Eastern

Transportation Planning Region Regional Coordinated Transit & Human Services Plan

Prepared for:

Colorado Department of Transportation
Division of Transit and Rail
and Eastern Transportation Planning Region

March 2015

Prepared by:

FELSBURG HOLT & ULLEVIG

In association with:
Cambridge Systematics
Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates
OV Consulting
TransitPlus

EASTERN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REGION REGIONAL COORDINATED TRANSIT AND HUMAN SERVICES PLAN

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Public transportation is a lifeline for many residents throughout the Eastern Transportation Planning Region (TPR) and state of Colorado. Transit services connect residents and employees to major destinations such as employment, schools, shopping, medical care, and recreation within the region and to the Front Range. These transit services are important contributing factors providing numerous benefits to the economic, social and environmental health of the area, and the quality of life of residents. Given the large geographic area of the region, it also presents many challenges in providing adequate service.

This Chapter explains the purpose of the plan and the process to develop it, an overview of the Eastern TPR, a map identifying major activity centers and destinations in the area, the regional transit vision and goals, and other studies conducted relevant to the Eastern TPR.

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

To meet state and federal requirements for planning and funding, the Eastern TPR and the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) Division of Transit and Rail (DTR) developed this Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan for the nine counties within the region. CDOT will use this plan to evaluate grant applications for state and federal funds and the Eastern TPR will use this plan to prioritize transit investments in the region.

The Plan identifies strategies and projects to enable the region's transit and human service providers to improve mobility of the populations who rely upon public transportation services, to minimize duplication of federally funded services, and to leverage limited funds. Essential to the region is maintaining the current transit system level of service and enhancing coordination between transit providers and human service agencies. The coordination projects and strategies identified generally have a short-term focus and are based on the prioritized needs of the TPR.

This plan identifies a regional transit vision and a financial plan to guide transit investment over the next 20+ years. Along with the state's other Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plans, this plan will act as the foundation for Colorado's first Statewide Transit Plan setting the stage for CDOT's vison, goals, policies and strategies for long-term investment of enhanced transit services throughout the state. An overarching goal of the Statewide Transit Plan is to have a framework for creating an integrated transit system that meets the mobility needs of Coloradans.

Key findings and recommendations from this Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan will be integrated into the Statewide Transit Plan and into the Eastern Regional Transportation Plan. Both of these documents will become part of the Statewide Transportation Plan, which is a long-term comprehensive policy document intended to address the state's multimodal transportation needs.

1.2 Plan Development Process

The process to develop the Eastern Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan followed state and federal planning regulations requiring a 20-year multimodal plan. This Plan addresses the transit needs as part of a multimodal transportation system in the Eastern TPR that provides connections within the region and to the rest of the state of Colorado.

The process included stakeholder meetings and surveys to gather information, identification of and coordination with area transit providers and human service agencies, identification of transit needs and service gaps based on demographic characteristics and stakeholder input, implementation strategies to address needs with available funds and the funding and financial outlook for the region.

Another element in developing the plan was the review of regional demographic characteristics and growth projections to develop a future transit demand methodology. The methodology developed included the use of general population growth projections through 2040 as well as the growth of the population aged 65+ through 2040 and was used to assess transit needs and gaps.

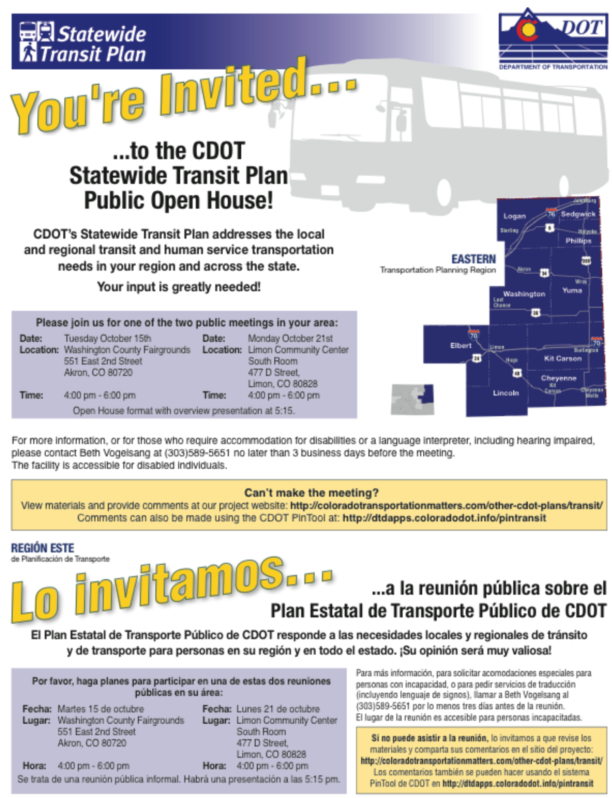
1.2.1 Transit Working Group

To guide and direct the development of the Eastern Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan, key stakeholders were invited to participate in a Transit Working Group (TWG) (see **Appendix B** for invitees, materials and sign in sheets). The TWG included representatives from public and private transit agencies, human service organizations, workforce centers, area agencies on aging, veteran organizations, community centered boards, elected officials, municipal staff, CDOT DTR, DTD and regional staff, and key consultant team members. The TWG helped to identify existing providers, transit needs and gaps in service, and develop strategies to address transit needs. The TWG meet three times with the following objectives:

Meeting 1 (July 12, 2013): Identify the region's transit and human service transportation issues/needs and provide information on plan approach. Develop draft regional transit vision and goals.
Meeting 2 (October 15, 2013): Finalize regional transit vision and goals; gather input on approach to prioritization of regional transit projects; and identify potential regional coordination strategies.
Meeting 3 (January 20, 2014): Review key concepts and major findings; identify final plan strategies; provide an overview of financial scenarios; and concur on plan recommendations.

1.2.2 Public Involvement Process

Public outreach and involvement for the Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan was conducted to be inclusive of all interested stakeholders within the region. Strategies included two public open houses, three TWG meetings, a Transit Plan website for sharing plan information, and an online comment form. The website provided up-to-date information on TWG meetings, public meetings, as well as the meetings to develop the Statewide Transit Plan. Exhibit boards, PowerPoint presentations, meeting materials, and meeting notes for all meetings were made available on the website.



Notification of the public open houses was provided to the TWG members, local agency and transit providers, local libraries, community centers, senior centers, and local media. Information was prepared in both Spanish and English. Translation services were provided upon request for language and hearing-impaired. All meetings were held in ADA accessible facilities.

The Eastern TPR public open house meetings were held on October 15, 2013, at the Washington County Fairgrounds in Akron and on October 21, 2013, at the Limon Community Center in Limon. The meetings were open house format, with the project team making a presentation (see **Appendix C** for materials and sign-in sheets from the Eastern TPR public open houses). Public comments were collected via computer, paper comment form and the Transit Plan website. Additionally, an online GIS-based mapping tool was created for recording of geographically based comments. Attendees included general public, transit providers, elected officials, and agency staff. Input received from attendees included the following key comments:

- Transit service on US 34 is very difficult and almost non-existent.
- No transit service is available north - south from Wray to Burlington or Haxtun, or Julesburg to Wray.
- There are no transit services to the dialysis center in Sterling.
- Expectations are that transit service should be available but the cost is high if only one person makes that trip.
- Last mile connections are needed at destinations such as Denver.

1.2.3 Transit Provider and Human Service Agency Survey

A transit provider and human service agency survey was conducted to obtain provider service, operational, and financial information. The TWG assisted in completing surveys and identified agencies to participate. Survey results were used to identify needs and gaps in service for human services and general public transit, to develop financial summaries of agencies in the TPR, and to support the development of high priority strategies for implementation in the TPR.

Appendix D includes a list of the provider and human service agencies that responded to the survey and the survey questionnaires.

1.2.4 Statewide Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

In 2013, CDOT DTR conducted a statewide survey to learn about the travel behavior and characteristics of older adult (65 years or older) and disabled (18 years or older) residents of Colorado, and to determine their transportation priorities, needs, and preferences. The survey also gathered information on the gaps and barriers to using transit and identified areas of focus to help address the transportation needs of older adults and adults with disabilities. The survey was conducted through direct mail efforts and also distributed by agencies throughout the state that serve older adults and adults with disabilities. Both Spanish and English versions were available for respondents. Survey results are reported at the statewide level as well as by TPR. Additional Information and findings from the survey are included in Chapter 3 of this plan.

The Eastern region accounts for 2.0 percent of older adults and adults age 18 to 64 with disabilities in the state of Colorado. Survey results indicated that about half of the respondents depend on family, friends, aides or volunteers for transportation for at least some of their trips. Nearly 40 percent indicated that they have had trouble finding transportation for trips they wanted or needed to make. Nearly half of the respondents indicated that lack of public transportation service where they lived was a major problem to getting where they needed to go and at the times they needed to travel. **Appendix E** includes the full survey report for the Eastern TPR.

1.3 Region Overview

The Eastern TPR, located in the northeast corner of the state, covers approximately 16,000 square miles comprised of the following nine counties: Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma. The largest incorporated municipalities in the region are Sterling, Burlington, Yuma, Wray, Holyoke, Limon, Akron, Elizabeth, and Julesburg. The approximate population of the TPR in 2013 was 83,757, which represents about 1.6 percent of the state’s total population. The overall population has not grown significantly since 2010. The fastest growing population in the region continues to be the elderly population.

The high plains define the topography of the region with most of the population living in the expansive rural areas. The climate is semi-arid and the area can experience extreme weather throughout the year. The region is dominated by large farms and ranches and numerous small towns. Industrial and commercial development is relatively limited. Areas along the western edge of the region (particularly Elbert and Logan Counties) are experiencing increasing urbanization due to the proximity to the Front Range cities (Fort Collins/Greeley, Denver, Colorado Springs). Given the low density of development throughout the region, many trips require long distance travel presenting a challenge for many travelers, transit providers and human service agencies.

There are numerous transportation corridors connecting communities across the region. The major transportation corridors in the TPR are I-70, I-76, US 6, US 287, US 385, US 40, US 34, US 36, US 24, State Highway (SH) 59, SH 71, SH 94, SH 63 and SH 86. These corridors provide access to employment, shopping and essential services for residents. Amtrak's California Zephyr passes through the region on its way from Chicago to San Francisco; however there is no stop in the Eastern TPR. The nearest Amtrak station is in Fort Morgan in Morgan County. Several intercity bus providers also travel along the I-76 and I-70 corridors providing connections to Denver and other cities across the country.

There are several general aviation airports that serve the region including Limon Municipal Airport, Kit Carson County Airport in Burlington, Wray Municipal Airport, Colorado Plains Regional Airport in Akron, Julesburg Municipal Airport, and Sterling Municipal Airport. These airports are open to the general public.

Within the region, agriculture is the base economic driver with the food and agriculture sector the top industry by employment. Approximately 16,000 people are employed in agriculture. Manufacturing and processing employs another 4,000 people. Large employers in agriculture and manufacturing include Cargill Meat and Western Sugar in Morgan County, and Colorado Lining International.

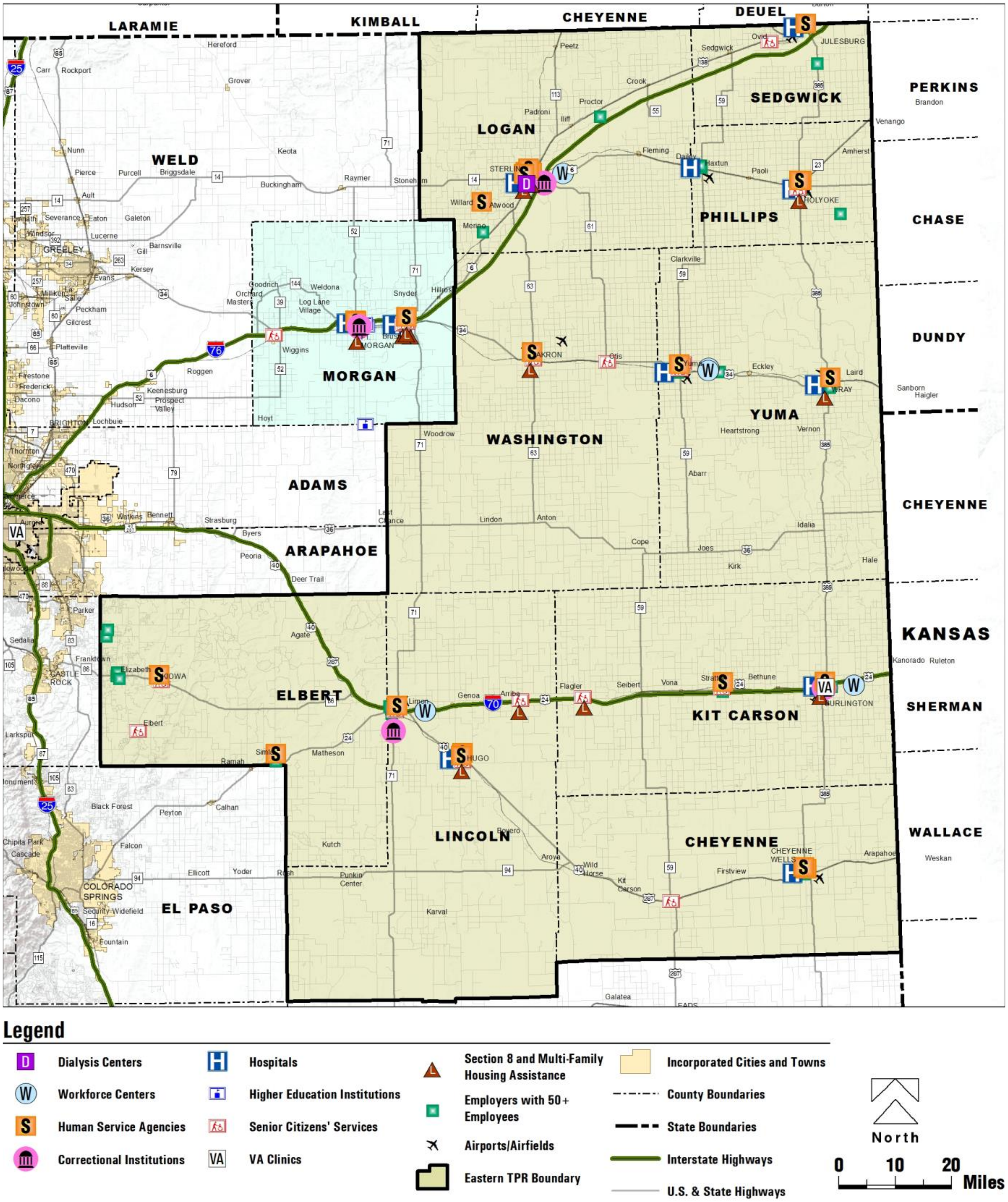
Other key industries include financial services, transportation and logistics, health and wellness, and energy and natural resources. The region has seen tremendous growth in the energy sector with the development of the wind industry and oil and gas processing, which is bringing many younger workers back into the region. Wind farms have emerged in many areas throughout region with several of the largest located near Limon, north of I-70 and east of SH 71 and the Peetz Table Wind Energy Center in northern Logan County.

The health industry represents some of the largest employers in the region including the Sterling Regional MedCenter, Colorado Plains Medical Center, Lincoln Community Hospital Nursing Home and Kit Carson County Memorial Hospital. Three correctional institutions in the region, in Sterling, Limon and Burlington, are three of the largest employers in the region, employing over 1,200 people.

Figure 1-1 identifies many of the major activity centers and destinations within the Eastern TPR. Major activity centers for the purpose of this plan include human service agencies, correctional institutions, grocery stores, hospitals, higher education institutions, senior citizens' services, workforce centers, mental health services, and employers with 50+ employees. This information provides an indication of where many people go to access goods and services. These locations also coincide with areas of higher population.

Figure 1-1 Major Activity Centers and Destinations

Business locations derived from 2011 ESRI data.



1.4 Region Transit Vision and Goals

As mentioned previously, the Transit Working Group (TWG) was established to help guide development of the Regional Transit Plan. As part of this, the TWG worked to create a high level transit vision and supporting goals for the region that align with the statewide transit vision and goals and could be used to vet key strategies and projects for implementation. The outcome of this process resulted in the following transit vision and goals for the Eastern TPR:

Eastern Transit Vision:

Provide an efficient, safe and accessible transit network that serves the needs of individual communities while making future investment decisions to enhance the quality of life of Eastern Colorado residents

Supporting Goals:

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

1.5 Other Regional and Statewide Planning Efforts

Over the past five years several plans at the region and statewide level have been completed. Relevant information to the Eastern TPR from these efforts is incorporated into this plan. Plans include:

1.5.1 Eastern Local Transit & Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan, 2008

This plan was prepared as part of the 2035 update for the Regional Transportation Plan. Key elements of the plan included inventory of existing transit service providers, analysis of the need for transit services, identification of gaps and duplication in service, identification of strategies to eliminate gaps and duplication, and identification of high priority strategies for implementation. Key issues include:

- Lack of commuter services
- Lack of weekend service
- Need for evening hour service
- Rural seniors in remote areas need more service
- Service needed for low-income populations to access employment
- Large intercity gap exists between communities to access healthcare
- Due to the large area, it is difficult to provide service

1.5.2 Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan, 2012

This plan offers recommendations for both short- and long-term investments in the state's rail system and positioning Colorado to receive federal funding for rail infrastructure projects. It is a project-based plan and will be updated in 2016. Projects identified were compiled based on recommendations/options from other plans or studies, as well as through stakeholder and public comment during the plan development. For suggested projects, no analysis was conducted on the feasibility or likelihood of implementation. Several freight rail improvements are included in the plan for the Eastern TPR, such as capital improvements on the Union Pacific lines in Julesburg, Limon, and Brush. Two high-speed rail projects were suggested by stakeholders in the area: 1) In the I-70 median east of Denver to Burlington and 2) In the I-76 median from Denver to Julesburg. In 2014, the plan was amended to include a high-speed transit vision based on the results of the Advanced Guideway

System (AGS) Feasibility Study and the Interregional Connectivity Study. This vision encompasses 340 miles of high-speed transit along the I-70 corridor from Denver International Airport to Eagle County and along the I-25 corridor from Fort Collins to Pueblo. While neither of these corridors is in the Eastern TPR, connections could be made to any future service, particularly along the I-25 corridor.

1.5.3 Colorado Aviation System Plan, 2011

This plan includes an objective for all airports in the Major and Intermediate categories to have access to ground transportation services for the millions of visitors who reach Colorado each year by air and support the Colorado economy. Ground transportation could include shuttles, taxis, buses, rail, and rental cars. There are two airports in the Eastern region that have been identified in the plan as needing improved ground transportation: the Limon Municipal Airport in Lincoln County and the Yuma Municipal Airport in Yuma County.

