

Interstate Highway 70 - Mountain Corridor

- 7th Pot Corridor #SP4026



CDOT Regions: 1 & 3

Counties: Eagle, Summit, Clear Creek, Jefferson

Location: Mile Posts 143 - 260

MPO/TPR: DRCOG, Intermountain

STIP # SSP4126 (Region 1); SSP4326 (Region 3)

Construction Period: TBD

Project Description: The Consensus Recommendation is the planned project improvement and was developed by the I-70 Collaborative Effort. The Consensus Recommendation is identified as the Preferred Alternative in the revised Draft PEIS. CDOT has determined that \$20.2 billion of strategic funding is needed for the corridor (in 2025 Year of Expenditure dollars). Regions 1 and 3 will continue assessing and implementing both early action projects and high priority projects identified in the Preferred Alternative, which includes evaluating the implementation of an Advanced Guideway System (AGS).

Project Benefits: The Consensus Recommendation is a multi-modal solution which will improve safety, system quality, and mobility. The Revised Draft PEIS is set to be released on September 10, 2010. A Final PEIS is anticipated to be complete in Winter 2010, with a Record of Decision (ROD) in Spring 2011. High priority projects have been identified in the Preferred Alternative and will be prioritized through the planning process. Some of the high priority projects could be implemented as soon as funding becomes available. Region 1 examples include: Empire Junction/US 40 Interchange, Silverthorne Interchange. Region 3 examples include: Dowd Canyon, Eagle Interchange, Fiber Optic projects. Plus a corridor-wide Advanced Guideway Feasibility Study.

For further information, please contact the I-70 Mountain Corridor Management Team:

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Interstate Highway 25 – South

- 7th Pot Corridor #SP4027



Now 70% complete!



CDOT Region: 1

County: Douglas

Location: Mile Posts 178 - 195

MPO: DRCOG

STIP # SSP4127

Construction Period: 2001 to Present

Project Description: The selected alternative from the Record of Decision (ROD) consists of improvements to the I-25 Corridor such as mainline widening, minor realignment, and interchange improvements. Major components of the revised ROD Selected Alternative include:

- Eight lanes (six through lanes and two climbing lanes) between RidgeGate and Meadows/Founders Parkways -**Complete except for the RidgeGate Parkway to County Line Road section.**
- Widening to six lanes between Meadows/Founders Parkway and Douglas Lane -Complete.
- Construction of an east-side frontage road between RidgeGate Parkway and Castle Pines Parkway -Complete.
- Removal of the northern and southern ramps at the Schweiger Interchange and Surrey Ridge Road Interchange(maintain I-25 underpasses) -Complete.
- Construction of the Castle Pines Parkway loop ramp -Complete.
- **Widening of the Happy Canyon Road Bridge -Currently under design.**
- Construction of a car pool lot (accommodating 500 spaces) in northeast quadrant of the I-25 and Castle Pines Parkway Interchange -Complete.
- Minor I-25 realignment to the east between Wolfensberger Road and Liggett Road - Complete.
- Construction of a new Union Pacific Railroad bridge south of the existing bridge -Complete.
- Reconstruction of the Plum Creek Parkway and RidgeGate Parkway Interchanges -Complete.

Project Benefits: Improved mobility and travel options, increased safety, and reduced congestion through increased capacity and enhanced operational measures.

For further information, please contact:

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US Highway 40/287 – Ports-to-Plains Corridor

- 7th Pot Corridor #SP4012



To be completed in 2012!

CDOT Region: 1

Counties: Cheyenne, Lincoln

Location: US 40 Mile Posts 386–446;
US 287 Mile Posts 123-133

TPR: Eastern

STIP # SSP4112

Construction Period: 1994 to
Present

Project Description: The Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor (US Highway 40/287 in Regions 1 & 2) is a planned, multimodal transportation corridor that facilitates the efficient transportation of goods and services from Mexico, through West Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, and Oklahoma, and ultimately on into Canada and the Pacific Northwest. Together, the communities along the Corridor are becoming the gateway to trade throughout the nation and with Mexico and Canada. The Ports-to-Plains Trade Corridor is recognized as a “Congressional High Priority Corridor” on the National Highway System. The Colorado Transportation Commission committed \$184.2 million for construction of the entire corridor in 1995. Region 1’s segments include:

- Hugo (In-town) –Complete
- Kit Carson (In-town) –Under design
- Boyero area –Under construction
- US 287: Kit Carson to Kiowa County Line -Complete
- At Junction of SH 94 East & West -Complete
- Wild Horse-East -Complete
- Kit Carson Overpass/Union Pacific Railroad Bridge Replacement -Complete
- West of Kit Carson -Complete
- Hugo-East: Phase I – Complete, Phase II – Under design

All projects consist of concrete reconstruction of the *Super Two* highway, drainage extensions, signing, striping, fencing, and improved shoulder embankments. The two in-town projects include street lighting, ADA-compliant sidewalks, and curb & gutter improvements as well.

Project Benefits: Improved mobility for freight, intrastate commerce, and tourism, increased safety, and system quality.

For further information, please contact:

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7th Pot CORRIDOR UPDATE

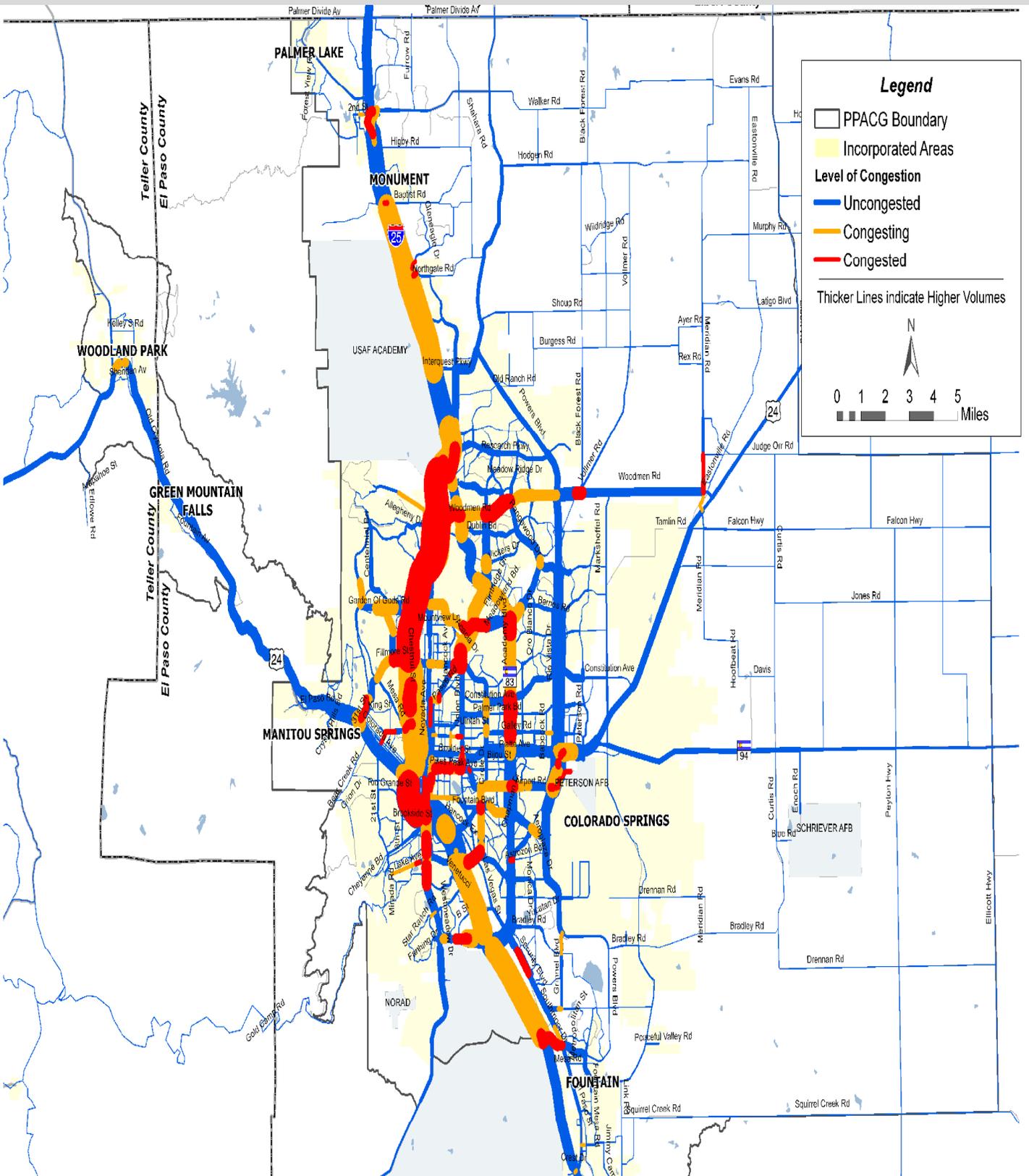
Tim Harris
Region 2 Transportation Director



Region 2 Remaining Strategic Corridors

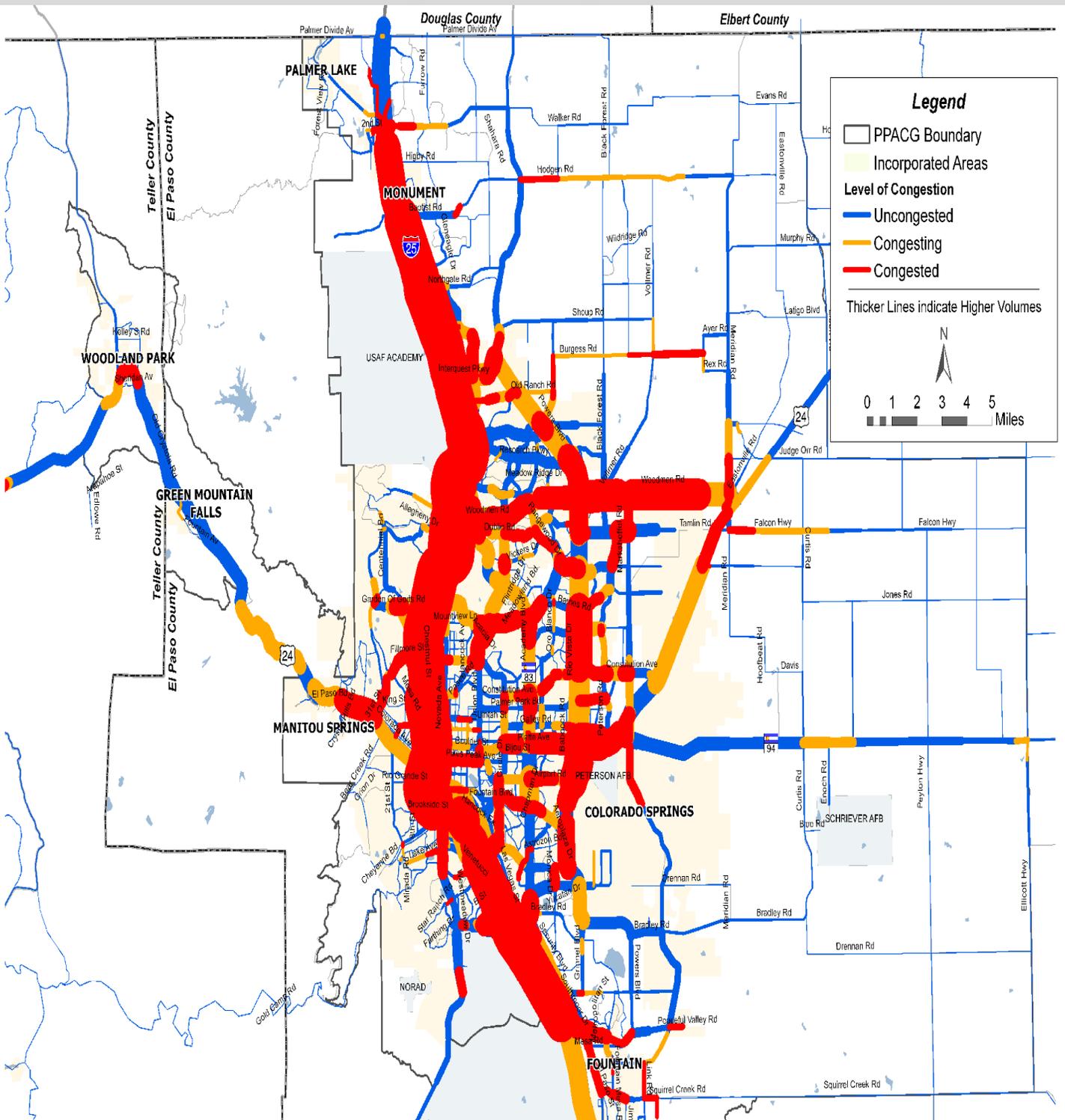
- I-25 South Corridor
- Powers Boulevard (SH 21)
- US 287 (Ports to Plains)

