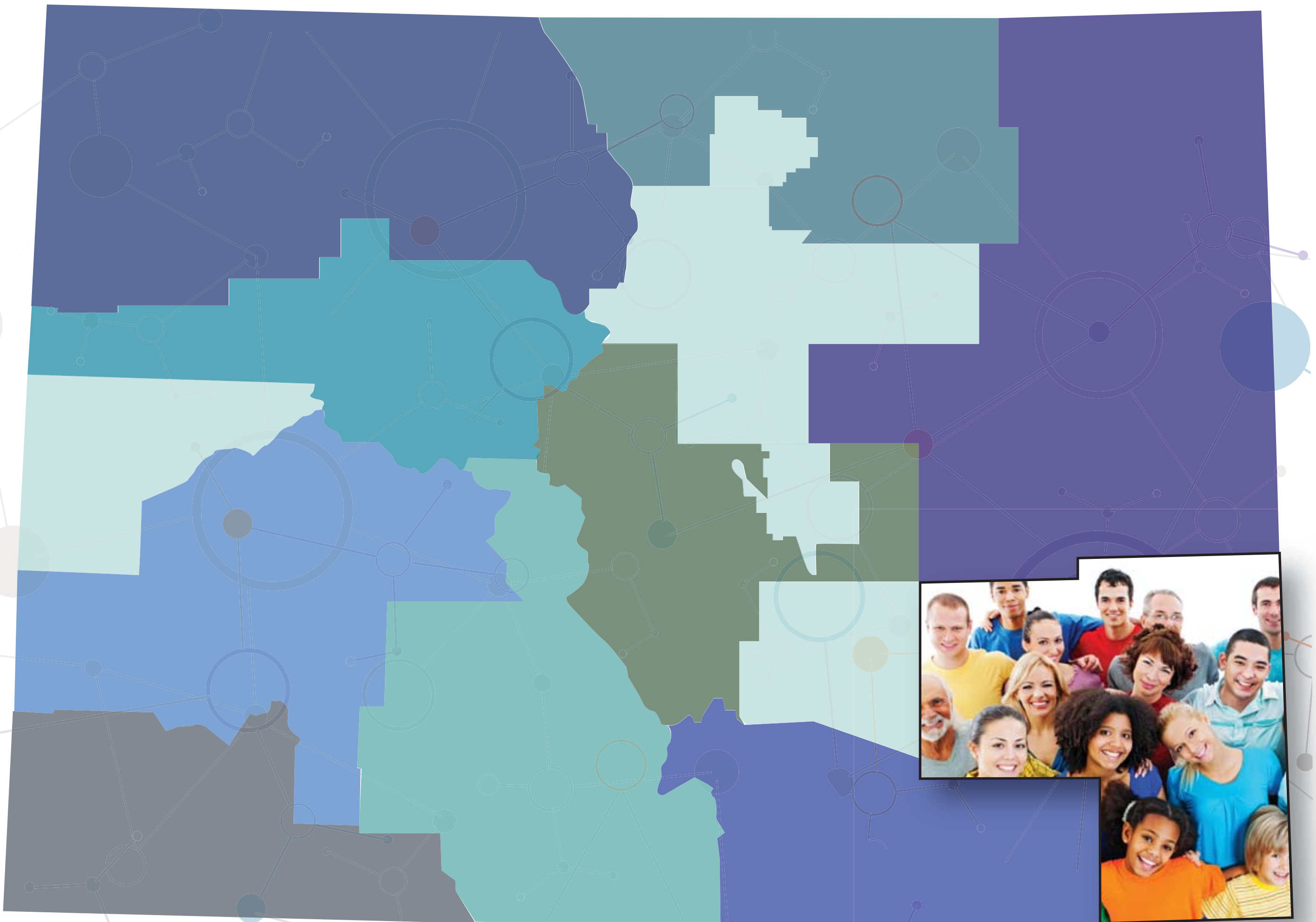
Southeast

Transportation Planning Region Regional Coordinated Transit & Human Services Plan



Prepared for:

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

December 2014

Prepared by:

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

SOUTHEAST TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REGION REGIONAL COORDINATED TRANSIT AND HUMAN SERVICES PLAN

Prepared for:

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

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Public transportation is a lifeline for many residents throughout the Southeast Transportation Planning Region (TPR) and state of Colorado. Transit services connect residents, employees, and visitors to major activity centers such as jobs, schools, shopping, medical care, and recreation. These transit services are important contributing factors to the economic, social, and environmental health of the region and state, and also provide many benefits to individuals and communities. The following are just a few of the benefits:

- Economic benefits of transit include providing access to jobs, shopping, and other destinations; creating jobs in public transit and related industries; reducing the cost of transportation for individuals and families with a portion of the cost savings redirected to the local economy; providing businesses with access to a broader labor market with more diverse skills; and providing savings associated with the reliability and effects of reduced congestion.
- Social benefits of transit include providing transportation options to access destinations; reducing household expenditures on transportation, allowing savings to be spent in the local economy; reducing non-transportation service costs; reducing travel time and accidents because of less congestion on the road; providing accessibility of transit by all segments of the population; providing health benefits associated with walking to/from transit; and providing an overall savings in time and money.
- Environmental benefits of transit include reducing emissions and the carbon footprint, reducing gas consumption, improving air quality with a reduction in associated health issues; and lessening impacts on the environment and neighborhoods due to transit's typically smaller footprint.

The Division of Transit and Rail (DTR) within the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), in cooperation with the Southeast TPR, developed this Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan to meet all CDOT and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) planning requirements for funding eligibility and planning for Colorado's transit needs. CDOT will use this plan to evaluate grant applications for state and federal funds received by regional transit and human service providers over the next five years. Transit and human service providers in the TPR will use this plan to prioritize transit investments in the next several years that work toward implementation of the TPR's long-term transit vision and goals, and priority strategies.

Purpose of Plan

This plan serves as the Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan for the region per FTA requirements. It identifies projects and strategies to enable the region's transit and human service providers to improve mobility of the populations who rely upon human service transportation or public transit, to minimize duplication of federally funded services, and to leverage limited funds. The coordination projects and strategies identified generally have a short-term focus and are based on the prioritized needs of the TPR.

In addition, this plan identifies a regional transit vision and 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 vision, goals, policies and strategies for long-term transit investment.

Key findings and recommendations from this Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan will be integrated into the Statewide Transit Plan and into the Southeast TPR 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.

Federal and State Planning Regulations

A variety of federal and state planning regulations and requirements are met through the development of this plan and its incorporation in the Statewide Transit Plan. These are described below.

1..1 Federal Planning Regulations

Federal planning regulations are codified in 23 Code of Federal Regulations 450, which requires each state to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide multimodal transportation planning process. This includes developing a long-range statewide transportation plan with a minimum 20-year forecast period for all areas of the state and a statewide transportation improvement program that facilitates the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of surface transportation systems that will serve the mobility needs of people and freight (including accessible pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities) and that fosters economic growth and development within and between states and urbanized areas, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution in all areas of the state. The long-range transportation plan shall consider connections among public transportation, non-motorized modes (e.g., bicycle and pedestrian facilities), rail, commercial motor vehicle, and aviation facilities, particularly with respect to intercity travel.

The transportation planning process considers projects, strategies, and services that address several planning factors including:

- Economic vitality of the US, state, metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas
- Safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
- Security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
- Accessibility and mobility of people and freight
- Protection and enhancement of the environment, promotion of energy conservation, improvement of the quality of life, and promotion of consistency between transportation improvements and state and local planned growth and economic development patterns
- Enhancement of integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes throughout the state, for people and freight
- Promotion of efficient system management and operations
- Preservation of the existing transportation system

The planning process is to be conducted in coordination with local officials in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, federal land management agencies, Tribal governments, health and human service agencies, and agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation. In addition, preparation of the Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plans should be coordinated and consistent with the statewide transportation planning process.

1..2 MAP-21

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed into law Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), providing approximately $10 billion per year nationally for transit funding in fiscal years 2013 and 2014. CDOT receives and distributes a portion of these federal transit funds to transit and human service providers throughout Colorado through a competitive grant process. Under MAP-21, several transit programs were consolidated and streamlined. There is a new requirement that recipients of transit funds develop a Transit Asset Management Plan. There is also new emphasis on performance-based planning and establishment of performance measures and targets that must be incorporated into the long-range planning and short-term programming processes. Seven national goal areas were established: safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement and economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and reduced project delivery delays. In August 2014, MAP-21 which was set to expire on September 30, 2014, was given a short-term extension to May 31, 2015.

Similar to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the previous transportation authorization bill, MAP-21 requires that projects selected for federal funding under the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities program (Section 5310) be derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit human services transportation plan. This plan meets the requirement for the region. While not a requirement for other FTA funds, FTA recommends, as a best practice, that all projects be identified through a coordinated planning process and be consistent with a plan.

1..3 Title VI

Title VI is a federal statute that is intended to ensure that programs (including public transit and human services) receiving federal financial assistance do not discriminate or deny benefits to people based on race, color, or national origin, including the denial of meaningful access to transit-related programs and activities for people with limited English proficiency (LEP). Title VI applies to CDOT and all CDOT grant partners receiving federal funds. While this document is not intended to be a Title VI compliance report, it does provide information on the demographic characteristics in the region compared to services provided in the region to assist with a Title VI assessment. The process to develop this transit plan includes information and outreach to individuals by providing language assistance upon request and by providing public information materials in Spanish.

1..4 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 calls on all federal agencies to make environmental justice part of their mission by identifying and addressing disproportionate and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. Similar to Title VI, this plan does not provide a comprehensive environmental justice evaluation. It does, however, provide information on low-income and minority populations in comparison service areas in the region to assist with understanding how well these populations are served by transit services in the region. The process used to develop this transit plan included information and outreach to low-income and minority populations in the Southeast region and throughout the state.

1..5 Colorado Planning Requirements

CDOT is the agency responsible for providing strategic planning for statewide transportation systems to meet the transportation needs and challenges faced by Colorado; promoting coordination among different modes of transportation; and enhancing the state’s prospects to obtain federal funds by responding to federal mandates for multimodal planning. State planning regulations, consistent with federal planning regulations, call for a multimodal plan that considers the connectivity between modes of transportation, and coordination with local land use planning, focuses on preservation of the existing transportation system to support the economic vitality of the region, enhances safety of the system, addresses strategic mobility and multimodal choice, supports urban or rural mass transit, promotes environmental stewardship, provides for effective, efficient and safe freight transport, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

In 2009, state legislation created DTR with responsibility for planning, developing, operating, and integrating transit and rail into the statewide transportation system. As part of that mandate, a statewide transit and passenger rail plan that identifies local, interregional, and statewide transit and passenger rail needs and priorities shall be developed and integrated into the Statewide Transportation Plan.

As a first step, a State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan was developed by DTR and adopted by the Colorado Transportation Commission in March 2012 (see **Section 1.3.2** for a summary). The next step was to develop the Statewide Transit Plan, which was done concurrent to the development of this Regional Transit Plan. The DTR may also expend funds to construct, maintain and operate interregional transit, advanced guideway, and passenger rail services, among other things.

In addition, DTR is responsible for administering federal and state transit grants. In accordance with FTA, DTR will use this plan to determine if grant applications are consistent and compatible with the Plan’s vision, goals, and strategies. Those that are consistent will be eligible for state and federal funding allocations through CDOT.

Relevant Statewide Background Reports/Plans

The following section describes transportation planning documents that have been completed in the last five years and their key findings and recommendations relevant to this Regional Transit Plan.

1..6 Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

CDOT adopted Colorado's first Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in October 2012. The plan focused on developing investment criteria to evaluate bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs, and performance measures. These criteria are based on a vision and eight broadly supported goals that can be achieved in part through improved bicycle and transportation projects and increased bicycling and walking activity. The goals identified through extensive public and stakeholder input include the following:

1. Enhance safety
2. Increase bicycling and walking activity
3. Expand recreational opportunities and enhance quality of life
4. Improve public health
5. Improve environment, air quality, and fossil fuel independence
6. Provide transportation equity
7. Maximize transportation investments
8. Improve the state and regional economies

The plan points out that nearly all transit trips begin and end with a walking trip and many also include a bicycle trip at the origin and/or destination and that successful bicycle and pedestrian networks have the potential to greatly expand the reach and effectiveness of public transit. Colorado's major metropolitan transit agencies, as well as many mountain communities, operate buses with bike racks. The plan suggests that the next step will be to increase the percentage of transit stops and stations that are easily accessible by bike or on foot and the percentage that provide secure bicycle parking.

1..7 Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan

The Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan, completed in March 2012, offers recommendations for both short- and long-term investments in the state's rail system while embracing a performance-based evaluation process and positioning Colorado to receive federal funding for infrastructure projects. This plan provides guidance for investing in future rail needs and presents ways to enhance passenger and freight rail development to support economic growth and environmental sustainability. It is a project-based plan required to have a major update at least every five years. In 2014, CDOT amended the passenger rail elements with a high-speed transit vision based on the conclusions of the Advanced Guideway System (AGS) Feasibility Study and the Interregional Connectivity Study (ICS). The high-speed transit vision encompasses 340 miles of high-speed passenger transit network through or affecting four I-70 Mountain Corridor counties west of the Denver region from Eagle County Regional Airport to Denver International Airport (DIA), and twelve I-25 Front Range counties from Fort Collins to Pueblo. The next update for the Plan is anticipated to begin in 2016.

Passenger rail elements of the Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan that could potentially impact travel in and to the Southeast region are numerous. The State Rail Plan identifies these suggested projects without any statement about the feasibility or likelihood of action. The projects have been compiled based on recommendations/options from other plans or studies as well as through stakeholder and public comment during the plan development. Projects include preserving the Amtrak Southwest Chief and creating a passenger rail link to Denver from La Junta.

1..8 Colorado 2011 Aviation System Plan

The Colorado Aviation System Plan Update, completed in 2011, is a performance-based plan that summarizes how airports of different classifications are meeting their assigned objectives and how the state airport system as a whole measures up. It identifies and describes actions and projects with the potential to improve system performance and offers generalized cost estimates for these policy choices.

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. The Eads Airport and Springfield Airport have been identified in the plan as needing improved ground transportation.

1..9 Colorado Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan

The 2014 Colorado Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan updates the 2008 plan. The plan develops a regional network and provides policies for extending regional services within Colorado, in addition to state-to-state trips served by intercity bus. It also provides a specific analysis of the I-70 corridor.