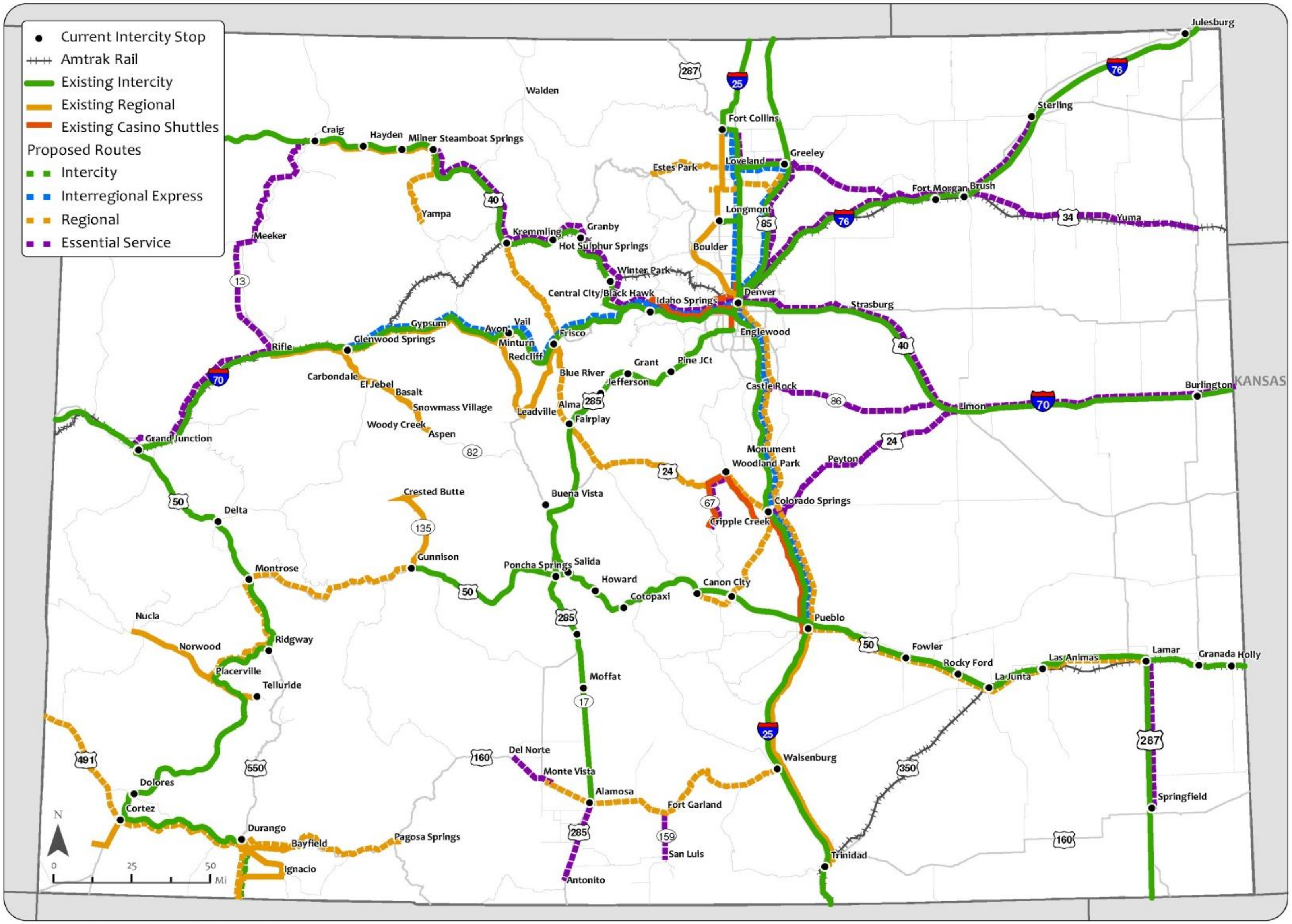
1.5.4 Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan, 2014

This plan develops a statewide bus network of intercity, interregional, regional and essential fixed routes to provide viable alternatives to meet travel needs around the state. Several types of service are evaluated in the plan including:

- **Interregional express bus service:** Travels between regions, focuses on commuter service, typically operates weekdays, and attempts to provide time sensitive travel times.
- **Intercity bus service:** Provides long-distance travel connecting major hubs throughout the nation, is typically funded with fares, and carries luggage and sometimes packages.
- **Regional bus service:** Provides travel into urban areas and resort communities, typically provides more frequent bus service each day than intercity bus service. Administrative and operating funds come from federal, state, and/or local sources.
- **Essential bus service:** Focuses on meeting the needs of residents in rural areas for medical and essential services and typically provides very infrequent service.

Recommendations made in this plan for the Eastern TPR include several fixed route essential service routes connecting cities and towns on the eastern plains with the Front Range cities to meet the needs of travelers requiring access to urban area services (primarily medical services) and returning the same day. These include routes along I-76, US 34, I-70, SH 86 and US 24. Additionally, in spring 2015 CDOT will begin Interregional Express (IX) bus service along I-25 between Fort Collins and Denver and Colorado Springs and Denver. Implementation of this service provides many local providers the opportunity to connect with service along the Front Range. **Figure 1-13** includes the existing and proposed statewide fixed routes identified in the Bus Network Plan.

Figure 1-2 Existing and Proposed Statewide Fixed Route Service



Source: 2014 Colorado Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan

2.0 REGION DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Having an understanding of the distribution and density of population and employment is an integral part of the transportation planning process. Demographics such as population, employment, and age distribution can tell a story about the complex travel needs of residents and employees, especially as they relate to the use of transit service. In this Section, the presentation of relevant data focusing on transit-dependent persons, including older adults, persons with disabilities (including some veterans and older adults), and low-income individuals, is based on a series of maps and tables. These maps and tables show key population characteristics emphasizing the transit-dependent populations that tend to have limited mobility options and a higher propensity to use and need public transit services.

Certain demographic groups have a greater need for public transit or a greater willingness to try local bus service. “Transit dependent” population segments are more likely than others to use transit service and depend on it as their primary form of transportation. Typically, the reasons relate to economics, ability, or age, and whether individuals own or have access to a private vehicle. Transit dependency characteristics based on age include both youth (individuals 18 or younger) and older adults (persons age 65 or older). Others who typically rely on public transit include people with disabilities, individuals with low income, zero-vehicle households, veterans, and persons with limited English proficiency (LEP).

"Choice" riders are those who usually or always have access to a private automobile (either by driving a car or getting picked up by someone), but choose to take transit because it offers them more or comparable convenience. For example, a choice rider might choose to add 10 minutes to their overall trip via bus to save a 10 dollar all-day parking charge. A commuter might choose to take a bus if they can work along the way rather than focusing on driving.

Another newer trend that has increased transit ridership over the last several years is the increase in the Millennial population choosing to use public transportation as a lifestyle choice. This generational shift is occurring across the United States, in both urban and rural areas, as the Millennials and many other Americans are increasingly choosing to use modes of transportation other than the private automobile, such as transit, carpools, vanpools, biking and walking. Millennials are choosing to live closer to jobs, recreation, and amenities so that they can use transit and eliminate the expense of vehicle ownership. This is impacting the typical travel patterns that have been seen in the United States since the coming of age of the automobile in the 1950s. Transit agencies must now consider not only the transit dependent users but also consider the impact that the Millennials transit ridership will have on their transit system.

The following sections detail various demographic data collected from the U.S. Census and from the State Demographer, that are typically aligned with the primary markets for transit ridership and use. The key demographic characteristics highlighted in this plan include older adults (65+), households with no vehicle, low-income, race and ethnicity, LEP, persons with disabilities, and veteran population.

2.1 Population Growth

Table 2-1 and **Figure 2-1** summarize the growth in population anticipated in each county in the Eastern TPR. The counties with the highest overall populations in the region in 2013 are Elbert and Logan counties, and the projections indicate that this will continue into 2040. Each county within the Eastern TPR is anticipated to see some level of growth in population by the year 2040, with the exception of Washington County which will experience a loss of approximately 6 percent of its population. The total population in the TPR is projected to grow overall by approximately 57,000 or 68 percent by 2040 from the base year of 2013. Comparatively, the projected growth for the entire state during the same timeframe is 47 percent.

Table 2-1 Projected Population Growth by County

County	2013	2020	2030	2040	Total % Growth from 2013 to 2040
Cheyenne	1,924	2,115	2,292	2,416	25.5%
Elbert	24,069	36,268	52,427	64,373	167.5%
Kit Carson	8,235	8,585	9,088	9,469	15.0%
Lincoln	5,405	5,876	6,768	7,585	40.3%
Logan	22,437	24,253	28,127	31,992	42.6%
Phillips	4,335	4,326	4,501	4,621	6.6%
Sedgwick	2,428	2,634	2,859	3,037	25.1%
Washington	4,615	4,430	4,397	4,331	-6.2%
Yuma	10,309	11,060	11,985	12,691	23.1%
TPR Overall	**83,757**	**99,547**	**122,444**	**140,515**	**67.8%**
Statewide Total	5,267,800	5,915,922	6,888,181	7,749,477	47.1%

Source: Based on 2012 estimates provided by the Colorado State Demographer's Office through the Department of Local Affairs
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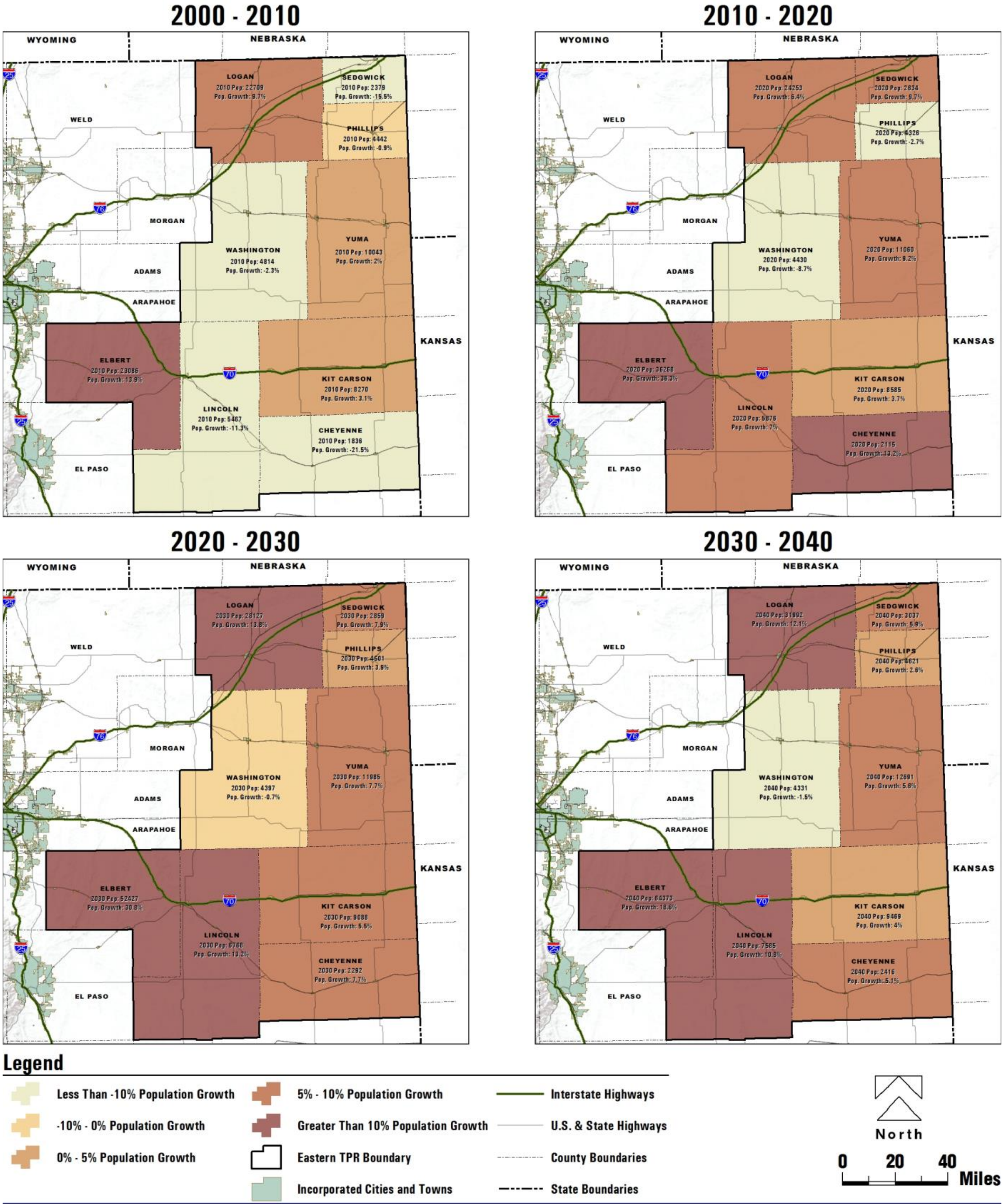
Figure 2-1 Population Growth

Population growth based on 2012 estimates provided by the State Demographer's Office through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs and 2000 - 2010 U.S. Census Summary File 1 100% Population Count statistics.



2.2 Population Growth Ages 65+

Table 2-2 and **Figure 2-2** illustrate the anticipated growth in the population over the age of 65 from a base year of 2013 extending out to 2040. The overall anticipated growth of the entire 65+ population from 2013 to 2040 is 80 percent. The highest anticipated growth in the 65+ population is in Elbert County, which projects a growth of 225 percent by 2040. **Figure 2-3** shows the growth in ages 65+ in 10-year increments. The total projected statewide growth of residents age 65+ is 120.5 percent from 2013 to 2040.

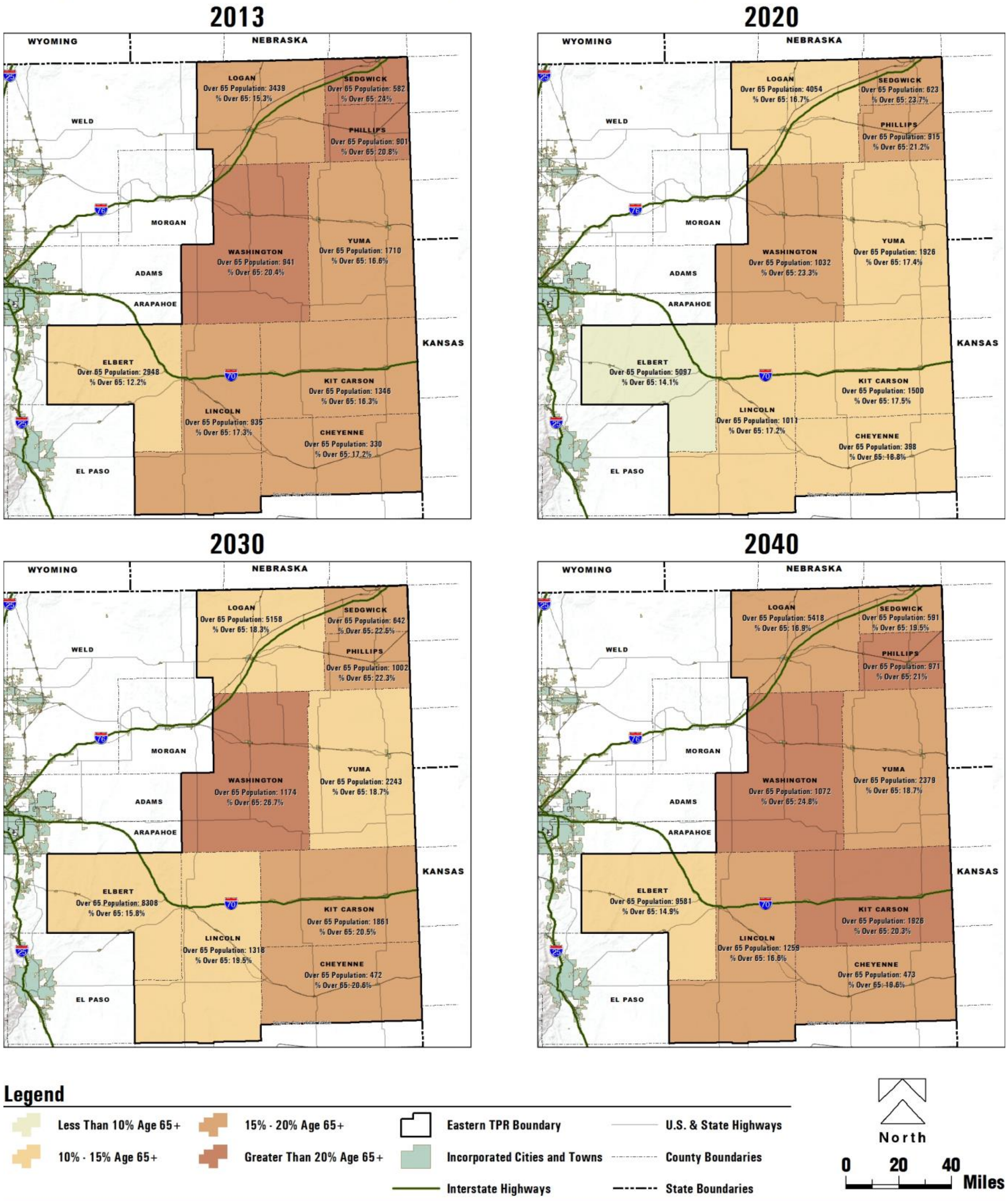
Table 2-2 Projected Growth of Residents Age 65+

County	2013	2020	2030	2040	Total % Growth from 2013 to 2040
Cheyenne	330	398	472	473	43.3%
Elbert	2,948	5,097	8,308	9,581	225%
Kit Carson	1,346	1,500	1,861	1,926	43.1%
Lincoln	935	1,011	1,318	1,259	34.7%
Logan	3,439	4,054	5,158	5,418	57.6%
Phillips	901	915	1,002	971	7.8%
Sedgwick	582	623	642	591	1.6%
Washington	941	1,032	1,174	1,072	13.9%
Yuma	1,710	1,926	2,243	2,379	39.1%
TPR Overall	**13,132**	**16,556**	**22,178**	**23,670**	**80.2%**
Statewide Total	645,735	891,805	1,240,944	1,423,691	120.5%

Source: Based on 2012 estimates provided by the Colorado State Demographer's Office through the Department of Local Affairs

Figure 2-2 Projected Growth of Residents Age 65+

Percentage is based on 2012 estimates provided by the State Demographer's Office through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs.



2.3 Zero Vehicle Households

Table 2-3 and **Figure 2-3** identify the number of households without vehicles in the Eastern TPR. Lincoln County has the highest percentage of households with no vehicle at 7.0 percent and Cheyenne County follows closely at 6.9 percent. The total number of households without vehicles in the region is approximately 1,300, which is 4.9 percent of total households. The TPR falls slightly below the statewide average of 5.7 percent of households with no vehicle in each of the nine counties.

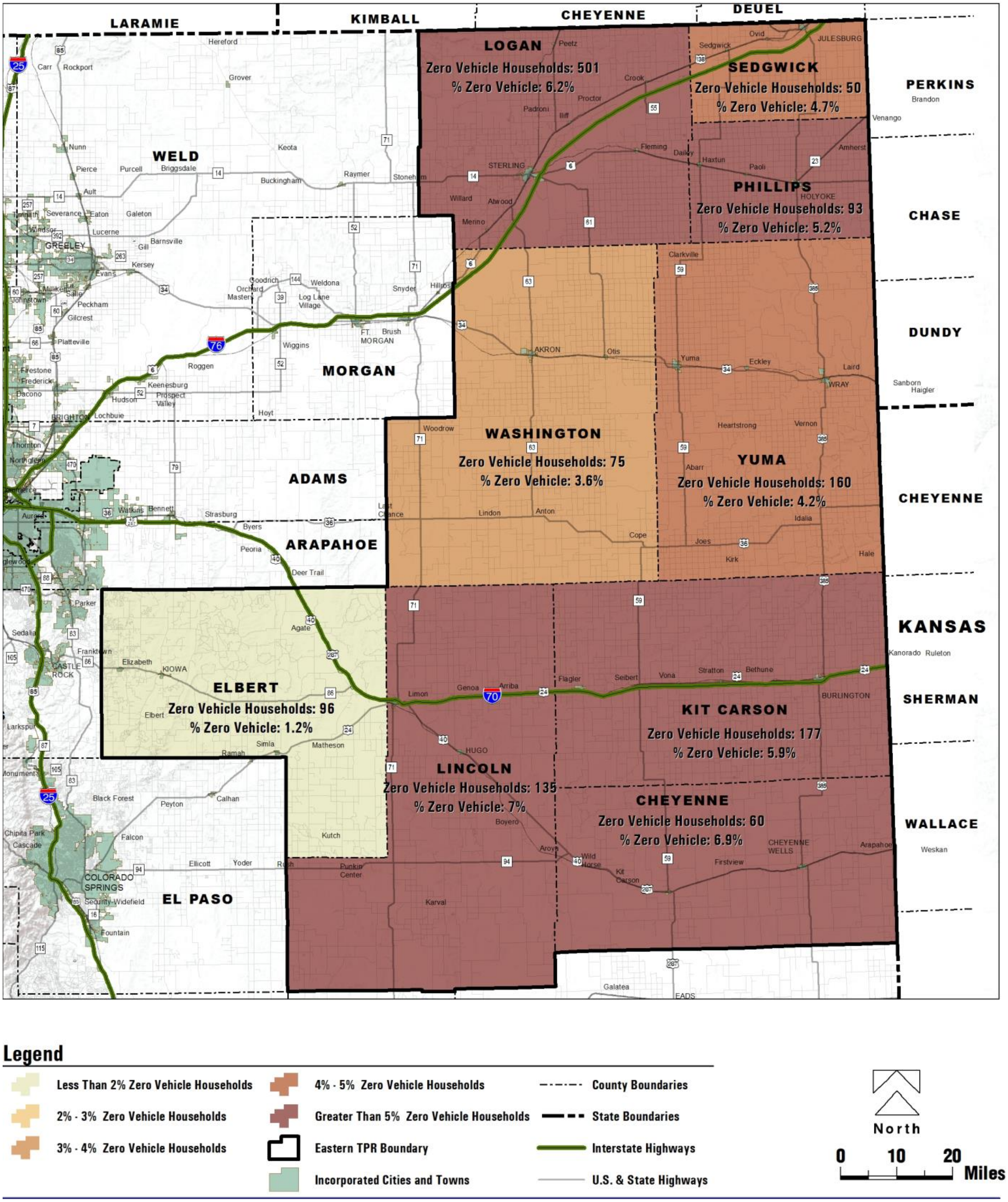
Table 2-3 2011 Households with No Vehicle

County	2011	% Households with No Vehicle
Cheyenne	60	6.9%
Elbert	96	1.2%
Kit Carson	177	5.9%
Lincoln	135	7.0%
Logan	501	6.2%
Phillips	93	5.2%
Sedgwick	50	4.7%
Washington	75	3.6%
Yuma	160	4.2%
TPR Overall	**1,349**	**4.9%**
Statewide Total	111,148	5.7%

Source: 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-Year Estimate

Figure 2-3 2011 Households with No Vehicle

Zero vehicle household data extracted from 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Table B08201 - Household Size by Vehicles Available.