2005 Roadway Congestion Levels



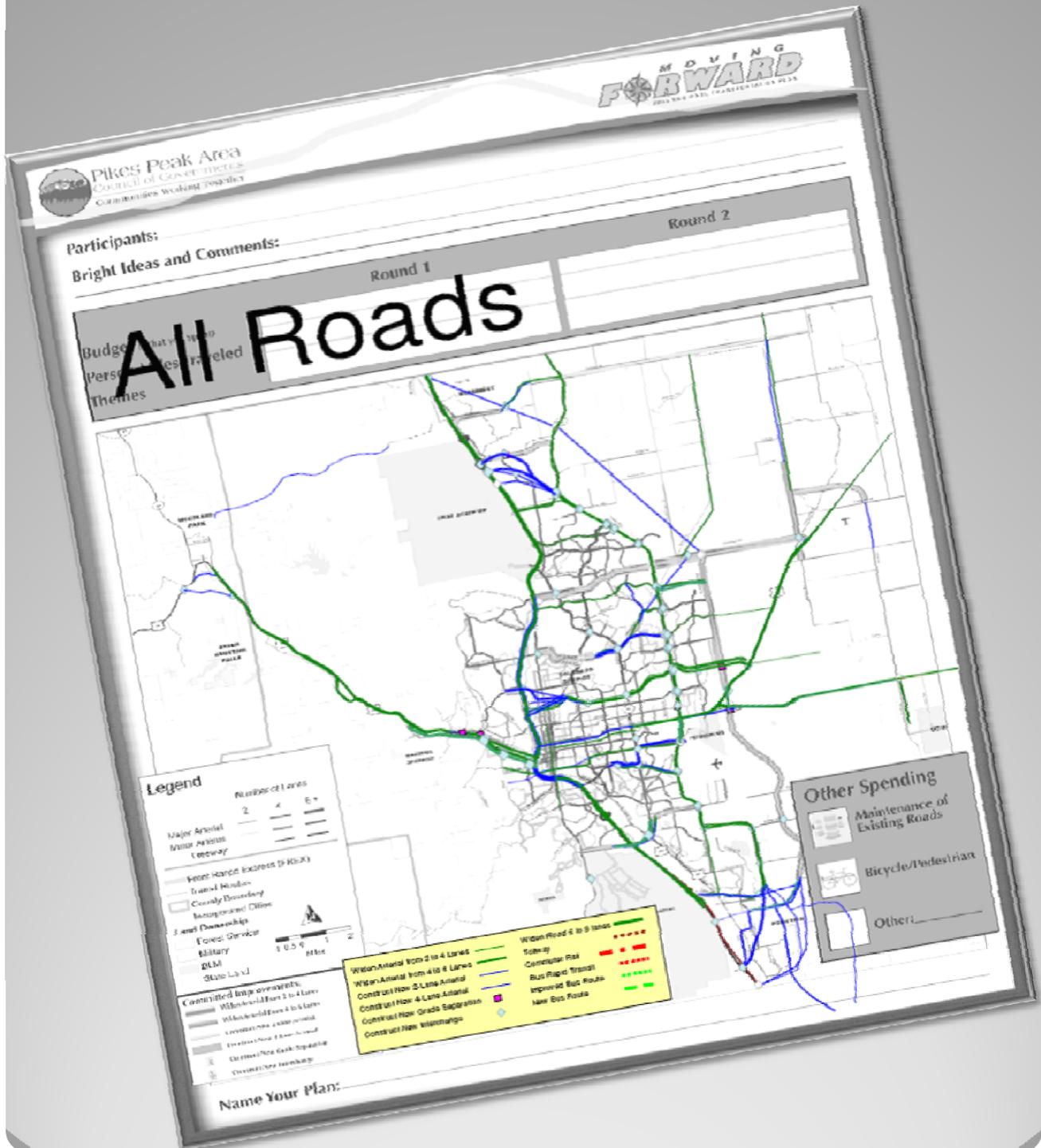
- I-25 carries 26% of regional vehicle miles of travel.
- SH-21 carries 7.5% of regional vehicle miles of travel.

2035 Roadway Congestion Levels



- A trip from Monument to Downtown Colorado Springs will change from 29 minutes to 49 minutes.
- A trip from Powers and Interquest to the Airport will change from 24 minutes to 46 minutes.

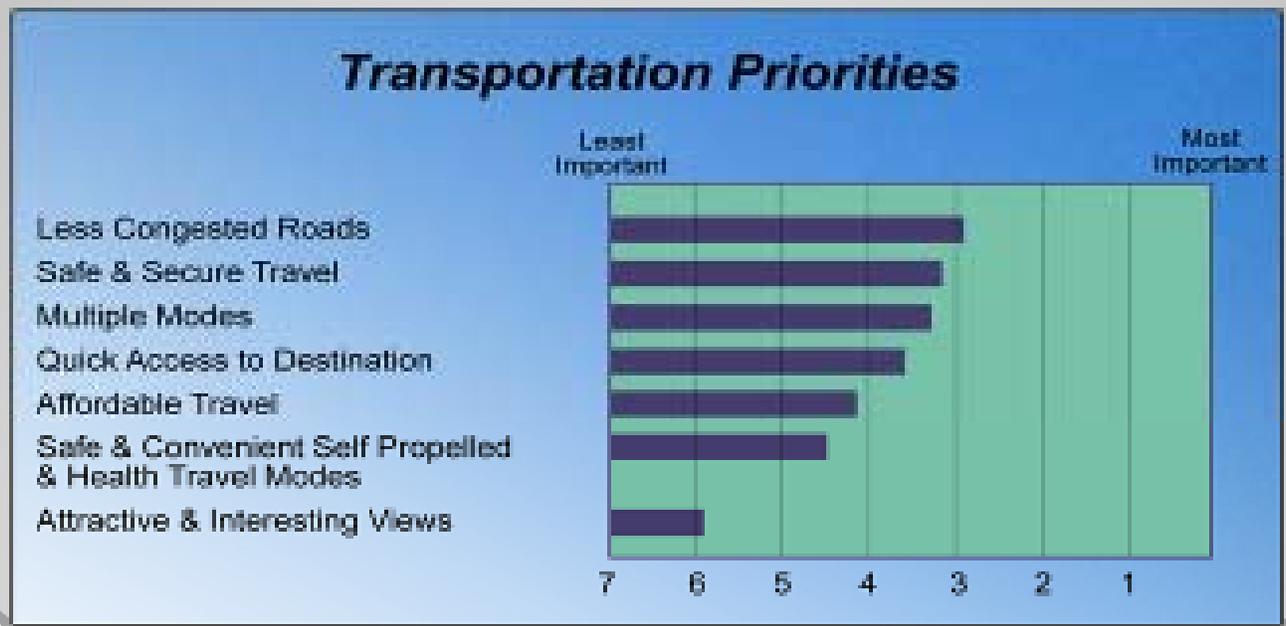
Pikes Peak Public Comments



Top Two Requested Roadway Improvements from the last Long Range Transportation Planning Public Process are: Powers Blvd. and I-25.



- Enhanced Mobility and Access for the Region's Residents.
- Implementation of Military Missions.
- Job Creation Opportunities.



What is at Risk?



Intersections on the Powers Corridor Consistently Rank at the Top of the "Most Dangerous" List.

- Powers / Briargate Intersection Topped the List in 2007 & 2008
- Four of the Top Ten Are on the Powers Corridor



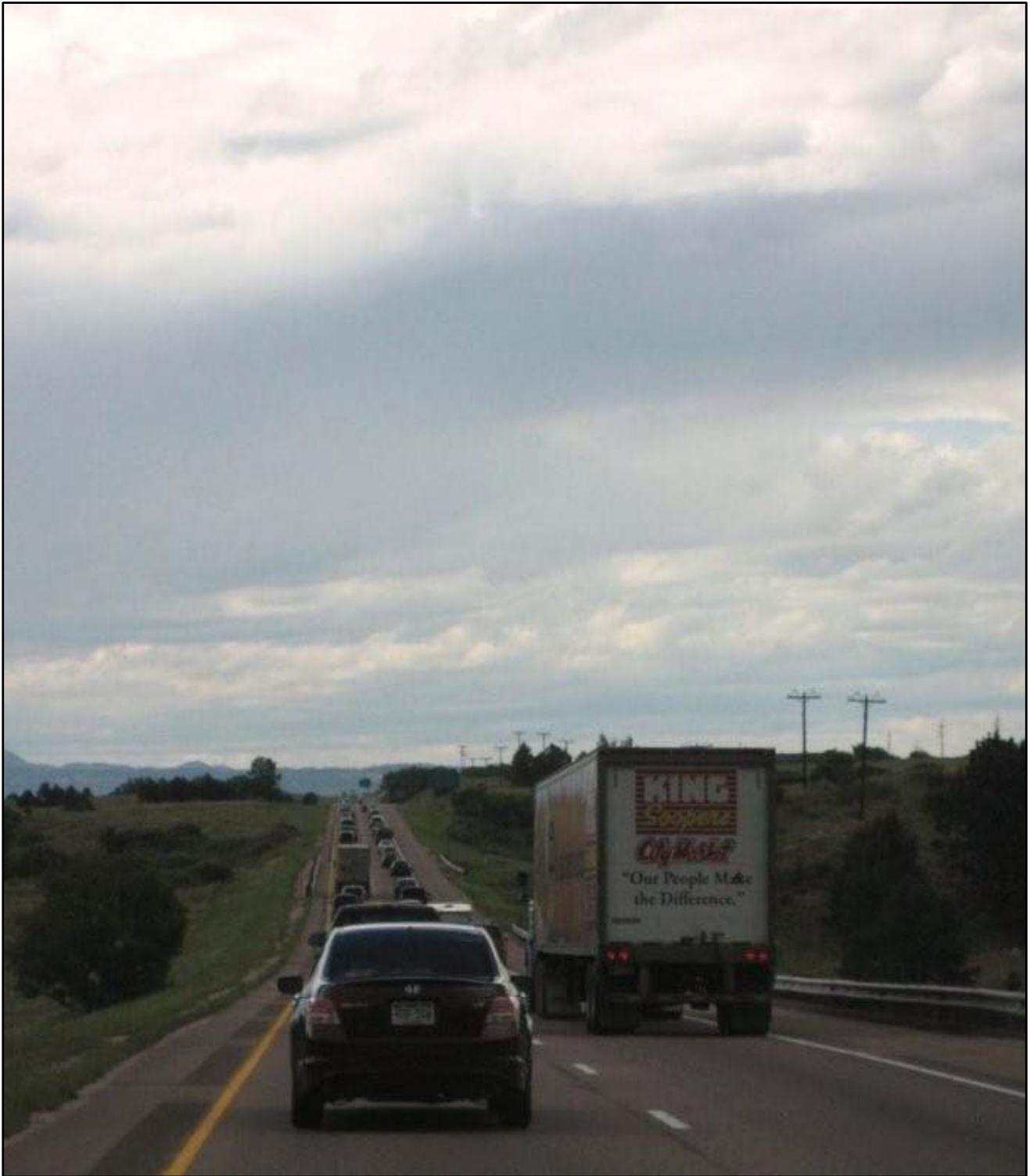
I-25 Interchanges Need Safety Improvements.

- I-25 / Woodmen Was Most Dangerous in 2006 & 2007
- CO State Patrol Identified it as a "Targeted Highway Segment" or "Highway Safety Zone"



What is at Risk?

I-25 South Corridor MIS

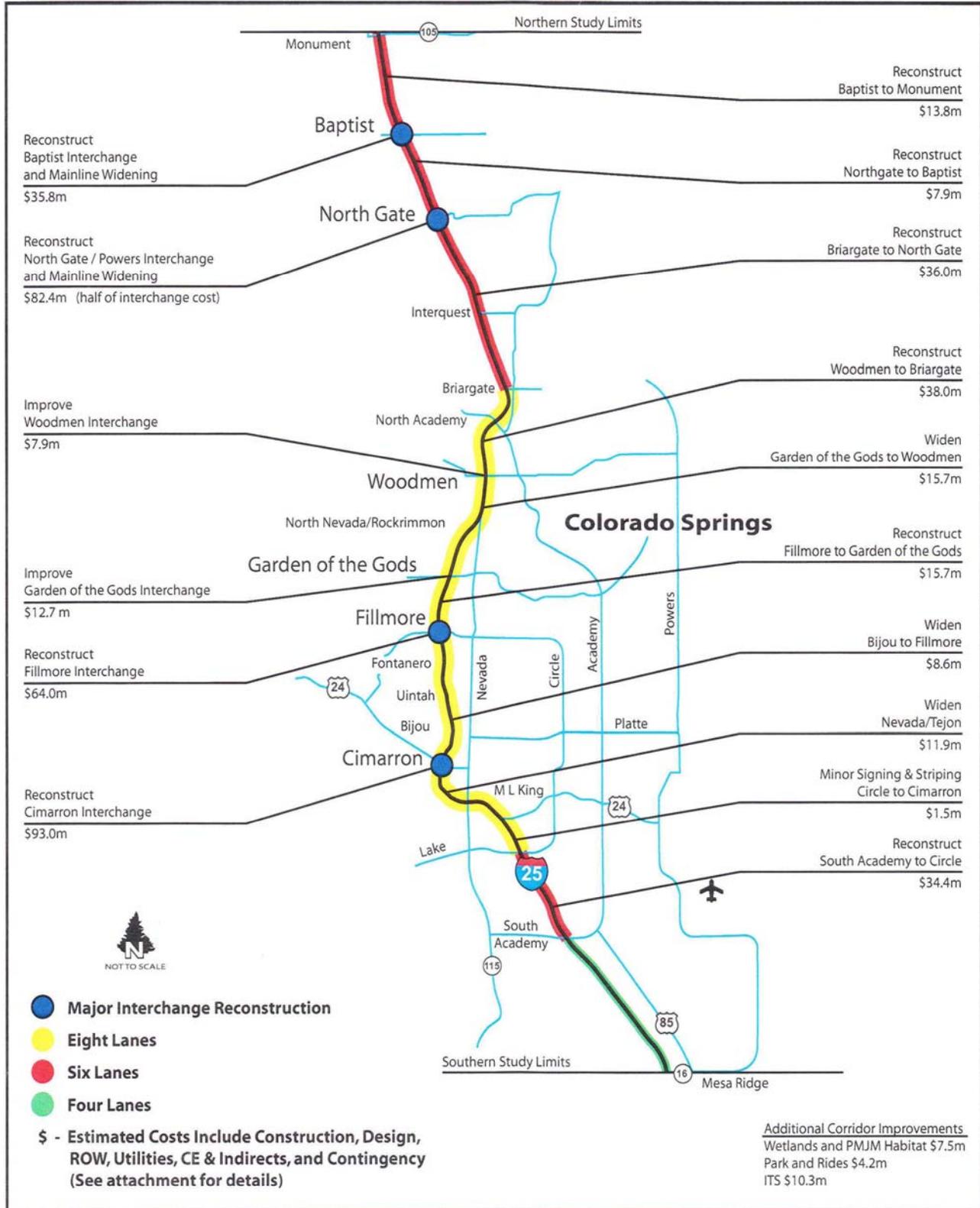


Project Description:

