program (TDP or Ten-Year Plan), Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs), and a four-year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP, which reflects the short-term project needs and priorities over a rolling four-year time frame and is fiscally constrained based on current CDOT revenue projections. This plan is informed by the RTPs, which are longer term 25-year plans developed by each of the 10 rural Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs) that identify the unique needs, priorities, and strategies of each region. The 10-year Plan bridges the gap between the SWP and 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. Each of these plans is outlined in more detail below.



Figure 6: Key elements of the planning process.

Elements of the Planning Process

Transportation Commission Policy - updated periodically, at least every four years:

- Transportation Commission responsibilities include approval of the statewide transportation plan and statewide transportation improvement program; adopting CDOT budgets and approving expenditures; advising the Governor and Legislature on transportation issues; and, adopting policies on CDOT management and decision processes.
- The Transportation Commission also monitors CDOT's efforts to improve in key goal areas as outlined in [Policy Directive \(PD\) 14](#). PD 14 provides performance targets

related to safety, asset management, and mobility.

- PD 14 also guides the distribution of resources in the SWP, 10-year Plan, 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 occurs whenever the SWP and STIP are updated, and is developed based on forecasted revenues, the funding needed to achieve performance objectives, and planning partner input. To prioritize funding across programs and regions, DAF, DTD, and other CDOT Divisions, Branches, Offices, Regions, and MPOs work together to estimate future needs and required funding levels through the 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. This includes the projection of trends in travel, economic growth, freight movement, population growth, development patterns, safety, environmental context, and customer demands. Findings from various studies and scenario analyses, including the Statewide Travel Model, are incorporated.
- Available revenue and funding shortfalls are identified and estimates of funding levels and gaps determine what level of investment is possible in the future.
- 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 CDOT's [Public Maps and Data](#) page, which uses a web-based mapping and informational tool for Geographic Information System (GIS) planning-related data.

Planning Process Evaluation and Improvement - continuous process

- Implementation of strategic actions that arose from other CDOT plans, CDOT policies, or public input are monitored for the 2050 SWP. Many of the strategic actions align with one of the SWP goals of increasing safety, fixing our roads, and sustainability increasing transportation choice.

[Performance Measures and Monitoring](#) - continuous process

The Statewide Transportation Plan must describe [performance measures and targets](#) used in assessing system performance, as outlined in the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs (IIJA) Act. Performance measures and progress on the SWP strategies are reported to communicate 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 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) prepared by MPOs must also link projects and investments to performance objectives and describe progress toward achieving targets.

Key Planning Products

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 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). CDOT assists the TPRs in developing their RTPs and cooperates closely with the MPOs in their plan development. Much like the SWP, these regional plans are governed by federal regulations and developed through a comprehensive process similar to the statewide planning process, including significant stakeholder and public outreach. Each region's plan identifies their unique needs, priorities, and strategies for the future.
- **Modal Plans** are developed or updated for transit, rail, aviation, freight, and bicycle and pedestrian modes and are integrated into the Statewide Transportation Plan. These plans help guide decisions and investments in each of these cross-cutting areas. Plans are led by CDOT Divisions or Offices and involve the public, stakeholders, and planning partners.
- **Functional Plans** are developed or updated for specific transportation functions, including the Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Statewide Transportation System

Management & Operations Plan, and Risk-Based Asset Management Plan. CDOT Divisions lead these plans with input from the public, planning partners, and CDOT Engineering Regions. These plans identify strategic direction in each focus area, identify challenges and solutions, and prioritize investments and strategies for implementation.

- The SWP is the blueprint and vision for how CDOT will improve the state's transportation system over the next 10 to 25 years. The SWP is developed with input from local and regional stakeholders, multimodal transportation interests, and the traveling public. It 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.
- The SWP integrates the rural and metropolitan RTPs and the various other modal and functional plans to provide a consistent and comprehensive strategic direction.
- The 2050 SWP is web-based and is intended to be accessible and engaging.
- The 2050 SWP, RTPs and other CDOT plans can be found at CDOT's [Your Transportation Priorities](#) page.