2.4 Poverty Level

Table 2-4 and **Figure 2-4** illustrate the number of people who fall below the federal poverty level in the Eastern TPR based on 2011 data. The average percentage of the population below the federal poverty level in the Eastern TPR is 10.8 percent, which is slightly less than the statewide average of 12.5 percent.

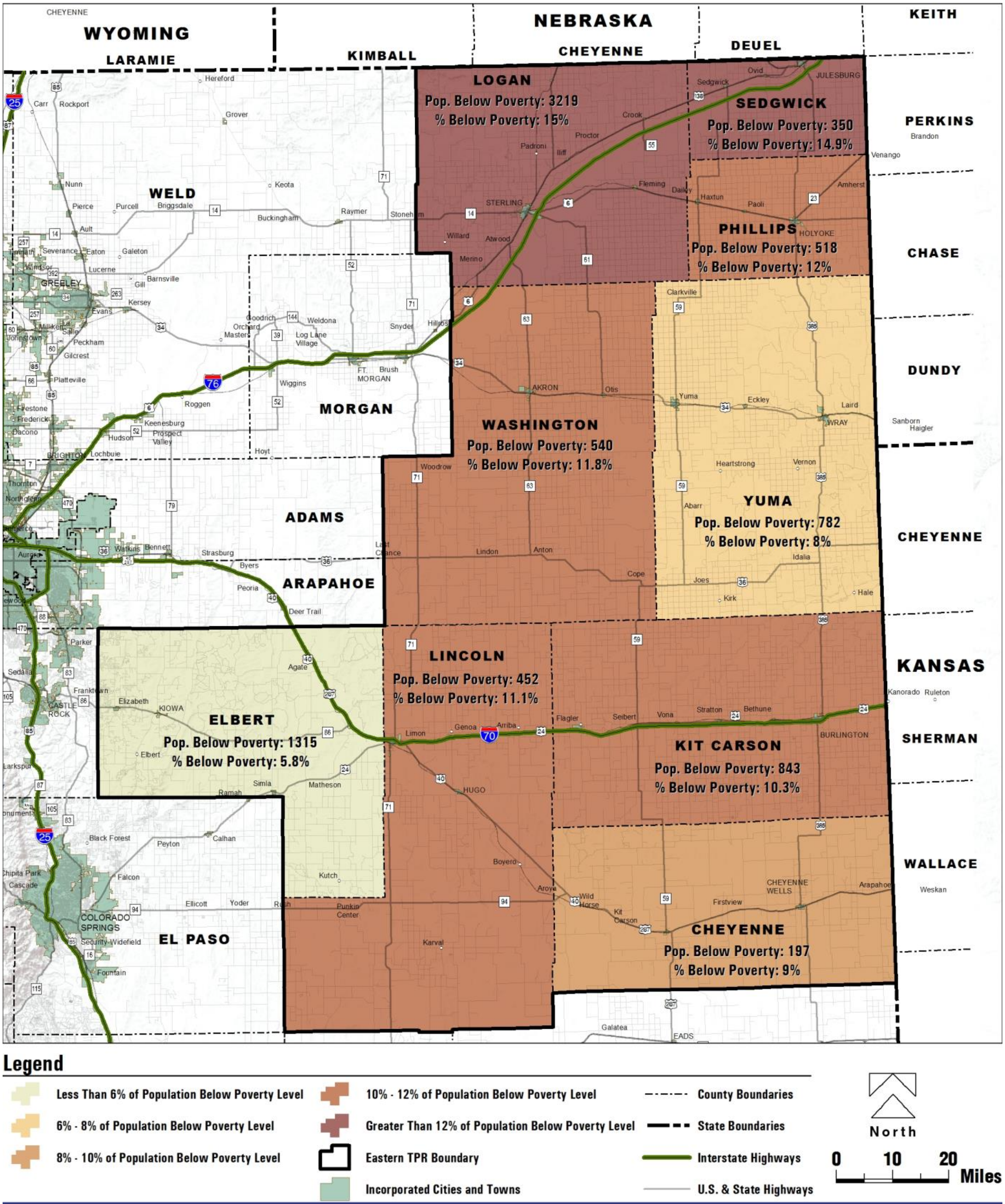
Table 2-4 2011 Population Below Federal Poverty Level

County	2011	% Below Federal Poverty Level
Cheyenne	197	9.0%
Elbert	1,315	5.8%
Kit Carson	843	10.3%
Lincoln	452	11.1%
Logan	3,219	15.0%
Phillips	518	12.0%
Sedgwick	350	14.9%
Washington	540	11.8%
Yuma	782	8.0%
TPR Overall	**8,216**	**10.8%**
Statewide Total	607,727	12.5%

Source: 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-Year Estimate

Figure 2-4 2011 Population Below Federal Poverty Level

Poverty status data extracted from 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Table S1701 - Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months



2.5 Race and Ethnicity

Table 2-5 and **Figure 2-5** provide an indication of race and ethnicity represented in the region and an overall understanding of the distribution of minority populations within the Eastern TPR's nine counties. The information on race also includes those of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity in the total. However, the final column calls out the number of persons in the TPR that indicated Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Approximately 13 percent of the Eastern TPR population is of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity of any race with the highest number in Logan County. This is lower than the statewide average of 20 percent.

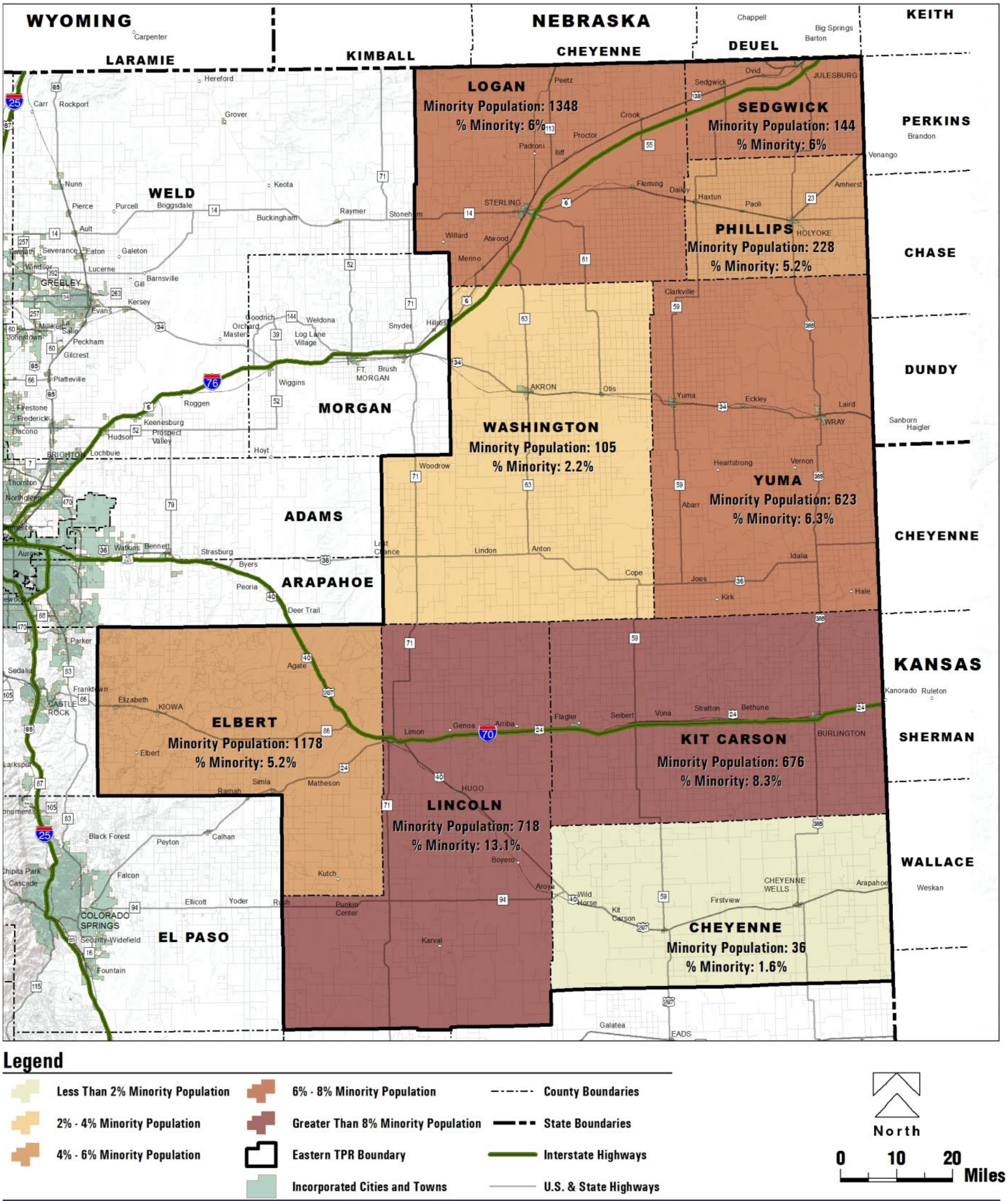
Table 2-5 2011 Race and Ethnicity

County	White Only	Black or African American Only	American Indian and Alaska Native Only	Asian Only	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Only	Some Other Race Only	Two or More Races	Minority % (Non-White Only)	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)
Cheyenne	2,211	3	0	14	0	5	14	1.6%	285
Elbert	21,681	107	141	153	12	172	593	5.2%	1,263
Kit Carson	7,502	262	35	105	3	185	86	8.3%	1,462
Lincoln	4,744	450	88	25	15	101	39	13.1%	629
Logan	21,069	224	31	70	3	567	453	6.0%	3,422
Phillips	4,163	15	24	5	10	90	84	5.2%	795
Sedgwick	2,246	7	11	14	13	39	60	6.0%	243
Washington	4,604	7	23	0	2	39	34	2.2%	426
Yuma	9,337	23	45	11	0	321	223	6.3%	1,985
TPR Overall	**77,557**	**1,098**	**398**	**397**	**58**	**1,519**	**1,586**	**7.4%**	**10,510**
Statewide Total	4,167,044	195,640	48,201	134,228	5,798	255,364	159,786	16.1%	1,011,545

Source: 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-Year Estimate

Figure 2-5 2011 Minority Population

Minority population data extracted from 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Table B02001 - Race; percentage based upon non-white population (does not separate hispanic population)



2.6 Limited English Proficiency Population

Table 2-6 and **Figure 2-6** illustrate the number of people within the region with LEP. The American Community Survey categorizes this information based on how much English people are able to speak. For the purposes of this plan, the portion of the population classified as LEP includes those that speak English "not at all, not well or well" but not fluently. As a percentage of the total population, Phillips County has the highest number of LEP at 10.8 percent. The overall percentage of the LEP population in the TPR is 5.3 percent, which is slightly less than the overall statewide total of 5.7 percent.

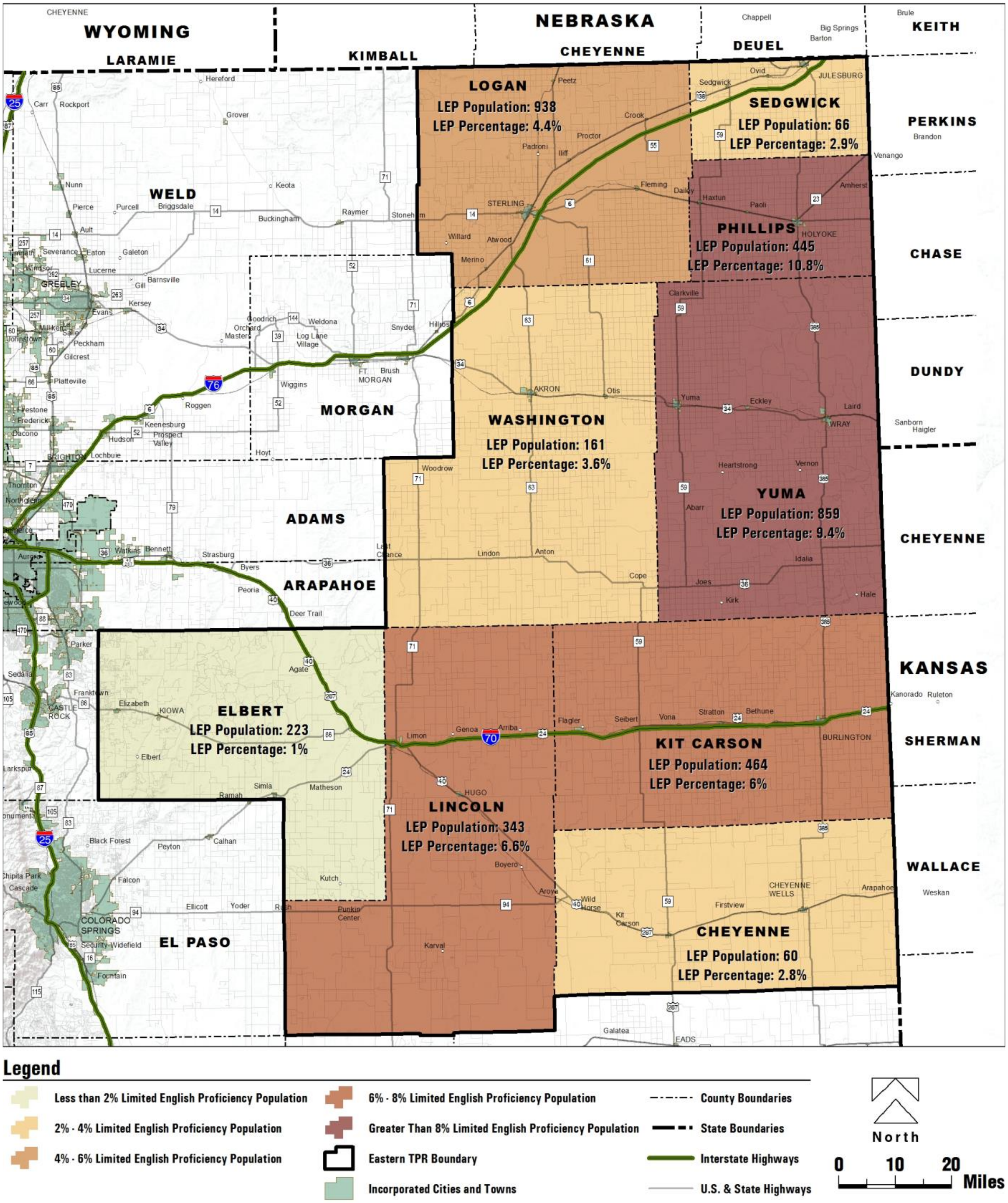
Table 2-6 2011 Limited English Proficiency Population

County	2011	% Limited English Proficiency
Cheyenne	60	2.8%
Elbert	223	1.0%
Kit Carson	464	6.0%
Lincoln	343	6.6%
Logan	938	4.4%
Phillips	445	10.8%
Sedgwick	66	2.9%
Washington	161	3.6%
Yuma	859	9.4%
TPR Overall	**3,559**	**5.3%**
Statewide Total	264,397	5.7%

Source: 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-Year Estimate, based on values for "Speak English – not at all, not well or well"

Figure 2-6 2011 Limited English Proficiency Population

Percentage is based on the 2007-2011 American Community Survey Table B16004, and on values for "Speak English - well, not well, or not at all".



2.7 Population of People with Disabilities

Table 2-7 and **Figure 2-7** provide information about the percentage of the population that has a disability within the Eastern region. The highest number of disabled persons live in Logan County and the lowest number in Sedgwick County. The highest percentage of disabled persons as a percentage of total population is located in Cheyenne County with 19.2 percent. Yuma County is the lowest with 7.4 percent. The percentage of disabled persons as a share of the total population for the entire state of Colorado is 9.8 percent, indicating that the Eastern region has a relatively high disabled population at 14 percent.