- Widen I-25 between SH105 (MP 161) and South Academy Boulevard (MP 135). Within these limits a six-lane cross section (three lanes in each direction) would be built south of the US 24 Bypass to South Academy (4 miles) and north of Briargate Parkway to State Highway 105 (12 miles).
- Additionally, for the 11 mile central portion from North Academy (MP 150) to the US 24 Bypass (MP 139) an additional through lane in each direction would be added. For the section between Briargate Parkway and Woodmen Road an eight- lane cross section (four lanes in each direction) would be built.
- The following interchange reconstruction projects are also part of the project:
 - Exit 156 – North Gate/Powers Boulevard
 - Exit 145 – Fillmore Street
 - Exit 141 – Cimarron Street (US 24)

I-25 South Corridor MIS

I-25 Corridor Improvements Required After COSMIX



- Intention of the 7th Pot strategic project improvement:
 - Relieve existing and future congestion on a major interstate corridor in the Colorado Springs Urbanized area
- Expected benefits:
 - Safety and Mobility
- Work status:
 - All NEPA is complete, design will proceed as funding is identified
- Proposed improvements to be completed with the remaining 7th Pot strategic funding commitment?
 - Mobility improvements on I-25
 - Widen I-25 north on North Academy
 - I-25 Cimarron
 - I-25 Fillmore
 - I-25 Northgate
- Timing of improvements:
 - Schedule is dependent upon the MPO priorities for the area and the funding availability.
- Benefits or advantages of inclusion in the 7th Pot strategic projects program?
 - Project may receive advanced and dedicated funding. In addition, the project is eligible for bonding.
- Estimated Cost:
 - Remaining improvements ~\$500 million

I-25 South Corridor MIS

Powers Boulevard (SH 21)



Powers Boulevard (corridor summary)



Powers North (Woodmen to SH 83) (8.5 miles) (Cost \$200M):

- This project includes completing the missing bridges from Woodmen to SH 83 (Research, Briargate, Union, Pine Creek, Old Ranch.)
- In addition, the project includes completing the a new freeway from SH 83 to I-25.
- Project EA completed in 1998

Powers Central (SH 16 to Woodmen) (17 miles) (Cost \$730M in 2007 Dollars):

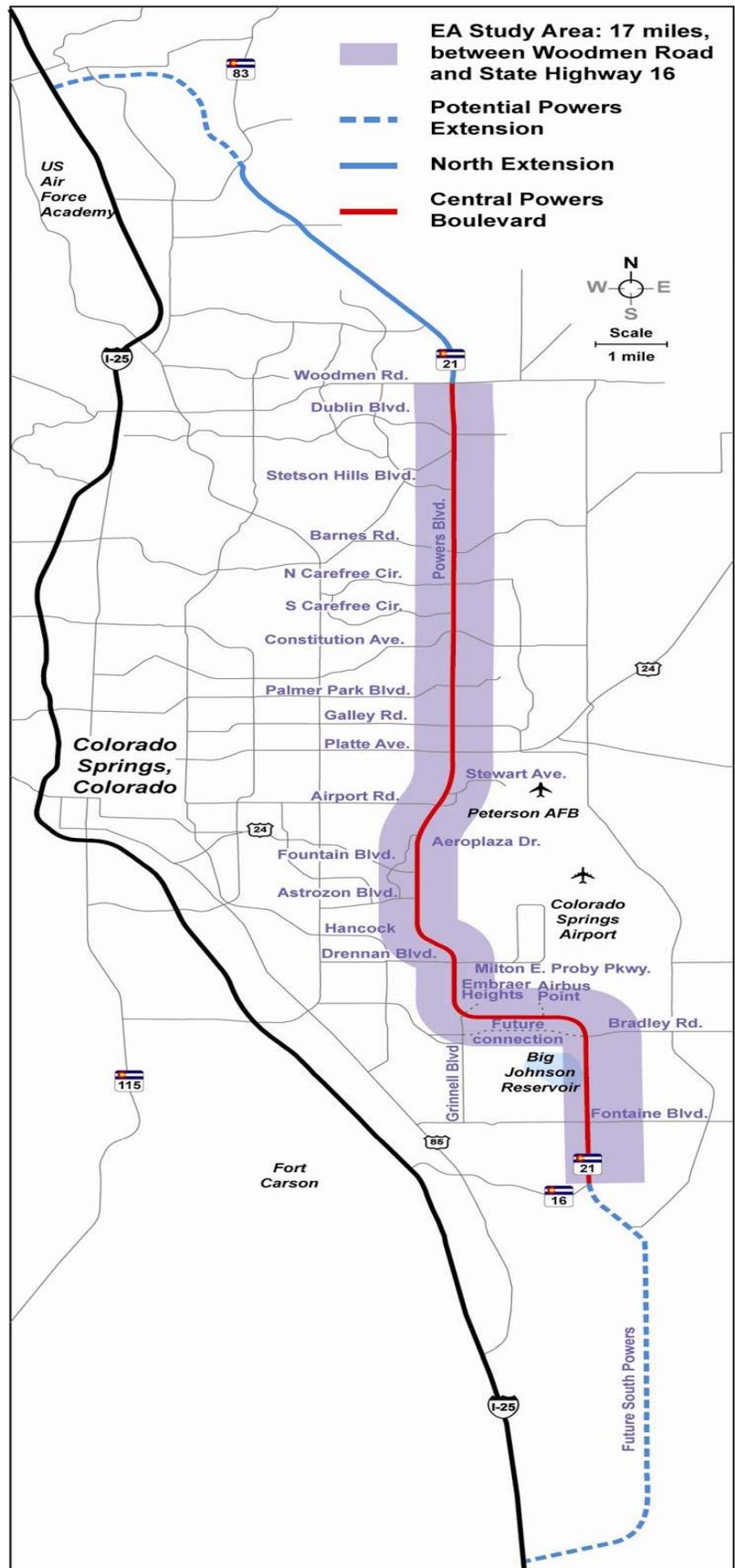
- This project Includes reconstructing Powers from a 6-lane expressway with at-grade intersection to a 6 to 8-lane freeway with interchanges.
- EA complete, FONSI in process

I-25 and SH 16

- This project includes the completing the I-25 and SH 85/87 interchanges at SH 16. The final project is expected to be completed by fall 2010.

Powers South (9 miles):

- In 2000, the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments completed a feasibility study identifying a possible route for the future extension of Powers Boulevard from SH 16 to I-25 near the Pikes Peak Raceway (Exit 123).
- No Funding has been identified in the long range plan to complete this section. The City of Fountain is working towards setting aside ROW with future annexations.



- Intention of the 7th Pot strategic project improvement:
 - Address congestion and improve time of travel on a regionally significant corridor.
- Expected benefits:
 - Improves nationally significant corridor by providing improved connections to military facilities and airport. Air quality and safety will also improve.
- Work status:
 - Environmental Assessment is signed. Decision Document under preparation and should be completed by end of 2010.
- Proposed improvements to be completed with the remaining 7th Pot strategic funding commitment?
 - Mobility improvements
- Timing of improvements:
 - Schedule is dependent upon the MPO priorities for the area and the funding availability.
- Benefits or advantages of inclusion in the 7th Pot strategic projects program?
 - Project eligible for dedicated funding.
- Estimated Cost:
 - \$730 million (*2007 dollars*)

Powers Boulevard

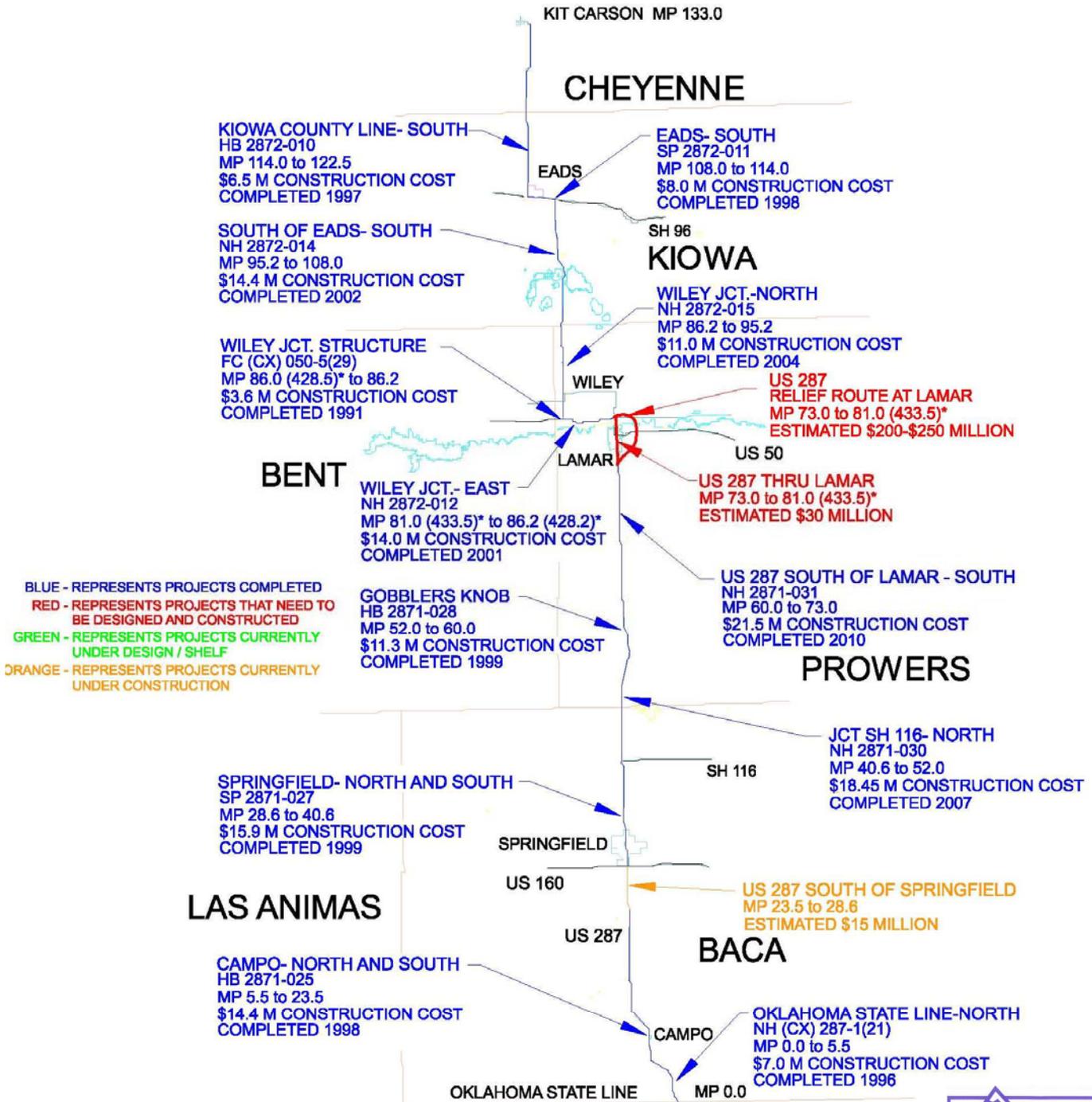
Ports to Plains: US 287 at Lamar



Region 2 Strategic Transportation Project, The 7TH Pot Program

US 287 - Campo to the North Kiowa County Line

The US 287 Corridor is a major north-south truck route through Colorado. Trucks account for estimated 75% of the traffic on this highway. The 133-mile portion of US 287 Corridor through CDOT's Region 2 runs from the Oklahoma State Line (mile post 0.0) to Kit Carson (mile post 133.0). High priority has been given to reconstructing the entire US 287 Corridor in concrete to provide for a more durable roadway with lower long-term maintenance. Approximately 80% of this segment has been completed to date (CDOT's fiscal year 2006). US 287 and I-70 have been designated as the state's official Ports-to-Plains Corridor routes. The transportation equity act for the 21st century (TEA-21) designated the Ports-to-Plains Corridor as one of the 43 "High Priority Corridors" on the National Highway System in 1991. Its importance is related to its direct connection with the Mexico border and the potential to attract and serve existing and future travel demands associated with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and international trade. The following illustrates the status of work being accomplished on the US 287 Corridor in Region 2.