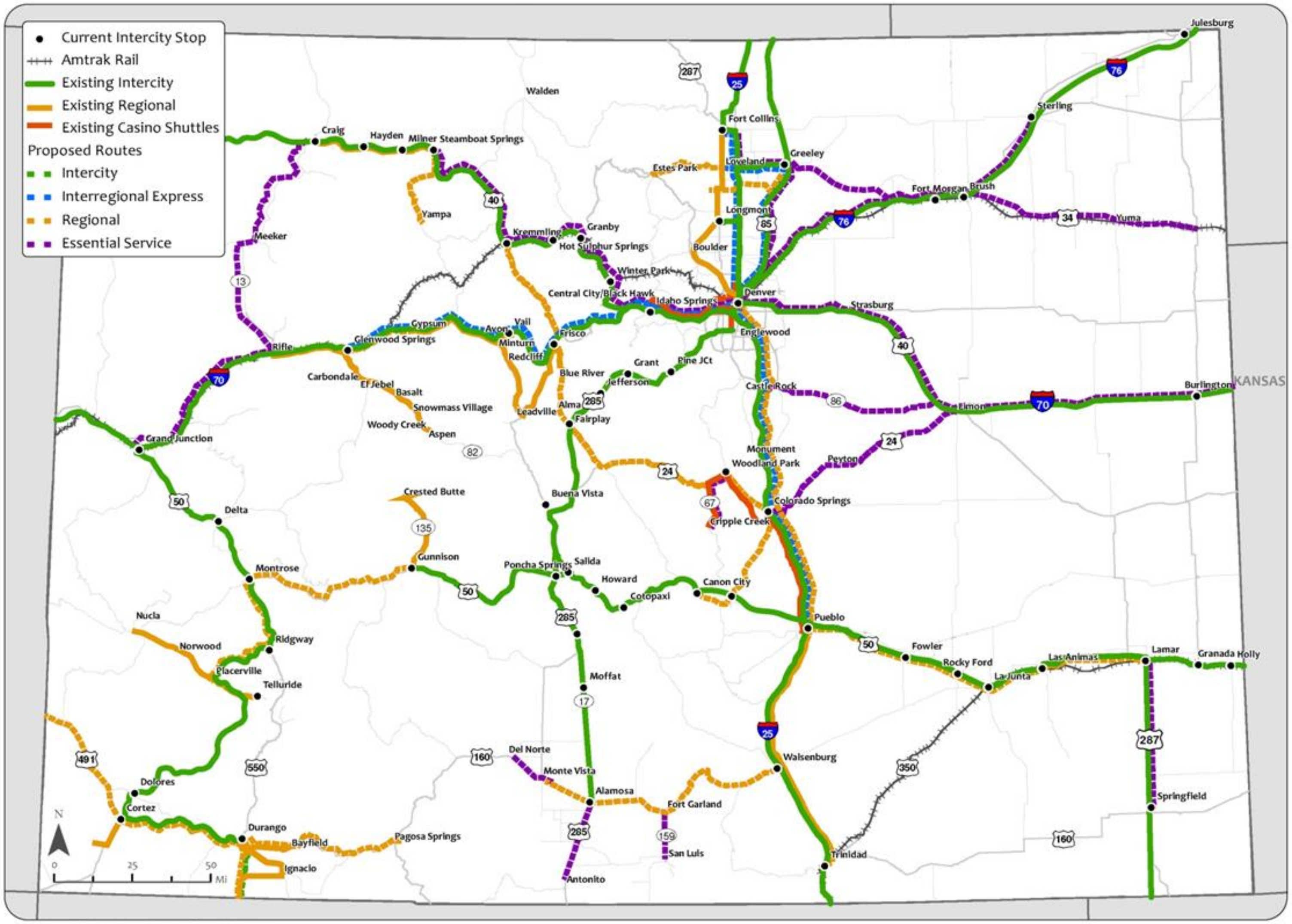
- **Interregional express bus service:** Travels between regions and focuses on commuter service, typically operates weekdays, and attempts to provide time sensitive travel times.
- **Intercity bus service:** Provides long-distance travel connecting major hubs throughout the nation, typically funded 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 Southeast TPR include a regional express route between Pueblo and Lamar and an essential services route between Springfield and Lamar. **Figure 1-1** includes the existing and proposed statewide routes identified in the Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan.

1..10 Southwest Energy Efficiency Project – Economic Benefits of Transit Systems: Colorado Case Studies

In September 2013, the Southwest Energy Efficiency Project released their report, "Economic Benefits of Transit Systems: Colorado Case Studies," which examined Fort Collins, the Roaring Fork Valley, and Grand Valley. This study showed quantifiable annual net benefits created by transit systems in each respective community. These benefit calculations took into account gasoline savings, vehicle maintenance savings, reduced congestion savings, avoided public assistance payments, reduced parking infrastructure demand, reduced cost of medical trips, and income from employment accessible by transit. Other transit benefits that cannot be monetarily quantified include increased independence for elderly and disabled citizens, improved air quality, and health benefits of walking or biking to and from transit stops.

Figure 1-1 Existing and Proposed Statewide Routes

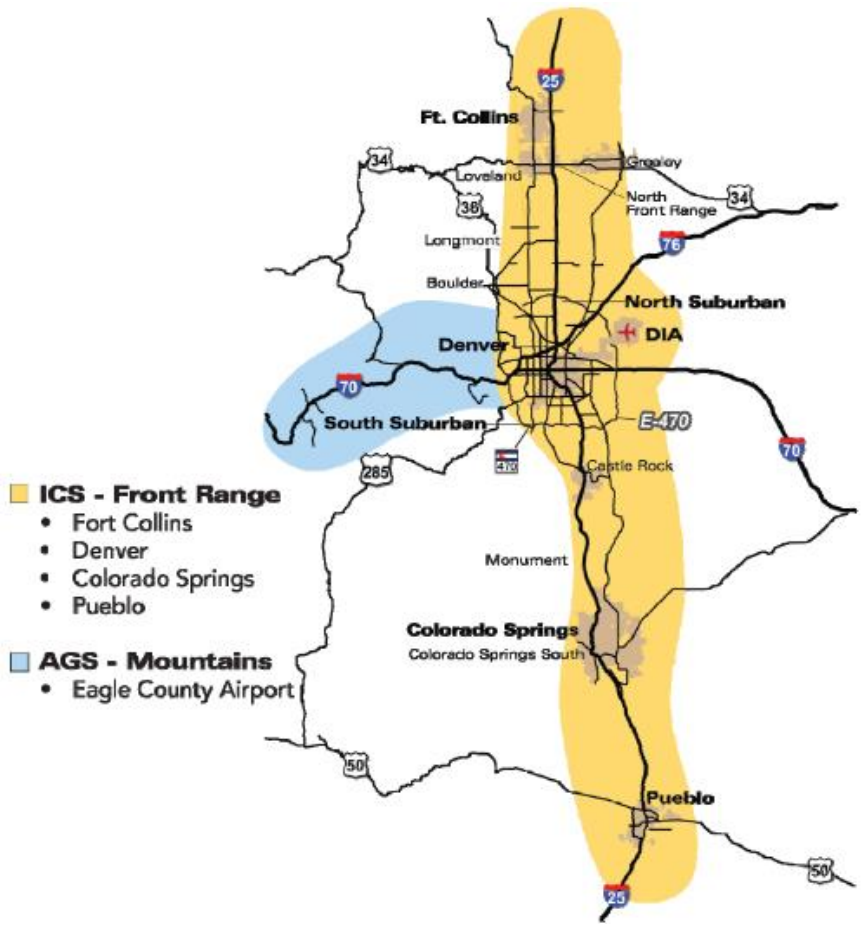


Source: 2014 Colorado Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan

1..11 Interregional Connectivity Study and Advanced Guideway System Feasibility Study

The ICS and the AGS Feasibility Study, together, represent the vision for a comprehensive future high-speed transit system in the state. The two studies were conducted between April 2012 and 2014 and were coordinated throughout the planning processes, each examining the potential for high-speed transit alignments and ridership along different corridors. The ICS study limits included DIA to the east, the C-470/I-70 interchange near Golden to the west, the city of Fort Collins to the north, and the city of Pueblo to the south. The AGS study limits extended from the C-470/I-70 interchange near Golden west to Eagle County Regional Airport. **Figure 1-2** provides a snapshot of the study area.

Figure 1-2 ICS and AGS Study Area



Source: Interregional Connectivity Study, 2014

The recommendations for the ICS system, combined with the I-70 Mountain Corridor AGS system, estimate 18 million riders per year in 2035, with corresponding revenue of $342 million to $380 million annually. Implementation of the high-speed transit vision (both ICS and AGS combined) is estimated at over $30 billion in capital costs. Implementation of the full high-speed transit vision from Fort Collins to Pueblo is assumed to begin with a Minimum Operating Segment such as DIA to Briargate to the south or DIA to Fort Collins to the north.

Detailed information and reports on each study can be found on CDOT's Transit and Rail Program website.

Relevant Southeast TPR Background Studies/Plans

1..12 2035 Southeast Local Transit and Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan

In 2008, the Southeast TPR completed its Local Transit and Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan as part of its 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. The information and outcomes from these plans were incorporated into the Southeast 2035 Regional Transportation Plan to reflect the multimodal needs of the region. The recommendations included in the transit plans were used as a starting place for discussion of transit needs and in developing this document.

1..13 City of Lamar Comprehensive Plan (2004)

This Plan is a broad public policy tool for guiding decisions concerning land use and future growth. It identifies goals and objectives, and policies and recommendations to guide the future growth of the City. Transportation is included as a category with identified goals. One of the transportation goals is to encourage coordination between the City, Prowers County and CDOT on transportation improvements through exploration of opportunities for connections to regional and county public transit.

1..14 CDOT Statewide Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities (2013)

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 and by transportation planning region. Additional Information and findings from the survey are included in Chapter 5 of this plan. **Appendix E** includes the full survey report for the Southeast region.

Plan Methodology

Many strategies were used to obtain the data and public input needed to develop this Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan. One of the foundational elements of the methodology was the use of the guiding principles developed by CDOT's Transit and Rail Advisory Committee (TRAC) to guide the process. A Statewide Steering Committee (SSC) was formed to develop a framework for the regional and statewide transit plans, to create a statewide vision, supporting goals and objectives for transit, and to guide the overall plan development process. Demographic data were used to identify regional characteristics and growth projections for transit demand in the future. Additionally, the Southeast region created a Transit Working Group (TWG) that met three times over the course of the planning process, developed a survey to obtain operational data and issues and needs from stakeholders, and held public open houses to gather input from the public.

1..15 Transit and Rail Advisory Committee Guiding Principles

The following are the guiding principles developed by the TRAC, which serve as a foundation for developing transit policies at CDOT. The guiding principles were also used to guide the development of this plan.

TRAC Guiding Principles

- When planning and designing for future transportation improvements, CDOT will consider the role of transit in meeting the mobility needs of the multimodal transportation system. CDOT will facilitate increased modal options and interface to facilities for all transportation system users.

- CDOT will consider the role of transit in maintaining, maximizing, and expanding system capacity and extending the useful life of existing transportation facilities, networks, and right-of-way.
- CDOT will promote system connectivity and transit mobility by linking networks of local, regional, and interstate transportation services.
- CDOT will work toward integrating transit to support economic growth and development, and the state's economic vitality. CDOT will pursue transit investments that support economic goals in an environmentally responsible manner.
- CDOT will establish collaborative partnerships with local agencies, transit providers, the private sector, and other stakeholders to meet the state's transit needs through open and transparent processes.
- CDOT will advocate for state and federal support of transit in Colorado including dedicated, stable, and reliable funding sources for transit. Through partnerships, CDOT will leverage the limited transit funds available to seek new dollars for transit in Colorado.

1..16 Plan Development Process

At the inception of the planning process for the Southeast region, the planning team identified key stakeholders to be invited to participate in a TWG to guide and direct the development of the Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan. 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 convened at key intervals throughout the planning process with the following objectives:

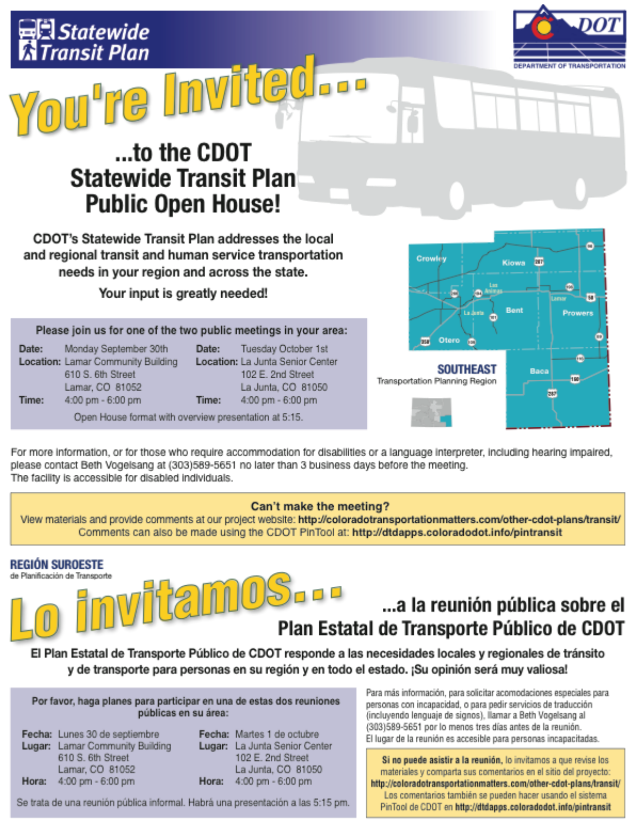
- **Meeting 1 (July 2013):** Identify the region's transit and human services transportation issues/needs and provide information on plan approach. Develop draft transit vision and goals.
- **Meeting 2 (October 2013)**: Finalize regional transit vision and goals; gather input on approach to prioritization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

The TWG identified visionary concepts for transit within their region at Meeting 1, and from that juncture, the planning team drafted a transit vision statement and key supporting goals. At Meeting 2, the TWG reviewed the statewide transit vision, goals, and objectives developed by the SSC to ensure that their region was also compatible with the larger statewide transit vision and goals. The TWG refined and provided comment on the region's transit vision and goals to ensure that it met the needs of the region. The transit vision and supporting goals were used to vet key strategies and projects to include in the plan. At Meeting 3, the TWG identified high-priority strategies for inclusion in the implementation plan. **Appendix B** includes a list of TWG invitees, TWG meeting materials and minutes, and TWG meeting sign-in sheets.