[10-Year Vision Plan](#) - updated on a quarterly basis

- In 2019, CDOT began the process to build a 10-Year Vision Plan for Colorado's transportation system, meeting in every county and connecting with residents in their communities. The purpose of the 10-Year Vision Plan is to bridge the gap between the four-year STIP and the 20-year SWP by capturing major investment needs and priorities within a 10-year timeframe. Major investment needs in the 10-Year Vision Plan are identified through community outreach, statewide planning and development studies, and in metropolitan and rural Regional Transportation Plans.
- The 10-Year Plan communicates the status of major investments to the public and stakeholders and acts as a guide to current and future transportation needs and investments.

[The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#) - updated annually

- The STIP identifies all capital and non-capital transportation projects and programs proposed for funding with state or federal funds, as well as all regionally significant transportation projects.
- The STIP is developed in conjunction with the MPOs and rural TPRs, local officials with responsibility for transportation, and Tribal Governments.

- MPOs are federally required to develop their own Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) in cooperation with CDOT and its Engineering Region. Once adopted by their respective Boards, TIPs are included without modification into the STIP.
- CDOT updates the STIP annually so that it always includes a full four years of projects and is fiscally constrained based on current CDOT revenue projections.
- The currently adopted STIP is available on the CDOT [Statewide Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#) page for public viewing.
- For more information regarding the development of the STIP see the STIP Development Guidelines and Project Priority Programming Process (4P) on the [STIP](#) page. The STIP represents the programming phase of the transportation planning and programming process. STIP programming is defined as the steps required for scheduling and funding projects that support transportation plans by allocating expected revenues to transportation projects over several years.

Locations of the projects in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program are available online via the [interactive mapping application](#) on the CDOT website.

Other Planning Engagement Opportunities

CDOT engages in a multitude of transportation planning efforts to preserve and enhance the state's transportation system.

The public is strongly encouraged to participate in any or all of CDOT's activities, which include, but are not limited to, modal and functional plans and studies, planning and environmental linkage studies, and National Environmental Policy Act studies.

In each of the studies and plans listed, public outreach opportunities are provided to give the public and other stakeholders the opportunity to provide their input in developing these plans. Information can be found on these various studies and plans via [the SWP dedicated website](#).

[Transit Plans](#)

CDOT develops a [Statewide Transit Plan](#) and nine [Regional Transit Plans](#) that provide a framework for creating an integrated statewide transit system and prioritizing transit investment to achieve the statewide transit vision, which is to enhance mobility for residents and visitors in an effective, safe, efficient, and sustainable manner.

[Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan](#)

This plan outlines the vision for Colorado's freight and passenger rail system which is to improve the movement of freight and passengers in a safe, efficient, coordinated, and reliable manner.

[Statewide Freight Plan](#)

Colorado's State Highway Freight Plan and the Multimodal Freight Plan, along with information gathered from the State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan, informs decision making at CDOT that will support and enhance freight movement and promote Colorado's economic vitality.

[Colorado Aviation System Plan](#)

The Aeronautics Division develops the Colorado Aviation System Plan-to assist with improving overall airport performance.

[Statewide Active Transportation Plan](#) (DRAFT)

The CDOT Statewide Active Transportation Plan sets the stage for enhancing biking and walking throughout Colorado and embraces statewide momentum around active transportation investment with goals, policy recommendations, interagency collaboration,

and a comprehensive process for evaluating and prioritizing projects which will improve safety, mobility, connectivity, and sustainability across our transportation system.

Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Through the development of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan process, CDOT developed a bold vision for transportation safety in the state and establishes a framework for Colorado agencies and partners to cooperatively implement strategies that eliminate transportation system fatalities and serious injuries. The plan outlines a future for Colorado with zero deaths so all travelers, whether they drive, walk, ride, or bike, arrive at their destinations safely.