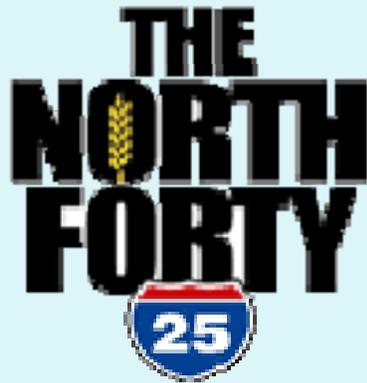


* MILE POST REFERENCE FROM US 50 CORRIDOR



- Intention of the 7th Pot strategic project improvement:
 - The Region 2 segment is part of the overall US 287 Strategic Corridor identified by the Transportation Commission and is eligible for 7th pot funds.
- Expected benefits:
 - Safety and Mobility
- Work status:
 - Over 90% complete (see the corridor map), finalizing Environmental Assessment for US 287 in Lamar. The EA should be finished in Summer 2011.
- Proposed improvements to be completed with the remaining 7th Pot strategic funding commitment?
 - Total reconstruction of US 287 Thru Lamar
 - Or reliever route on east side of Lamar
- Timing of improvements:
 - This project would be the final project on the Ports to Plains corridor. If design and construction funding were available the work could commence immediately.
- Benefits or advantages of inclusion in the 7th Pot strategic projects program?
 - Without 7th Pot funds this corridor would most likely never been completed.
- Estimated Cost:
 - \$30 Million to \$200 million

US 287 in Lamar



Region Four 7th Pot Update Corridor MIS: Denver to Fort Collins

Region Four Presentation to STAC
August 13, 2010



Corridor MIS: Denver to Fort Collins



Funded Projects

- Initial 14 Miles Documented by EA / FONSI in 1995:
 - SH 7 to SH 66
 - Recommended Proposed Action is to increase I-25 from four to six mainline lanes, frontage road improvements and major interchange improvements.
- Benefits:
 - Mobility, Safety and System Quality
- Work status:
 - Construction as identified in 1995 EA / FONSI is almost complete, with the last phase of construction at Prebble Creek expected to be finished in October.
- EIS:
 - Denver Union Station to SH 1 (Wellington)
 - FEIS and ROD scheduled for signature summer 2011.
 - Multi-Modal.
- Benefits or advantages of inclusion in the 7th Pot
 - Without 7th Pot funds the improvements from SH 7 to SH 66 would not be complete

Corridor MIS: Denver to Fort Collins

Project	Total	* Fiscal Year	Comments
North I-25 Front Range EIS	\$20,210,000	FY 03, 05, 07	FEIS in Early 2011, ROD Summer 2011
NFR Corridor Invest Study II	\$1,249,818	FY 98	
NFRTAFS Funding ALTs	\$20,000	FY 98	
JCT SH 14 & I-25-Ft. Collins	\$1,168,258	FY 01	Phase One Interchange Improvements, remove EB to NB loop
SH 68 Interchange-Harmony Rd	\$14,997,855	FY 98-99	Reconstruct Harmony Road Interchange
SH 392 & I-25 Interchange Reconstruction CO105	\$2,312,278	FY 05-10	Will add \$20M in "HIRE" funding and \$5M local for construction in FY 11
I-25 & US 34	\$1,576,488	FY 09	SAFETEA-LU Earmark, project set-up to begin final design and ROW acquisition following EIS. May need to spend funds sooner.
I-25-Frontage Rd Abandonment	\$3,700,000	FY 06	Transferred funds to Weld County for WCR 9.5, remove East Frontage Road from SH 119 to SH 66
N/O SH 119-N/O SH 66	\$60,393,165	FY 07	Widen to six lanes, Reconstruct SH 66 Interchange
S/O WCR 16-N/O SH 119	\$46,301,427	FY 06	Widen to six lanes
SH 7 to WCR 16	\$55,411,396	FY 02~03	Widen to six lanes, includes reconstruction of WCR 8 Interchange (Erie)
Preble Creek Drainage (I-25 & SH 7)	\$4,723,088	FY 08-09	Drainage Improvements north of SH 7
SH 7 to SH 66	\$16,992,844	FY 04-10	Parent project for Design, ROW, and Utility phases from SH 7 to SH 66 (14.5 miles)
Total	\$229,056,617	* Main year(s)	In Year of Expenditure

Corridor Needs

- As identified in the North I-25 EIS:
 - **Purpose**
 - Meet long-term travel needs between the Denver Metro Area and the Fort Collins-Wellington area
 - **Need**
 - Address increased frequency and severity of crashes
 - Address increasing traffic congestion
 - Replace and/or upgrade aging and obsolete infrastructure
 - Provide modal alternatives
- **Work status:**
 - The EIS and ROD scheduled for signature in the Summer 2011.
- **Recommended Preferred Alternative**
 - \$2.2B multi-modal package
 - Highway, Rail and Transit Components

Recommended Preferred Alternative

LEGEND			
	Tolled Express Lanes		Express Bus Transit Station
	General Purpose Lanes		Commuter Bus Transit Station
	Express Bus		Commuter Rail Transit Station
	Commuter Bus		Carpool Lots
	Commuter Rail		Commuter Rail Operational & Maintenance Facility
	Passing Track		Commuter Bus Operational & Maintenance Facility
	Feeder Bus Service		FasTracks Rail Line
	Interchange Upgrades		FasTracks / RTD Transit Station
	Number of Lanes: General Purpose/ Tolled Express		RTD Boundary

TRANSIT STATION LOCATIONS

Commuter Rail

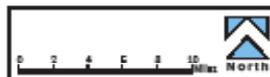
CR1	Fort Collins Downtown Transit Center - BNSF and Maple St.
CR2	CSU - BNSF between University Ave. and W. Pkln St.
CR3	South Fort Collins Transit Center - US 287 and Harmony Rd.
CR4	North Loveland - BNSF and 29th St.
CR5	Downtown Loveland - BNSF and approximately 8th St.
CR6	Berthoud - BNSF and SH 56
CR7	North Longmont - BNSF and SH 66
CR8	Longmont - Sugar Mill, north of alignment, south of Rogers Rd.
CR9	Erie - I-25 and CR 8
	North Metro FasTracks - SH 7 to Downtown/denver

Express Bus

EB1	South Fort Collins Transit Center - US 287 and Harmony Rd.
EB2	Timberline - Harmony Rd. and Timberline
EB3	East Fort Collins - I-25 and Harmony Rd.
EB4	Windsor - I-25 and SH 302
EB5	Crossroads - Loveland between Crossroads Blvd. and US 34
EB6	West Greeley - US 34 and SH 257
EB7	Greeley - US 34 and 83rd Ave.
EB8	Greeley Downtown Transfer Center - 8th Ave. and 8th St.
EB9	Berthoud - I-25 and SH 56
EB10	Firestone - I-25 and SH 110
EB11	Frederick/Dacono - I-25 and SH 52
EB12	Erie - I-25 and CR 8
EB13	Broomfield - I-25 and SH 7
EB14	DA
	Downtown Denver

Commuter Bus

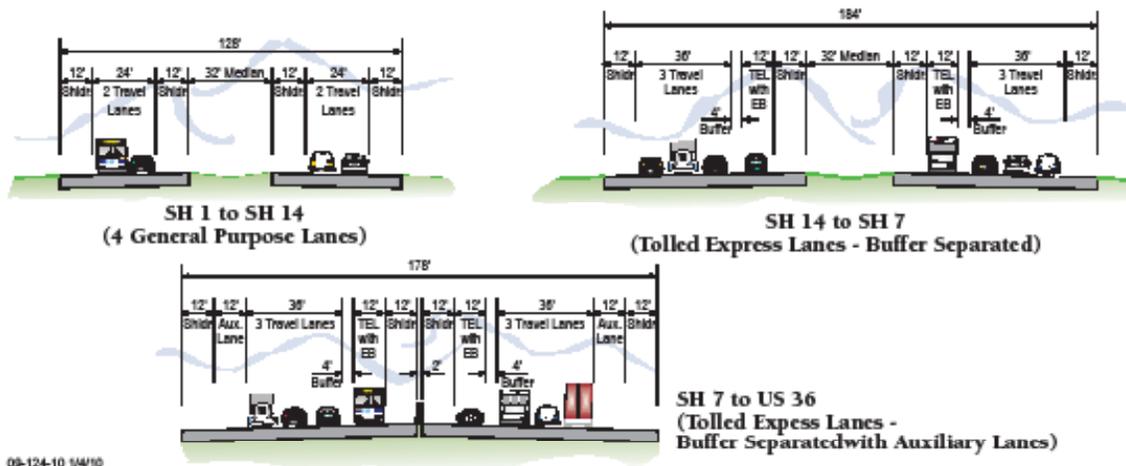
CB1	Greeley - US 85 and 6 St.
CB2	South Greeley - 8th Ave. and 24th St.
CB3	Evans - US 85 and 43rd St.
CB4	Platteville - US 85 and Grand Ave.
CB5	Fort Lupton - US 85 and CR 14.5
CB6	Brighton - US 85 and SH 7
CB7	Commerce City - 69th and Colorado



Recommended Preferred Alternative

Existing Interchange Location	No-Action Configuration	Recommended Preferred Alternative
SH 1	Substandard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
Mountain Vista	Substandard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
SH 14	Substandard Partial Cloverleaf	Reconstructed Diamond
Prospect Road	Substandard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
Harmony Road	Standard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
SH 392	Substandard Diamond	Reconstructed Tight Diamond
Crossroads Boulevard	Substandard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
US 34	Substandard Partial Cloverleaf	Dual Directional / Diamond
SH 402	Substandard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
LCR 16	Substandard Off Ramps	Reconstructed Diamond
SH 60	Substandard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
SH 56	Substandard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
WCR 34	Substandard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
SH 66	Standard Diamond	No Improvement
SH 119	Standard Diamond	Bridge Widening
SH 52	Standard Diamond	Bridge Widening
WCR 8	Standard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
SH 7	Standard Diamond	Reconstructed Diamond
E-470	Fully Directional	No Improvement
144th Avenue	Standard Diamond	No Improvement
136th Avenue	Standard Diamond	No Improvement
120th Avenue	Standard Diamond	No Improvement
104th Avenue	Substandard Diamond	Structure Rehabilitation
Thornton Parkway	Substandard Diamond	Structure Rehabilitation
84th Avenue	Substandard Diamond	Structure Rehabilitation

- Congestion Management Elements**
- Local Transit Service
 - Carpool/Vanpool
 - Incident Management Program
 - Signal Coordination and Prioritization
 - Ramp Metering
 - Real-time Transportation Information
 - Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities
 - Travel Demand Measures



Fiscally Constrained Corridor Plan

- Estimated Cost Phase 1 to 2035:
 - \$648M
 - Includes Region 4, Region 6, DRCOG, NFR, UFR, and Local Funds
- Remaining 7th Pot Allocation:
 - \$300M in FY 2011 dollars
- Benefits or advantages of inclusion in the 7th Pot
 - The Draft Phase 1 improvements are reliant on 2035 RTP 7th Pot and Post 7th Pot allocations
 - Increases perspective on Statewide Significance

Phase 1 Capital Improvement Projects

DRAFT

NFRMPO PROJECTS

NFRMPO ROADWAY PROJECTS					
	DESCRIPTION	LENGTH (miles)	LANES	CURRENT COST ESTIMATE (in millions)	FUNDING SOURCE
1	I-25 WCR 38 to SH 56, (no interchange)	1.8	2	\$36	Post 7th Pot
2	I-25 SH 56 interchange	2.0		\$49	Post 7th Pot
3	I-25 SH 392 to Prospect/ Prospect interchange	7.7	2	\$139	Post 7th Pot
4	I-25 SH 14 interchange	1.4		\$63	Post 7th Pot
SUBTOTAL ROADWAY				\$287	
NFRMPO RAPID TRANSIT PROJECTS					
	DESCRIPTION			CURRENT COST ESTIMATE (in millions)	FUNDING SOURCE
5	I-25/US 34 initial bus stations	I-25/Harmony, US 34/R3rd Ave. park and rides		\$16	Post 7th Pot
6	Commuter bus stations	US 85 park and rides and transit priority features		\$7	Post 7th Pot
7	Commuter rail	Right-of-way preservation		\$12	Post 7th Pot
SUBTOTAL TRANSIT				\$35	
TOTAL NFRMPO PROJECTS				\$322	
AVAILABLE FUNDS				\$325	