Additionally, as part of the plan development process a transit provider and human service agency survey was developed and distributed to obtain provider service, operational and financial information. The TWG assisted with completion of the surveys. 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 provider and human service agency survey respondents, and provider and human service agency survey questionnaires.

Another element of the planning process was the review of demographic characteristics, growth projections, and development of a future transit demand methodology. The methodology included the use of general population growth projections through 2040, as well as the growth of the population aged 65+ through 2040.

1..17 Public Involvement Process



Public outreach and involvement for the Statewide Transit Plan and Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plans was conducted to be inclusive of all interested stakeholders. Strategies included 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 SSC meetings, TWG meetings, and public meetings in each TPR. Exhibit boards, PowerPoint presentations, meeting materials, and meeting notes for all meetings were made available on the website.

Seventeen public open house meetings were held throughout the rural areas of the state across 10 rural TPRs. Notification of the open houses was provided to TWG members, local agencies, 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. Meetings were held in ADA accessible facilities.

The Southeast TPR public open house meetings were held September 30, 2013, at the Lamar Community Building in Lamar and October 1, 2013, at the La Junta Senior Center in La Junta. The meetings were open house format, with the project team making a presentation. Public comments were collected via computer, hard copy comment forms, and the Transit Plan website. Additionally, an online GIS-based mapping tool was created to record geographically based comments. Attendees included general public, transit providers, elected officials, and agency staff. Input received from attendees included the following key comments:

- There is a desire to implement aviation service to/from the area and Colorado Springs.
- Amtrak service should be preserved through the area and marketed to seniors.
- Transportation needs are number one in the area.
- Marketing and messaging are needed around transit services.
- Prowers Area Transit Service (PATS) does not have enough funding for after-hours service.
- Regional transit connections to Pueblo, Colorado Springs, and Denver are needed, as well as to Lamar; especially for medical services.
- Additional operating funds are needed for more service in all areas.

Appendix C includes materials and the sign-in sheets from the Southeast TPR public meetings.

Relationship to Statewide Planning Efforts

As previously mentioned, this Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan will be integrated into the Statewide Transit Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan. The Statewide Transit Plan and Regional Transportation Plan will then be integrated in the Statewide Transportation Plan, which is a long-term comprehensive policy document intended to address the state's multimodal transportation needs.

The Statewide Transit Plan is a performance-based plan that includes a statewide transit vision statement and a set of performance measures to track CDOT's progress at achieving the statewide transit vision and goals over time.

1..18 Statewide Transit Vision and Goals

This region's transit vision and goals directly support the statewide transit vision, goals, and objectives that were developed through the statewide planning process. The statewide transit vision and goals are broad and reflective of the entire state. They were developed through a series of meetings with the SSC over the course of this plan development.

Statewide Transit Vision

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

Supporting Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives that are related to the impacts of transit on the statewide transportation network were crafted in the planning process. Statewide goals and objectives include:

System Preservation and Expansion

Establish public transit as an important element within an integrated multimodal transportation system by supporting and implementing strategies that:

- Preserve existing infrastructure and protect future infrastructure and right-of-way
- Expand transit services based on a prioritization process
- Allocate resources toward both preservation and expansion
- Identify grant and other funding opportunities to sustain and further transit services statewide
- Develop and leverage private sector investments

Mobility/Accessibility

Improve travel opportunities within and between communities by supporting and implementing strategies that:

- Strive to provide convenient transit opportunities for all populations
- Make transit more time-competitive with automobile travel
- Create a passenger-friendly environment, including information about available services
- Increase service capacity
- Enhance connectivity among local, intercity, and regional transit services and other modes
- Support multimodal connectivity and services

Transit System Development and Partnerships

Increase communication, collaboration, and coordination within the statewide transportation network by supporting and implementing strategies that:

- Meet travelers' needs
- Remove barriers to service
- Develop and leverage key partnerships
- Encourage coordination of services to enhance system efficiency

Environmental Stewardship

Develop a framework of a transit system that is environmentally beneficial over time by supporting and implementing strategies that:

- Reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions
- Support energy efficient facilities and amenities

Economic Vitality

Create a transit system that will contribute to the economic vitality of the state, its regions, and its communities to reduce transportation costs for residents, businesses, and visitors by supporting and implementing strategies that:

- Increase the availability and attractiveness of transit
- Inform the public about transit opportunities locally, regionally, and statewide
- Further integrate transit services into land use planning and development

Safety and Security

Create a transit system in which travelers feel safe and secure and in which transit facilities are protected by supporting and implementing strategies that:

- Help agencies maintain safer fleets, facilities, and service
- Provide guidance on safety and security measures for transit systems

1..19 Statewide Transit Performance Measures

Under MAP-21, the U.S. DOT will establish performance measures and state DOTs will develop complementary performance targets. For transit, MAP-21 focuses on the state of good repair and asset management. Transit agencies receiving federal assistance are required to develop performance targets for state of good repair. They will also be required to develop asset management plans, which include capital asset inventories, condition assessments, decision support tools, and investment prioritization. Within four years of the enactment of MAP-21 and every other year thereafter, states are required to submit reports on the progress made toward achieving performance targets.

DTR initiated the development of transit performance measures in their document entitled *Establishing a Framework for Transit and Rail Performance Measures*, December 2012. They have continued the effort through the inclusion of measures in CDOT Policy Directive 14, which provides a framework for the statewide transportation planning process that will guide development of a multimodal, Statewide Transportation Plan and distribution of resources for the Statewide Transportation Plan, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and the annual budget.

This work was used to develop an initial set of performance measures that were reviewed with the SSC for the Statewide Transit Plan. Comments and suggestions from the SSC were then taken to the TRAC Performance Measure Subcommittee and the TRAC Statewide Transit Plan Subcommittee for review, followed by approval of the full TRAC. Through this process, the performance measures below were identified as a reasonable starting point for DTR to initiate its performance based planning work. These performance measures meet the requirements of MAP-21.

At the regional level, transit agencies are encouraged to review and use these categories and performance measures to identify and implement projects that help achieve the state’s transit vision and meet the national goals.

Table 1-1 CDOT Division of Transit and Rail Performance Measures

Category	Goal	Performance Measure
System Preservation and Expansion	Establish public transit as an important element within an integrated multimodal transportation system.	▪ Portion of CDOT grantees with Asset Management Plans in place for state or federally funded vehicles, buildings, and equipment by 2017 (PD 14) ▪ Percentage of vehicles in rural Colorado transit fleet in fair, good, or excellent condition, per FTA definitions (PD 14) ▪ Annual revenue service miles of regional, interregional, and intercity passenger service (PD 14)
Mobility/Accessibility	Improve travel opportunities within and between communities.	▪ Percentage of rural population served by public transit ▪ Annual revenue service miles of regional, interregional, and intercity passenger service (PD 14) ▪ Percent of agencies providing up-to-date online map/schedule information ▪ Annual small urban and rural transit grantee ridership compared to five year rolling average (PD 14)
Transit System Development and Partnerships	Increase communication, collaboration, and coordination within the statewide transportation network.	▪ Percentage of grantee agencies reporting active involvement in local/regional coordinating councils or other transit coordinating agency
Environmental Stewardship	Develop a framework of a transit system that is environmentally beneficial over time.	▪ Percentage of statewide grantee fleet using compressed natural gas, hybrid electric or clean diesel vehicles, or other low emission vehicles ▪ Passenger miles traveled on fixed-route transit
Economic Vitality	Create a transit system that will contribute to the economic vitality of the state, its regions, and its communities to reduce transportation costs for residents, businesses, and visitors.	▪ Percentage of major employment and activity centers that are served by public transit
Safety and Security	Create a transit system in which travelers feel safe and secure and in which transit facilities are protected.	▪ Percentage of vehicles in rural Colorado transit fleet in fair, good, or excellent condition, per FTA definitions (PD 14) ▪ Number of fatalities involving transit vehicles per 100,000 transit vehicle miles ▪ Percentage of grantees that have certified CDOT Safety and Security Plans, which meet FTA guidance

1..20 Transit Asset Management

Asset management is a critical area of focus for any transportation provider regardless of mode. In fact, it is seen as so important that it will soon become the driving force behind CDOT’s department-wide approach to resource allocation and project prioritization.

With the adoption of MAP-21, Transit Asset Management (TAM) is now a priority area of focus for FTA. MAP-21 requires that all FTA grant recipients develop TAM plans and that the states certify these plans. CDOT’s approach to helping its grant partners meet this new set of requirements is based on a combination of general oversight of asset management practices at the agency level and providing focused and direct technical assistance where appropriate.

At the time of this writing, FTA had not yet provided final rules or guidance regarding how to satisfy the new asset management requirements in MAP-21. However, the legislation itself articulates two basic requirements that TAM plans must contain: an inventory of all transit capital assets and a prioritized capital development/replacement plan. CDOT is helping its grant partners meet these most basic requirements through the ongoing Statewide Transit Capital Inventory (STCI) project, which will provide a comprehensive inventory of transit assets throughout the state, including rolling stock, facilities, and park and rides. In addition to completing an asset inventory for each recipient of federal funds, CDOT and its STCI consultant team will prepare prioritized capital development/replacement plans for each transit provider. In the case that an agency has already developed an asset management plan, CDOT will review the plan for conformity with FTA's expectations and regulations.

CDOT is also providing technical assistance in the form of a guide to the preparation of Asset Management Plans, a revised guide to implementing a preventative maintenance program for rolling stock, as well as training and information sessions at conferences. A Transit Infrastructure Specialist is an available resource to all grant partners as a subject matter expert on the creation and implementation of TAM plans, maintenance procedures and policies, and the development of capital projects.

Progress on CDOT's asset management initiatives will be measured by several performance metrics. Some of these are identified in CDOT's Policy Directive 14 and others have been developed as a part of this plan. Chapter 7 discusses asset management related strategies.

Overview of Plan Contents

The Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan is organized into seven chapters as described below. Overall, the plan is intended to paint a picture of the region, document the transportation needs based on various demographic data and trends, illustrate available funding, identify the transit needs, and recommend strategies for meeting the needs over the short-, mid-, and long-term. This plan is intended to be an action plan and used to guide the region in making decisions about how best to invest limited resources to implement transit projects that improve mobility and offer transportation choices for the region.

Chapter 1 – Introduction: Describes why the plan was developed, the process used to develop the plan, and the planning requirements fulfilled by this plan.

Chapter 2 – Regional Overview: Describes the region's major activity centers and destinations, key demographics, and travel patterns. It includes existing data on populations that are often associated with transit demand in a community (people over age 65, low-income individuals, and households without vehicles). Other data are included on persons with disabilities, veterans, race, ethnicity, and English proficiency to provide a comprehensive picture of the region's need for transit.

Chapter 3 – Existing Transit Provider and Human Service Agencies: Summarizes the key features of the region's public and private transit providers, as well as the human service agencies in the region. Information is provided on service areas, types of service, eligibility, and ridership.

Chapter 4 – Current and Potential Funding: Describes the variety of transit funding sources at various levels of government and the challenges faced by transit and human service transportation providers in seeking these various funding sources.

Chapter 5 – Transit Needs and Service Gaps: Describes key findings from the review of the region's demographic profile and the existing and future unmet transit needs.

Chapter 6 – Financial and Funding Overview: Summarizes the anticipated funding through 2040 and the funding needed through 2040 based on population growth.

Chapter 7 – Implementation Plan: Provides an overview of the high priority strategies identified in the region to meet the region's transit vision and goals over the next 15 years to 2030.

2.0 REGIONAL OVERVIEW

This Chapter includes an overview of the Southeast Transportation Planning Region (TPR), provides a map that identifies major activity centers and destinations in the region, and provides demographic information about populations that are typically aligned with transit use.

Transportation Planning Region Description

The Southeast TPR consists of six counties: Bent, Baca, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, and Prowers, which are connected by a transportation network that includes airports, roadways, public and private transit providers, non-profit human services transportation providers, and private taxis and shuttles. These services connect the major cities of La Junta, Lamar, Las Animas, and Springfield; provide access to the larger cities of Pueblo and Colorado Springs; and are vital to the mobility of the residents of the Southeast TPR.

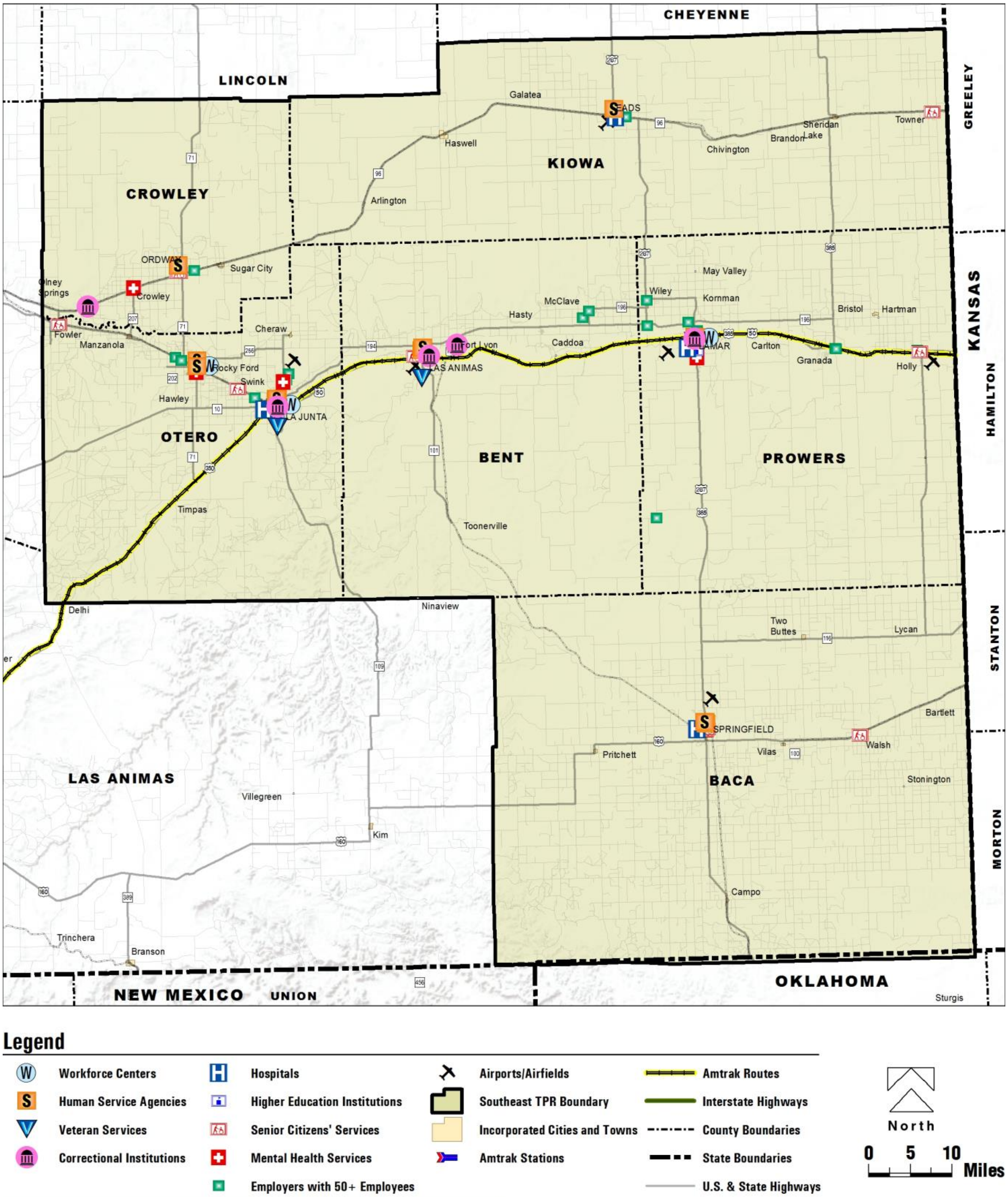
The region has a rich history, with area attractions such as Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site, Comanche National Grasslands, Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, Santa Fe Trail, and the Amache Internment Camp drawing tourists from across the country.