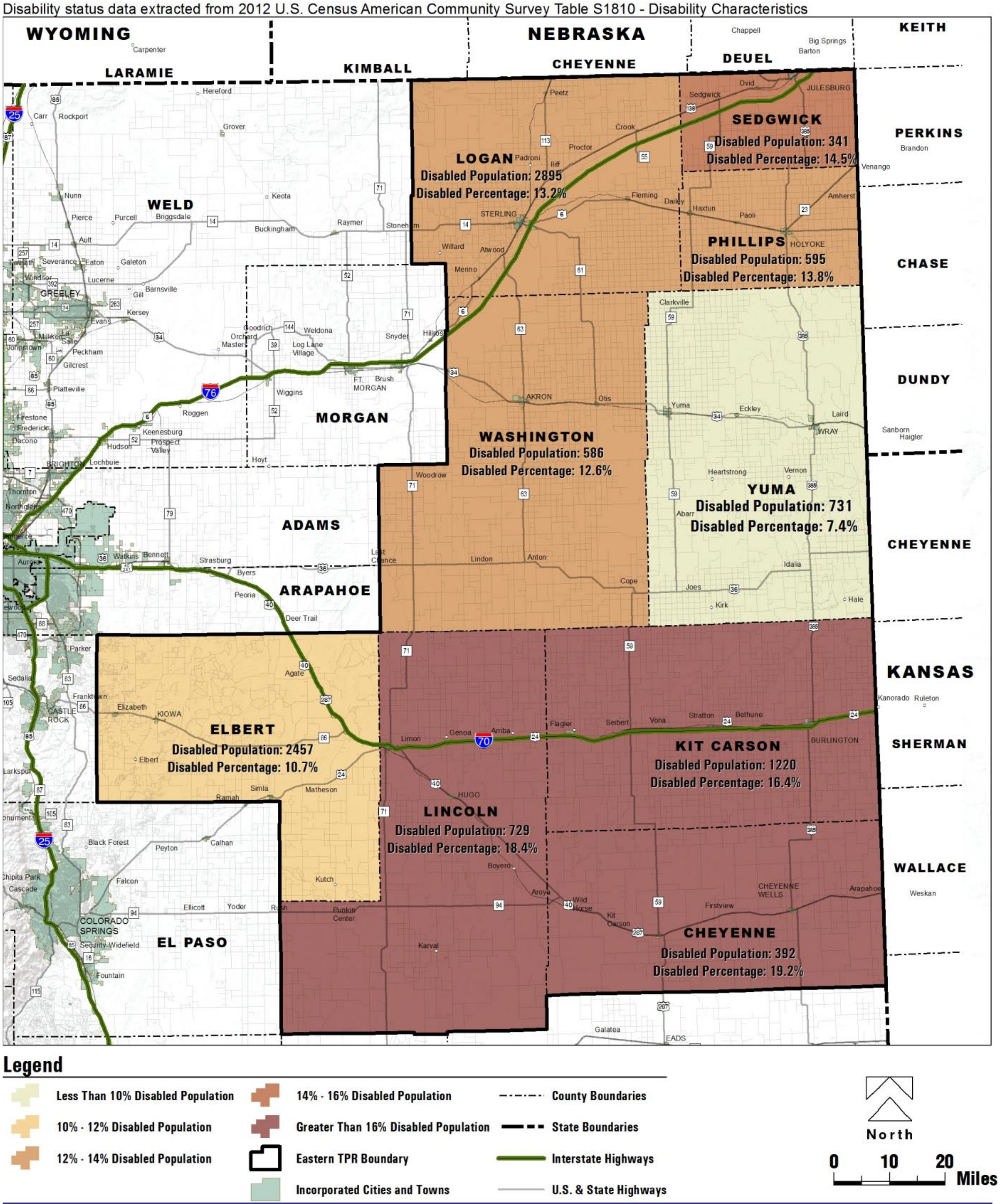
Table 2-7 2012 Disabled Population

County	2012	% Disabled Population
Cheyenne	392	19.2%
Elbert	2,457	10.7%
Kit Carson	1,220	16.4%
Lincoln	729	18.4%
Logan	2,895	13.2%
Phillips	595	13.8%
Sedgwick	341	14.5%
Washington	586	12.6%
Yuma	731	7.4%
TPR Overall	**9,946**	**14.0%**
Statewide Total	487,297	9.8%

Source: 2012 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-Year Estimate

Figure 2-7 2012 Disabled Population

Disability status data extracted from 2012 U.S. Census American Community Survey Table S1810 - Disability Characteristics



2.8 Veteran Population

Table 2-8 and **Figure 2-8** illustrate the veteran population within the Eastern region. The highest number of veterans reside in Elbert County and the lowest number in Cheyenne County. However, the highest percentage of veterans as a percentage of total population is Lincoln County with 11.8 percent, and Cheyenne County is the lowest with 5.7 percent. The percentage of veterans as a percentage of total population for the entire state of Colorado is 8.2 percent, very similar to the Eastern region at 9.1 percent.

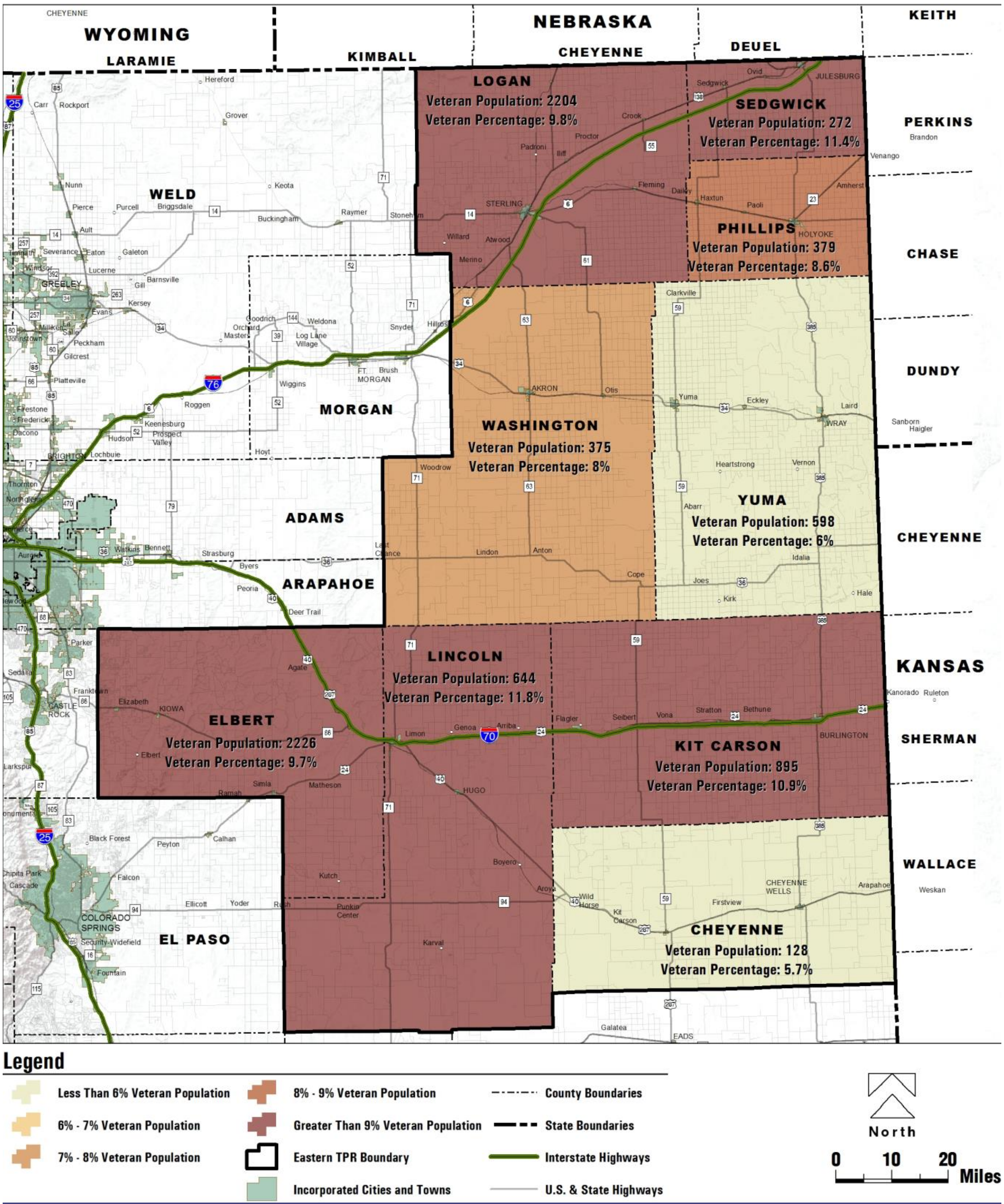
Table 2-8 2011 Veteran Population

County	2011	% Veteran Population
Cheyenne	128	5.7%
Elbert	2,226	9.7%
Kit Carson	895	10.9%
Lincoln	644	11.8%
Logan	2,204	9.8%
Phillips	379	8.6%
Sedgwick	272	11.4%
Washington	375	8.0%
Yuma	598	6.0%
TPR Overall	**7,721**	**9.1%**
Statewide Total	405,303	8.2%

Source: 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Five-Year Estimate

Figure 2-8 2011 Veteran Population

Veteran status data extracted from 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Table S2101 - Veteran Status



2.9 Employment and Job Characteristics

The major employment base of the Eastern TPR is in agriculture, with strong secondary markets that include manufacturing, energy and human services (correctional facilities, government, and hospitals). As mentioned previously, the region is home to several large wind farms, three correctional facilities, as well as numerous human services agencies, and several schools and colleges, the largest being Northeastern Junior College in Sterling with over 2,000 students. Given the great distances between communities and the absence of a large urban center in the region, it is likely that travel distances and times to and from job opportunities are high. Together with the level of zero vehicle households (five counties have greater than 5 percent zero vehicle households), there is likely to be some demand for employment-based transportation services.

Figure 2-9 illustrates the job growth from a base year of 2000 out to 2040. As the figure shows, the most significant job growth in the region is projected to occur between 2010 and 2020, at 10 to 25 percent. Job growth remains strong through 2030 and then levels out between 2030 and 2040 with the most counties in the region seeing job growth between 0 and 10 percent.

Figure 2-10 provides a snapshot of the commuting patterns in the region with each line indicating the number of commuter trips taken per day between counties (county-to-county trips with less than 100 commuters are not depicted). The most significant number of trips within the Eastern region takes place from Logan to Phillips and from Washington to Logan and Yuma. The highest commute patterns overall are from Elbert County to Arapahoe, Douglas, Denver, Jefferson, El Paso and Adams counties. Another primary commute pattern is from Morgan County into the Region to Logan County. The commuter travel patterns identify that a large number of employees live a significant distance from their places of employment.

2.10 Summary of Community Characteristics

As shown in **Figure 2-11,** Elbert County is expected to see the highest overall population growth and 65 + population growth by 2040 in the Eastern region, followed by Logan County. With the overall above average growth in the elderly population, it is likely that the region will require more human service transportation options to meet the rising demand.

Logan and Sedgwick counties have the highest population below the federal poverty level and Phillips County has the largest population of persons with LEP. These transit indicators suggest that the need for employment and essential transportation services is interspersed throughout the region and needed within and between counties.

Job growth is expected to increase significantly in the Eastern region until 2030 and then tapers off to 0 to 10 percent growth in all counties until 2040. Elbert County shows the most consistent job growth over the period, ranging from 25 to 50 percent over the plan period.

The community characteristics of the Eastern TPR indicate a high demand for both work-related and specialized transportation services to accommodate job and population growth patterns. The high number of counties in the region, together with the sporadic distribution of towns and work centers, creates a situation in which developing transportation options presents unique challenges.

Figure 2-9 Job Growth

Job growth based on 2012 estimates provided by the State Demographer's Office through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

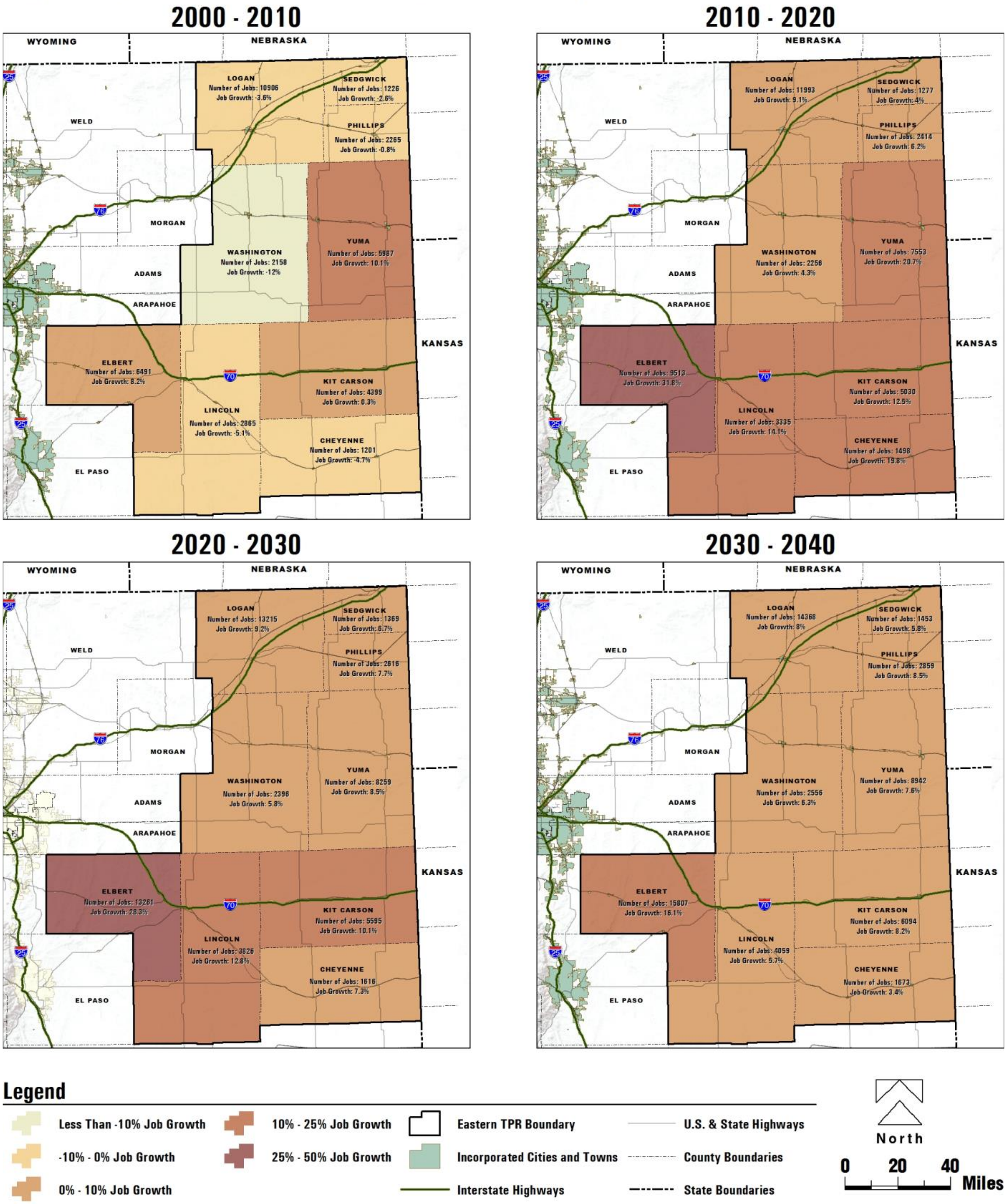


Figure 2-10 Employed Working Outside of County of Residence

*Note: Values are based on the 2006-2010 US Census American Community Survey (ACS) Metropolitan and Micropolitan Table 2 - Residence County to Workplace County Flows for the U.S. by Workplace Geography and 2009 ACS Table S0804 - Means of Transportation to Work by Workplace Geography.

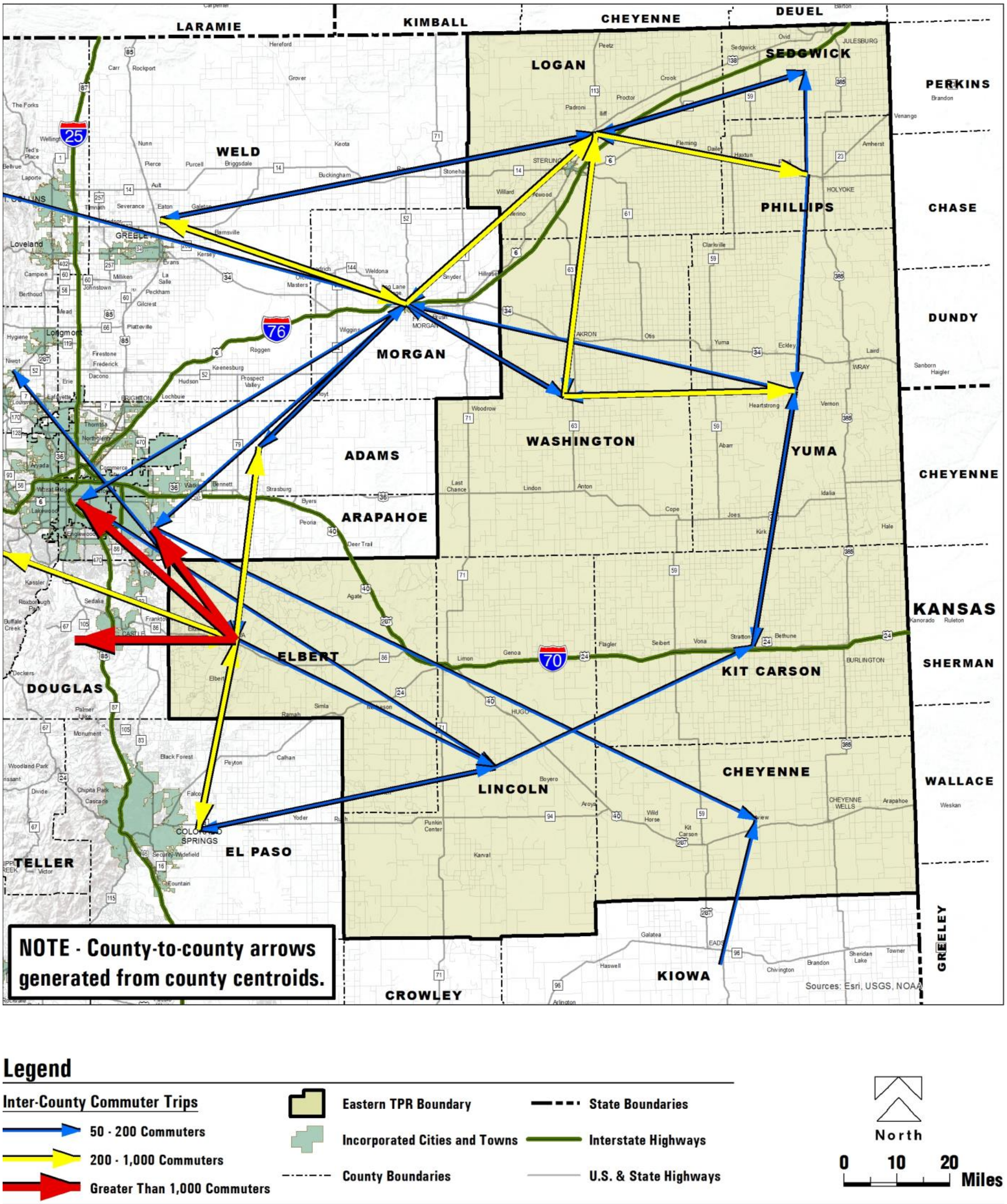
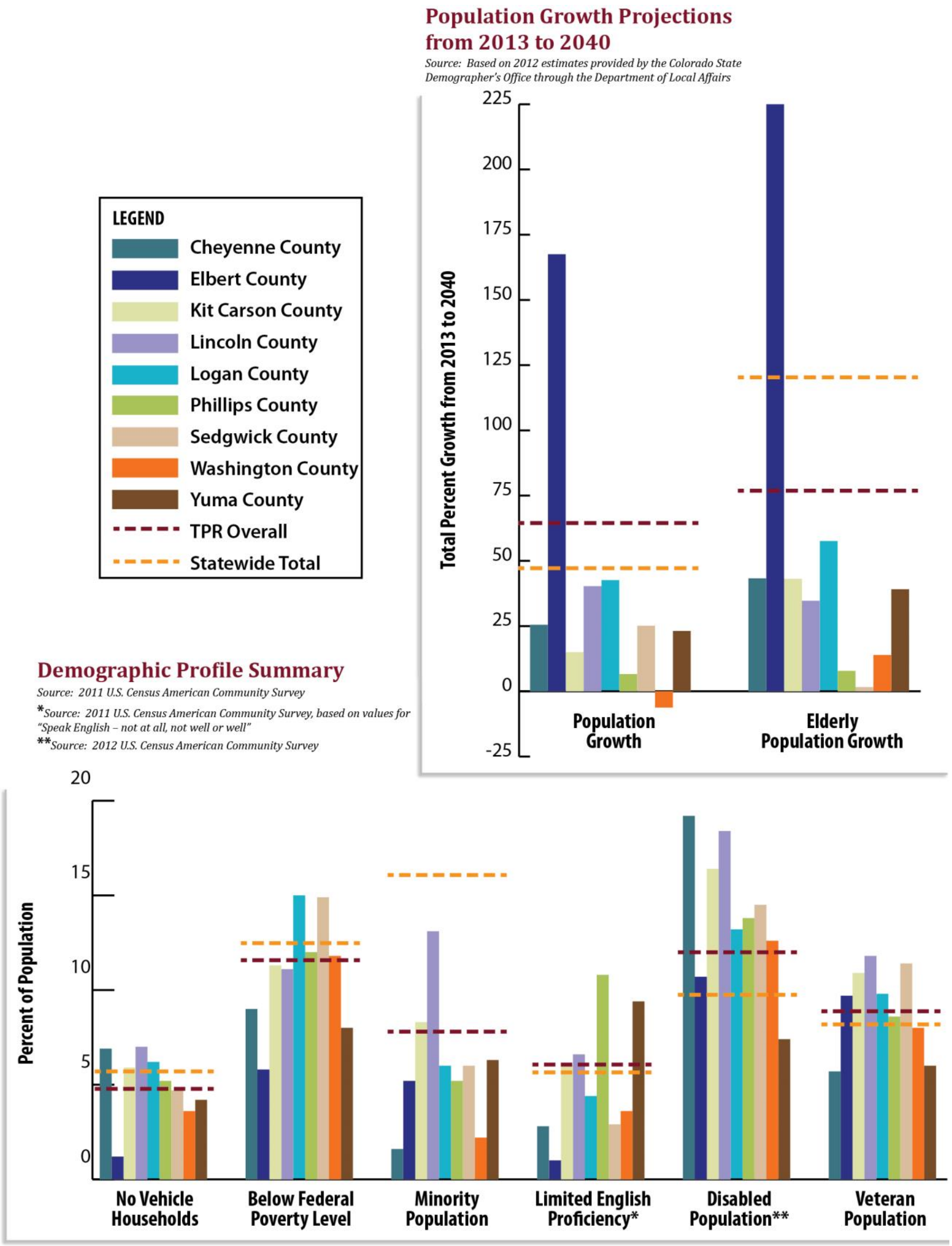


Figure 2-11 Counties with Higher than Statewide and TPR Average Transit Needs Indicators



3.0 EXISTING TRANSIT PROVIDERS AND HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES

This Chapter describes existing public and private transit providers, and human service agencies in the region, and their current coordination activities. The information included in this Chapter was gathered through detailed surveys that were distributed to all transit providers and human service agencies in the Eastern TPR supplemented by telephone interviews and web research. **Figure 3-1** provides a snapshot of the primary transit providers and human service agency transportation services available in the Eastern TPR and illustrates some of the gaps in service. For definitions of key terms used throughout this Chapter and the rest of the Plan, see **Appendix A**.