DRCOG REGION 4 PROJECTS

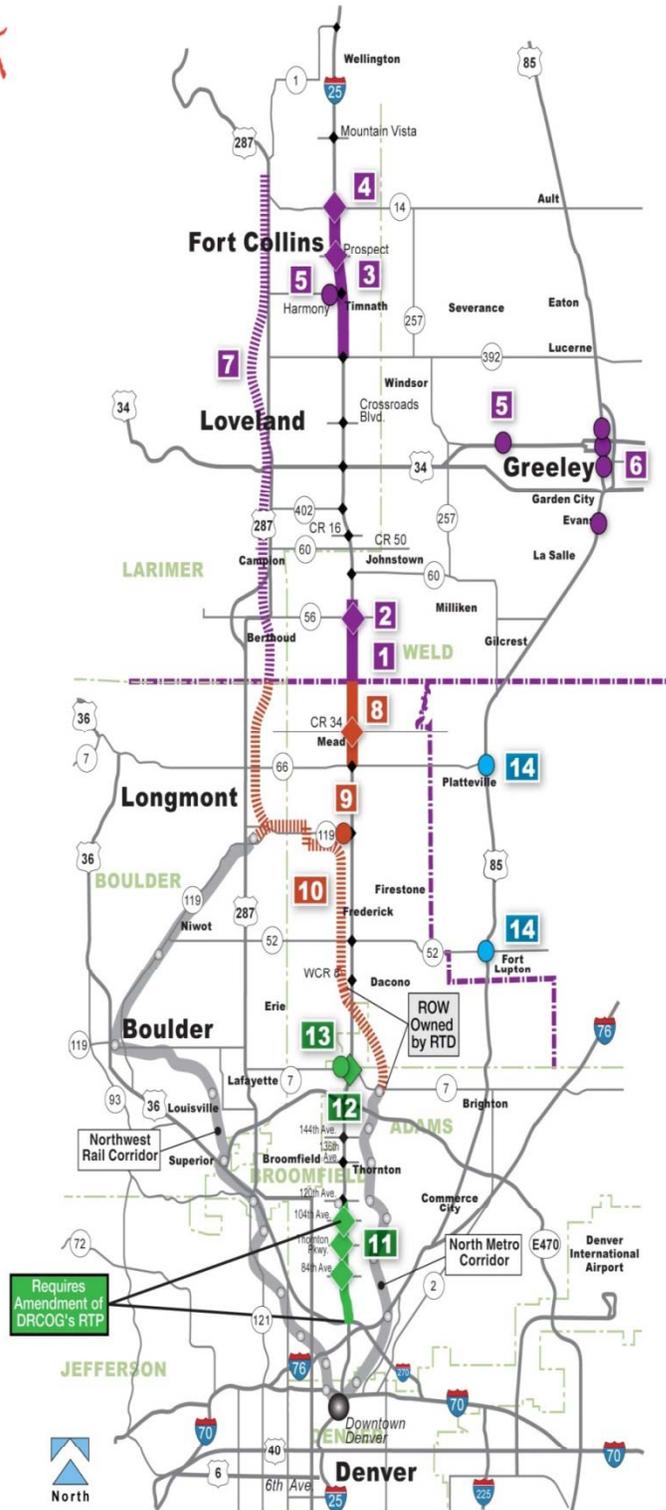
DRCOG R4 ROADWAY PROJECTS					
	DESCRIPTION	LENGTH (miles)	LANES	CURRENT COST ESTIMATE (in millions)	FUNDING SOURCE
8	I-25 SH 66 to WCR 38/WCR 34 interchange reconstruction	4.0	2	\$88	Post 7th Pot and congestion relief
SUBTOTAL ROADWAY				\$88	
DRCOG R4 RAPID TRANSIT PROJECTS					
	DESCRIPTION			CURRENT COST ESTIMATE (in millions)	FUNDING SOURCE
9	I-25 initial bus stations	SH 119 park and rides		\$17	Post 7th Pot and OMAQ
10	US 287/MSF Commuter rail	Right-of-way preservation		\$13	Post 7th Pot
SUBTOTAL TRANSIT				\$30	
TOTAL DRCOG REGION 4 PROJECTS				\$118	
AVAILABLE FUNDS				\$100	

DRCOG REGION 6 PROJECTS

DRCOG R6 ROADWAY PROJECTS						
	DESCRIPTION	LENGTH (miles)	LANES	CURRENT COST ESTIMATE (in millions)	FUNDING SOURCE	
11	I-25 US 36 to 120th Avenue	Amend RTP to specify tolled express lanes instead of general purpose lanes. Extend terminus to 120th Ave., upgrade interchanges	5.5	2	\$141	DRCOG RTP
12	I-25 SH 7 interchange reconstruction	Interchange reconstruction		\$50	DRCOG RTP	
SUBTOTAL ROADWAY				\$191		
DRCOG R6 RAPID TRANSIT PROJECTS						
	DESCRIPTION	LENGTH (miles)	LANES	CURRENT COST ESTIMATE (in millions)	FUNDING SOURCE	
13	I-25 initial bus stations	SH 7 park and ride		\$18	DRCOG RTP	
SUBTOTAL TRANSIT				\$18		
TOTAL DRCOG REGION 6 PROJECTS				\$209		
AVAILABLE FUNDS				\$211		

UPPER FRONT RANGE PROJECTS

UPPER FRONT RANGE RAPID TRANSIT PROJECTS					
	DESCRIPTION			CURRENT COST ESTIMATE (in millions)	FUNDING SOURCE
14	Commuter bus stations	US 85 park and rides and transit priority features		\$6	Post 7th Pot
TOTAL UPPER FRONT RANGE PROJECTS				\$6	
AVAILABLE FUNDS				\$6	
TOTAL PROJECT COST				\$655	
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS				\$644	



Questions?



NORTH I-25
EIS



information. cooperation. transportation.



Flickr: blmurch



EAST CORRIDOR MIS – I-70 EAST FROM I-25 TO TOWER ROAD

7th Pot Status Report

August 13, 2010 STAC

East Corridor MIS - 7th Pot Funding and Original Intended Project Scope

- \$ 74 million 7th Pot funding allocated by TC in 2000 dollars
- Original Major Investment Study (MIS) Scope:
 - ▣ Widening of I-70 from I-25 to Tower Road
 - ▣ Reconstruction of poor roads and bridges (including the I-70 viaduct)
- \$ 51 million 7th Pot budgeted / spent to date:
 - ▣ \$ 24 million on viaduct repair (for 10-15 yrs of useful life)
 - ▣ \$ 4 million on I-70 median barrier replacement – SAFETEA LU earmark
 - ▣ \$ 23 million on Denver Union Station (DUS earmark was split evenly between East and West Corridor control totals)

I-70 East – Project Status

- Draft EIS (DEIS) is complete
- Initially EIS included CDOT's I-70 scope and RTD's "East Corridor" FasTracks project. In 2006 EISs were separated because each had "independent utility".
- Collaborative process underway with stakeholders via Preferred Alternative Collaborative Team (PACT)
 - ▣ 8 month process
 - ▣ PACT to meet monthly or until it reaches consensus on a preferred alternative
- Once a preferred alternative is identified, Final EIS (FEIS) will begin

I-70 East Alternatives



- Two alignments still being considered.
 - ▣ One would leave I-70 essentially where it currently exists;
 - ▣ the other would re-align I-70 up to approximately 54th Ave in the area due north of the existing Viaduct.

- Two operating scenarios being considered for each alignment.
 - ▣ General Purpose Lanes
 - ▣ Tolloed Express Lanes

- No-build scenario would cost \$500 – 700 million to rebuild the viaduct in its current configuration.

I-70 East - Alternatives

No Action
and 4 Build
Alternatives
Remain



No-Action

No-Action Alternative – Viaduct replacement from Brighton Boulevard to Colorado Boulevard. Replaces the aging viaduct between Brighton Boulevard and Colorado Boulevard without adding any capacity. Design options include building to north or south between Brighton Boulevard and Colorado Boulevard at a cost of \$486 to \$697 million (2009 dollars).



1 EXISTING

Alternative 1 – General purpose lanes on the existing alignment. Keep I-70 on its existing alignment and add general purpose lanes between I-25 and Tower Road. Design options include building to north or south between Brighton Boulevard and Quebec Street at a cost of \$1,478 to \$1,663 million (2009 dollars).



3 EXISTING, TOLLED

Alternative 3 – Tolled express lanes on existing alignment. Keep I-70 on its existing alignment, add general purpose lanes between I-25 and Colorado Blvd. and between Chambers Rd. and Tower Rd., add tolled-express lanes in each direction between Colorado Blvd. and Chambers Rd. Design options include building to north or south between Brighton Boulevard and Quebec Street at a cost of \$1,658 to \$1,834 million (2009 dollars).



4 REALIGNED

Alternative 4 – General purpose lanes on realignment. Realign I-70 to the north through north Denver and south Commerce City between Brighton Blvd. and Quebec St. and add general purpose lanes between I-25 and Tower Rd. The existing I-70 alignment would be converted to 46th Avenue, a 4-lane roadway between Washington St. and Quebec St., including removal of the viaduct. The realignment is along I-270 between Brighton Boulevard and Quebec Street. Design options include a western and eastern connection to I-70 near Brighton Boulevard at a cost of \$1,794 to \$1,989 million (2009 dollars).



6 REALIGNED, TOLLED

Alternative 6 – Tolled express lanes on realignment. Realign I-70 to the north through north Denver and south Commerce City between Brighton Blvd. and Quebec St., add general purpose lanes between I-25 and Brighton Blvd. and between Chambers Rd. and Tower Rd., and add tolled-express lanes in each direction between Colorado Blvd. and Chambers Rd. The existing I-70 alignment would be converted to 46th Avenue, a 4-lane roadway between Washington St. and Quebec St., including removal of the viaduct. The realignment is along I-270 between Brighton Boulevard and Quebec Street. Design options include a western and eastern connection to I-70 near Brighton Boulevard at a cost of \$2,099 to \$2,291 million (2009 dollars).

Note: Alternatives 2 and 5 (High Occupancy Vehicle lanes) were eliminated during the screening process.

Options with Current Alignment

Alternative 1



Alternative 3



Options with Realignment

Alternative 4



Alternative 6



I-70 East – Funding Issues

- Inadequate funding for any of the build or no-build alternatives. \$78 million remaining in 7th Pot allocation (FY 10 dollars). \$422 million total in the 2035 DRCOG Plan, but dependent upon Bridge Enterprise funding. Schedule of improvements is uncertain due to shortfalls.

Alternative	Construction Cost * (million, 2009 dollars)
No-Action North	\$486 - \$501
No-Action South	\$582 - \$697
Alternative 1 North	\$1,478 - \$1,495
Alternative 1 South	\$1,548 - \$1,663
Alternative 3 North	\$1,658 - \$1,675
Alternative 3 South	\$1,719 - \$1,834
Alternative 4 West	\$1,885 - \$1,989
Alternative 4 East	\$1,794
Alternative 6 West	\$2,187 - \$2,291
Alternative 6 East	\$2,099

* Cost range reflects variation in right of way costs.

Benefits of Inclusion in the 7th Pot



- 7th Pot designation gives statewide visibility – acknowledging I-70's importance in regional and national transportation network
- Project needs statewide financial support – it's too costly to complete using Region 6 funding alone

WEST CORRIDOR MIS – US 6 FROM I-25 TO COLFAX

7th Pot Status Report

August 13, 2010 STAC

West Corridor MIS - 7th Pot Funding and Project Scope

- \$ 74 million 7th Pot funding allocated by TC in 2000 dollars
- Major Investment Study (MIS) was completed in July, 1997 – joint effort by RTD and CDOT – looked at capacity improvements on US 6 from I-25 to Colfax. Major State Highway and FasTracks corridor connecting Denver to the Federal Center and beyond.
- Cost of roadway improvements included in the MIS were estimated at \$390 million (2002 dollars)
- Recommended improvements focused primarily on the need for additional capacity and operational/safety issues.
- \$ 31 million 7th Pot spent to date:
 - ▣ \$ 6 million on environmental, \$3 million on design for US 6/Wadsworth interchange
 - ▣ \$ 23 million on Denver Union Station (DUS earmark was split evenly between East and West Corridor control totals)

West Corridor MIS – All Recommended Improvements

Bridge Replacements:

- US 6 @ Federal
- US 6 @ Bryant
- US 6 @ S. Platte River
- US 6 @ I-25
- US 6 @ Knox Court
- US 6 @ Perry Street
- US 6 @ Simms/Union
- US 6 @ Garrison
- US 6 @ Kipling

Interchange Reconstruction:

- US 6 Sheridan Interchange
- US 6 Wadsworth Interchange
- I-70/6th Avenue Interchange

- Other:
- Safety, Access and ITS Improvements corridorwide

West Corridor MIS – Priorities for 7th Pot Funding

- \$74 million control total was not sufficient to pursue all improvements in the MIS
- Denver and Lakewood reached agreement on first two priorities for 7th pot funding:
 - ▣ US 6 / Wadsworth Interchange reconstruction and widening of Wadsworth from 3rd to 14th Avenue, connecting to a new RTD FasTracks park-n-ride
 - ▣ US 6 / Federal-Bryant bridge reconstruction, consistent with Phase I Valley Highway priorities

West Corridor – Projects Status

US 6 / Wadsworth

- NEPA cleared
 - ▣ FONSI on the US 6 / Wadsworth Interchange and widening project signed in March 2010.
- \$100 million project cost
 - ▣ \$17 million programmed from Region 6 allocations for design and right-of-way acquisition.
- Could be ready to advertise by Summer 2012

US 6 / Federal - Bryant

- NEPA cleared
 - ▣ US 6 / Federal-Bryant bridge projects were cleared in the Valley Highway Phase I Record of Decision signed in July 2007.
- \$ 31 million project cost
 - ▣ No funding has been programmed.
- Could be ready to ad by Spring 2011

West Corridor – Funding Issues



- \$113 million remaining in 7th Pot allocation (FY 2010 dollars)
- Inadequate to cover cost of the first two priority projects, let alone balance of projects in the MIS scope
- \$127 million identified in the 2035 DRCOG Plan for the two projects combined -- \$113 million from 7th pot, balance from RPP.