Figure 2-1 identifies many of the major activity centers and destinations within the Southeast TPR. Major activity centers for the purpose of this plan include human service agencies, correctional institutions, hospitals, higher education institutions, senior citizens' services, workforce centers, mental health services, employers with 50+ employees. Mapping the selected activity centers listed above provides a general understanding of where people who are using transit and/or are in need of human service transportation are likely to be traveling to and from within the region.

Major transportation corridors include US 287, US 50, US 385, US 350, US 160, SH 71, SH 89, SH 96, SH 10, SH 100, SH 116, SH 207, as well as the Amtrak passenger rail line that travels east/west across the center of the planning region with stops in La Junta and Lamar.

Figure 2-1 Major Activity Centers and Destinations Map

Business locations derived from 2011 ESRI data.



Regional Transit Vision and Goals

The Southeast Transit Working Group (TWG) developed a high level vision and supporting goals for transit in the region. These were developed with consideration for the vision and goals developed for the Statewide Transit Plan by the Statewide Steering Committee (SSC). The TWG was charged with crafting a regional transit vision and supporting goals that align with the statewide transit vision and goals. The outcome of this process resulted in the following transit vision and goals for the Southeast TPR:

Southeast Transit Vision:

Provide the opportunity for residents of southeast Colorado to experience an enhanced quality of life by providing an efficient, safe, and accessible transit network that serves the needs of the region's citizens, businesses, and communities.

Supporting Goals:

- Maximize transit services and facilities to meet existing transit needs and those in the future
- Evaluate the need for additional transit service and facilities to meet unmet needs
- Maintain service of the Amtrak Southwest Chief passenger train through southeast Colorado
- Increase regional and intra-regional service for medical, employment, and educational trip purposes
- Increase coordination among state, regional, local public, non-profit, and private entities to more effectively achieve shared community goals

Population 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 Chapter, 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.

Some population segments have a greater need for public transit and depend on it as their primary form of transportation. 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, low-income individuals, zero-vehicle households, veterans, and persons with LEP.

In general, the two key markets for public transportation services are:

- "Transit Dependent" riders who do not always have access to a private automobile. This grouping includes individuals who may not be physically (or legally) able to operate a vehicle, or those who may not be able to afford to own a vehicle.
- "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 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 in walkable communities 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 the impact that the Millennial generation will have on transit system ridership.

The following sections detail various demographic data, as collected from the U.S. Census and from the State Demographer, that are typically aligned with the primary markets for transit ridership and use. They also analyze the spatial distribution of people who are more likely to take transit and the location of activity centers and destinations that are likely to generate transit ridership. Population within the Southeast region is heavily aligned with the US Highway 50 corridor and US Highway 287, along with other spurs of state highways. Thus, higher transit dependent populations are found along these corridors as well. The key demographic characteristics highlighted in this plan include older adults (65 or older), 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 2-2** summarize the growth in population anticipated in each county in the Southeast region. The counties with the highest overall populations in the region in 2013 were Otero and Prowers counties. Projections indicate that this will continue into 2040. Each county within the Southeast TPR is anticipated to see substantial growth in population by the year 2040, with the highest growth shown in Crowley County (38.6 percent), Kiowa County (23.7 percent), and Prowers County (20.5 percent). The total population in the TPR is projected to grow overall by approximately 8,865 or 17.9 percent by 2040 from the base year of 2013. Comparatively, the projected growth from the entire state during the same timeframe is 47.1 percent.

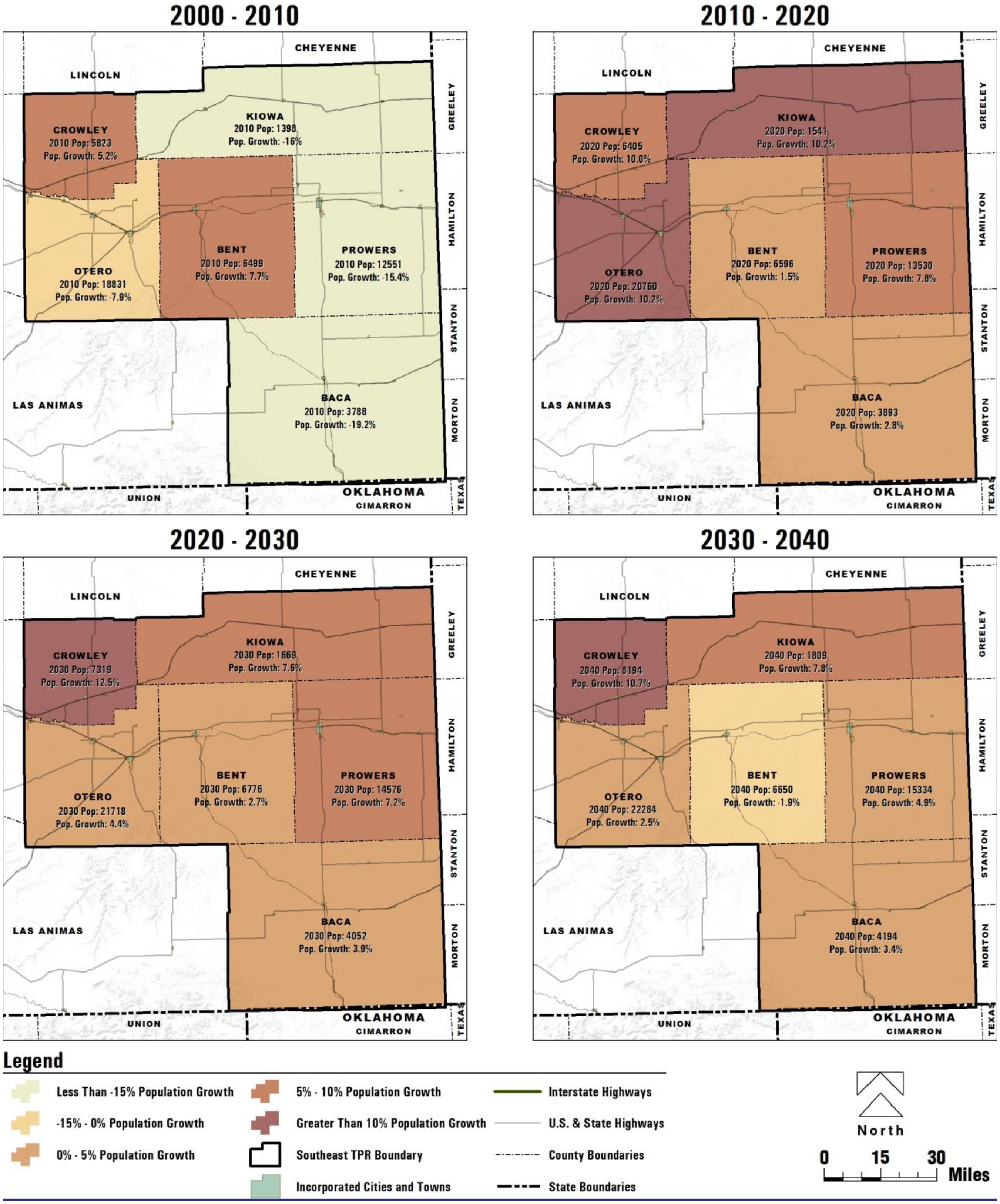
Table 2-1 Projected Population Growth by County

County	2013	2020	2030	2040	Total % Growth from 2013 to 2040
Baca	3,799	3,893	4,052	4,194	10.4%
Bent	6,366	6,596	6,776	6,650	4.5%
Crowley	5,914	6,405	7,319	8,194	38.6%
Kiowa	1,463	1,541	1,669	1,809	23.7%
Otero	19,328	20,760	21,718	22,284	15.3%
Prowers	12,730	13,530	14,576	15,334	20.5%
TPR Overall	**49,600**	**52,725**	**56,110**	**58,465**	**17.9%**
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

Figure 2-2 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 2-3** illustrate the anticipated growth in the population over the age of 65 from a base year of 2013 extending out to 2040. The highest anticipated growth in the 65+ population is in Crowley County, which projects a growth of 81.5 percent by 2040. The overall projected growth of the region's population over 65 years old from 2013 to 2040 is 32.7 percent compared to 120.5 percent for the state. **Figure 2-3** shows the growth in ages 65+ in 10-year increments.

Table 2-2 Projected Growth of Residents Age 65+

County	2013	2020	2030	2040	Total % Growth from 2013 to 2040
Baca	933	936	962	883	-5.4%
Bent	935	1,065	1,362	1,641	75.5%
Crowley	704	882	1,180	1,278	81.5%
Kiowa	298	339	386	358	20.1%
Otero	3,633	4,099	4,450	4,300	18.4%
Prowers	1,988	2,366	2,780	2,813	41.5%
TPR Overall	**8,491**	**9,687**	**11,120**	**11,273**	**32.7%**
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 2-3 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 2-4** identify the number of households without vehicles in the six-county Southeast region. Otero County has the highest percentage of households with no vehicle at 8.3 percent, and Prowers County follows at 7.3 percent. The total number of households without vehicles in the region is approximately 1,230, which is 6.8 percent of total households. The TPR falls above the statewide average of 5.7 percent of households with no vehicle.

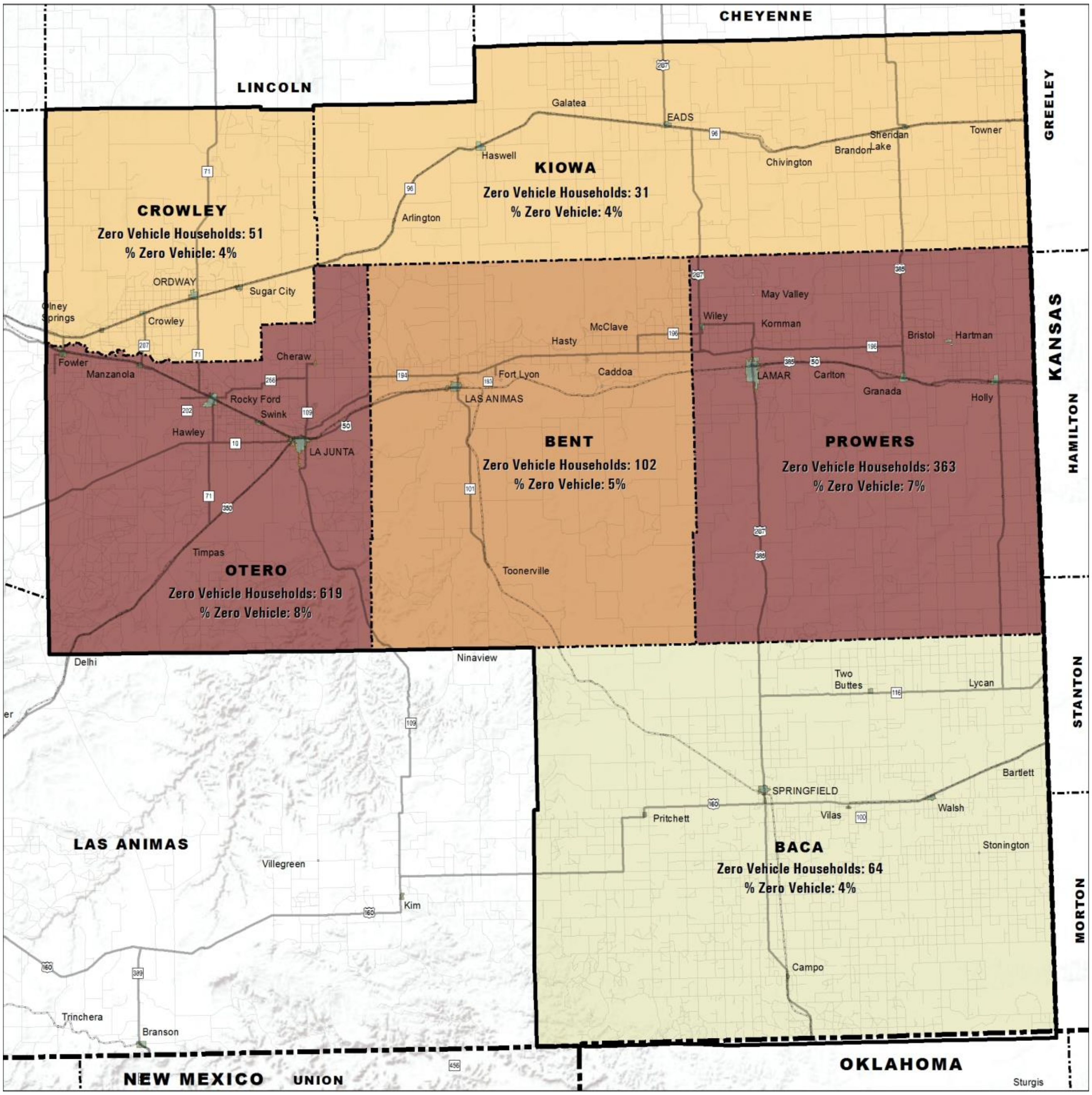
Table 2-3 2011 Households with No Vehicle

County	2011	% Households with No Vehicle
Baca	64	3.8%
Bent	102	5.2%
Crowley	51	4.3%
Kiowa	31	4.3%
Otero	619	8.3%
Prowers	363	7.3%
TPR Overall	**1,230**	**6.8%**
Statewide Total	111,148	5.7%

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

Figure 2-4 2011 Percentage of Households with No Vehicle

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



Legend

Less Than 4% Zero Vehicle Households	6% - 7% Zero Vehicle Households	County Boundaries
4% - 5% Zero Vehicle Households	Greater Than 7% Zero Vehicle Households	State Boundaries
5% - 6% Zero Vehicle Households	Southeast TPR Boundary	U.S. & State Highways
	Incorporated Cities and Towns	

North

0 5 10 Miles

2..4 Poverty Level

Table 2-4 and **Figure 2-5** illustrate the number of people who fall below the federal poverty level in the Southeast region. Otero County has the highest number of people in this category. Kiowa County has the lowest (13.1 percent). The average percent of the population below the federal poverty level is 22.0 percent, which is almost double the statewide average of 12.5 percent.