3.1 Public Transit Service Providers

Public transit services are those that are funded by local or regional agencies and are open to all members of the public. These differ from human service transportation services that are limited to clientele who qualify such as people over the age of 65. There are two primary public transit service providers in the Eastern region, East Central Council of Local Governments (ECCOG), and Northeastern Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG), serving nearly 84,000 residents across the Eastern TPR. The services being provided are either demand response or deviated-fixed route, which provide limited opportunities for work-related trips.

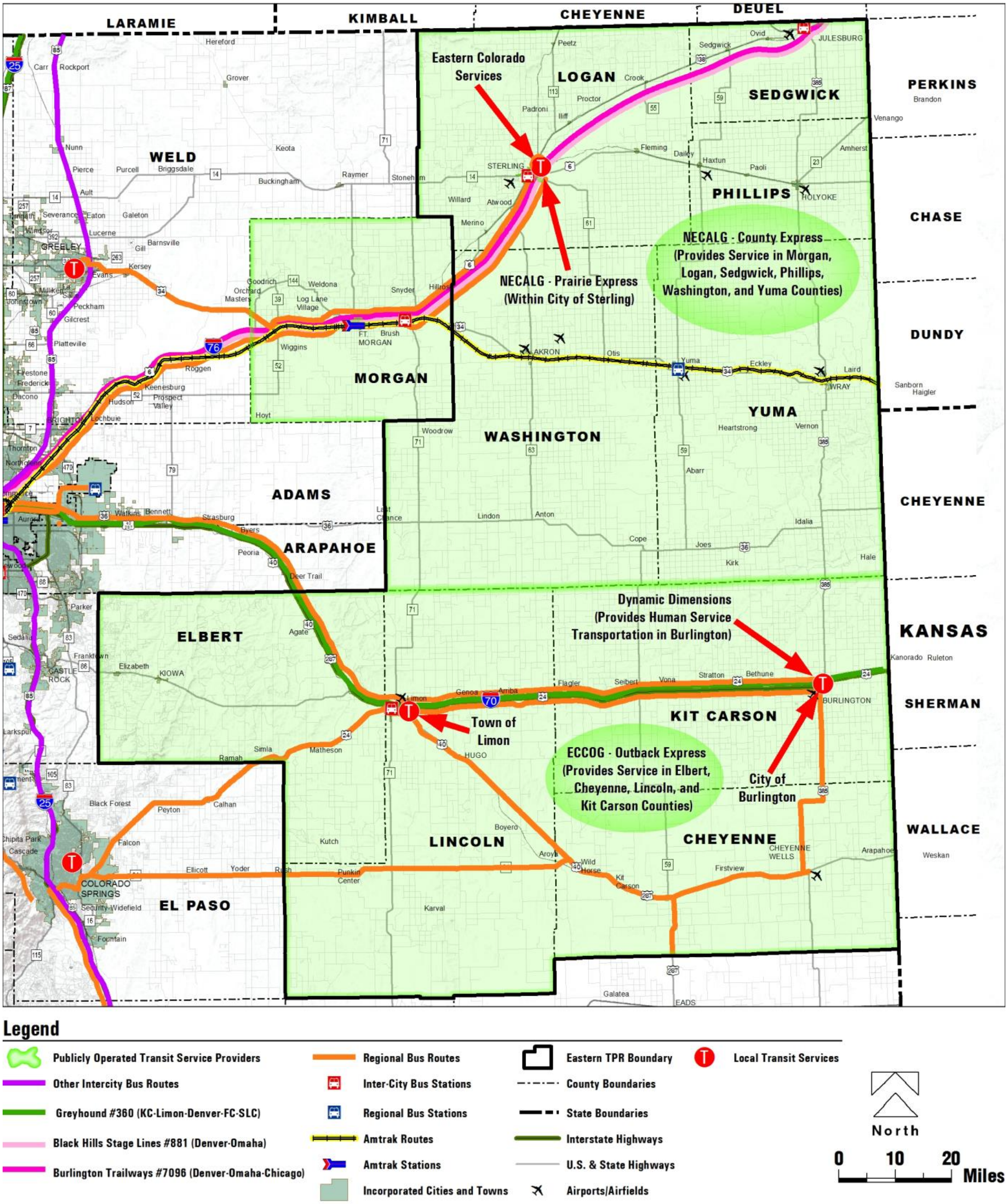
3.1.1 ECCOG

In the southern portion of the Eastern TPR, ECCOG provides regional coordinated public transit services to the residents of Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson and Lincoln Counties. Outback Express is a scheduled demand-response system offering service to older adults, persons with disabilities, and the general public for local in-town trips, intra-regional trips, as well as trips to Denver and Colorado Springs for medical and essential shopping purposes. In the City of Burlington, Outback Express provides service, upon request, within the city limits. In addition, Dynamic Dimensions provides service in the Burlington area for those with developmental disabilities. In the Town of Limon, service is provided on a limited scheduled demand response service three days a week within town limits. These services help residents' access jobs, grocery stores, pharmacies, clinics, banks, post office, etc.

The East Central Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is part of ECCOG and provides various local senior services including information, referral, outreach, advocacy, in-home care, legal services, senior nutrition program and transportation services. Transportation is provided through Outback Express for medical and dental appointments, education and employment, meal sites, grocery and essential shopping, legal appointments and visits to nursing home residents. Transportation is also provided outside the region to the metro area for medical services.

Figure 3-1 Transit Provider System Map

Transit service provider information based upon 2013 mapping.



3.1.2 NECALG

In the northern portion of the Eastern TPR, NECALG provides public transit service to residents in Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington and Yuma counties within the TPR and Morgan County in the Upper Front Range TPR through County Express. County Express is a demand response, curb-to-curb system providing transportation to jobs, health and medical services, social functions and services, and recreational and educational functions. Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) is provided to Greeley, Fort Collins, Denver and other medical facilities along Colorado's Front Range.

NECALG is also the home of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the five counties within the NECALG service area. The AAA receives an allocation from Title III or the Older American's Act to provide a variety of eligible services to residents over the age of 60. In addition to health screenings, senior center programs, homemaker services, meals, dental program, and Medicaid services, the AAA also provides transportation for the elderly through County Express.

In addition, NECALG also operates Prairie Express, a fixed route service in the City of Sterling. While the services operate on a fixed route, they are able to deviate to accommodate demand-response trips. This service is funded through the South Platte Valley Regional Transportation Authority (SPVRTA).

In 2005, stakeholders within the City of Sterling contacted the Administrative Staff of County Express to discuss implementation of one of the policy recommendations of the Transit Element of the Eastern Regional Transportation Plan. Based on the input from Cooperating Ministries of Logan County, Rural Solutions, Centennial Mental Health, Area Agency on Aging, local human service programs, Northeastern Junior College, City of Sterling, Logan County Commissioners, Logan County Economic Development Corporation, Sterling Regional Medical Center, Sterling Workforce Center, Sterling Chamber of Commerce, Department of Corrections, and the Advantage Center, the Board of Directors of County Express filed an application for Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funding to implement "a route deviation or checkpoint system in Sterling to serve the County Department of Social Service Office Complex, human service programs, major employers, education facilities, senior and low income residential facilities and major retail centers with a deviated fixed route service."

Since JARC funding was not the appropriate funding source to operate the deviated fixed route system, in November 2007 residents of the City of the Sterling approved creation of the SPVRTA. The ballot issue creating the Authority also established a sunset date of December 31st, 2011. The SPVRTA contracted with County Express to operate the fixed deviated route service (AKA Prairie Express) in Sterling. In its first year of operation, Prairie Express provided 11,976 trips, drove 68,924 miles, and operated 4,876 hours in the City of Sterling. These totals became the base line for evaluation of the Prairie Express service.

In 2011, the residents of the City of Sterling approved another ballot issue continuing the fixed route service in Sterling, eliminating the "sunset provision" and continuing SPVRTA as the governing entity of the deviated fixed route system for the City.

Table 3-1 includes summary information about each public transit provider in the region.

Table 3-1 Public Transit Provider Services Overview

Public Transit Provider Services Overview							
Provider	**Service Area**	**Service Type(s)**	**Span of Service**	**Days of Service**	**Fares**	**2012 Annual Ridership (includes all service types)**	**2012 Annual Operating & Admin Budget (includes all service types)**
Northeastern Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG) – County Express Public Transportation	Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma counties	▪ Demand Response	Varies	M T W Th F Sa	$3.00/3 stops	121,000	$1,300,000
Prairie Express (NECALG County Express under contract with the South Platte Valley RTA)	City of Sterling	▪ Fixed Route with route deviation	Route 1: 7 am – 6 pm; Route 2: 12:30 – 6 pm	M T W Th F	$1 per one-way trip; $.50 elderly (65+)	N/A	N/A
East Central Council of Governments (ECCOG) – Outback Express	Cheyenne, Elbert, Lincoln, and Kit Carson counties; service to Colorado Springs, Denver, Lamar and La Junta	▪ Demand Response	Varies	M T W Th F	$1 – $20 per one way trip	41,500	$234,700
Town of Limon (ECCOG)	Limon town limits	▪ Demand Response	11 am – 3 pm	T Th	$1	1,200	$7,300
City of Burlington (ECCOG)	Burlington city limits	▪ Demand Response	8 am – 5 pm	M T W Th F	$0.25 per one-way trip suggested donation	7,200	$28,300

Source: Transit Agency Provider Survey, 2013

3.2 Human Service Transportation Providers

Human service organizations often provide transportation for program clients to access their services and augment local public transportation services. **Table 3-2** describes human service organizations that fund or operate transportation service and participated in this coordinated planning process.

Table 3-2 Human Service Transportation Provider Overview

Human Service Transportation Provider Overview				
Provider	**Service Area**	**Passenger Eligibility**	**Service Type(s)**	**Days of Service**
Dynamic Dimensions (ECCOG)	Burlington city limits	▪ Developmental Disabilities	▪ Demand Response	M T W Th

3.3 Other Human Service Agencies/Programs

Many types of human service agencies in the region provide critical services and fund transportation programs, but do not provide transportation for their clients. These agencies rely on public transit and human service transportation programs to get their clients where they need to go. The following is a list of the types of human service agencies/programs that need to be considered when determining transportation needs in the region.

- Area Agencies on Aging (ECCOG, NECALG)
- Community Centered Boards
- Departments of Human Services/Social Services (all counties)
- Departments of Public Health (all counties)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (all counties)
- Healthcare Facilities
- Low-Income Housing
- Mental Health Facilities and Services
- Senior Services, Nursing Homes, Senior Centers
- Veteran's Services (all counties)
- Workforce Centers (all counties)
- Independent Living Centers
- Educational Institutions

The services these agencies often provide include:

- Gas vouchers and/or vehicle repair vouchers funded through the TANF program
- Transit tickets and/or vouchers for a suggested donation for travel to medical and/or dental appointments
- Home and community based services (HCBS), such as NEMT, medical transportation, adult day services funded through Medicaid
- Volunteer transport for clients to meal centers
- Home meal deliveries
- Provides referrals to transportation providers

Both the ECCOG and NECALG AAAs provide transportation services to elderly residents through their area transit provider, Outback Express County Express, respectively.

3.4 Privately Operated Public Transportation Services

Table 3-3 provides an overview of the privately operated public transportation services available in the Eastern region. This includes shuttle services, Amtrak train services, and intercity bus services.

Table 3-3 Privately Operated Public Transportation Services Overview

Privately Operated Public Transportation Services Overview						
Provider	Service Area	Service Type(s)	Passenger Eligibility	Span of Service	Days of Service	Fares
Amtrak – California Zephyr	▪ Chicago – Omaha–Fort Morgan -Denver–Salt Lake City–San Francisco ▪ No stops within the Eastern TPR	▪ Private long-distance passenger train service	General Public	N/A	S M T W Th F Sa	Varies
Black Hills Stage Lines (wholly owned subsidiary of Arrow Stage Lines)	▪ Brush ▪ Fort Morgan ▪ Sterling	▪ Intercity Bus Service; Fixed-Route	General Public	Varies	S M T W Th F Sa	Varies
Burlington Trailways	▪ Denver ▪ Brush ▪ Sterling ▪ Fort Morgan	▪ Intercity Bus Service; Fixed Route	General Public	Varies	S M T W Th F Sa	Varies
Greyhound	▪ Fort Morgan (no stops within the Eastern TPR)	▪ Intercity Bus Service; Fixed Route	General Public	Varies	S M T W Th F Sa	Varies
Dashabout Shuttle / Roadrunner Express	▪ Colorado and Nebraska	▪ Scheduled; Fixed Route and Demand Response	General Public	Varies	S M T W Th F Sa	Varies

Source: Rates and schedules based on stakeholder input and internet information in Q1 2014.

3.5 Existing Coordination Activities

Both NECALG and ECCOG are engaged with coordination of services in their respective service areas. Currently there is limited need for coordination of services between the two areas given the commute patterns and large geographic areas covered by each. Also, since each agency is also the AAA and transportation is provided through their area transportation service, there is coordination on providing needed services to elderly residents within the TPR.

NECALG's public transportation services operate under the Northeastern Colorado Transportation Authority. The Authority is comprised of a 12 member board with two representatives from each county in the region: a county commissioner and a municipal representative. In addition, NECALG also works closely with Rural Solutions.

Rural Solutions is a non-profit grassroots coalition of mental health providers, human/social services departments, disabled services, public health, area agency on aging and elected officials within the nine counties that comprise the Eastern TPR and Morgan County in the Upper Front Range TPR. Rural Solutions works to coordinate health and human service needs assessments and program development for the region. The focus is on collaboration and developing cooperatives that enhance the opportunity for program development throughout the region. Rural Solutions is a key partner in collaboration on human services issues, including transportation. It is governed by a board of directors comprised of the entities listed above. The NECALG AAA Director serves on the board as well.

ECCOG's Outback Express service is guided by the Senior Services and Transit Advisory Board. In 2010, the Transit Advisory Committee was restructured and combined with the Senior Services Advisory Board becoming the Senior Services and Transit Advisory Board (SSTB). The Board is comprised of 13 members representing vehicle owners, drivers, service participants, and transit providers. This group develops, reviews, and makes recommendations on policies, programs and actions affecting the operation of transit service to the ECCOG Board of Directors. The SSTB, along with transit staff, are involved in transit planning, contracting, monitoring, system evaluation, technical assistance, trip scheduling, advocacy, vehicle maintenance, driver training and education, vehicle procurement, system coordination, and federal and state reporting. ECCOG also provides technical assistance to the Eastern Colorado Services (developmental disabilities) and commits to supporting them in assisting individuals who may need help with transportation needs in Lincoln and eastern Elbert counties. ECCOG also has a one-call/one-click system. Riders can call a toll free number to schedule a ride on the appropriate vehicle. The driver will contact individuals to confirm the date and time for pick-up.

3.6 Summary of Existing Services

The Eastern TPR has two primary public transit providers that also provide human services transportation, and a few private transportation providers. NECALG, provides demand response general public service to an area in excess of 9,000 square miles in the northern portion of the TPR. ECCOG provides general public and program specific service in the southern portion of the TPR. There are three intercity bus providers with limited stops in the TPR.

4.0 TRANSIT NEEDS AND SERVICE GAPS

This Chapter provides an assessment of key quantitative and qualitative factors that play a role in assessing and understanding needs and service gaps for transit in the Eastern Transportation Planning Region (TPR). Additionally, an assessment of existing public transit and human service transportation services is reviewed with the needs and gaps expressed by a variety of sources and data collection efforts conducted as a part of this plan development. The sources used to prepare this subjective assessment of needs and gaps in the Eastern TPR included, but were not limited to, the Eastern Transit Working Group (TWG), provider and human service agency survey results, Elderly and Disabled survey results, geographic analysis of the locations/concentrations of the likely transit user populations, and input received from two public meetings in the region.

4.1 Quantitative Assessment of Needs and Gaps

This section provides information relevant to general population growth and elderly population growth in the TPR. These data aid in the quantitative assessment of transit needs and gaps in the Eastern region.

4.1.1 General Population Growth

Based on 2012 estimates from the Colorado State Demographer's Office, the general population in the Eastern region is expected to see continued growth through 2040, increasing from 83,757 residents in 2013 to approximately 140,515 residents in 2040. While the general population is likely to grow in every county in the region, Washington County will see a decline of 6.2 percent. The highest growth rates are within Elbert, Logan and Lincoln counties. As these are large counties that are rural in nature, travel over long distances to reach services and employment will continue to be a challenge for transit providers and passengers alike.

4.1.2 Elderly Population Growth

The elderly population for the region is anticipated to grow 80 percent from 2013 to 2040. Elbert County will see the most significant growth in the 65+ population in the region with a 225 percent increase from 2013 to 2040, but Logan County also has very high growth projections at 57.6 percent. When looking at these numbers, the increase in the Eastern region must be considered when planning for both public transit and human service transportation in the future. The elderly population will likely produce an increased number of transit dependent individuals who will rely heavily on human service transportation to get to major activity centers, healthcare facilities, and meal sites.

4.2 Qualitative Assessment of Needs and Gaps

Various types of service gaps impact transit service delivery to the general public and specialized populations. By reviewing these gaps within the Eastern TPR, a baseline is established which then helps to identify the larger service needs and gaps. Identified service needs and gaps for the nine-county TPR are reviewed below.

4.2.1 Spatial Needs and Gaps

Spatial gaps were observed in many parts of the Eastern TPR. Spatial gaps make it challenging for some travelers to access education, medical, service, shopping and employment centers outside their home service area. The following highlights the spatial gaps identified in the Eastern TPR:

- There is currently a need for increased trips for medical services that affect both the Northeastern Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG) and East Central Council of Governments (ECCOG) operations. Currently ECCOG provides service to and from Denver and Colorado Springs two to three trips per month, but this may need to be increased to weekly. NECALG service area to and from Fort Collins and Loveland should also be evaluated for increase in frequency.
- There is a need for direct, regional transit service to/from Elbert County and the Front Range.

- Human service transportation services are especially limited in the Eastern TPR and need to be expanded to meet rising demand.
- Medical appointments connecting all counties to the Front Range present transportation challenges that will need to be overcome.