Benefits of Inclusion in the 7th Pot



- 7th Pot designation gives statewide visibility.
- Projects need statewide financial support – too costly to complete using Region 6 funding alone.
- 7th Pot control total has required prioritization of the \$390 million in roadway improvements identified corridor-wide.

Options for Awarding 2010 FASTER Multimodal Transit Funding

Draft 8/10/10

FASTER provides \$5 million per year for local transit grants and \$10 million per year for multimodal, transit-related projects. The Commission has approved a process for distributing and awarding the \$5 M local transit grants funds using a regional allocation and prioritization process. This issue has been discussed by the EMT, STAC and the Transit and Intermodal Committee over the past two months. The purpose of this paper is review the options considered and make recommendations on how to award the \$10 M multimodal funds.

This paper will be focused on addressing four issues: (1) timeframe; (2) eligibility; (3) criteria for prioritization; (4) selection methodology, and (5) process.

Background The \$10 million set aside for multimodal transit projects is derived from the “state share” of FASTER. The statute, in **43-4-206**, indicates the funds can be used “for the planning, designing, engineering, acquisition, installation, construction, repair, reconstruction, maintenance, operation, or administration of transit-related projects, including, but not limited to, designated bicycle or pedestrian lanes of highway and infrastructure needed to integrate different transportation modes within a multimodal transportation system, that enhance the safety of state highways for transit users.”

The FY 10 funding of \$10 M is available as of 6/30/10. Of the \$10 M for FY 11, \$2,650,336 has been budgeted by the Commission for FY 11 for the new Division of Transit and Rail (DTR). That leaves \$7,349,664 from FY 11 funds for distribution, though it would not be available for actual distribution on 7/1/10—the funds are transferred to CDOT throughout the FY.

Among the major assumptions used in developing this list of options:

- While the statute mentions the funding could be used for operating, it remains the case that the State Constitution and its HUTF provisions take precedence over the FASTER statute. As was the case with the \$5 M local share, there is a lower risk in initially considering the use of these funds only for capital expenses, not for operating expenses. There could be some freedom, though, to consider their usage for planning expenses.
- The Division of Transit and Rail will not necessarily oversee these funds, since they are multimodal in design, not just for transit.
- The FASTER local transit grants are being awarded through the CDOT Regions, in cooperation with the TPRs, so it may be appropriate to build on that arrangement with these multimodal transit funds.

1. Timeframe

- For which years should these funds be awarded? Should it be awarded for FY10 through FY12? For the STIP period, through FY 17? Or just for FY10?
 - As with the FASTER \$5 M local transit grants, it seems the decisions should not just be made for only one year, so that there is time to plan and prepare projects, nor should they be for the long haul, to allow for a review of the process and to allow the Division of Transit and Rail to become better established. This option would award funds for FY 2010 through 2012, with a review well in advance of FY 13, just as was done with the FASTER local transit grants.
 - Another option would be to award just the FY 10 funds in the immediate future. This option would seek to award the immediately available funds and allow for the new director of the Division of Transit and Rail to get established and determine whether there are some new and innovative projects or new initiatives that should be undertaken with these funds. If FY 10 through FY 12 funds are committed, flexibility would be taken away from the new director.
 - It is recommended that the funds be awarded for FY 2010-2012, to be consistent with the timeframe of the local FASTER transit funds.

2. Eligible Sponsors and Projects.

- Are these CDOT projects or “local agency” projects? Either?
 - The \$5 M for local transit grants comes from the “local share.” The \$10 M comes from the “State share” so it would seem appropriate to use the funds for State projects that are multimodal, transit-related projects--that is, ones which are regional or statewide in nature and that “integrate different transportation modes within a multimodal transportation system.” Otherwise, one could argue that the legislation would have simply set aside all \$15 M for local transit projects.
 - In addition to CDOT, Eligible sponsors could be the same as set forth in the FASTER local transit grant program: Public agencies, as well as public and private nonprofit agencies that offer either public transportation **or** “open door” specialized transportation (service for the elderly and disabled). CDOT could also be an applicant, and in fact the Regions could be encouraged to be the applicant for projects involving the State system.
- Should the funds be used primarily for projects that “integrate different transportation modes within a multimodal transportation system,” as set forth in the FASTER statute, or should funding also be made available to transit projects considered local in nature, such as rolling stock and bus maintenance facilities?

- One option would be to use the funds primarily for regional and multimodal projects, consistent with the FASTER legislation.
 - Another option would be to also make local transit projects eligible—that is, projects that are not multimodal or multi-regional. This option would allow more flexibility, particularly if there is a shortage of worthwhile regional, statewide and multimodal projects.
 - Another option would be to target a portion of the funding for regional and multimodal projects, and a portion for local transit projects. This would assure that both types of projects would receive funding. It might also address what might be considered as a conflict for CDOT—that is, sponsoring some regional and multimodal projects and also being the party selecting the projects. On the other hand, the amount of funding may not warrant this type of suballocation.
 - It is recommended that the funds be made flexible, for either statewide, interregional, regional or local projects, with prioritization in that general order.
- What types of projects could and should be funded?
- The types of projects that could potentially be eligible as regional and multimodal projects includes but is not limited to:
 - Park and ride facility construction or improvements (which were ineligible under SB 1).
 - Technology improvements that enable enhanced transit services in high priority corridors, including queue jump lanes and signal prioritization.
 - Wayfinding signage between modes (e.g., signage for intermodal facilities, intercity bus stations, Amtrak, park-and-rides, etc.)
 - Multimodal facilities, such as facilities that accommodate some **combination** of services of multi-regional or statewide significance, such as regional bus service, Amtrak, park-and-ride lot, and Greyhound/intercity bus service.
 - HOV, HOT, BRT and transit lanes
 - Rolling stock or facilities for multi-regional transit services, such as intercity bus, FLEX, or FREX.
 - Bike racks, lockers and bike parking at multimodal stations.
 - Enhanced modal connections, such as trails, sidewalks and bike lanes leading to major transit stations, provided they have a clear transit connection and enhance transit ridership.

- The types of projects eligible as local transit projects could include the same types of projects eligible under the FASTER local transit grant program: any items defined as **capital expenses** by the Federal Transit Administration (e.g., buses, facilities, equipment), with the **exception** of land purchases and office-related equipment.
 - It is recommended that all of the above be considered eligible for the FASTER State Transit funding. It is further recommended that the CDOT Regions consider projects they could sponsor and carry out that could enhance transit services, such as bus pullouts and bike path connections to transit stops and multimodal stations.
- Among some eligibility questions and issues to be considered:
- Should planning studies, feasibility studies, and NEPA be considered? What kinds of studies would be worthwhile? Should they be limited to ones that are regional and statewide in coverage? (Note: There could be sensitivity to investing too much in planning/studies.)
 - Should partial projects be allowed, as opposed to only stand-alone projects?
 - Should the funds be allowed to be used to match federal funds, as they are under the FASTER local grant program?
 - It is recommended that all the above be eligible and that no more than 10% of the available funds be used for planning studies.

3. **Prioritization Criteria Issues**

- The same criteria used for the FASTER local transit grants, (criticality, financial capacity, financial need, project impacts, readiness) could be applied here. An emphasis on multi-regional connections, multimodal connections, or regional or statewide significance, could be added if they were considered the priority for this program. Are these criteria appropriate for bike/ped projects? It may be challenging to weigh transit and bike/ped projects against each other.
- It is recommended that the same criteria used for the FASTER local transit grants be applied here, but that there be some priority given to inter-regional and regional projects and connections, as well as to multimodal connections, wherever possible.

4. **Process or Methodology Issues**

- Would the intent be to fund a small number of large, regionally significant projects as a means of maximizing the impact of the funds **or** to fund a larger number of smaller projects as a means of spreading the dollars around? The answer to that question might influence the next two options.
- How should the projects be requested and selected?

- One option would be to administer the funds in the same way the local transit grant funds will be handled: distribute the funds to the CDOT Regions based on an allocation formula, have projects identified at the local and regional level, and have projects selected by the Regions in cooperation with the Division of Transit and Rail, DTD (bike/ped), and TPRs/MPOs. Projects would be selected at the same time as the FASTER local grant funds and programmed in the STIP.
- Another option would be to administer this as a statewide program. This might be a more suitable option **if** it was the preference of the Commission to prioritize projects that are statewide or multi-regional.
- It is recommended that the funds be administered in the same way the local transit grant funds will be handled—through a distribution of the funds to the CDOT Regions based on an allocation formula and selection of the projects by the Regions in consultation with the Division of Transit and Rail and the TPRs. It is recommended that the funds be distributed using the same formula used for the local FASTER transit funds.
- It is further recommended that full consideration and priority be given to ready to go statewide or interregional projects. However, because there is a desire to allocate these funds quickly, and because it is assumed there may be no statewide or interregional projects that are ready to go, and because some FASTER transit funding may be available for statewide or interregional studies, it is recommended that all the available FY 10 FASTER State funding be allocated to the CDOT Regions immediately. It is also recommended that \$1 M be set aside in from FY 11 and FY 12 for statewide and interregional projects, but that a call for such projects be conducted over the next nine months in order to determine whether such funding will be needed or whether it will be part of the allocation to the Regions.
- It is further recommended that the Division of Transit and Rail be involved cooperatively with the Regions in overseeing the projects.

MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Division of Transportation Development
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TO: Transit and Intermodal Committee

FROM: Jennifer Finch, DTD Director

DATE: July 9, 2010

RE: **Options for disposal of SB 1 North Front Range MPO Buses**

CDOT provided a Senate Bill 1 grant to the North Front Range MPO for the purchase of three buses that were to be used to provide fixed route transit service between Greeley and Loveland. As indicated in the attached letter, that service has been terminated due to a lack of ridership. I'd like to begin discussions on options for dealing with a Senate Bill 1 project that is being terminated.

Based on the terms of our contract with the MPO, if the project is terminated, the capital assets are to be returned to the State. We must now determine how to dispose of them. We have faced this situation with the FTA grants we administer. When grantees have relinquished a vehicle, our practice has been to first make the vehicle available for transfer to another eligible and capable organization in the same geographical service area that is prepared to provide the same or a similar service as the grantee relinquishing the vehicle. If there is none, then the vehicle is offered statewide. In the case of SB 1, there is the question of whether we should attempt to transfer the vehicle to a strategic project rather than merely keep it in the same geographical area for a non strategic project.

Options will be somewhat limited in this case. The vehicles are 31 foot coaches (smaller than are used in large capacity systems), have a 7 year or 250,000 mile life (as opposed to 12 years and 500,000 miles for larger buses), and have only one passenger door and forward facing seats (which means they are more appropriate for commuter and longer distance trips, not for local service.) The buses are nearly two years old and have about 110,000 miles on them. Here are some options for disposing of the buses:

1. This option would first make them available to a public transit agency in the North Front Range area (Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland) for any strategic or non strategic purpose. Given that the buses are relatively new they should probably be made for full time usage only, not as spare vehicles. If there is no interest, move to another option.
2. Make the buses available on a statewide competitive basis for a strategic project, as it was generally defined in the SB 1 application process: Increased ridership

through improving transit connections between communities, **or**, increased access to critical destinations.

3. Make the buses available on a statewide competitive basis for any purpose, with selection based on greatest need for the buses.
4. Sell the buses outright on the open market and use the proceeds to make another SB 1 award.
5. A combination of options 2 and 3, whereby option 3 is used if there are no strong strategic uses proposed. The purpose would be to shorten the time for disposing of the buses.

It should be noted that the organization to which the transfer is made must enter into a contract with CDOT and must reimburse the original grantee the prorated 20% local share.

POTENTIAL RAIL LINE ACQUISITION REPORT
TO THE
TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATIVE
REVIEW COMMITTEE

PREPARED BY THE COLORADO
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

September 2010

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide the Transportation Legislative Review Committee (TLRC) with the Colorado Department of Transportation's report on rail abandonments and recommendations relative to possible rail line acquisitions. This is the thirteenth report submitted by the Executive Director of the Department to the TLRC on rail abandonment pursuant to 43-1-1303 (3) C.R.S.

During the last year there have been no new abandonment actions. In addition, during the past year there have been some other activities and initiatives by the Department and others that could potentially impact rail abandonments and rail acquisition in the future. **Part I** provides **Background Information** on past and ongoing activities. **Part II** describes **New Initiatives and Activities** which have been undertaken over the past year. Finally, **Part III** lists the **Recommendations** of the Department.

Part I Background Information

(A) Rail System in Colorado.

Colorado's rail system consists of almost 3,000 miles of track. A significant portion of this system, about 86%, is owned and operated by two Class I national railroad companies, the Union Pacific (UP) and BNSF railroad companies. The other 14%, about 424 miles, is owned and operated by eight regional railroad companies, private owners, and the Federal Government. Population and employment growth in Colorado has led to an increase in travel demand that is straining the capacity of the highway system in some corridors. In high growth corridors, where traditional highway solutions require additional right of way or cannot fully meet commuter and freight needs, the rail right-of-way may need to be preserved, even if rail operations cease, to maintain the possibility of future transportation uses for the corridor.

(B) Past Legislative actions.