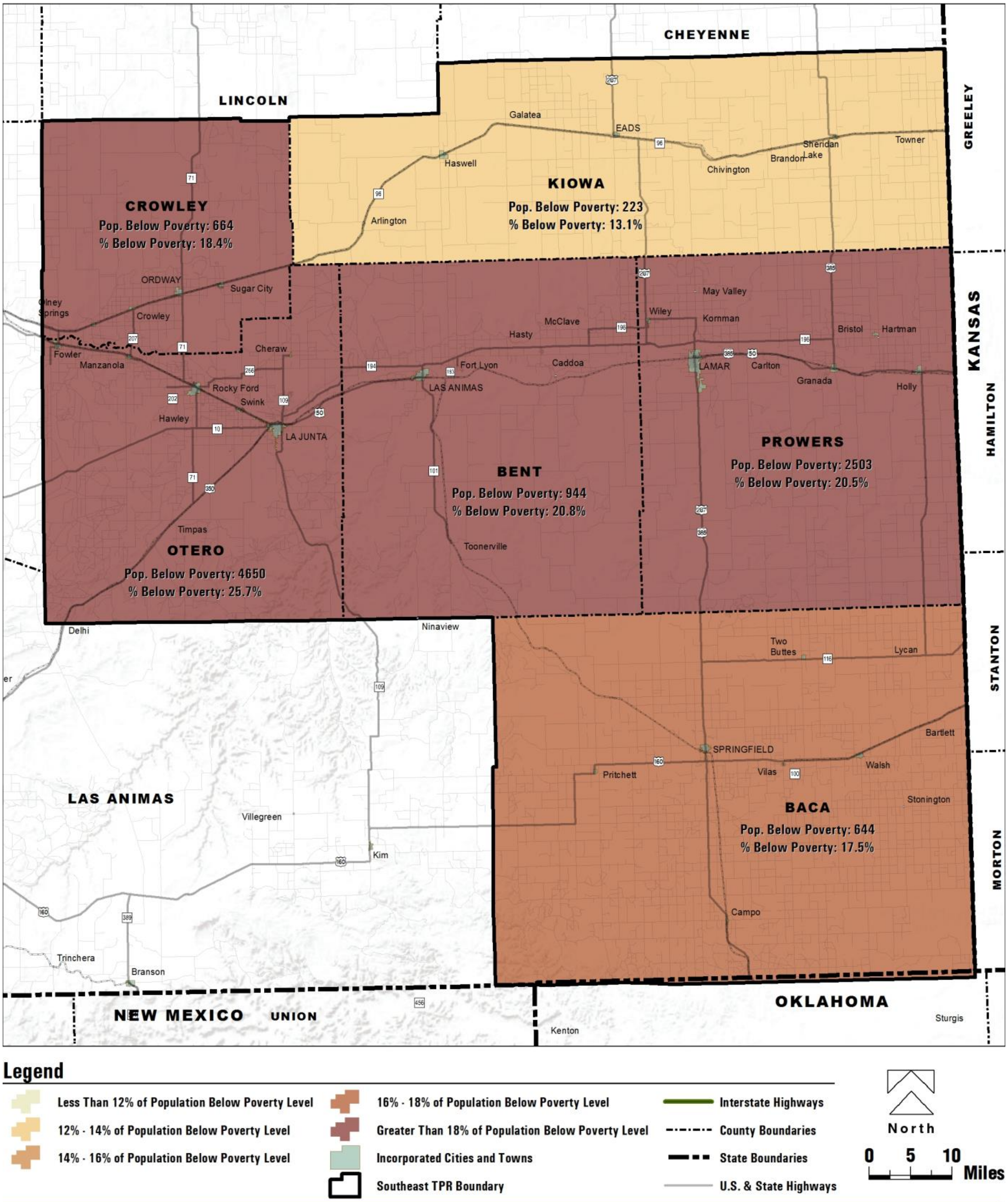
Table 2-4 2011 Population Below Federal Poverty Level

County	2011	% Below Federal Poverty Level
Baca	644	17.5%
Bent	944	20.8%
Crowley	664	18.4%
Kiowa	223	13.1%
Otero	4,650	25.7%
Prowers	2,503	20.5%
TPR Overall	**9,628**	**22.0%**
Statewide Total	607,727	12.5%

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

Figure 2-5 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 2-6** provide an indication of racial composition of the region and an overall understanding of the distribution of minority populations within the Southeast TPR's six counties. Crowley County has the highest minority (non-white alone) population at 19.5 percent, while Kiowa County has the lowest minority population at 2.8 percent. Overall, the Southeast TPR has a higher minority population than the state overall.

In addition, the Southeast TPR has a relatively high Hispanic and Latino population, approximately 32 percent. Throughout the state, Hispanic and Latino people account for approximately 20 percent of the population.

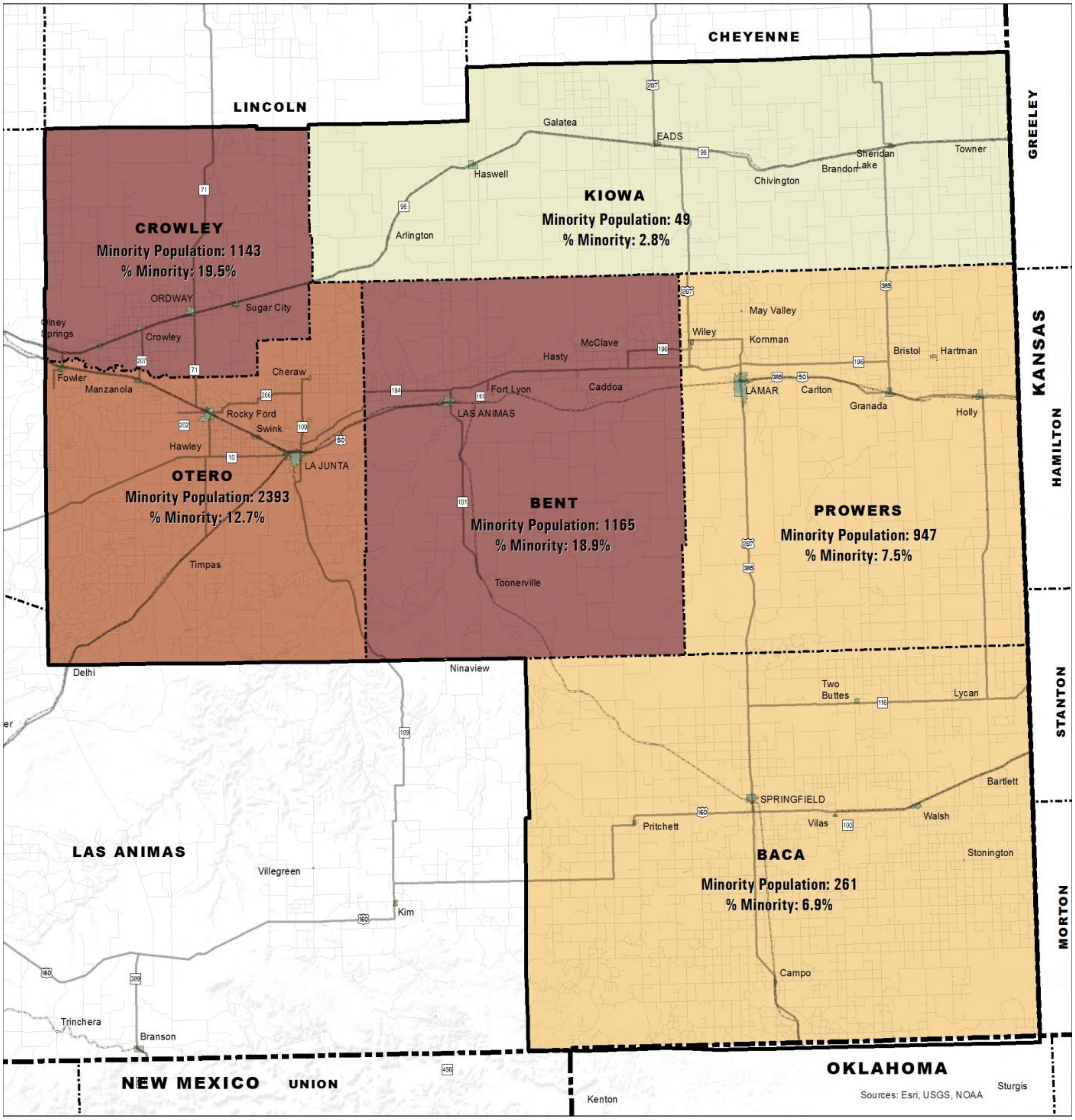
Table 2-5 2011 Race

County	White Alone	Black or African American Alone	American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	Asian Alone	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	Some Other Race Alone	Two or More Races	Minority Percentage (Non-White Alone)
Baca	3,546	45	24	20	0	48	124	6.9%
Bent	4,999	373	206	77	0	380	129	18.9%
Crowley	4,723	525	115	38	0	359	106	19.5%
Kiowa	1,679	1	3	15	0	3	27	2.8%
Otero	16,402	94	638	143	0	1,179	339	12.7%
Prowers	11,668	10	24	16	0	686	211	7.5%
TPR Overall	**43,017**	**1,048**	**1,010**	**309**	**0**	**2,655**	**936**	**21.7%**
Statewide Total	4,167,044	195,640	48,201	134,228	5,798	255,364	159,786	16.1%

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

Figure 2-6 2011 Minority Population

Minority population data extracted from 2011 U.S. Census American Community Survey Table B02001 - Race



Legend

- Less Than 4% Minority Population
- 4% - 8% Minority Population
- 8% - 12% Minority Population
- 12% - 18% Minority Population
- Greater Than 18% Minority Population
- Incorporated Cities and Towns
- Southeast TPR Boundary
- Interstate Highways
- County Boundaries
- State Boundaries
- U.S. & State Highways

North

0 5 10 Miles

2..6 Limited English Proficiency Population

Table 2-6 and **Figure 2-7** illustrate the number of people within the region who have 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 that is classified as having LEP is those that speak English "not at all, not well or well" but not fluently. As a percentage of the total population, Crowley County has the highest number of LEP people at 8.6 percent with Prowers County following at 8.5 percent. The overall percent of the LEP population in the TPR is 5.9 percent, which is slightly higher than the overall statewide total of 5.7 percent.

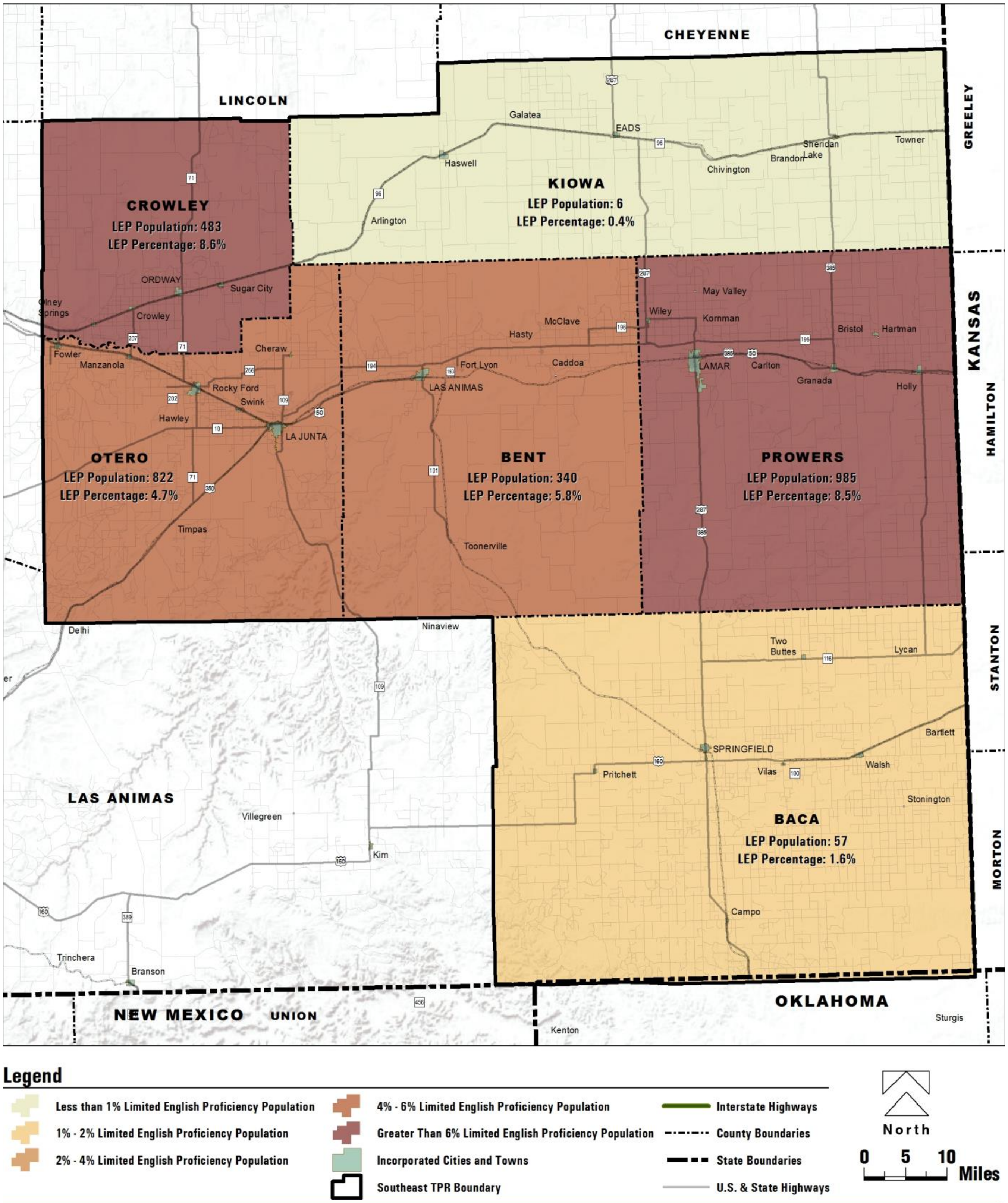
Table 2-6 2011 Limited English Proficiency Population

County	2011	% Limited English Proficiency
Baca	57	1.6%
Bent	340	5.8%
Crowley	483	8.6%
Kiowa	6	0.4%
Otero	822	4.7%
Prowers	985	8.5%
TPR Overall	**2,693**	**5.9%**
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 2-7 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 2-8** provide information about the percent of the population that has a disability within the Southeast region. The highest number of disabled persons live in Otero County and the lowest number in Kiowa County. The highest percentage of disabled persons as a percent of total population is located in Bent County with 26.3 percent and Kiowa County is the lowest with 15.0 percent. The percent of disabled persons as a share of the total population for the entire State of Colorado is 9.8 percent, indicating that the Southeast region has a relatively high disabled population at 18.7 percent; double the state.