Transportation Systems Management and Operations Plan

This plan includes the recommendation of an integrated program to actively manage and monitor the transportation system and systematically improve travel time reliability and safety on Colorado highways through technology, innovative programs and strategies, targeted traffic management activities, and safety improvements to maximize the return on investment of transportation funds.

Planning and Environmental Linkage Studies

Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) is the concept of making transportation decisions that consider environmental, community, and economic goals early in the planning process. This enables the planning and the environmental processes to work in tandem. A PEL study allows decisions made during the planning process to carry forward into environmental studies. This improves project delivery, reduces costs and time spent on project environmental reviews, and helps reduce duplication of effort between planning and the National Environmental Policy Act required process. CDOT's PEL guidance can be found on [CDOT's PEL website](#).

National Environmental Policy Act Studies

[The National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#) requires preparation of an environmental document addressing the impacts associated with a project and the actions taken to avoid, minimize, or mitigate those impacts. The guidelines for these studies can be found in the [CDOT National Environmental Policy Act Guidance Manual](#).

Consultation and Coordination

CDOT relies heavily on citizens and stakeholders to get involved in planning and programming processes.

Approaches to Stakeholder Engagement

CDOT looks to engage a number of stakeholders on an on-going basis. Consultation is specifically identified for select groups, including non-metropolitan elected officials, Tribal Governments and environmental agencies.

Non-Metropolitan Consultation

Due to the predominantly rural nature of the state, Colorado has many non-metropolitan local officials. Over the years, CDOT has worked with non-metropolitan local elected officials to develop a transportation vision for Colorado. Local elected and appointed officials are those that represent local government or have responsibility for transportation, including counties, incorporated cities, and special-purpose local government entities.

In accordance with [CFR Title 23 §450.212\(b\)](#), “The State shall have a documented process(es) for consulting with non-metropolitan local officials representing units of general purpose local governments and/or local officials with responsibility for transportation that is separate and discrete from the public involvement process ...” This separate public involvement process outlines how officials have the opportunity to fully participate in the development of the SWP and STIP. A copy of the [Non-Metropolitan Consultation Plan](#) is available on the CDOT website

Tribal Consultation

In accordance with the legislation and documentation outlined in the [Tribal Governments](#) section, joint cooperative meetings among Colorado Tribal Governments, CDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona departments of transportation take place every six months to a year to discuss transportation issues specific to the Tribal Governments. For more details on how CDOT and Colorado’s Tribal Governments coordinate on transportation planning and programming, see the [Colorado Tribal Coordination Plan Memorandum](#) and the [State-Tribal Consultation Guide](#).

Environmental Consultation

In accordance with [CFR Title 23 §450.214\(i\)\(c\)](#), “The long-range statewide transportation plan shall be developed, as appropriate, in consultation with State, Tribal, and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation.” To address this requirement, CDOT meets quarterly

with the [Transportation Environmental Resource Council \(TERC\)](#). TERC was formed in 2002 to provide a forum for local, state, and federal transportation and resource agencies to discuss state transportation decisions and plan for environmental stewardship. Seventeen member agencies belong to TERC, and CDOT and the Federal Highway Administration co-chair the meetings.

Throughout the planning process CDOT also consults with environmental resource and regulatory agencies to share region priorities and obtain feedback on environmental areas and resources of concern that may impact project delivery.

CDOT's [Environmental Programs Branch](#) page provides more information on specific focus areas and initiatives.

Coordination

All public involvement activities for transportation plans and programs work in concert with one another. CDOT constantly seeks ways to effectively and efficiently use limited transportation planning funds through streamlining and combining processes where and when appropriate. CDOT demonstrates this commitment through the following examples:

- CDOT coordinates public involvement efforts for both the transportation planning process and the STIP development and amendment process. The coordination effort is accomplished by capturing comments from the STIP, or other plans or studies to include or address during the statewide planning process.
- The foundations established through the RTPs or SWP provide a starting point for environmental studies. Furthermore, CDOT uses iterative processes that link the efforts and information developed through environmental studies and combines those efforts whenever possible.