In 1997, the General Assembly enacted SB 37, concerning the disposition of abandoned railroad rights-of-way in Colorado. According to this legislation, an existing rail line, railroad right-of-way or an abandoned railroad right-of-way is eligible for acquisition by the Department, if the Executive Director determines it serves one or more of the following purposes:

- (1) Preservation of the rail line for freight or passenger service;
- (2) Maintenance of a rail corridor for future transportation purposes or interim recreational purposes;
- (3) Access to surrounding manufacturing facilities and agricultural areas; and
- (4) Any public use of the rail line or railroad right-of-way that is compatible with future use as a railroad or other transportation system.

The legislation also requires the Colorado Transportation Commission to review any property determined to be eligible for acquisition and approve the acquisition before the Executive

Director submits the prioritized list of rail lines or rights-of-way to be acquired to the TLRC (43-1-1303)(2)).

43-1-1308 C.R.S., states that “the members of the Transportation Legislative Review Committee shall make a written report setting forth its recommendations, findings, and comments as to each recommendation for the acquisition of railroad rights-of-way and their uses and submit the report to the General Assembly.”

43-1-1301(2) C.R.S., stipulates that the “Executive Director shall submit a prioritized list with recommendations to the TLRC concerning the railroad rights-of-way or rail lines to be acquired by the state and their proposed use.”

During the 1998 Legislative Session, HB-98-1395 was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. That bill allocated \$10.4 million to the State Rail Bank Fund to purchase the North Avondale (NA) to Towner rail line from the UP and to subsequently lease or sell the line to a short line operator. The line was purchased from the UP in July 1998 and subsequently advertised for sale. Since that time the State has leased the line to short line operators. (See item G. below.)

(C) **Past Transportation Commission actions.**

The Transportation Commission believes that certain significant rail corridors represent an irreplaceable state transportation resource and that it is critical to preserve them. That is because once they are lost, the cost of recreating equivalent corridors in the future will be prohibitive.

In June 2000 the Colorado Transportation Commission approved a **Rail Corridor Preservation Policy**, which states the following reasons why rail transportation is important to Colorado:

- Preserving rail corridors for future use may save money, since the cost to preserve a corridor for future transportation purposes is often far less than having to purchase an equivalent corridor in the future.
- Rail transportation may be needed in certain corridors to supplement the highway system and to provide adequate mobility and travel capacity.
- Rail transportation can be a cost-effective and environmentally preferable mode of transportation in certain situations.
- Preserving existing freight rail service by preventing a railroad from being abandoned can reduce the maintenance costs on state highways, since the transportation of displaced rail freight to trucks will increase deterioration of the state highway system.
- Freight rail service can serve as an economic lifeline to the economic health of a community when there are no other modes that adequately and economically serve the needs of the community.

The Rail Corridor Preservation Policy identified the following criteria to be used to prioritize corridors for funding:

- Magnitude of negative impacts upon adjacent highways.

- Immediacy of the possible abandonment of the rail line.
- Immediacy of possible encroachment on an existing rail corridor that may jeopardize the implementation of passenger rail service in the corridor.
- Estimated cost to acquire the rail corridor.
- Opportunity for public-private partnerships.

In order to facilitate a more comprehensive examination of which rail corridors are of interest to the State, the Transportation Commission directed CDOT staff to identify State Significant Rail Corridors. In November 2000, CDOT prepared a list of **State Significant Rail Corridors**, which were adopted by the Transportation Commission as part of the Statewide Transportation Plan. The criteria used to identify these state significant rail corridors included existing and potential future demand for passenger and freight services and local/regional support for the preservation of the corridor.

(D) Abandonment Activity

During the last year there were no new abandonment activities.

(E) Potential Rail Lines for Acquisition

When a rail line is not economically viable to operate, the result is often either (1) the sale of the line, usually from the two Class I national railroads (UP and/or BN), to small, regional railroad companies; or, (2) a formal request for abandonment to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) by the owner of the rail line. Rather than abandon a line, a larger railroad company will usually solicit bidders for the purchase of the line by a short line operator or regional railroad in an effort to maintain rail service along the line. These smaller railroad companies usually have lower operating costs and do not need the same volume of business on the line as the larger railroads to be profitable.

The ability to respond quickly to a potential abandonment can be an important factor in ensuring corridor preservation: once a Request to Abandon has been formally filed with the STB, abandonment can take place in as little as 90 days.

The issue of rail lines being abandoned is of statewide importance due to the impact these abandonments may have on the remainder of the transportation system. As lines are lost, the freight that was being moved by rail must then be moved by truck, causing additional deterioration of the local roadways and/or state highways. In addition, some businesses cannot survive without access to a rail line, thereby causing these businesses to either relocate to another area in the state or to move out of state. Also, once a railroad corridor is abandoned, it is unlikely it will be returned to rail service or be available for any transportation purpose, especially if the rail tracks are salvaged and the ROW is sold or reverts to adjoining property owners.

There are three lines that continue to be considered at risk of future abandonment and are considered railroad lines of state significance. They are as follows:

❑ **Valmont/Boulder Branch Line (UP)**

This line, commonly referred to as either the Valmont or the Boulder Branch, extends north from Commerce City along the east side of I-25. The line then crosses over I-25 and runs west from Erie to the Valmont Power Plant, east of Boulder. Only the portion of the line east of I-25 is identified as a corridor of state significance. The UP is proposing to discontinue (but not abandon) service on the portion of this line to the west of I-25. This action has resulted in CDOT avoiding reconstruction of a railroad bridge across I-25 during the widening of I-25. The section of the Boulder Branch line east of I-25 will stay in service. This eastern portion of the Boulder Branch line is identified as a significant rail corridor because it is the preferred rail alignment identified in both the North Front Range and North Metro Major Investment Studies. Should this corridor be lost at some point in the future, the creation of a new, equivalent corridor would be much more expensive than preserving the current corridor.

❑ **Tennessee Pass Line (UP)**

The Tennessee Pass line runs from near Gypsum, over Tennessee Pass and along the Arkansas River to Pueblo. The Tennessee Pass line has been of high concern to CDOT because of its potential to carry both passengers and freight, and because it is the only trans-mountain alternative in Colorado to the Moffat Tunnel line, which often runs near capacity. This rail line might be needed in the event there would be a significant increase in trans-mountain rail demand due to increased development on the Western Slope or if the Moffat Tunnel were damaged or closed for any reason. Such an event would have a significant impact on Colorado, particularly on the Western Slope, since the railroads would be forced to move freight through Wyoming. No freight has been shipped on the Tennessee Pass Line since 1996, but it does not appear that the UP will abandon this line in the near future.

❑ **Fort Collins Branch Line (UP)**

The Fort Collins Branch line is identified as a rail corridor of state significance since it connects Greeley and Ft. Collins to the North I-25 corridor, and is identified as part of the preferred alternative in the North Front Range Transportation Alternatives Feasibility Study. This line does not appear to be at risk of abandonment at this time.

CDOT will continue to monitor these rail corridors of state significance with regard to possible abandonment actions.

(F) State Rail Bank Fund Activities

There were no expenditures from the State Rail Bank Fund in FY 2010. In fact, through Senate Bill 09-208 the General Assembly transferred all available funding for the acquisition of rail lines out of the Fund and into the General Fund in response to the State's fiscal problems. CDOT believes it is important to note that without the Fund it now has no resources readily available to preserve a state significant rail line if a rail company owning it chose to initiate abandonment of that line. Absent available cash in the Fund, the department would likely be unable to request and obtain funding from the state legislature to preserve such a corridor in a

timely fashion, should abandonment occur when the Legislature is out of session. As noted earlier, abandonment can occur with as little as 90 days notice.

One concept that deserves consideration is placement by the Legislature of significant funds in the Rail Account of the State Infrastructure Bank, which the Transportation Commission could draw upon should a state significant rail line need to be acquired. CDOT would then pursue repayment to the Rail Account of the State Infrastructure Bank for any acquisition expense from the Legislature during the following Legislative session. This would enable the Transportation Commission to be more responsive to any abandonments that may occur.

It should also be noted that while no expenditures are proposed from the State Rail Bank Fund, CDOT's Rail Relocation Implementation Study (see discussion below in II (B)) could generate interest in state participation in a rail relocation project in the future and could lead to new interest in the rail bank and a request for funding in the future.

(G) Status of NA Towner Line

During the 1998 Legislative Session, HB-98-1395 was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, allocating \$10.4 million to the State Rail Bank to purchase the North Avondale (NA) Towner Rail Line from the UP and to subsequently lease or sell the line to a short line operator. The line was purchased from the UP in July 1998 and subsequently advertised for sale. In March 2000, CDOT leased the NA Towner Line to the Colorado Kansas and Pacific Railway Company (CKP) for five years with an option to buy. CKP operated rail service on the line beginning April 2000.

During the 2002 Legislative session, HB 1350 was signed into law. That bill amended HB-98-1395, (1) directing CDOT to renew the current NA Towner lease, provided the lessee is financially solvent and responsible; (2) extending the length of the lease from 5 to 10 years; (3) instructing CDOT to lease the line for as long as is reasonably possible and to offer the lessee an option to buy; (4) requiring CDOT to waive any bonding requirements if the lessee has demonstrated financial solvency and responsibility after one year of such lease; and, (5) authorizing CDOT to suspend any volume-based rent in the lease so long as such rent is placed into an escrow account used for infrastructure improvements approved by CDOT. That legislation was developed in response to the difficulties experienced by the CKP as a result of drought and low crop yields.

In 2003, the CKP experienced two derailments and did not realize significant freight traffic from the local community. The CKP struggled to maintain service, and in February 2004 was unable to secure insurance for operating the line. CDOT requested that CKP stop operation until that situation was rectified. While a number of options were explored, the CKP was unable to overcome its operational and insurance problems. CDOT staff received approval from the Transportation Commission in June 2004 to begin lease termination proceedings.

In 2005 CDOT conducted a Request for Proposal process for a purchase of the NA Towner Line and selected the V&S Railway Inc. to purchase the line for \$10.3 million in January, 2006. The purchase agreement stipulated a down payment of 1 million dollars that was collected at the

contract initiation with a balance of \$9.3 million due in six years. Significant details of the purchase agreement include that V&S Railway would operate the line for six years, agreement to a “first right to repurchase” should V&S Railway be unwilling or unable to continue to operate the line post-purchase agreement and an agreement to operate the line with adherence to State and Federal regulations.

In January 2006, the V&S (aka VST) began rehabilitation and improvements of the Line which included: track repair, track replacement, repair of active crossing equipment, and returning the track to Class II operating standards. The first grain train returning the Line to service was conducted in September 2006. In April 2008, the Line experienced the loss of two bridges and roadbed damage due to fires in the Ordway area. The VST repaired the Line, and was able to provide full service. The two locomotives used on the line were moved to Mississippi for other V&S operations. Grain movement on the Towner Line was provided by WATCO under the V&S name.

During most of 2009 and 2010 the Line has been storing UP cars east of the Crowley County line to about 8 miles west of Arlington. There are adequate breaks for crossings and cars are not being stored in towns. The amount of freight service on the line has been negligible.

Part II New Initiatives and Activities

This section describes new initiatives or major activities in the rail field, some of which have included CDOT as an active participant. Listed are initiatives or activities that could have a future impact on rail service, abandonments and/or acquisitions.

(A) Denver Union Station

CDOT continues to participate as a partner in the development of Denver Union Station (DUS). The City and County of Denver, RTD, DRCOG and CDOT jointly purchased the 19.5-acre Denver Union Station (DUS) site and agreed to fund the development of a master plan, a rezoning of the property, and an Environmental Impact Statement. The master plan and zoning application were completed, the EIS was completed and a Record of Decision was signed by the Federal Transit Administration on October 17, 2008, confirming that construction of the proposed arrangement of transit improvements could proceed.

The Union Station Neighborhood Company (USNC) was selected as the master developer for the DUS redevelopment project. Passage of the FasTracks tax initiative provided approximately \$200 million for the DUS project. In addition, \$50 million has been authorized for the project in the SAFETEA-LU transportation bill, and nearly \$17 million has been made available for the DUS project from the Senate Bill 1 Strategic Transit Program, as mentioned below. There was a significant funding shortfall for the transportation improvements at DUS. The master developer was charged with identifying public funding as well as private development income, with which to pay for these improvements.

DUS is expected to become an important transportation hub for the Denver metro area, Front Range and state. It is expected to bring together many passenger modes into this 19-acre site, including commuter rail, light rail, regional buses, Amtrak, regional trains, taxis, and cars. The site will also include transit oriented private development.

Recently the U.S. Department of Transportation announced it was providing just over \$300 million in federal loans through an unprecedented and historic innovative financing arrangement using the DOT's Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Program and the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Program. The TIFIA and RRIF loan programs are intended to help advance qualified projects that otherwise might be difficult to finance because of the size, complexity, or uncertainty over the timing of project cash flows.

The loans are being awarded to the Denver Union Station Project Authority (DUSPA), the non-profit, public benefit entity formed by the city in July 2008 along with its public partners. DUSPA is responsible for the financing, acquiring, owning, equipping, designing, constructing, renovating, operating and maintaining the Denver Union Station redevelopment project.

Together the TIFIA and RRIF loans will constitute approximately 58 percent of all funding sources for the project. Under the financing plan, an RTD bond as well as tax increment revenues pledged to DUSPA will be used to repay the debt. RTD will assist with the construction management of the transportation improvements and will own and operate the facilities after the construction period.