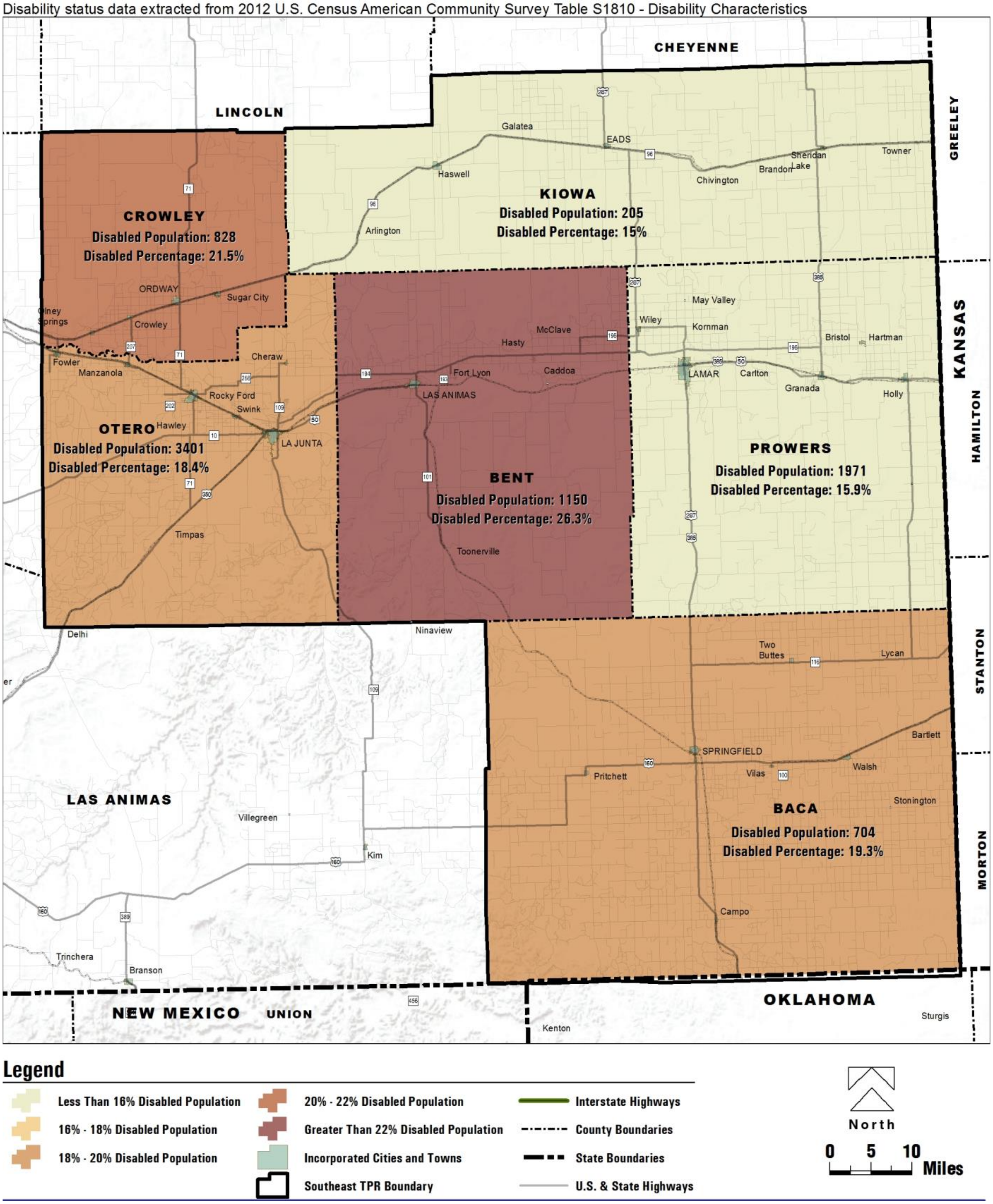
Table 2-7 2012 Disabled Population

County	2012	% Disabled Population
Baca	704	19.3%
Bent	1,150	26.3%
Crowley	828	21.5%
Kiowa	205	15.0%
Otero	3,401	18.4%
Prowers	1,971	15.9%
TPR Overall	**8,259**	**18.7%**
Statewide Total	487,297	9.8%

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

Figure 2-8 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 2-9** illustrate the veteran population within the Southeast region. The highest number of veterans reside in Otero County and the lowest number in Kiowa County. However, the highest percentage of veterans as a percent of total population is Crowley County with 12.5 percent and Kiowa County is the lowest with 6.7 percent. The percentage of veterans as a percent of total population for the entire State of Colorado is 8.2 percent, indicating that the Southeast region has a slightly higher veteran population.

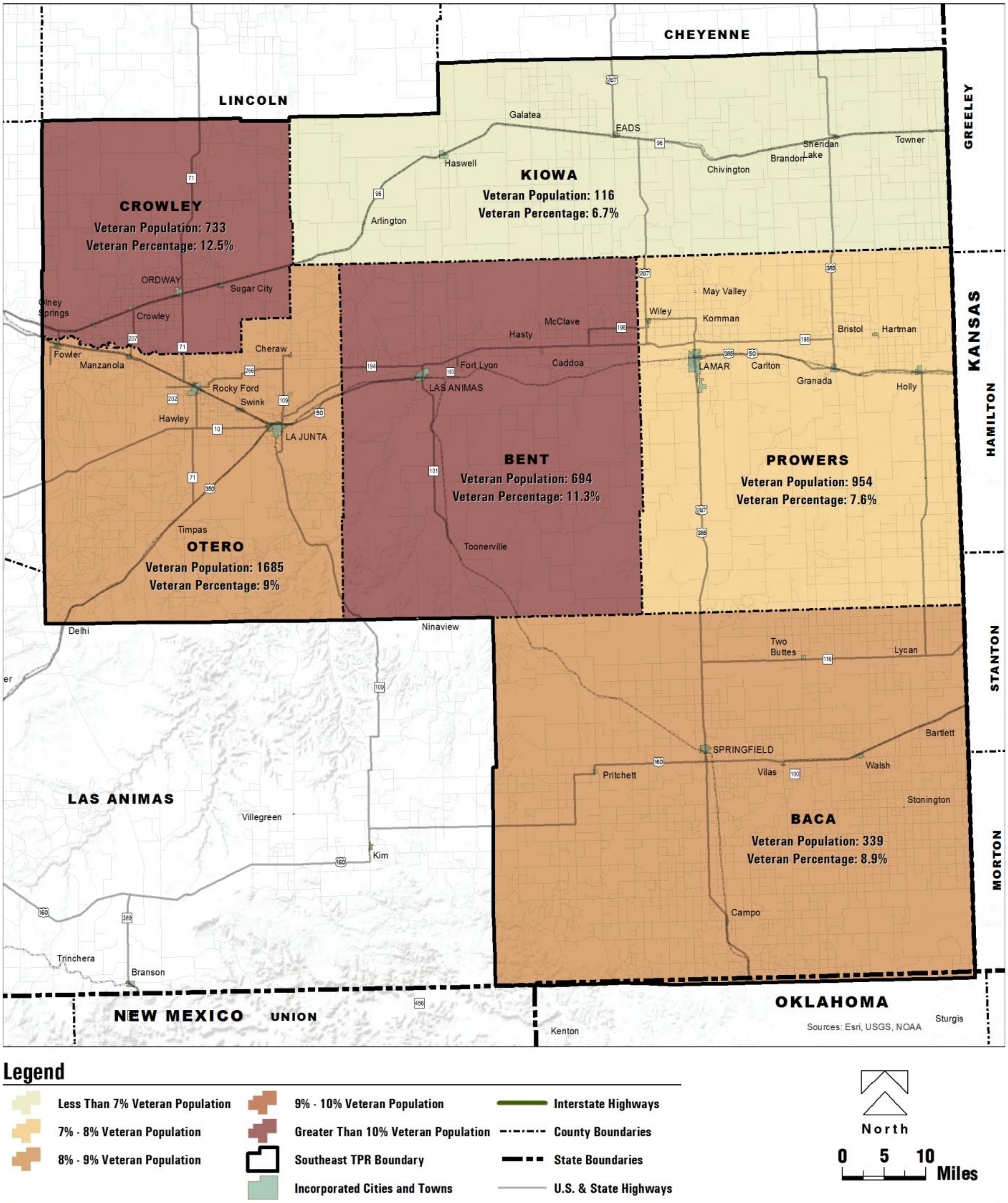
Table 2-8 2011 Veteran Population

County	2011	% Veteran Population
Baca	339	8.9%
Bent	694	11.3%
Crowley	733	12.5%
Kiowa	116	6.7%
Otero	1,685	9.0%
Prowers	954	7.6%
TPR Overall	**4,521**	**9.3%**
Statewide Total	405,303	8.2%

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

Figure 2-9 2011 Veteran Population

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



Employment and Job Characteristics

The major employment base in the Southeast region is agricultural activities. Additional employment industries in the TPR are health and wellness and the energy and natural resource sectors.

Figure 2-10 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 greater than 25 percent. Job growth then levels out between 2020 and 2040, with most counties in the region seeing job growth between 10 and 25 percent.

Figure 2-11 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).

Summary of Community Characteristics

As shown in **Figure 2-12,** Crowley County is expected to see the highest population growth in the Southeast region, as well as experience the highest increase in the number of adults aged 65+. With the overall growth in the elderly population, it is likely that the region will require more human service transportation options to meet the demand. Otero County has the highest population below the federal poverty level. Crowley and Prowers Counties have the largest population of persons with LEP. Bent County has the highest population of people with disabilities.

The Southeast TPR has many geographic, demographic, and economic characteristics that point to the importance of public transit and human service transportation to enable residents to access services, employment, and education. The region is large, with many communities 90 or more miles from the nearest regional service center, Pueblo. Overall, the region has a population that is older than that of the state average. The region also has higher poverty rates than the state as a whole.

The region also is sparsely populated, with long distances between communities. This presents challenges to providing efficient mobility services. For many human service programs, access to regional services in Pueblo, Colorado Springs, or even Denver is important.

Figure 2-10 Job Growth

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

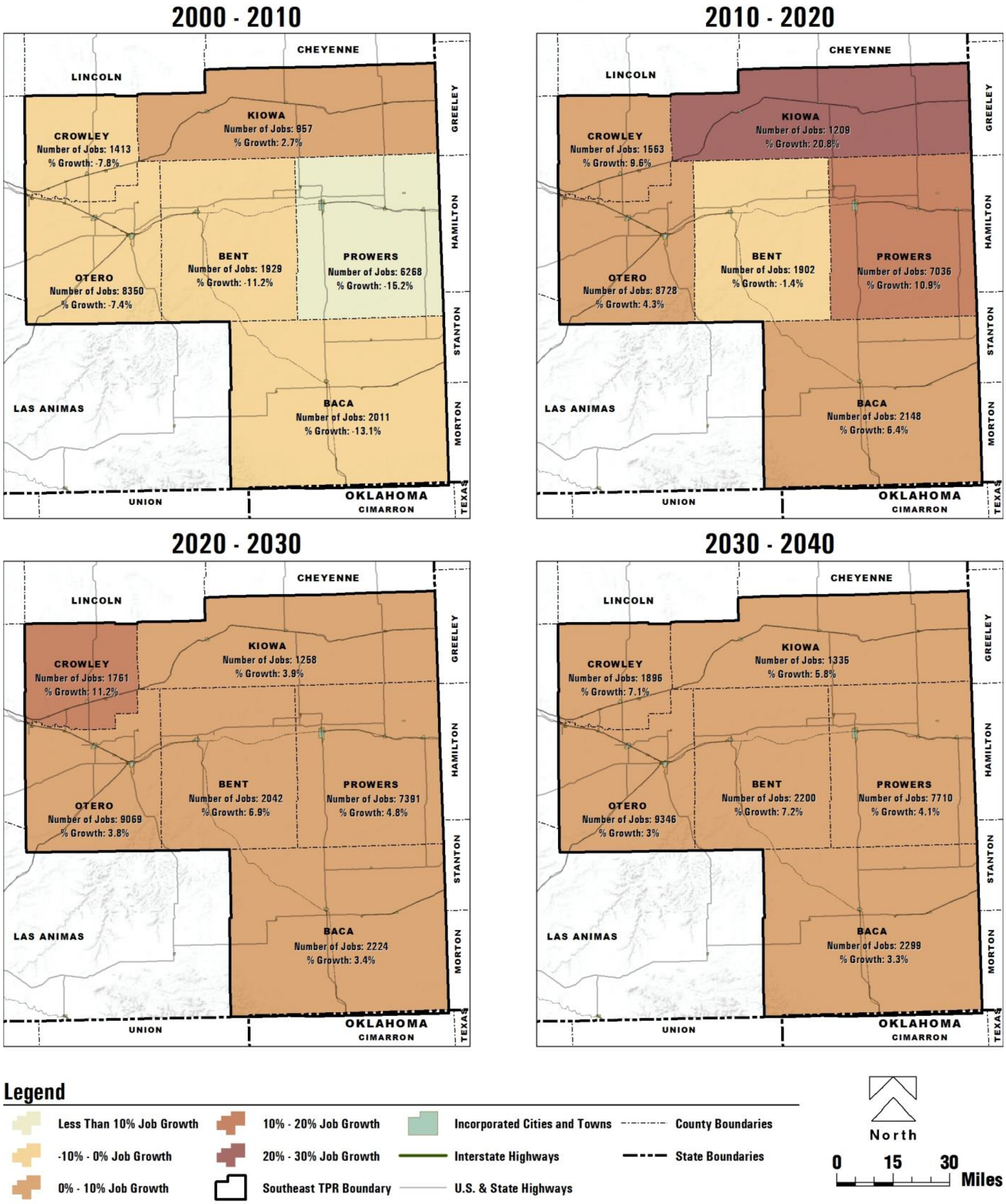


Figure 2-11 Employed Working Outside of County of Residence

*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.