Additionally, supporting the needs identified through analysis of the region and from the TWG, the Colorado Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan indicates the following spatial gaps in the Eastern TPR:

- Need for essential regional service from Sterling to Greeley, Fort Collins or Denver via Fort Morgan; between Yuma and Greeley via Fort Morgan, and Burlington to Denver via Limon and Strasburg.
- Essential service routes would also be added between Limon and urban areas along the Front Range.

CDOT's Statewide Elderly and Disabled Survey also showed concurrence with many of the spatial needs identified in the Eastern TPR, including:

- Forty-nine percent of respondents in the Eastern TPR rely on others for transportation for some to all of their trips
- Twenty-six percent of those surveyed indicated that at least sometimes they have trouble finding transportation for trips they need or want to make. Of those, 70% had difficulty finding transportation to medical appointments, 45 percent for accessing activity centers for shopping and pharmacy trips, and 35 percent for vising family or friends.
- A majority of respondents (70 percent) were unable to get somewhere because they could not find transportation once or more in the last month.
- General public transportation service and paratransit service is not available where 47 percent of the survey respondents live and/or where they want to go, which indicated this is a "major problem."
- The distance to a bus stop showed to be a major problem for 29 percent of survey respondents and is a barrier to their use of transit.

4.2.2 Temporal Needs and Gaps

Temporal gaps were also observed in many parts of the Eastern TPR. Similar to spatial gaps, temporal gaps create challenges for passengers trying to access education, medical, service, shopping and employment centers outside their home service area at certain times during the week/day. The following are the temporal needs and gaps noted for the Eastern TPR.

- A limitation on transit service frequency in the late evening and early morning hours was identified in the region. The lack of services during these times impacts the ability of service industry workers to access employment where jobs do not typically fall in the 8 AM to 5 PM timeframe.
- Several human service agencies in the region identified additional and/or expanded weekend transit service as a need. Again, weekend service allows specialized populations access to employment, recreation/social activities, and services.

CDOT's survey of older adults and adults with disabilities in the Eastern TPR also indicated temporal needs of those surveyed, including:

- Thirty-one percent of respondents indicated that service not operating during needed times being a "major problem" and is a barrier to their using transit.
- Forty-two percent of respondents indicated that it was difficult to find transportation on weekdays from 10 AM to 4 PM and 31 percent indicated this same challenge on weekdays from 4 PM to 7 PM. Lack of transportation services during the day on Saturday and Sunday also was a time that many survey respondents indicated needing transportation services, 37 percent and 54 percent, respectively.

4.2.3 Funding Needs and Gaps

All general transit and human service transportation providers identified funding limitations and regional needs. The following are the main issues identified:

- All providers identified the need for additional operating and capital funds to maintain existing services as a major issue. The lack of ongoing, consistent funding remains an issue in the state of Colorado and within the Eastern TPR, with particular need for assistance with matching funds. While capital funds are needed, all providers noted the lack of operating funds as a major limitation. Even if federal operating funding was increased, local available resources may not be able to provide the required 50 percent match.
- Significant growth in the elderly population in the Eastern region may place an additional strain on general public and human service transportation agencies, requiring increased funding to meet rising demand.

4.2.4 Program Eligibility and Trip Purpose Needs and Gaps

Program eligibility and trip purpose limitations also result in gaps and unmet needs in existing services. Examples in the Eastern TPR include:

- Many human service transportation programs are often available only to their program clients and no comingling of various subsets of the population is allowed. This is often due to the funding limitations, liability concerns, vehicle needs, and passenger behavior.
- Many quality of life trips (e.g., shopping, meals, and friends) are often not eligible trips through human service transportation providers. This becomes especially problematic as the elderly population grows and these older adults want to age in place.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Transit is an important economic engine that helps drive the local, regional and state of Colorado's economy. Transit helps connect people to jobs, shopping and much more throughout the Eastern Transportation Planning Region (TPR). The strategies identified in this Chapter highlight the importance of continuing to make meaningful investments in transit in the region.

Based on financial scenarios and projected growth in the Eastern TPR, the region's highest priority strategies have been identified, including the associated costs, common funding sources, local champions and partners, and the ideal timeframe for implementation. Each strategy falls in line with the transit vision and goals identified by the Eastern TPR Transit Working Group (TWG).

5.1 High Priority Strategies

The following strategies are to be used as an implementation plan to help prioritize and fund projects over the next 15 years between now and 2030. The implementation plan should be used as a guide for moving the Eastern region's transit vision forward. The TWG identified these strategies based on input from the public, identified needs and gaps in service, and input from transit and human service providers in the region. The strategies are categorized by the regional goal that it supports. **Appendix D.5** includes a full list of regional transit projects identified by the Eastern TWG.

It should be noted that the strategies identified in this Chapter complement and are congruent with the recommendations that have been identified in plans and studies completed in the region within the last five years, including the Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan completed in 2014. It is important to connect all planning efforts to meet the overall combined vision and goals of various stakeholders and entities throughout the region.

Regional Goal 1: Increase access to medical services within the region and to larger service areas.

Strategy 1.1: Increase East Central Council of Local Governments (ECCOG) area trips to Denver and Colorado Springs for medical services. Add one trip/week for each route.

- Annual Operating Cost: $50,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $10,000
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: ECCOG
- Potential Funding Sources:

  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, OAA/Title III, CDBG, CSBG, agency revenues, and local government (HUTF)

  Capital – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FASTER, CDBG, CSBG, OAA/Title III

Strategy 1.2: Increase Northeastern Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG) area trips to the Front Range (Denver and Fort Collins) for medical services. Add 3 trips/week for each route.

- Annual Operating Cost: $150,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $15,000
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: NECALG
- Potential Funding Sources:

  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, OAA/Title III, CDBG, CSBG, agency revenues, and local government (HUTF)

  Capital – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FASTER, CDBG, CSBG, OAA/Title III

Regional Goal 2: Expand transit services to meet identified needs.

Strategy 2.1: Expand service hours and days of operation in Burlington. Saturday service 12 hours/week; extend service 3 hours daily. 1,400 hours/year.

- Annual Operating Cost: $84,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $10,000
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: ECCOG, City of Burlington
- Potential Funding Sources:

  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, OAA/Title III, CDBG, CSBG, agency revenues, and local government

  Capital – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FASTER

Strategy 2.2: Expand service hours and days of operation in Limon to three days per week and five hours per day.

- Annual Operating Cost: $47,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $10,000
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: ECCOG, Town of Limon
- Potential Funding Sources:

  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, agency revenues, and local government (HUTF)

  Capital –FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FASTER

Strategy 2.3: Provide daily shuttle service in Elbert County (Elizabeth/Kiowa) and a park-and-ride. Weekday service; 1 daily round trip. 2,080 hours/year.

- Annual Operating Cost: $125,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $520,000
- Timeframe: 7–12 years
- Champions/Partners: ECCOG, Elbert County
- Potential Funding Sources:

  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, agency revenues, and local government (HUTF)

  Capital – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FASTER

Regional Goal 3: Provide transit service for the transit dependent populations within the region.

Strategy 3.1: Add 10,000 hours/year of transit service throughout the region for transit dependent populations within the Eastern TPR.

- Annual Operating Cost: $600,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $20,000
- Timeframe: 7–12 years
- Champions/Partners: Eastern TPR, ECCOG, NECALG, AAAs, Human Service agencies
- Potential Funding Sources:

  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, OAA/Title III, CDBG, CSBG, agency revenues, and local government (HUTF)

  Capital – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FASTER

***Regional Goal 4*: Maximize (maintain) existing transit service to meet current and future transit needs.**

Strategy 4.1: Continue operation of existing regional services.

- 2030 Operating Cost: $2.1 million
- Annual Capital Cost: $120,000
- Timeframe: Present to 3030
- Champions/Partners: ECCOG, NECALG
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Operating –FTA 5310, FTA 5311, OAA/Title III, CDBG, CSBG, agency revenues, and local government (HUTF)
  Capital – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FASTER

***Regional Goal 5*: Increase the awareness of mobility services among elected officials, agencies, clients, and the public to encourage greater utilization of existing transit services.**

Strategy 5.1: Develop regional transit resource directories, route/schedule information, marketing, education, travel training, and coordination strategies for ECCOG and NECALG service areas.

- Annual Operating Cost: N/A
- Annual Capital Cost: N/A
- Timeframe: Present to 3030
- Champions/Partners: ECCOG, NECALG, human service agencies, Progressive 15, CDOT
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311(b), agency revenues, and local governments (HUTF)

5.2 Implementation Plan Financial Summary

Table 5-1 provides an overview of estimated costs associated with maintaining the existing system compared to implementing the high-priority strategies as identified in Section 5.1

To maintain existing service levels in 2030, the region would require operating funds in the amount of approximately $2.1 million. Inflation rates in Colorado over the last decade have averaged 2 percent per year. Price inflation for transportation commodities has averaged 3 percent and motor fuel price inflation has averaged over 10 percent over the last decade. Inflation erodes the purchasing power of current revenue streams.

To implement the “growth” scenario, which implements the high priority strategies, an additional $1.7 million in operating and administrative dollars would be required, increasing the annual shortfall to approximately $2.1 million. Capital expenses associated with the high priority strategies will require an additional $585,000 between 2014 and 2030 in 2013 dollars to implement.

As shown, to maintain existing services and implement high priority strategies identified in the region, the Eastern TPR will need to secure new funding to ensure growth and expansion of transit and human services transportation in the region.

Table 5-1 Financial Summary

2030 Projected Annual Operating/Administrative Costs	
Status Quo – Maintain Existing Service Levels	$2.1 million
Growth – Implement High Priority Strategies	$1.7 million
Total - Status Quo and Growth Costs	**$3.8 million**
2040 Anticipated Revenues	$1.7 million
Shortfall	**($2.1 million)**

Values in 2030 dollars

2014–2030 Projected Capital Costs	
Growth – Implement High Priority Strategies	$585,000 in 2013 dollars $935,000 in 2030 dollars

6.0 FINANCIAL AND FUNDING OVERVIEW

This Chapter presents current and estimated future operating expenses and revenues available in the Eastern Transportation Planning Region (TPR) through 2040. These estimates are based on survey reported data from providers in the region. Through Transit Working Group (TWG) meetings, every attempt has been made to be inclusive of all providers and agencies operating in the region and to verify the accuracy of these data. These estimates reflect best available data and are intended solely to illustrate long-term trends in operating needs.

This Chapter also presents a snapshot of current transit funding levels and potential sources of funds for the Eastern TPR. Significant current and potential future funding programs are summarized and estimates of funds generated through future potential revenue mechanism are provided.

6.1 Financial Overview and Funding Scenarios

The 2040 operating revenue and expense projections presented here are intended to provide an estimate of the general range of future revenues available and the magnitude of future resource needs. While any forecast is subject to uncertainty, estimates may help guide regional actions and may indicate the need for future coordination, collaboration, and alternative revenue strategies.

6.1.1 Current and Future Operating Expenses

In recent years, operating expenses for major transit providers in the Eastern TPR have grown faster than available revenues and population growth. As shown in **Table 6-1**, operating expenses are projected to grow 1.2 percent, while revenues are projected to grow by only 0.6 percent between 2013 and 2040.

The region's resident population is expected to grow 1.7 percent annually between 2013 and 2040 and reach 140,515 by 2040. The population over the age of 65 years will grow at an annual rate of 2.2 percent through 2040. Future population growth will exceed historic growth rates in operating funds. In 2013, approximately $1.4 million, or $17 per capita, was expended to support critical transit and transportation services in the Eastern TPR. To provide the same level of service (as measured by per capita expenditures) in 2040 as today, the region will require approximately $2.4 million in operating funds.

Table 6-1 Existing and Projected Operating Revenues and Expenditures to Maintain Existing Service Levels (2013-2040)

Eastern TPR	2013	2020	2030	2040	Average Annual Growth (2013-2040)
Operating Expenses	$1,434,740	$1,722,000	$2,129,000	$2,450,000	1.2%
Operating Revenues	$1,434,740	$1,565,000	$1,705,000	$1,876,000	0.6%
Potential Funding (Gap) / Surplus	*0*	(-$157,000)	(-$424,000)	(-$574,000)	*-0.60%*

Source: CDOT, Transit Agency Provider Survey, 2013. Dollars in year of expenditure value.

Table 6-2 provides an overview of several indicators often used to measure performance of transit systems. The operating cost indicators provide an additional perspective on the operational costs in the Eastern TPR and the regional influences. Influences on operating cost measures include the rural nature of the area, long trip distances, and higher fuel and maintenance costs.

Table 6-2 Eastern TPR Average Transit Operating Cost

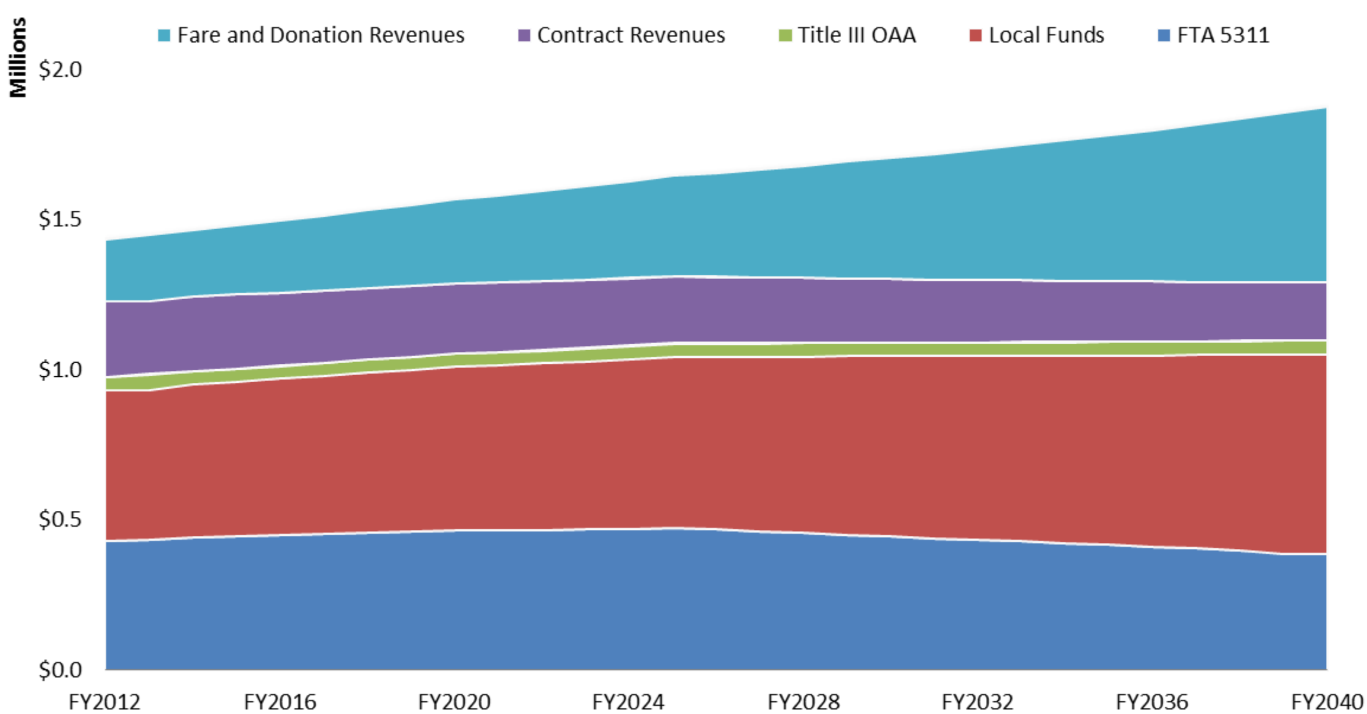
Performance Measure	Operating Cost
Cost per Capita	$17
Cost per Passenger Trip	$7
Cost per Revenue Mile	$2
Cost per Revenue Hour	$24

Source: Transit Agency Provider Survey, 2013

6.1.2 Current and Future Operating Revenues

By 2040, the Eastern TPR could expect transit revenues available for operating and administration purposes to reach an estimated $1.8 million. Projections of future revenues are based on historical trends in provider budgets, current estimates of federal revenue growth, and state and regional population and economic growth rates (All operating expenses also include administrative expenses as reported by the providers and as collected from available NTD and survey reported data). **Figure 6-1** illustrates potential future trends in major operating revenue sources currently used within the region.

Figure 6-1 Forecasted Operating Revenues in the Eastern TPR



The following information summarizes each revenue category identified in **Figure 6-1**:

- **Federal Transit Administration (FTA**) revenues depend on fuel tax revenues, which are expected to grow more slowly from 2020 through 2040. FTA awards provide a significant portion of transit service funding in the region today, including continuing operating support through FTA 5311 rural funds. CDOT estimates future FTA funding levels per Congressional Budget Office forecasts.
- **Local funds,** including local matching funds for grant awards, are variable and depend on the fiscal health and economy of local municipalities. Growth in sales tax revenues is expected to slow in the

future as consumer spending shifts from durable goods to services. Forecast builds from historical trends and assumes that overall local funding will stay constant over the long-term.

- **Title III of the Older Americans Act (OAA)** for supportive services for the elderly is subject to reauthorization every five years. Funding for this program has grown over the past decade, but according to the Office of Management and Budget, is expected to decline in the future given the impacts of sequestration. For FY2013, Colorado's OAA Title III funding allotment for home and community based care fell by 15 percent.
- **Contract revenues** account for roughly 20 percent of all operating revenues in the region but have declined over the past three to five years. These revenues include variable sources such as Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) funding through the Medicaid program or Community Service Block Grants (CSBG). Revenues from Medicaid and CSBG have grown quickly in the region. Higher growth rates will continue in the mid-term but will begin to slow in the long-term with changes in the population demographics within the region.
- **Fare and donation revenues** are a significant, but variable, source of funding for Eastern TPR providers. Between 2008 and 2012, fare and donation revenues have grown at a compound annual average growth rate of 3.8 percent.
- **Other revenues,** including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/Workforce Investment Act (TANF/WIA), Head Start, other FTA grant programs, and agency-derived sources such as investments and contracts are important but relatively small sources of revenues and not directly included in this forecast.

Estimating future revenues is challenging, particularly for the diverse federal, state, and local funding mechanisms used to support transit services in rural areas. Federal legislation, such as Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, OAA, Social Security Act, and WIA provide significant and ongoing funding for transit and transportation services but are subject to periodic reauthorizations and annual budget appropriations. Individual programs funded through the FTA, Department of Veteran Affairs, and Department of Health and Human Services continue to evolve over time and changes in state funding formulas can significantly impact the monies available to providers in Colorado.

Other federal grant awards are competitive, are often one-time grants, and are highly uncertain over the long-term. Revenues from local governments or regional transportation authorities are often not dedicated and are subject to variations in local tax revenues and local budget processes. Donations and awards from private, civic, or philanthropic sources are highly variable and not often recurring. Fare and contract revenues reflect demand for services but may also vary substantially with local economic fluctuations or changes internal to the agency. Every effort has been made to reasonably estimate the overall level of revenues available to support operating expenses at the regional level.

6.1.3 Status Quo Revenue and Expenditure Summary

Based on best available information and known trends, it is currently forecast that transit expenses in the Eastern TPR will outstrip the growth in transit revenues by 0.6 percent (average annual growth including inflation) between 2013 and 2040. As illustrated in **Table 6-1,** these trends could result in a potential funding gap of nearly $574,000 in 2040. In terms of potential projects and strategies, this means the region will have to secure new funding sources to address funding gaps.

Future operating expense estimates represent only the resources necessary to maintain transit services at current levels on a per-capita basis. These estimates do not take into account any cost increases beyond inflation. For example, higher costs of labor, fuel, administration, and maintenance can significantly increase operating costs. As a result, actual operating expenses in future years may run higher than anticipated.