CDOT will continue to play a major role in this process to ensure that DUS maintains its role as a significant local, regional and statewide transportation facility.

(B) Discussions regarding Rail Relocation

CDOT, UP, BNSF and RTD have been discussing possible rail infrastructure relocation and freight line consolidation for more than seven years. These exchanges have focused on the development of a long-term plan to ease traffic congestion and improve freight and passenger mobility along the Front Range without impacting the competitive balance between the railroads or economic health of businesses within the state.

In 2003 the two railroads came to an agreement on the types and locations of improvements that would constitute a desirable relocation and consolidation project. CDOT then agreed to conduct a public benefits and costs study of those proposed improvements in order to identify and quantify public benefits, drawbacks and costs associated with a possible transportation partnership with the railroads. A major purpose of the study was to assess whether or not the benefits of this partnership are such that it would be worthwhile to the public to continue to consider participating in and supporting a relocation and consolidation project. This study was an initial phase of a larger effort that will require a more detailed and comprehensive analysis.

A final Public Benefits and Costs Study was released in May 2005. The study indicated there are significant public (and private) benefits associated with this project. Both railroads indicated that they were interested in continuing to work with CDOT and others to implement this project.

In 2005 Congress awarded Colorado \$2 million in transportation funding with which to conduct its next phase of work for the relocation project. In May of 2007 CDOT selected a consulting firm to conduct the Colorado Rail Relocation Implementation Study (also referred to as the Railroad Relocation for Colorado Communities project—R2C2) using the Federal funds. In order to analyze the possible rail bypass project costs and also to determine the railroad operations savings and costs associated with such potential bypass routes, two “Study Alignments” were identified for analysis in R2C2. These two hypothetical alignments were identified for three purposes: 1) to determine order of magnitude construction costs of a potential “bypass route”, 2) compare order of magnitude railroad operational savings operating on a new bypass route as opposed to operating on the existing Joint Line, and 3) identify environmental resources that may be encountered in eastern Colorado if a rail bypass project were to be constructed.

Based on feedback from Colorado citizens, CDOT began a process of establishing a Citizens Advisory Committee to work with CDOT as further review continued. The public outreach of R2C2 revealed the need for a more detailed evaluation of the benefits and impacts of a new rail line to the agriculture and ranching industries and communities of eastern Colorado. These benefits and impacts were not addressed in the Public Benefits and Costs Study or the R2C2 Study, so CDOT made a commitment to perform such a detailed analysis.

In May, 2010 CDOT made the decision to suspend the examination of the Eastern Rail Bypass as it establishes the new Division of Transit and Rail and begins work on a State Rail Plan. Depending upon the recommendations of the State Rail Plan, CDOT may once again examine the Eastern Rail Bypass. Should CDOT decide to move forward with a relocation project, it will honor the conclusions of the R2C2 study.

(C) Senate Bill 1 Strategic Transit Program Funding

Senate Bill 1 (1997) provided General Fund dollars, amounts above certain thresholds, for “strategic transportation projects,” setting aside at least 10% of such revenues for strategic transit projects. The Transportation Commission selected 22 projects from 2006 through 2010. Over \$65 million was awarded to 21 of the projects. Declining State revenues resulted in CDOT not being able to fund projects starting in FY 2009. Subsequent legislation eliminated the SB 1 program.

Among the SB 1 projects were four that were passenger rail related, as follows:

- The Rocky Mountain Rail Authority, a public entity formed by intergovernmental agreement by over 50 public agencies, was awarded \$1.2 million to conduct a High Speed Rail Feasibility Study in the I-25 and I-70 West corridors. The application was built upon the fact that in 2002 CDOT submitted a letter to the U.S. Department of Transportation expressing an interest in having these two corridors designated as the

eleventh High Speed Rail Corridor under a High Speed Rail program established by Congress, as well as earlier federal legislation stipulating that such a study was a prerequisite to applying for federal high speed rail funding. .

- The Northwest Colorado Council of Governments was awarded \$500,000 with which to identify land use planning and zoning issues that are essential for incorporating a potential future mass transit system along the I 70 West corridor. This planning, which included exploration of transit access points (stations, park-n-rides, intermodal facilities) and transit-oriented development alternatives where possible, was completed in 2009.
- RTD was awarded \$16,880,000 for phased improvements at Denver Union Station.
- The City of Longmont was scheduled to receive \$4,000,000 in 2010 for an extension of FasTracks commuter rail from the planned end-of-line station at Twin Peaks Mall to a central location in Longmont's historic downtown. However, with the elimination of the SB1 program there is no longer any SB 1 funding available for that project.

(D) Completion of Colorado High Speed Rail Feasibility Study

The Colorado High Speed Rail Feasibility Study was completed by the RMRA early in 2010. The purpose of the Study was to determine whether High Speed Rail was feasible in two corridors: the I-25 corridor from the Wyoming state line to the New Mexico state line, and the I-70 West corridor from DIA to Grand Junction, as well as along some spur routes. The Study used operational and economic feasibility criteria established by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

In order to qualify for federal funding, a High Speed Rail program must demonstrate it would have an Operating Ratio of greater than 1.00, meaning that operating revenue would exceed operating costs and that the system could run without an operating subsidy. The program would also need a cost benefit ratio of greater than 1.00.

The Study examined a variety of rail technologies, each with certain traits and maximum speeds, ranging from conventional 79- and 110-mph diesel trains, to 150- and 220-mph electric trains, to 125- and 300-mph magnetic levitation (maglev) trains. The Study examined a variety of route types, including highway ROW, highway corridor, unconstrained/greenfield, and existing freight rail lines.

The Study examined a variety of corridor options and accompanying technologies, along with their expected travel time, which affected ridership and the price people were willing to pay. There were varying ridership trends associated with various transportation modes and differing fuel price levels. Based on analysis of these various scenarios and options, High Speed Rail was shown to be feasible on the two corridors. The most feasible option, with the highest operating ratio and cost benefit ratio, was a Greenfield route (built on a new alignment, most likely apart from the existing rail corridors), using a 220-mph electric train. The route did not include the entire study corridor. Rather, it included the I-25 corridor from Pueblo to Fort Collins, and the I-70 corridor from DIA to the Eagle County Airport, with no spurs. A rough cost estimate for building the most feasible option exceeded \$20 billion.

The study did not in any way select this most feasible option or establish it as a preferred alternative. The Study was not intended to establish a preferred alignment, a preferred technology, station locations, or an evaluation of environmental impacts and determination of mitigation. Those are all future NEPA Study functions. The most feasible option was simply the particular combination of corridor and technology type that in theory produced the best cost benefit ratio from a variety of feasible options. Advancing a project to NEPA examination and for seeking federal funds would require far more examination than was conducted by this study.

(E) Funding for High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Studies

The Obama Administration, through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) as well as the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA), has made significant Federal funding available for the study, design, construction and implementation of high speed intercity passenger rail. In 2009 CDOT applied for three grants under PRIAA. The first was an application submitted by the State of New Mexico, in partnership with the states of Colorado and Texas, seeking funds to study the feasibility of high speed intercity passenger rail from El Paso to Denver. That project was not selected for funding.

Two other projects requested by CDOT were awarded full funding by the Federal Railroad Administration. The first will enable Colorado to develop its first comprehensive State Passenger and Freight Rail Plan. The grant provides \$400,000 and requires a \$400,000 match from CDOT. The study will begin in 2010 and is anticipated to be completed near the end of 2011. The State Rail Plan will provide direction on how to integrate passenger and freight rail elements into the larger statewide multi-modal transportation framework. The State Rail Plan also enables Colorado to be eligible for future high speed rail funds, as states must have a State Rail Plan in order to qualify for such funds.

CDOT was also awarded FRA funds for conducting a Connectivity Study. The FRA awarded \$1 million for this study, which must be matched with \$1 million from CDOT. This study is the result of findings from the Colorado High Speed Rail Feasibility Study, which indicated that good connections in Denver, particularly with RTD's FasTracks rail lines, are crucial to the success of any potential future high speed rail line. However, there are numerous technical issues associated with a high speed rail line passing through Denver. Therefore, CDOT requested funds with which to examine those issues. CDOT will partner closely with the RTD in conducting the study, examining route and station location decisions that could help a High Speed Rail project progress to the next stages of development and considering where it might be beneficial for the two systems to share a corridor.

(F) Implementation of a Division of Transit and Rail

With the passage of Senate Bill 09-094, a new Transit and Rail Division was created within CDOT. The statute calls for the new Division to be "responsible for the planning, development, operation, and integration of transit and rail, including, where appropriate, advanced guideway systems, into the statewide transportation system; shall, in coordination with other transit and rail providers, plan, promote, and implement investments in transit and rail services statewide."

In accordance with the statute, CDOT established a special interim transit and rail advisory

committee to specifically advise the Transportation Commission and the Executive Director regarding the initial focus of the division and to recommend a long-term advisory structure, including the advisory structure's purpose and role, in support of the transit and rail-related functions of the department.

The interim committee completed its work in the spring. The committee recommended characteristics, skills and responsibilities of the division director position; incorporated input from a peer panel made up of three other state DOTs; suggested some short-term action items for the new Division; and made recommendations on the make-up and structure of a long-term advisory structure for the Division.

The Transportation Commission has subsequently taken steps to hire a division director and approve a budget and general organizational structure for the new division.

(G) Amtrak Examination of Restoring Abandoned Service through Colorado

Amtrak has been engaged in a number of activities in Colorado.

1. Congress required Amtrak to perform a feasibility study to explore restoration of the *Pioneer* Line from Denver to Seattle, a service that was abandoned in 1997. Amtrak submitted its study to Congress in October 2009, outlining the feasibility of restoring the *Pioneer*, or portions of it. The study assessed the ridership, revenue, and mobility implications resulting from various scheduling options and the associated capital and operating requirements. The study included a projected timeline and estimated costs associated with restoring the service. Amtrak provided opportunities to the state DOTs along the route to submit comments.

One issue of concern was the preferred routing option. The study examined two routes previously used for the Pioneer: one route connects train cars on to the existing *California Zephyr* train through Glenwood Springs and Grand Junction and on to Salt Lake City, where the Pioneer cars would then split off and travel on to Seattle. The other route would travel from Denver through Greeley, Cheyenne, Laramie and on to Seattle.

The study reached no conclusions about which routing option should be used nor whether the Pioneer Line should be restored. Rather, Amtrak indicated it cannot restore the Line within its current budget, leaving it to Congress to decide whether to provide funding for the Line.

2. The Amtrak station in Trinidad was demolished as part of the rebuilding of the I-25 viaduct through the city. CDOT, Amtrak, South Central Council of Governments, Greyhound and the BNSF Railroad have worked together to replace the station with a multimodal station that will serve both Amtrak and Greyhound riders, as well as local transit riders.
3. Amtrak and the BNSF have expressed concern to the states of Kansas, New Mexico and Colorado about the future of the Amtrak Southwest Chief line, which traverses southern Colorado, including stops in Lamar, La Junta and Trinidad. BNSF traffic has decreased

significantly on portions of the line through the three states. If BNSF fails to keep the line up to certain standards, Amtrak will be unable to maintain its current speeds and keep existing schedules. Future discussions will be held with the states as to whether any assistance can be provided. Thus far the three states have indicated they cannot use existing transportation revenues for rail improvements.

(H) Ski Train Discontinues Service; Replacement Proposed

In April 2009 the operator of Ski Train service between Denver and Winter Park discontinued the service. Iowa Pacific Holdings LLC, which operates a number of short line railroads, including one in the San Luis Valley, announced plans to provide a service to replace the Ski Train. However, citing problems in developing operating agreements with Amtrak, which would have operated the service, Iowa Pacific had to cancel its plans for the 2010 ski season.

Part III Recommendations

There are no major rail lines in Colorado which have been abandoned in the past year that impact the state's transportation system, nor are there any which are considered to be at high risk of abandonment at the current time. Consequently, at this time the Department is not recommending to the TLRC that any railroad rights-of-way or rail lines be acquired by the State. However, the Department is recommending the following actions:

- The first priority is to continue to monitor the NA Towner line. CDOT has taken steps to maintain an operator for the line, with an emphasis on trying to keep the line open for freight service rather than salvaged. However, it has been difficult to maintain freight service on the line given the low levels of revenue.
- The second priority is to conduct the State Rail Plan, followed by the Rail Connectivity Study. The results from the State Rail Plan would drive any decisions as to whether the State would continue its cooperative project to examine opportunities for the relocation and improvement of freight service along the Front Range.
- The third priority is to monitor the status of the Valmont/Boulder Branch line. It does not appear the UP will abandon the portion of this line east of I 25. This line is critical to preserving options to relieve congestion on I 25, US 36, and US 85 and therefore should be preserved for future passenger rail service.
- The fourth priority is to monitor the status of the Tennessee Pass line. While there is no indication that the UP will abandon this line in the near future, the line has not been used for over fourteen years. If this line is abandoned, the State should purchase it to preserve it for freight service in the future.

The fifth priority is to monitor the status of the Fort Collins Branch line. While this line does not appear to be at risk of abandonment at this time, it is identified as a rail corridor of state

significance since it connects Greeley and Ft. Collins to the North I 25 corridor, and is identified as part of the preferred alternative in the North Front Range Transportation Alternatives Feasibility Study.