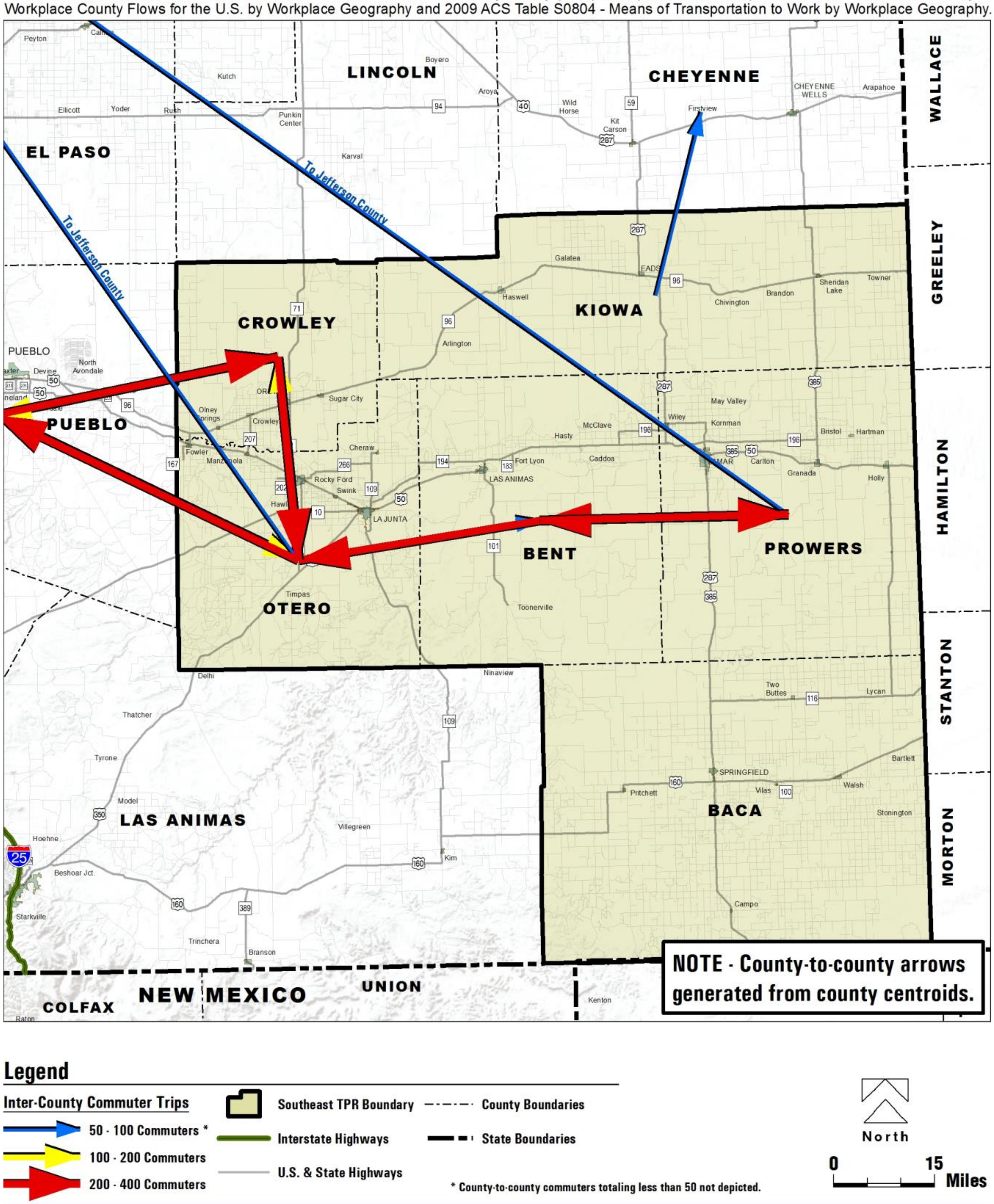
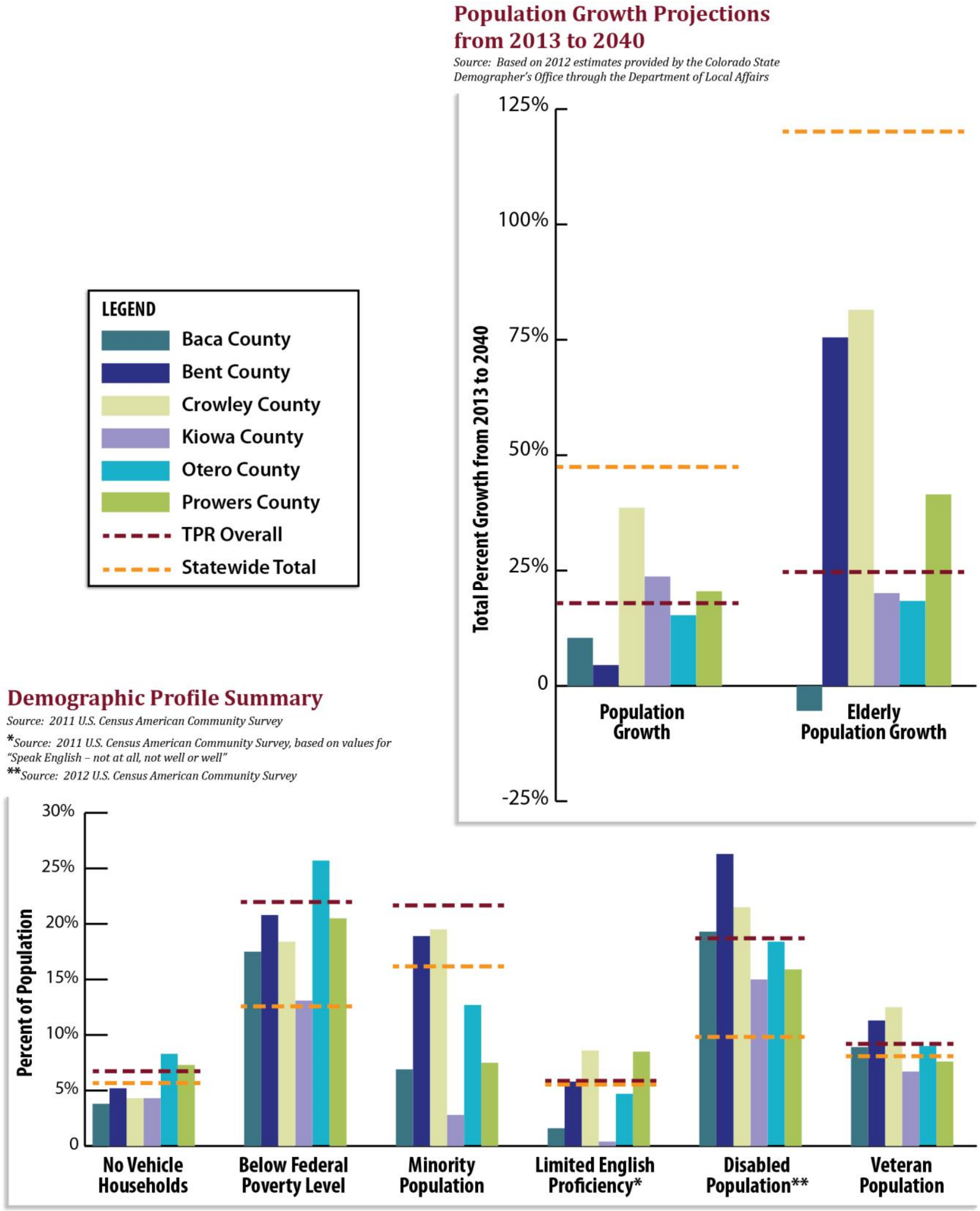


Figure 2-12 Counties with Higher than Statewide and TPR Average Transit Needs Indicators

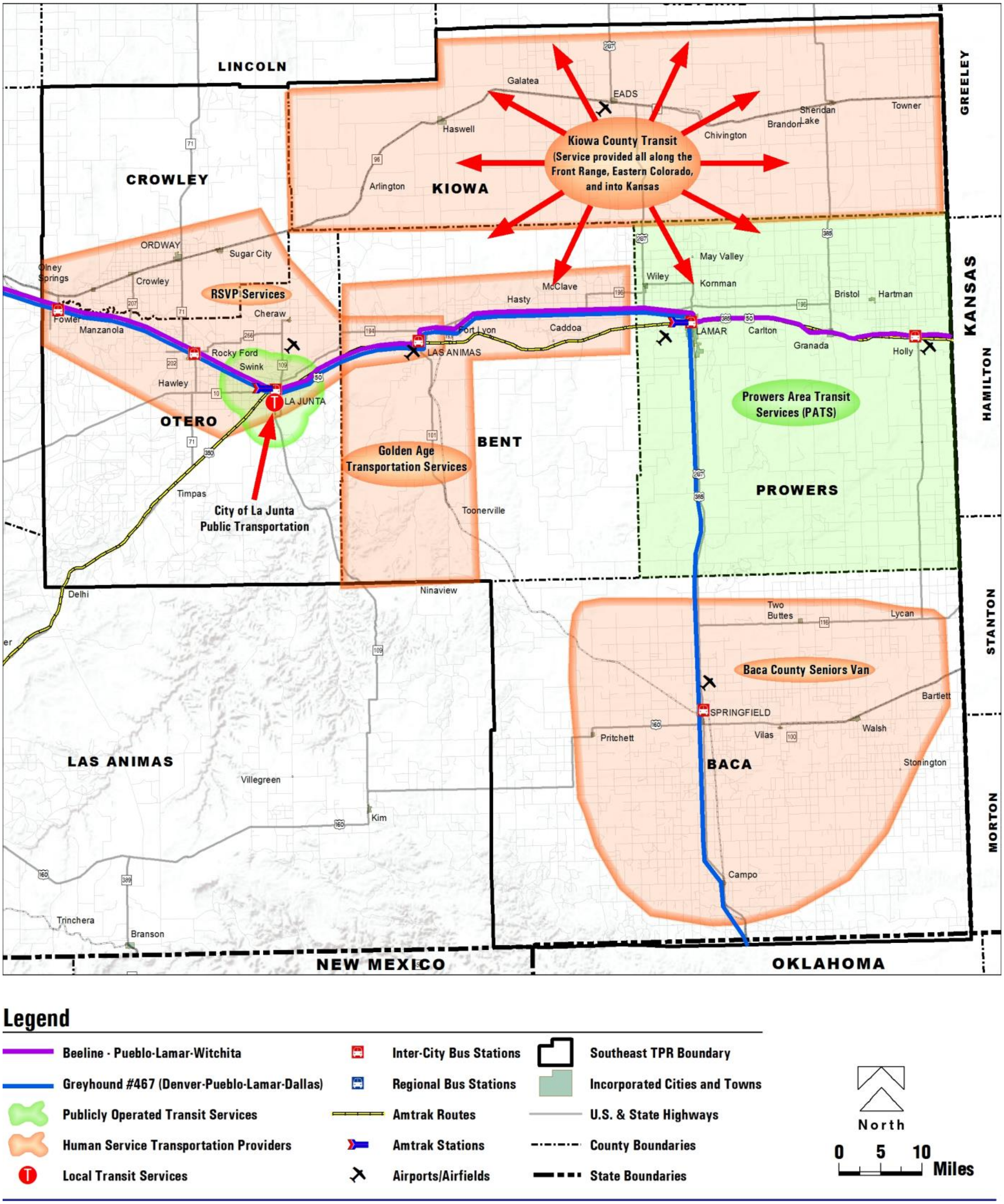


3.0 EXISTING TRANSIT PROVIDERS AND HUMAN SERVICE AGENCIES

This Chapter describes existing public and private transit providers, human services 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 Southeast TPR and supplemented by telephone interviews and web research. **Figure 3-1** provides a snapshot of the primary public transit providers and human service agency transportation services available in the Southeast region. While the map in **Figure 3-1** is not inclusive of every small agency or private taxi service, it provides a useful summary of the available services and illustrates some gaps in service. **Appendix A** includes definitions of key terms used throughout this Chapter and the rest of the plan.

Figure 3-1 Transit Provider System Map

Transit service provider information based upon 2006 CDOT mapping.



Public Transit Providers

There are several public transit service agencies in the region. Public transit services are those that are funded by the 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, e.g., people over the age of 65. The public transit providers in the TPR serve nearly 50,000 residents, numerous visitors, and employees across the region. **Table 3-1** includes key information about each public transit provider in the region.

Table 3-1 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)
City of La Junta	La Junta	▪ Fixed-Route ▪ Demand Response	7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	M T W Th F	$0.50 on-route, $1.00 off-route	30,000	$114,000
Golden Age Transportation Services (GATS)	Bent County	▪ Demand Response	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM	M T W Th F	60 + is voluntary, $1.00 all others	6,000	$33,000
Baca Area Transportation	Baca County	▪ Demand Response	8:30 AM – 4:30 PM	M T W Th	60 + is $2.00 to $3.00, $4.00 all others	11,000	$11,500
Prowers Area Transit Services (PATS)	Prowers County	▪ Demand Response	7:30 AM – 5:00 PM	M T W Th F	$1.50	23,697	$253,000
Kiowa County Transit	Southeast TPR	▪ Demand Response	Varies	M T W Th F	60+/Disabled is donation, $1.00 all others	930	$22,000

Source: Transit Agency Provider Survey, 2013

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 services organizations that fund or operate transportation service and participated in this coordinated planning process.