Outreach to the Disproportionately Impacted Communities

CDOT strives to ensure that everyone has an equal chance to contribute to statewide transportation planning and programming processes.

[Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 \(Title VI\)](#) is the act that requires a careful analysis of impacts and possible mitigation factors that help avoid disproportionate impacts caused by transportation projects and services.

Social impacts should be recognized early and monitored continually throughout the transportation decision-making process. Enhanced public input and participation at all points of the statewide transportation planning process ensures meaningful participation and non-discrimination as mandated by Title VI making sure the transportation needs of low-income and minority populations must be considered.

[Disproportionately impacted \(DI\) communities](#), as defined by the state legislature in 2021 and updated in 2023, are those that may experience higher environmental and health burdens, like pollution and climate change. DI communities include census block groups with a higher proportion of environmental or socioeconomic factors, including low-income, minority, housing cost burdened, and/or linguistically isolated communities, and populations that have been historically marginalized. The Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment's (CDPHE) [Enviroscreen 2.0](#) tool identifies and maps these census block groups.

Addressing Barriers to Participation

Often there are identifiable practicable or physical barriers to participation in the planning and programming processes (for example, a disability). It is the responsibility of CDOT to identify potential barriers to participation and take steps to address them. Table 2 outlines barriers to participation for citizens in the planning and programming processes and how CDOT identifies and addresses those barriers.

[The Americans with Disabilities Act](#) encourages the involvement of people with disabilities in the development and improvement of transportation and paratransit plans and services. Additionally, at state level, CDOT works to ensure that multimedia content like images, video, audio and documents are accessible to anyone with disabilities consistent with [state accessibility laws](#).

Barrier	How CDOT Identifies and Addresses the Barrier
Cultural	<p>Working actively with CDOT's Center for Equal Opportunity, cultural barriers are reduced through cultural training for staff and connecting with local community leaders.</p> <p>CDOT staff identifies barriers to participation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding community demographics and researching applicable culture, customs, language, and community styles • Identifying CDOT employees of diverse cultural backgrounds that can help improve outreach • Identifying and reaching out to local community organizations and leaders
Language	<p>Working actively with CDOT's Center for Equal Opportunity to solicit in-house interpreters to assist in dealing with language barriers in the planning process. Specifically, CDOT has made improvements in providing web pages and major documents in Spanish, simplified Chinese, and Vietnamese.</p> <p>Additionally, the Department works to identify community bilingual speakers, and address language related barriers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing videos with non-English subtitles • Ensuring materials are in languages that are representative of where the meeting or outreach is taking place • Providing interpreters • Ensuring websites and applications are aligned with WCAG 2.2 Level A and AA • Ensuring materials are written in clear, simple language and at an appropriate reading level for the intended audience, generally maintaining a 6th to 8th grade reading level
Mobility and other disabilities	<p>CDOT staff is attentive to any calls or other forms of communication where individuals request assistance to participate in the planning and programming processes. This includes, but is not limited to, meeting access (in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended) or meeting materials in Braille or large print.</p>

Barrier	How CDOT Identifies and Addresses the Barrier
	<p>CDOT works to ensure meeting facilities are accessible and addresses barriers to participation by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing materials in large print format or Braille for those who are vision impaired • Using sign language interpreters • Offering hearing aid amplifiers and other hearing assistance devices • Using telecommunication devices for communication via telephone with hearing impaired • Partnering with Aira to connect those who are blind or have low vision with highly trained visual interpreters to remove barriers when navigating state-operated buildings and digital services
Economic/income	<p>CDOT considers meeting locations in terms of multimodal accessibility and meeting times that help to not only provide participants convenience but snacks and child care where appropriate.</p> <p>CDOT works to increase participation as well as address economic related barriers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting meetings or face-to-face interactions at convenient times and locations and meeting people where they are to ensure convenience and approachability • Prioritizing using local catering companies for meals or snacks at public meetings. • Providing financial incentives for participation in focus groups and other public involvement opportunities, when appropriate • Carefully considering the unique needs of low-income and minority populations (Disproportionately Impacted Communities) as outlined in Title VI and state requirements.