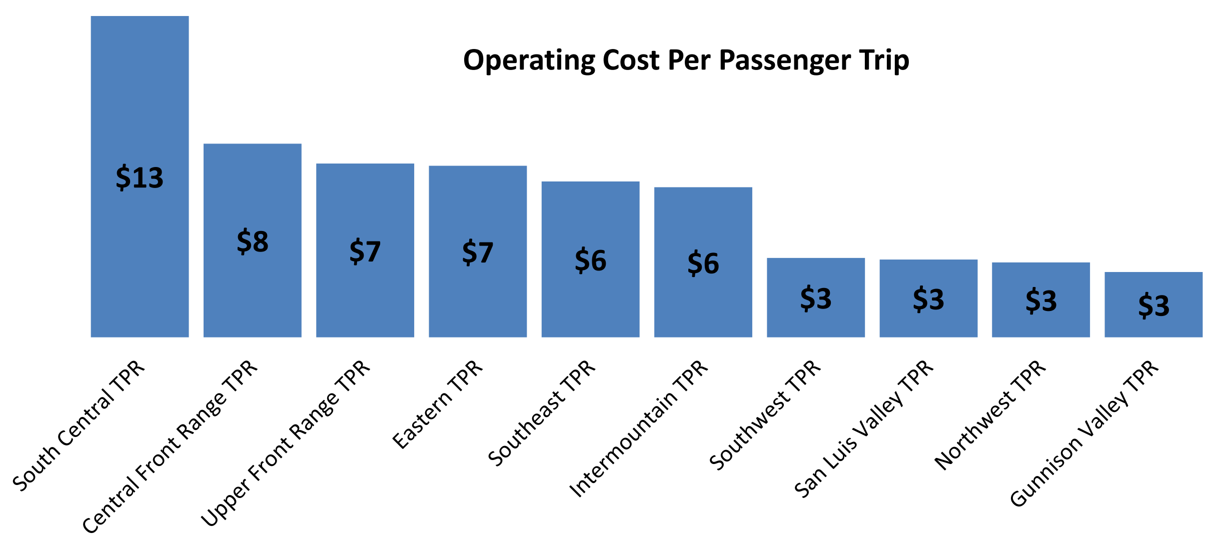
Additionally, revenue forecasts are highly variable and actual future values may be higher or lower than expected. In particular, sales and use tax collections are cyclical and depend entirely on economic conditions.

Given the magnitude of potential future funding shortfalls in the region, alternative revenue sources, such as those described later in this chapter, or growth in current revenue streams will more than likely be necessary to continue to fund improvements and to meet the growing needs of general public, businesses, elderly, veterans, low-income, and transit dependent populations.

6.2 Current Transit Expenditures

Per capita operating expenditures provide an approximate indicator of current and future resource needs. **Figure 6-2** illustrates the various levels of transit service provided in each of Colorado's TPRs as measured by operating cost per passenger trip. Each region varies considerably in the scale and type of operations, system utilization and ridership, full-time resident population, and population of seasonal visitors and other system users. In 2012, approximately $7 per trip was expended to support critical transit services within the Eastern TPR. Transit operating costs in the Eastern TPR are relatively high compared to other regions, due to the higher cost of fuel, trip distances, and general maintenance imposed by the region's geography and economy.

Figure 6-2 Operating Cost per Passenger Trip in Colorado Transportation Planning Regions



Source: 2012 Self-reported data from Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Transit Agency Provider Survey, 2013

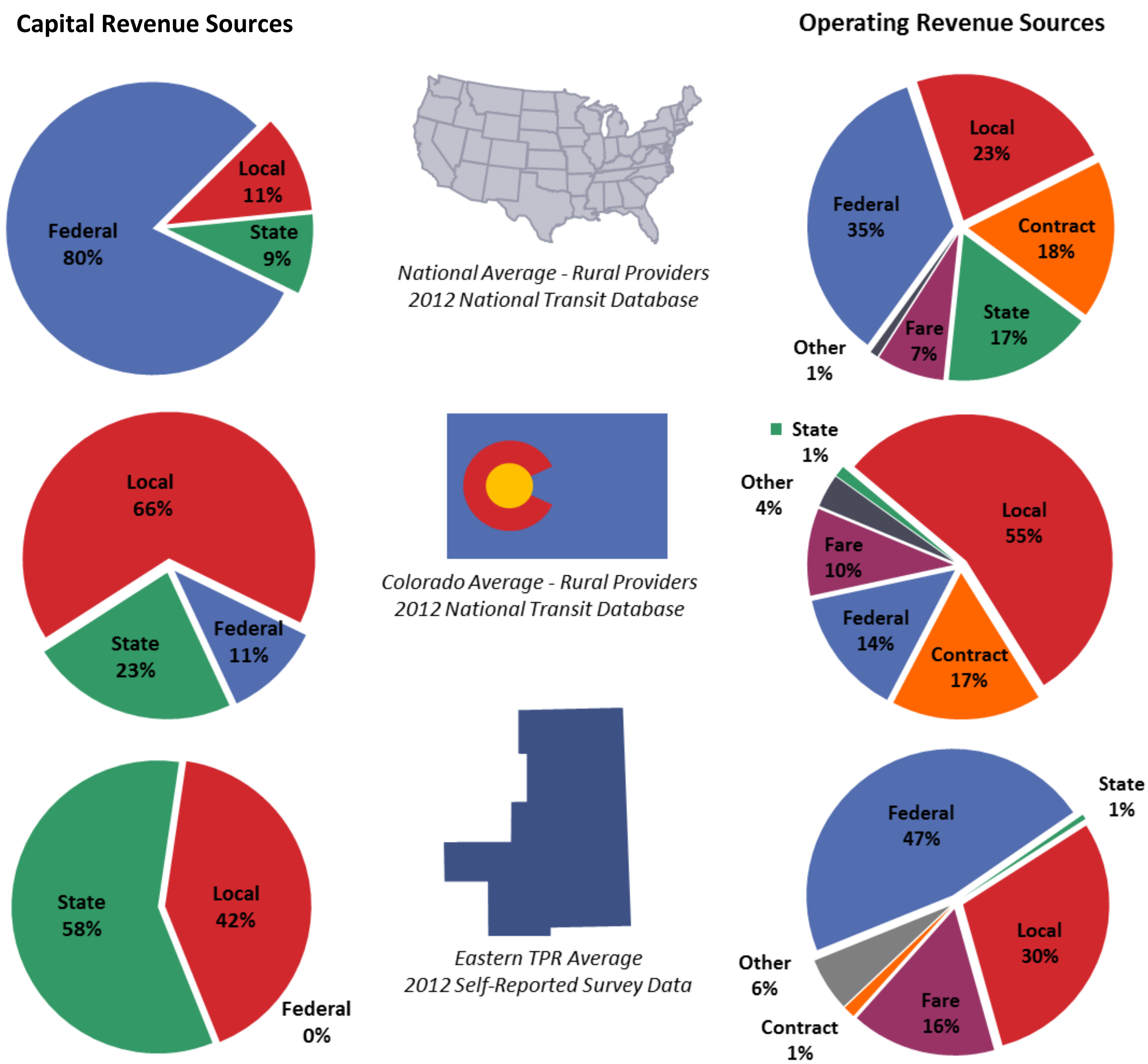
6.3 Current Transit Revenue Sources

Transit service providers in the Eastern TPR and across Colorado rely on a patchwork of funding sources to continue operations or fund improvements and system expansions. **Figure 6-3** displays information from the National Transit Database of rural providers for the nation and for Colorado. This information is compared to the aggregate regional financial information as reported to the DTR by providers in the region.

At the national level, most capital revenues are derived from federal sources, primarily Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants. Over the past five years, federal capital spending increased substantially through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and some of those investments are still being awarded. In 2012, ARRA funding represented one-third of all federal transit-related capital funding nationally. However, in

Colorado, relatively few ARRA investments and other large-scale transit capital projects are underway and the federal share of capital revenues is substantially less at the state level—at just 11 percent. The State of Colorado contributes more than twice the national average toward capital investments, primarily through the Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery (FASTER) program.

Figure 6-3 Comparison of National, State, and Regional Revenue Sources



Source: National Transit Database, 2012 | CDOT Transit Agency Provider Survey, 2013

In the Eastern TPR, capital funding is provided exclusively through state and local sources. State support was primarily provided through FASTER funding. Local funding includes a wide variety of local government contributions to services throughout the region. There was no reported federal funding in 2012. However, in previous years, federal funds have been received by the region. Capital expenditures are not consistent over time and different sources are used to fund different projects as needs arise.

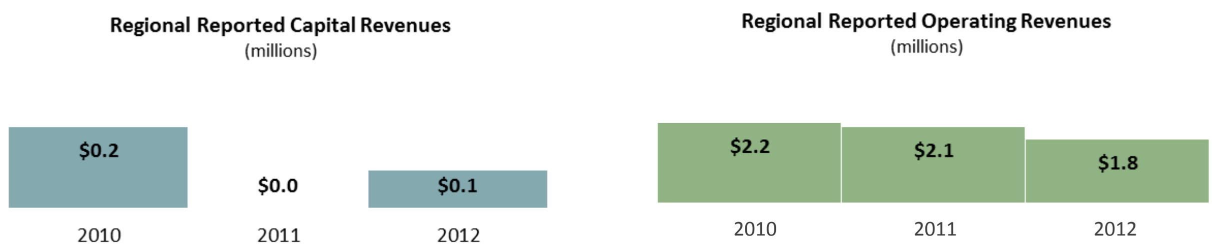
At the national level, operating revenues are relatively diversified among federal, local, agency-derived, and state funding sources. Colorado, on average, is more dependent on local sources and less reliant on federal and state sources for operating funds. However, within the Eastern TPR, the local share of operating revenues is less than the state average (30 percent compared to 55 percent). Federal operating grants make up nearly one-half of operating funding sources. Many providers in the region provide a variety of important local human services needs, which tend to be primarily funded through federal human services and health programs. Fares are an important source of operating funding in the Eastern TPR, more so than in some other regions in Colorado. Other sources such as private and philanthropic funds are also important sources for providers in the region.

6.4 Regional Transit Revenue Trends

While federal operating support for rural transit is relatively stable and predictable, many other funding sources are highly variable, including federal or state competitive grant awards, one-time transfers from local governments, private or philanthropic donations, or local tax revenues that are subject to fluctuations in local economies. When these funding streams decline or remain stagnant, transit agencies are forced to respond by reducing service, raising fares, eliminating staff positions, delaying system expansions, or postponing maintenance activities.

Figure 6-4 illustrates trends in reported capital and operating revenues for the past three years. Capital investments in new services and vehicle replacement, while relatively small, have remained constant in the region in recent years. Operating revenues have declined recently. In particular, funds from local and contract source have fallen, while funds from fares and charitable contributions, agency-generated revenues, and other sources have increased. It should be noted that data for 2010 and 2011 are compiled from the National Transit Database and are not directly comparable to data derived from survey information reported by providers in the region in 2013 based on 2012 data.

Figure 6-4 Recent Trends in Regional Transit Revenues



Source: 2012 Self-reported data from CDOT Transit Agency Provider Survey, 2013

6.5 Transit and Transportation Funding Sources

Public funds are primarily used to support transit and transportation services in Colorado's rural areas. Support from federal agencies, state programs, and local governments provide most funding to support capital construction and acquisition. Operating and administration activities are most often supported by local governments, FTA grants, private or civic gifts, and from agency-generated revenues, such as contract services, service fares, and investments.

The following sections detail a number of commonly used funding streams that can be used to support transit services in the region. This list is not exhaustive, as there are approximately 80 federal agencies that provide funding for transportation services, including mobility management, one-call/one-click centers, transit fares/vouchers, and vehicles.

6.5.1 Federal Grant Programs – U.S. Department of Transportation

Grant programs administered by the FTA provide the most significant source of ongoing funds to support transit services in rural areas. Colorado conducts a statewide competitive application process to determine awards of

FTA grants and to ensure that it and the local grantees follow federal laws and regulations. CDOT contracts with the local grantees once it selects the funding recipients. FTA funds are complex and governed by varying requirements and provisions for use.

Only the 5311 grant programs are specifically intended to support transit in rural areas; however, under certain circumstances and with the discretion of the state, many other programs may be used to support rural services. The following major FTA and U.S. DOT programs cover grant assistance programs for rural areas. Providers in the Eastern region may not be eligible for some of these programs. CDOT provides a clearinghouse of information on current grant programs and can provide limited technical assistance with grant applications.

FTA Section 5304 Statewide and Metropolitan Planning funds can be used for a wide variety of transit planning activities, including transit technical assistance, planning, research, demonstration projects, special studies, training, and other similar projects. These funds are not available for capital or operating expenses of public transit systems. First priority is given to statewide projects, which includes grant administration; the provision of planning, technical and management assistance to transit operators; and special planning or technical studies. The second priority is given to updating existing regional transit plans. Third priority is given to requests for new regional transit plans. Fourth priority is given to requests to conduct local activities, such as research, local transit operating plans, demonstration projects, training programs, strategic planning, or site development planning.

FTA Section 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides formula funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in areas with populations of less than 50,000. Funds may be used to support administrative, capital, or operating costs, including planning, job access, and reverse commute programs, for local transportation providers when paired with local matching funds. States may distribute funding to public, private non-profit, or tribal organizations, including Local and Regional Coordinating Councils. Within this program, Section 5311(f) requires at least 15 percent of a state's funds under this program to be used to support intercity bus services, unless the governor has certified that such needs are already being met. The Rural Transit Assistance Program and the Tribal Transit Program are funded as a takedown from the Section 5311 program. The federal share of eligible capital and project administrative expenses may not exceed 80 percent of the net cost of the project. For operating, the federal share may not exceed 50 percent of the net operating cost of the project. For projects that meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Clean Air Act, or bicycle access projects, they may be funded at 90 percent federal match.

FTA Section (5311(b)(3)) Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP) provides a source of funding to assist in the design and implementation of training and technical assistance projects and other support services tailored to meet the needs of transit operators in rural areas. States may use RTAP funds to support non-urbanized transit activities in four categories: training, technical assistance, research, and related support services. Colorado receives a base allocation of $65,000 annually in RTAP funds. There is no federal requirement for a local match. CDOT provides RTAP funding to the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies.

FTA Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities is a formula grant program intended to enhance mobility of seniors and persons with disabilities. It is used to fund programs that serve the special needs of transit-dependent populations beyond traditional public transportation services and ADA complementary paratransit services. Eligible recipients include states or local government authorities, private non-profit organizations, or operators of public transportation. At least 55 percent of program funds must be used on public transportation capital projects that are intended to meet the special needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, inappropriate, or unavailable. The remaining 45 percent of program funds may be used for projects that exceed the ADA requirements or that improve access to fixed-route service and decrease reliance by individuals with disabilities on paratransit services or that provide alternatives to public transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities. The 5310 program funds certain capital and operating costs, with an 80 percent federal share for capital and 50 percent federal share for operating.

FTA Section 5312 Research, Development, Demonstration, and Deployment Projects supports research activities that improve the safety, reliability, efficiency, and sustainability of public transportation by investing in the development, testing, and deployment of innovative technologies, materials, and processes; carry out related endeavors; and to support the demonstration and deployment of low-emission and no-emission vehicles to promote clean energy and improve air quality. Eligible recipients include state and local governments, providers of public transportation, private or non-profit organizations, technical and community colleges, and institutions of higher education. Federal share is 80 percent with a required 20 percent non-federal share for all projects (non-federal share may be in-kind).

FTA Section 5322 Human Resources and Training program allows the FTA to make grants or enter into contracts for human resource and workforce development programs as they apply to public transportation activities. Such programs may include: employment training, outreach program to increase minority and female employment in public transportation activities, research on public transportation personnel and training needs, and training and assistance for minority business opportunities. Eligible recipients are not defined in legislation and are subject to FTA criteria. This program is initially authorized at $5 million total through 2014. The federal share is 50 percent with a required 50 percent non-federal share for all projects.

FTA Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities program provides capital funding to replace, rehabilitate, and purchase buses, vans, and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. This program replaces the previous 5309 program and provides funding to eligible recipients that operate or allocate funding to fixed-route bus operators. Eligible recipients include public agencies or private non-profit organizations engaged in public transportation, including those providing services open to a segment of the general public, as defined by age, disability, or low income. States may transfer funds within this program to supplement urban and rural formula grant programs, including 5307 and 5311 programs. Federal share is 80 percent with a required 20 percent local match.

FTA Section 5309 Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Grants (New Starts) program is the primary funding source for major transit capital investments. The 5309 program provides grants for new and expanded rail and bus rapid transit systems that reflect local priorities to improve transportation options in key corridors. This program defines a new category of eligible projects, known as core capacity projects, which expand capacity by at least 10 percent in existing fixed-guideway transit corridors that are already at or above capacity today, or are expected to be at or above capacity within five years. This discretionary program requires project sponsors to undergo a multi-step, multi-year process to be eligible for funding. Projects must demonstrate strong local commitment, including local funding, to earn a portion of this limited federal capital funding source. Generally the requirements of this program limit funding to major urban providers, however some rural systems have been competitive and received funding in recent years, including RFTA for the new VelociRFTA BRT service along SH 82. Maximum federal share is 80 percent.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Surface Transportation Program (STP) provides flexible funding that may be used by states and local governments for a variety of highway-related projects as well as pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, transit capital projects, including vehicles and facilities used to provide intercity bus service, transit safety infrastructure improvements and programs, and transportation alternatives as defined by MAP-21 to include most transportation enhancement eligibilities. Funds may be flexed to FTA programs, local governments, and transit agencies to support transit-related projects.

FHWA Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including transit-related projects, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, and community improvement activities. The TAP replaced the funding from pre-MAP-21 programs including the Transportation Enhancement Activities, Recreational Trails Program, and Safe Routes to School Program. Requirements and guidelines for this program – as related to transit – largely remain similar to the previous transportation enhancement program. TAP funds transferred to FTA are subject to the FTA program requirements, including a required 20 percent matching local funds.

FHWA National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) provides funding specifically to support the condition and performance of the National Highway System (NHS). While this is a highway-oriented program, NHPP funds can be used on a public transportation project that supports progress toward the achievement of national performance goals. Public transportation eligible projects include: construction of publicly owned intracity or intercity bus terminals servicing the NHS, infrastructure-based intelligent transportation system capital improvements, and bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways.

Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative (VTCLI) is a competitive grant program to support activities that help veterans learn about and arrange for locally available transportation services to connect to jobs, education, health care, and other vital services**.** The initiative focuses on technology investments to build One-Call/One-Click Transportation Resource Centers. The VTCLI program is a joint effort of the Departments of Transportation, Defense, Health and Human Services, Labor, and Veterans Affairs but is managed and administered by the FTA. Funded in 2011 and 2012 only, future funding for the effort has not been announced.

6.5.2 Federal Grant Programs – Other

Other federal agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Labor, Department of Education, and others, provide grants or continuing financial assistance to support the needs of aging residents, military veterans, unemployed workers, and other populations. A 2011 Government Accountability Office report found that over 80 federal programs may be used for some type of transit and transportation assistance. For a complete inventory of other federal programs available, see recent reports from the National Resource Center for Human Service transportation Coordination (http://www.unitedweride.gov/NRC_FederalFundingUpdate_Appendix.pdf). Most federal human services related funding assistances flow through state or regional organizations and may be used to cover a wide range of services, including, but not dedicated to, transit and transportation assistance. These other federal programs may provide for contracted transportation services, or offer reimbursement for transportation services provided to covered individuals or may be used as “non-federal” matches for FTA grants or may support transportation assistance and coordination positions

The following section briefly describe current and major federal grant programs most frequently used to support transit and transportation services, according to the National Resource Center for Human Service Transportation Coordination.

Medicaid is the only program outside the U.S. DOT that requires the provision of transportation. This federal-state partnership for health insurance and medical assistance is provided for low-income individuals. In Colorado, Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) is provided for medical appointments and services for clients with no other means of transportation. Medicaid in Colorado provides a significant source of funds for many transit service providers. However, these funds are provided on a reimbursement basis.

Older Americans Act (OAA), Title III provides funding to local providers for the transport of seniors and their caregivers. Eligible recipients include transportation services that facilitate access to supportive services or nutrition services, and services provided by an area agency on aging, in conjunction with local transportation service providers, public transportation agencies, and other local government agencies, that result in increased provision of such transportation services for older individuals. Under certain conditions, OAA funds can be used to meet the match requirements for programs administered by the FTA.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds for **Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)** is a federal program that provides funding to states. State TANF agencies, including Colorado Works, may use TANF funds to provide support services including transportation. States have wide latitude on how this money can be spent, but the purchase of vehicles for the provision of transportation services for TANF-eligible individuals is included. For example, supporting and developing services such as connector services to mass transit, vanpools, sharing buses with elderly and youth programs, coordinating with existing human services transportation resources, employer provided transportation, or guaranteed ride home programs are all activities that may be covered under the TANF program.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and cover funding for transportation. A portion of CDBG funds are spent on directly operated transit services, transit facilities or transit-related joint facilities, and services for persons with disabilities, low-income populations, youth and seniors. These grants have statutory authority to be used as the “non-federal” matching funds for FTA formula grants.

Community Services Block Grants (CSBG) are administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and cover funding for transportation. CSBG funds are primarily intended to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities. Eligible transportation activities include programs or projects to transport low-income persons to medical facilities, employment services, and education or healthcare activities.

Vocational Rehabilitation grants are from the Department of Education. Often, a portion of these grants are used to provide participating individuals with transportation reimbursements, vouchers, bus passes, or other purchased transportation service, often from FTA grantees and subrecipients. State vocational rehabilitation agencies are encouraged to cooperate with statewide workforce development activities under the WIA. In Colorado, these grants are administered through the Statewide Independent Living Council and State Rehabilitation Council.

6.5.3 State, Local, and Agency-Derived Revenue Sources

In Colorado, local revenue sources provide an important source of funding for transit agencies and service providers. Transfers and grants from local governments provide ongoing operating support and assistance with one-time planning efforts or matching funds for major capital projects. The state of Colorado provides direct funding for capital equipment investments and for projects that support transit activities. A variety of other relatively small, but important funding sources are used by providers and agencies to meet the needs of transit dependent populations in the state.

Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation & Economic Recovery (FASTER) is a state funding source that provides direct support for transit projects. FASTER funds provide $15 million annually for statewide and local transit projects, such as new bus stops, bike parking, transit maintenance facilities, multimodal transportation centers, and other capital projects. FASTER transit funds are split between local transit grants ($5 million per year) and statewide projects ($10 million per year). Both are awarded competitively by CDOT DTR. Among the types of projects that have been awarded are the purchase or replacement of transit vehicles, construction of multimodal stations, and acquisition of equipment for consolidated call centers.

In 2014 the Colorado Transportation Commission approved the use of these funds for operating and capital costs. As a result, $3 million of the FASTER transit funds are now allocated to cover the cost of the planned Interregional Express Bus service and another $1 million is available annually to cover the operating costs of other regional/interregional routes. From fiscal years 2010 to 2013, over $52 million in FASTER funds have been invested in transit projects throughout the state. However, while total revenues collected under the overall FASTER program ($252 million FY 2013) are projected to increase over time, the allocation for transit projects remains at a flat $15 million per year.

The Colorado Veterans Trust Fund is administered by the Colorado Department of Military and Veteran Affairs to support organizations providing transit and transportation assistance to veterans. The state supports Veterans Service Offices in each county and grants are awarded to non-profit organizations providing transportation and other services to veterans. An estimated $200,000 a year is directed to supporting the transportation needs of veterans.

Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) is funded through revenues raised from statewide gas tax, vehicle registration fees, license fees and user fees. These taxes are not indexed to inflation or motor fuel prices. As a result, revenues within this fund do not keep pace with actual construction or program costs over time. Funds are distributed based on a formula to CDOT, counties, and municipalities. Under Senate Bill 13-140, local governments are authorized to flex HUTF dollars to transit-related projects. Transit and other multimodal projects allowed include, but are not limited to: bus purchases, transit and rail station constructions, transfer facilities, maintenance facilities for transit, rolling stock, bus rapid transit lanes, bus stops and pull-outs along roadways, bicycle and pedestrian overpasses, lanes and bridges. Local governments may expend no more than 15 percent of HUTF allocations for transit-related operational purposes.

Local Governments including cities, counties, and special districts support or directly fund rural transit services. These services are typically funded through a city or county's general fund, although mass transit districts, metropolitan districts, and rural transportation authorities can levy and collect dedicated funding from sales and use taxes. Local funds flow to public or non-profit transit or transportation service agencies either on a contract basis or in the form of general operating support. Transit agencies also often seek direct local support to provide matching funds to federal grant awards. Local governments in Colorado are most commonly funded through general sales and use taxes or property taxes.

In 1990, Colorado provided the "authority of counties outside the Regional Transportation District to impose a sales tax for the purpose of funding a mass transportation system." Eagle, Summit, and Pitkin counties currently employ this Mass Transit District mechanism to support transit services. Unlike a rural transportation authority, this option does not require a geographic boundary separate from the county and does not require the creation of a legal authority.

In 1997, Colorado enabled the "Rural Transportation Authority Law" to allow any single or coalition of several local governments to create rural transportation authorities. These authorities are empowered to develop and operate a transit system, construct and maintain roadways, and petition the citizens within the authority boundary to tax themselves for the purpose of funding the authority and the services provided. There are currently five Rural Transportation Authorities active in Colorado (Roaring Fork, Gunnison Valley, Pikes Peak, Baptist Road, and South Platte Valley).

Fares and other revenues (such as advertising) generated by transit agencies are used to offset operating expenses. Farebox recovery varies by agency, but rarely do passenger fares cover more than half of total operating and maintenance expenses. Because of this, transit agencies are dependent on the federal, state, and local revenue sources they receive to continue operating.

Service contracts are a way for local agencies to fund operations for specific economic or employment centers, such as universities or the campuses of major employers. Examples around the country include CityBus in Lafayette, Indiana, which has a service contract with Purdue University and Ivy Tech State College; Kalamazoo Metro Transit in Michigan, which contracts with Western Michigan University; Corvallis Transit in Oregon, with a contract with Oregon State University. Service contracts can also be made with neighboring counties or municipalities. In addition to service contracts, another way to partner with local colleges or universities is through a College Pass Program. These programs often involve a student activity fee for transit services that is administered by the school. This can be paired with a discounted or free pass that students can use to ride the transit system.

Private support from major employers within a transit agency service area can be a source of funds. These employers may be willing to help support the cost of vehicles or the operating costs for employee transportation. Individual companies or business groups may also fully fund or subsidize new express routes, dedicated vehicles, or improved transit facilities that specifically serve their employees. Sponsorship opportunities can range from small-scale benefits programs to encourage ridership (such as commuter passes) to service subsidies (such as direct contract payments or on-vehicle advertising) to larger capital investments in new vehicles or facilities serving business centers.

Charitable contributions are a source of revenue for many rural transit or service providers. While contributions from individuals are uncommon, ongoing operating support or one-time grants for operating positions or even capital investments may be provided by community or private foundations.

6.6 Future Funding Options

The following section describes options that can be considered by Colorado's local agencies to fund transit service. These sources include revenue streams that are relatively common across the country or those that are not often implemented except for in a small number of communities. Available options for any given community depend on state and local regulations, funding needs, and political considerations. Many of the examples listed in this section are drawn from TCRP Project J-11, Task 14: Alternative Local and Regional Funding Mechanisms.

Local Sales Taxes: Local sales and use taxes are one of the most common sources of revenue used to fund public transit by counties, cities, and special districts. Revenues derived from sales taxes may be dedicated to a transit agency or special district or may be collected by a local government and transferred to a local public provider for ongoing support. Dedicated assessments commonly range from 0.25 to 1 percent of total taxable sales. The use of these revenues is generally flexible and can provide funding for specific capital projects, or provide dedicated operating revenue to an entire agency. In Colorado, formation of special districts and any tax policy change resulting in net revenue gains requires voter approval under the TABOR constitutional amendment.

Property Taxes: Another common source of funding for transit agencies is property taxes. Property tax assessments are usually levied as a percentage of assessed residential and commercial value within a transit agency's service area. Property tax assessments that are levied solely on mineral or natural resource property value are infrequently used, but do exist. As with sales tax assessments, local communities seeking to raise property tax mil rates must seek voter approval and must consider TABOR and Gallagher limits.

Motor Fuel Taxes: Motor fuel taxes are commonly levied by states for transportation and most state funding for transit comes from fuel tax revenues. At the local or regional level, state motor fuel taxes are generally dedicated to roadways, although some local governments can transfer fuel tax revenues to transit, including in Colorado. In addition to state-collected fuel taxes, at least 15 states allow for local-option motor fuel taxes to be administered and collected at the city or county level.

Those states that enable local-option fuel taxes that may be used to support transit services within a local area include: Tennessee, California, Florida, Illinois, Hawaii, and Virginia.

Vehicle Fees: Fees tied to vehicle ownership most commonly include annual registration titling fees as well as other mechanisms such as vehicle titling or sales fees, rental or lease taxes, toll revenues, parking, or taxi company licensing fees. State collected vehicle-related fees are used to support transit, including the FASTER program in Colorado. Locally collected vehicle related fees are not in widespread use to directly support transit, though there are a few examples around the country.

Triangle Transit in North Carolina and New York MTA both receive multiple types of vehicle fees that are collected at the local level. Allegheny County in Pennsylvania enacted a $2 rental car fee to support transit services in the Pittsburgh region.

Parking Fees: Fees and fines for parking vehicles within certain city areas may be imposed to achieve local goals, including managing congestion and encouraging mode shifts to transit. Local transit agencies may receive funding for operations from parking fees and fines levied by local governments or they may receive parking related revenues generated at facilities (e.g., parking garages or park and ride lots actually owned by that transit provider).

The San Francisco Metropolitan Transportation Agency (Muni) receives a significant amount of revenues for the provision of transit services through parking fees and fines. Eighty percent of city parking revenues are dedicated to Muni operations.

Employee or Payroll-Based Taxes: Payroll taxes are generally imposed on the gross payroll of businesses within a transit district or transit agency service area and are paid by the employer. An income-based tax is imposed on employee earnings and may be administered by a local government based on employees' place of work.

Transit agencies currently using payroll taxes include TriMet in Oregon, New York MTA, and CityBus in Lafayette, Indiana.

Value Capture: Value capture describes a range of revenue mechanisms related to residential or commercial development, including impact fees, tax increment financing (TIF), and special assessment districts. Impact fees are based on anticipated traffic and transit volumes of major new developments and are used to offset the costs of new transportation infrastructure. TIF mechanisms seek to capture some portion of the value of redevelopment or new development property value within a certain geographic area and usually administered by local business improvement or special districts.

Tampa, Florida's Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority uses a combination of three value capture mechanisms. Impact fees provide matching funds for bus capital projects, TIF funds operations for the city's streetcar system, and a special assessment district funds the capital costs of the city's streetcar system.

Utility Taxes or Fees: Utility fees are annual flat assessments per household or housing unit that range from $5 to $15. These fees are widely used in Oregon for operations and maintenance expenditures for transit and capital improvements of transportation infrastructure, primarily local roads and streets. Local governments in other states such as Florida, Texas, and Washington have enacted utility fees for transportation, but their use is not widespread across the country.

In 2011, the Corvallis Transit System implemented a Transit Operations Fee that is a hybrid revenue mechanism but most closely associated with a utility fee. The fee is indexed to the average price of a gallon of gas and adjusted each year. In 2012, the fee was $3.73 per month for single family residences and $2.58 per unit per month for multifamily properties. Pullman Transit in Washington State levies a voter-approved 2 percent utility tax on natural gas, electricity, telephone, water, sewer, and garbage collection services within the city of Pullman. This tax brings in approximately $1 million annually.

Room and Occupancy Taxes: Additional sales taxes for hotel and lodging purchases are common across the country and include flat service fees and percentage based sales taxes. This revenue source is popular in areas with high tourism demand to fund additional needs associated with visitors.

Savannah, Georgia uses room occupancy fees to fund free public transportation and Park City Transit in Utah relies on occupancy taxes to fund services.

Lottery or Limited Gaming Taxes: Taxes are imposed on the sale of lottery tickets, most often by a state, while local municipalities may tax casino revenues or assess a fee per machine. In Colorado, state lottery taxes are devoted to fund costs associated with open space and recreation as well as the state and local library system. Those municipalities or tribal governments that allow for gaming may also transfer limited gaming fees to support local transit systems, including in Cripple Creek, Colorado.

The State of New Jersey diverts a portion of the state Casino Revenue Fund to support a Senior Citizens and Disabled Residents Transportation Assistance Program. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania dedicates a percentage of lottery revenues to a free transit program for persons over 65 years old traveling in off-peak hours.

Vehicle-Miles Traveled Fees: A number of states are increasingly researching alternatives to fuel taxes that would instead charge drivers a fee based on the amount of miles traveled rather than a tax on the amount of fuel used. Fees could also be variable to help manage congestion at peak times. Generally, those states examining VMT-based fees consider this system to be a revenue-neutral alternative to fuel taxes, rather than a source of additional new funding.

Corporate Sponsorship: Businesses across the country have practiced funding private employee shuttles or vanpool options for decades and subsidized or fully-funded transit passes are a common employee benefit. Individual companies or business groups may also fully fund or subsidize new express routes, dedicated vehicles, or improved transit facilities that specifically serve their employees. Sponsorship opportunities can range from small-scale benefits programs to encourage ridership (such as commuter passes) to service subsidies (such as direct contract payments or on-vehicle advertising) to larger capital investments in new vehicles or facilities serving business centers. Private sponsorship can be uncertain and unsustainable, but partnerships and contracts do provide alternative revenue streams and offer opportunities for increasing system ridership.

Public-Private Partnerships: Public-private partnerships or P3 arrangements generally refer to a range of project delivery and financing agreements between a public agency and private business to complete infrastructure projects. P3 arrangements are becoming increasingly common for major public works or infrastructure projects. However, according to the National Council of State Legislatures, P3s are used for less than 20 percent of transportation projects nationally and not typically used for transit projects. In Denver, a recent agreement between the Regional Transportation District and Denver Transit Partners was the first full design-build-finance-operate-maintain transit P3 project in the United States.

States and communities across the country have enabled and enacted a wide variety of revenue mechanisms to directly or indirectly support transit services. Generally, those states with more robust local transit operations or with state policies that are more supportive of public transit allow for more innovative revenue options. In Colorado, the constitutional TABOR amendment restricts state and local governments from implementing new taxes without voter approval and from raising revenues collected under existing tax rates in excess of the rate of inflation and population growth, without voter approval. Additional constitutional restrictions in Colorado limit the ability of local governments to creatively finance transit services.

6.7 Potential Revenue Estimates

Transit providers in the Eastern TPR rely on federal grant programs to support operating expenses and major capital projects. However the future of some of these programs is not clear and future funding levels may be substantially reduced. Local governments have also reduced funding for transit services in recent years. To meet future needs and continue to provide critical services in the region, alternative revenue sources should be considered.

Table 6-3 provides high-level estimates of potential new funds in the Eastern TPR based on feasible and currently available revenue sources. These estimates are intended to provide an approximate value of these potential funding sources and do not constitute an endorsement or recommendation. The exact amount of revenues that could become available is dependent on voter approval, implementation of the mechanism, and local limitations and tax policy. Values are based on currently published information for Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma counties.

Table 6-3 Estimates of Funds Generated Through Alternative Revenue Sources

	Mechanism	Revenue Source	2012 Revenue Base	Annual Funds Generated
1.	0.7% sales tax	Net Taxable Sales	$689,224,000	$4,824,568
2.	1.0 mill levy	Assessed Property Value	$1,455,256,539	$1,455,257
3.	$15 annual fee	Total Housing Units	35,079	$526,185
4.	2% equivalent fee	Local Tourism Tax Receipts	$4,296,200	$85,924
5.	10% flex transfer	Local Highway Users Tax Fund	$19,579,902	$1,957,990

1. **Sales Tax Increase**: If each county in the region were to enact an additional levy of 0.7 percent of net taxable sales in the region annual revenues could have reached $4.8 million in 2012. An increase in sales taxes would require voter approval and would be collected by either a dedicated regional transportation authority or local governments and then transferred to support transit services. Several counties and transportation authorities in the state currently levy dedicated mass transit sales taxes ranging from 0.4 percent to 0.8 percent, varying by city and county.
2. **Property Tax Increase**: If each county in the region were to increase property taxes the equivalent of 1.0 mill (or $1 per $1,000 of assessed value), the potential revenue generated in 2012 could have reached over $1.4 million. An increase in taxes would require voter approval, and local cities and counties may be limited by existing TABOR revenue limits.
3. **Utility Fee Enactment:** If each county in the region were to enact a $15 per housing unit annual fee to provide transportation and transit services potential revenue could have reached $526,000 in 2012. Housing units account for single and multi-family residences, including those for seasonal use or second-home ownership. Housing units do not account for nightly lodging or rental units.
4. **Tourism Tax Enactment:** Visitors to the region generated over $4 million in local tax receipts in 2012. If each county in the region were to enact a fee or daily tax on lodging equivalent to 2 percent of all local tourism-based tax receipts, approximately $85,000 in annual revenues could have been generated. New taxes require voter approval in Colorado.

5. **Transfer of HUTF:** If each county in the region were to allocate at least 10 percent of HUTF receipts to transit, then approximately $1.9 million could have become available for transit-related investments. Some counties in the region do use these funds to support transit infrastructure.

6.8 CDOT Grants Process

CDOT's DTR is responsible for awarding and administering state and federal transit funds to public transit and human service transportation providers throughout Colorado. State transit funds are provided through the FASTER Act passed by the state legislature in 2009. FASTER provides a fixed $15 million per year for statewide, interregional, regional, and local transit projects.

On the federal side, the FTA provides funding for transit services through various grant programs. The FTA provides several grant programs directly to Designated Recipients, primarily in urbanized areas. For rural areas, FTA transit funds are allocated by formula to the state and are administered by DTR through a competitive application process. These grant programs provide funding assistance for administrative, planning, capital, and operating needs. For more information on the various FTA grant programs, visit the FTA website at http://www.fta.dot.gov/index.html.

To begin the grant application process, DTR issues a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and a "call for projects" for FASTER and FTA funds annually or bi-annually. Capital and operating/administrative calls for projects are conducted separately and at different times during the year. Applications for FTA operating and administrative funds are solicited every two years. Applications for FTA and FASTER capital funds are solicited every year in a single application, and DTR determines the appropriate source of funds (FTA or FASTER).

From the date of the NOFA, grant applicants have a minimum of 45 days to submit an application. The application process will soon be available online using DTR's new CoTRAMS grant management program. Before each application is submitted, each grant applicant must submit an agency profile and capital inventory. Applications will not be reviewed until this is complete. Applicants applying for funds for a construction project must have National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation completed and submitted with the application and demonstrate the readiness of the project to proceed.

Following the 45 day grant application period, applications for operating/administrative funds are then evaluated, scored, and ranked by both internal DTR staff and an Interagency Advisory Committee composed of individuals outside DTR (including the Colorado Department of Human Services and the Public Utilities Commission). Amounts awarded are often less than the amount requested. Applications for capital funds are evaluated primarily on performance metrics (age, mileage, and condition).

DTR announces the awards and obtains CDOT Transportation Commission approval for projects that are awarded FASTER transit funds. Transportation Commission approval is not necessary for FTA awarded funds. All awards require a local match—50 percent local match for operating funds and 20 percent for administrative and capital funds. All funds are awarded on a reimbursement basis; that is, grant recipients must first incur expenses before seeking reimbursement from CDOT.

Once funding awards are made, a scope of work for each awarded project is developed and negotiated between DTR and the grant applicant. Once the scope of work is complete, the project can be offered a contract. Once a contract is fully executed by both DTR and the grant applicant, CDOT issues a notice to proceed. For more information on the grant application process, visit the DTR Transit Grants website.

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