Barrier	How CDOT Identifies and Addresses the Barrier
Digital equity	<p>Technology presents a unique challenge in that it can facilitate effective and efficient engagement, but may also create a barrier for some. Groups including older adults, low-income communities, and immigrant and refugee communities may not use or have easy access to a computer or smart phone.</p> <p>While CDOT often utilizes technology for virtual meetings and outreach, it works to ensure materials are accessible for those with limited access or digital literacy through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispersing information through mailing letters, posting signs, putting information in the local newspaper, or advertising it on television or radio • Partnering with community-based organizations to utilize their existing channels of communication • Providing multiple methods of access to meetings and meeting recordings

Table 2: Addressing barriers to public participation.

Limited English Proficiency

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#) requires that people with Limited English Proficiency must not be disproportionately affected regarding public involvement as it would be discrimination based on national origin. To comply with Title VI, public involvement efforts should seek to include Limited English Proficiency members of the public as much as possible to ensure that all affected communities have a voice in the transportation decision-making process. The U.S. Department of Transportation has created guidance using a four-factor framework for developing and carrying out public involvement activities. For further guidance see the [Federal Transit Administration's Limited English Proficiency Handbook](#).

Safe Harbor Provisions

For any Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Populations under Title VI:

The [Safe Harbor Provision](#) is a guideline for organizations to ensure they are meeting their written translation obligations for LEP populations.

CDOT provides written translation of all public-facing documents for each eligible LEP language group that constitutes 5% or 1,000, whichever is less, of a block group in the Community Study Area (defined as part of the socioeconomic scoping and analysis process). If

there are fewer than 50 persons in a language group that reaches the 5% trigger, vital written materials do not need to be translated. Rather, CDOT staff may provide written notice in the primary language of the LEP group, of the right to receive competent oral interpretation of those written materials, free of cost.

Limited-English Speaking Population evaluations are required by Title VI & ‘Safe Harbor’ regulations as well as during DI Community evaluations (SB 260). CDOT considers it best practice to understand and document linguistic barriers for equitable outreach and engagement.

Public Outreach Tools and Techniques

CDOT is committed to the continual expansion of its public engagement “toolkit” to help inform and educate the public about transportation planning and provide opportunities for input and feedback.

The following list of public involvement tools and techniques should be used within the appropriate context for maximum effectiveness. CDOT considers the appropriateness and practicality of a wide range of tools and techniques, which include, but are not limited to:

Methods and Tools

Internet and Web Resources

CDOT, to the maximum effort practicable, makes public information accessible in electronic formats via the Internet and uses innovative techniques to communicate complex information and improve comment solicitation. Through the use of a combination of text, video, audio, and interactive elements, the Internet can be an excellent tool to communicate with the public. Information regarding projects, programs, outreach opportunities and more can be found on the [Your Transportation Priorities](#) page, which is designed to be a comprehensive resource for anyone interested in getting involved or learning more about CDOT’s planning process.

Social Media

The widespread use of social media provides another potential avenue for public involvement. Social media can be used for sharing information and outreach in real time, and some platforms include polling and questionnaire features that can be utilized for gathering quick and easy responses from a range of people. In addition, social media algorithms can push content out to specific groups, allowing for a more targeted approach. CDOT embraces-the use of popular current social media platforms for obtaining quick reactions and developing

on-going conversations with the public. Staff from the [Office of Communications](#) continually monitor CDOT's social media accounts and post informative information as well as respond to user comments and questions. CDOT's social media accounts are as follows:

- [Facebook](#)
- [X](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [TikTok](#)
- [Linkedin](#)
- [YouTube](#)

Online Surveys

Online surveys allow the public to provide valuable input on a specific set (or sets) of questions without requiring participation at a meeting. In the past, CDOT has used online, mail-in and in-person surveys to help determine regional priorities and made those surveys available in both English and Spanish. Survey platforms such as Qualtrics and other tools allow for the inclusion of images and location-specific information that enhances feedback.

Digital Presentations

CDOT employs PowerPoint and other presentation platforms to help display and communicate information to stakeholder groups, citizens, elected officials and others. These presentation tools can be used to deliver information in-person, remotely, or via the web and allow the public to consume information at their own pace.

Videos

The use of video for the purpose of public education and engagement has made significant advancement in recent years. Distribution and viewing of public involvement videos has been helped greatly through platforms including [YouTube](#). Many public meetings, such as the Transportation Commission meetings, are livestreamed and later posted. In addition, CDOT publishes a variety of outreach and educational videos for public consumption.

[Media Strategy](#)

Media strategies inform the traveling public about projects and programs through a wide range of media approaches which include but are not limited to newspapers, radio, television and videos, billboards, posters, variable message signs, mass mailings of brochures or newsletters, and distribution of fliers. CDOT's Office of Communication coordinates the development and implementation of media strategies.

Public Information Materials

Public information materials quickly communicate CDOT's message. They are often visually appealing and often do not require a great level of detail.

Examples of public information materials are:

- Advertisements - (display and legal notices)
- Fliers
- Newsletters and press releases
- Social media posts
- Badges, buttons, and magnets
- Progress bulletins
- Brochures
- Summaries of reports
- Fact sheets
- Models
- FAQs
- Fast-food place mats and utility bill stuffers

Maps

CDOT uses both electronic and large print maps to illustrate locations, transportation data, and analysis that help the public better understand the subject area and provide comment on any proposed plans, projects, or help determine priorities. CDOT utilizes web-based mapping applications to better link project locations with comments provided by environmental resource and regulatory agencies.

Online Mapping and Commenting Tools

[CDOT has developed a Statewide Plan Data Visualizer mapping application](#) that locates and provides information on current projects, corridor visions, and allows the public to provide location-specific comments. This application is a powerful, easy to use web-based mapping and informational tool using [ArcGIS Online](#) that can be used for data analysis and sharing.

Public Meetings

CDOT uses public meetings that range from formal, such as a public hearing that includes a formal presentation and a transcript, to informal open house meetings that include exhibits and project staff available to answer questions. It is important to note that CDOT hosts all public meetings in locations that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Virtual Meetings

The rise of virtual meeting providers such as Zoom allows public meetings to be more accessible and flexible. Regardless of one's location, they are able to listen to and participate in the planning process. Many of these services include tools for engagement, such as chat features and interactive voting and surveys.

Charrettes

Charrettes are intensive workshops that involve the public in the planning and design process. In these workshops, a team of experts work alongside a group of community members to guide them through various activities that are designed to gather feedback and brainstorm

ideas. Charrettes can also help to build public support in projects and imbue community members with a sense of joint ownership and responsibility.

Interactive Electronic Voting

CDOT uses interactive electronic polling devices where participants are asked a series of questions on a variety of transportation issues and are able to respond in real time using hand held electronic keypad devices. The electronic keypads register participants' responses and project them graphically on a screen providing the opportunity for discussion and instantaneously capturing public opinions.

Telephone Town Halls

A telephone town hall can be used to poll a large number of participants to provide input on transportation policies, projects or improvements. The telephone town hall allows participants to ask questions of CDOT staff over the phone, much like a radio talk show, and make participation convenient while reducing the need to travel to a public meeting.

[Advisory Committees](#)

CDOT often creates civic advisory committees as part of a public involvement program to better gauge public perceptions on a transportation project or plan. These committees are representative groups of stakeholders that meet regularly to discuss issues of common concern. There are a number of different committees each focused on a specific topic or field, such as transit, freight, and aeronautics. More information on these specific committees can be found in the [Planning Partners and Stakeholder Groups](#) section of this document. While these groups are often called citizen advisory committees, the term civic is used here, because citizenship is not a requirement for participation.

Speakers' Bureaus

Speakers' bureaus are groups of specially-trained representatives who can speak about a process or program. They can be community members or agency staff. Bureau members meet with public and private organizations and groups on behalf of a project, program, or planning activity.

Meeting in a Box

A meeting in a box is a toolkit that is provided to local citizens or community leaders to host a meeting for groups within their communities. The meeting in a box provides everything that is needed for the meeting. The host is responsible for securing a meeting location, which may be a school, church, or private residence, as well as inviting people to attend. The host is also responsible for returning the results of the meeting and any comments or notes.

Mailing Lists

CDOT maintains mailing lists to provide public information, meeting notices, and other information to interested parties.

Public Comments

CDOT values the comments received through all public involvement efforts, and strives to adhere to the following guidance regarding public comments:

- Providing timely responses to public comments;
- Recognizing that all people are important and can contribute valuable perspectives;
- Providing clear, definite responses to substantive comments; differentiating between philosophical and factual differences; and providing an explanation of why one approach or option was selected over others;
- Ensuring that all public comment becomes a part of the public record for any transportation planning or programming effort; and
- Tracking and responding to (in a written format) comments and ensuring that all comments received from the public are available for public viewing during normal business hours.

Technology

Nowadays, there are countless services and technologies that can be utilized for public involvement. Technology can streamline processes and quickly gather feedback in innovative ways, including through images and geographic information. Augmented and virtual reality technologies provide users with an immersive experience that allows for a higher level of engagement with complex ideas. It allows the public to visualize and interact with proposed changes to a space, prompting more informed feedback.

Measures of Effectiveness

One of the most important questions asked at the end of a planning process is “how effective was the process?” It is important to determine whether goals were met, how information received was used, and how best to improve the process. Performance measurement provides transparency to the public and stakeholders and helps CDOT make better-informed decisions. The following are sample questions CDOT has asked to develop measures of effectiveness and determine if its approaches and techniques used during the planning process were effective.

Website and Electronic Media

- How many visitors did the web page receive?
- Was the website updated in a timely manner with the most current information? (i.e., within a day or two of the information being finalized for the web)
- How many subscribers are there to distribution lists, news feeds, and other electronic interactive media?
- How many times was a document downloaded from the website?
- How many comments were posted on a website?
- How many comments received electronically were addressed in the plan document?
- How much engagement (likes, shares, comments) did a social media post receive?
- Was a post or article picked up and shared by a news agency?

Meetings and Outreach

- How many individuals were identified as stakeholders at the beginning of the planning process?
- How many people did staff speak to?
- Were meetings held in previously unreached geographic areas of the state?
- How many meeting attendees were active participants?
- Did the number of participants increase from previous planning efforts?
- Was the information gathered used in the regional and statewide plans?
- How many survey responses were gathered?
- What proportion of respondents completed a survey versus abandoned the survey partway through?
- Were the attendees representative of the wider community? What groups were potentially over- or underrepresented?

Outreach Method Evaluation

- What outreach method was the most effective and why?
- Was the use of news and/or electronic media increased from previous efforts? Did it result in increased participation?
- Did outreach efforts improve CDOT's relationships with stakeholders and community groups?
- Have responses been integrated into project decisions? Has increased communication, outreach, and engagement influenced the project process?

Printed Materials

- Were informational documents (brochures, fact sheets, documents, white papers) made available?
- How many newspaper articles were written covering the planning or programming process?
- How many people took information or asked questions?

On-going Stakeholder Identification

By continuing to refine the approach used to identify stakeholders, CDOT hopes to increase awareness of the planning process, determine appropriate frequency of interaction, and better understand specific issues and concerns of all stakeholders.

Conclusion

CDOT's mission is to provide the best multimodal transportation system for Colorado that most effectively and safely moves people, goods, and information. This mission will not be accomplished without effective and equitable public involvement, therefore, CDOT is committed to using innovative public outreach tools and techniques to inform the public and encourage them to stay involved in local and statewide planning processes. This Public Involvement Guide helps identify how stakeholders and the general public can participate in decision-making processes and outlines CDOT's techniques to address barriers to participation to ensure representation of all stakeholders.