Table 3-2 Human Services Transportation Provider Overview

Provider	Service Area	Passenger Eligibility	Service Type(s)	Days of Service
RSVP of Otero, Bent, and Crowley Counties	Otero, Bent, Crowley	▪ Elderly ▪ Low-Income ▪ Veterans	▪ Demand Response ▪ NEMT	M T W Th F
Golden Age Transportation Services	Bent County	▪ Elderly ▪ Disabled	▪ Demand Response	M T W Th F
Prowers County Transit Service (PATS)	Prowers County	▪ Elderly ▪ Disabled ▪ Low-income	▪ Demand Response	M T W Th F
Prowers County Veterans Service Office	Prowers	▪ Veterans	▪ Demand Response	M T W Th F
Southeast Behavioral Health Group	La Junta Area	▪ Cognitive Disability	▪ Demand Response	M T W Th F
InspirationField	Bent, Crowley, Otero	▪ Developmentally Disabled	▪ Demand Response	M T W Th

Other Human Services 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 types of human service agencies/programs need to be considered when determining transportation needs in the region:

- Area Agencies on Aging
- 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

Privately Operated Public Transportation Services

Table 3-3 provides an overview of the privately operated public transportation services that are available in the Southeast region. These services are open to the public, but operated by private companies. This includes private operators Amtrak (passenger rail services), Greyhound, and Village Tours/Beeline Express (inter-city bus services).

Table 3-3 Privately Operated Public Transportation Services Overview

Provider	Service Area	Service Type(s)	Passenger Eligibility	Span of Service	Days of Service	Fares
Amtrak – Southwest Chief	▪ Chicago to Los Angeles ▪ Station/stop in La Junta and Lamar	▪ Passenger Rail	General Public	N/A	S M T W Th F Sa	Varies
Greyhound	▪ Denver to Dallas, Texas ▪ Station/stops located in Colorado Springs, Lamar, Pueblo, Rocky Ford, and Springfield	▪ Intercity Bus	General Public	Varies	S M T W Th F Sa	Varies
Village Tours & Travel (BeeLine Express)	▪ Pueblo to Wichita, Kansas ▪ Additional stops in Fowler, Rocky Ford, La Junta, Las Animas, Lamar, and Granada	▪ Intercity Bus	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.

Existing Coordination Activities

Prowers Area Transit Services is coordinating with local human services and mental health providers to handle many of their clients' trips, which utilize a voucher program.

The Southeast region faces several challenges in implementing coordination activities and currently does not have a Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) or Local Coordinating Council (LCC). While there is little interest in forming an official coordinating council, through the planning process it was suggested that the TWG involved in this plan continue to meet on coordination. Difficulties in maintaining momentum, finding available staff and funding, the large geographic area, and assigning a leader or champion were noted. The TWG agreed to maintain the coordinating activities outlined in this plan.

Summary of Existing Services

The Southeast region has five general public transit agencies that mainly provide service within their respective service areas. The City of La Junta operates services within La Junta, Golden Age Transportation Services (GATS) within Bent County, Baca Area Transportation within Baca County, and Prowers Area Transit Services (PATS) serves only Prowers County. Only Kiowa County Transit operates on a larger scale, providing service to all of the Southeast TPR. Combined, the services account for nearly 50,000 annual trips, most of which are demand response. There are a number of human services providers, all of which serve limited populations with demand response service. The relatively low level of tourism-related activities precludes many private providers such as taxi companies from operating in the area; however, Amtrak Southwest Chief Line, Greyhound, and the Village Tours/BeeLine Express are providing regional connections.

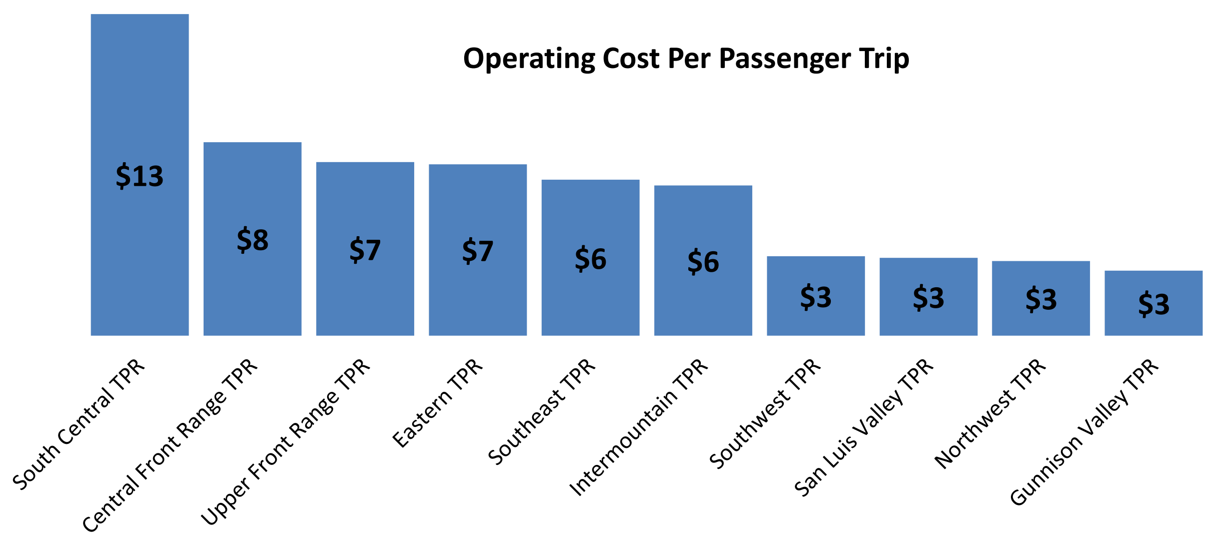
4.0 CURRENT AND POTENTIAL TRANSIT FUNDING

This Chapter presents a snapshot of current transit funding levels and potential sources of funds for the Southeast Transportation Planning Region (TPR). Significant current and potential future funding programs are summarized and estimates of funds generated through future potential revenue mechanisms are provided.

Current Transit Expenditures

Figure 4-1 illustrates the various levels of transit service provided in each of Colorado's rural 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 $6 per trip was expended to support critical transit services within the region. Transit operating costs in the Southeast 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 4-1 Operating Cost per Passenger Trip in Colorado Transportation Planning Regions

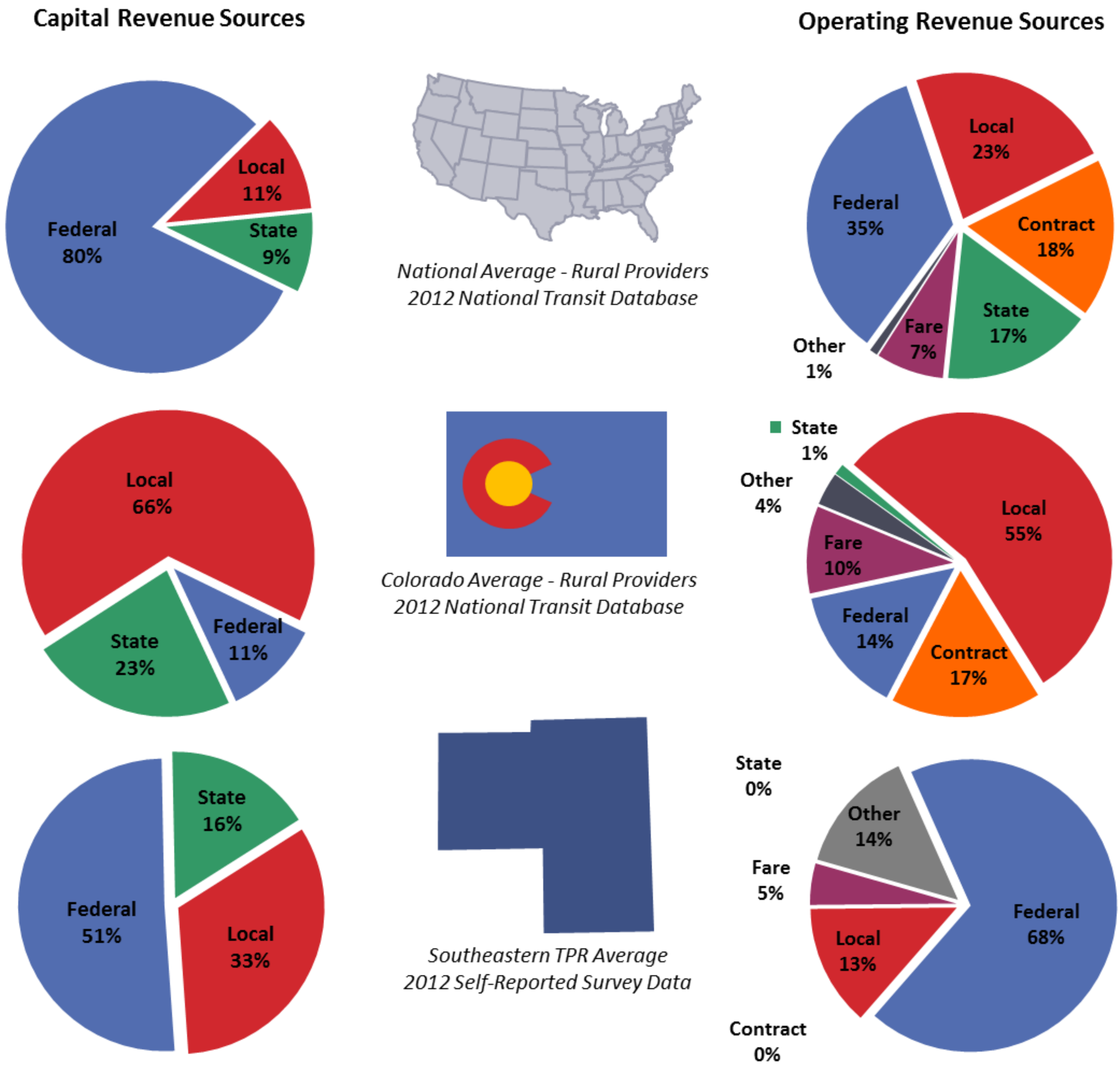


Source: 2012 Self-reported data from Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Transit Agency Provider Survey, 2013

Current Transit Revenue Sources

Transit service providers in the Southeast TPR and across Colorado rely on a patchwork of funding sources to continue operations or fund improvements and system expansions. **Figure 4-2** displays information from the National Transit Database (NTD) of rural providers for the nation and for Colorado. This information is compared to the aggregate regional financial information as reported to the Division of Transit and Rail (DTR) by providers in the region.

Figure 4-2 Comparison of National, State, and Regional Revenue Sources



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

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 & Economic Recovery (FASTER) program.

In the Southeast TPR, capital funding is provided primarily through federal grant programs, including Title III of the Older Americans Act. Local funding includes a wide variety of local government contributions to services throughout the region. State support was primarily provided through FASTER funding. Capital expenditures are not consistent over time, and different sources are used to fund different projects as needs arise.

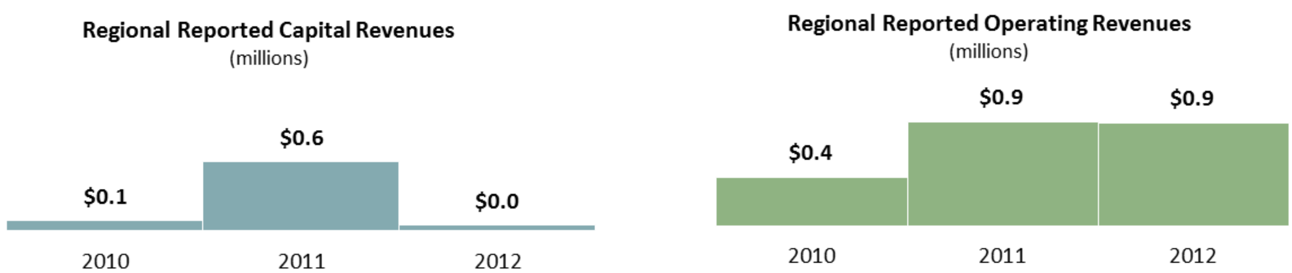
At the national level, operating revenues are relatively diversified among federal, local, agency-derived, and state funding sources. Colorado, on average, is more dependent on local sources and less reliant on federal and state sources for operating funds. However, within the Southeast TPR, the local share of operating revenues is significantly less than the state average (13 percent compared to 55 percent). Federal operating grants make up more than one-half of operating funding sources. Many providers in the region provide a variety of important local human services needs, which tend to be funded through federal human services and health programs. Other sources such as private and philanthopic funds are also important sources for regional providers.

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 4-3 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 varied in the region in recent years. The City of La Junta and Prowers Area Transit received substantial state capital funding in 2011, which is reflected in **Figure 4-3**. Operating revenues have remained relatively stable in recent years. Federal operating grants have increased, but local government contributions have declined. Fares and revenues from other sources including charitable contributions have made up the shortfall in local funds. It should be noted that data for 2010 and 2011 are compiled from the NTD and are not directly comparable to data derived from survey information reported by regional providers in 2013 based on 2012 data.

Figure 4-3 Recent Trends in Regional Transit Revenues



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

Current and Potential 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 community used funding streams and provide estimates of potential new revenue sources for the region.

4..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. CDOT 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 list of major FTA and U.S. DOT programs cover grant assistance programs for rural areas. Providers in the Southeast 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 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 (CASTA).

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 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 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 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 states and local governments may use for a variety of highway-related projects and 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.

4..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 describes current and major federal grant programs that are 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.

4..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. Providers and agencies use a variety of other relatively small, but important funding sources 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). CDOT DTR competitively awards the local transit grants and the statewide grants. Local recipients are required to provide a minimum 20 percent local match. 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, administered by the Colorado Department of Military and Veteran Affairs, supports organizations providing transit and transportation assistance to veterans. The state supports Veterans Service Offices in each county and awards grants to non-profit organizations providing transportation and other services to veterans. An estimated $200,000 a year is directed to support 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 (counties and municipalities) 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, community and private foundations may provide ongoing operating support or one-time grants for operating positions or even capital investments.

Future Funding Options

The following section describes options that Colorado’s local agencies can consider to fund transit service. Sources include revenue streams that are relatively common across the country or those that are not often implemented except in a small number of communities. Available options for any given community are dependent 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 that counties, cities, and special districts use to fund public transit. 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 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 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 and 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 are 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 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 number 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 (loans) 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.

Potential Revenue Estimates

Transit providers in the Southeast TPR rely heavily on federal transit and health and human service 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 4-1 provides an estimate of potential new revenues in the Southeast TPR based on feasible and currently available revenue sources. This estimate is intended to portray the approximate value of these potential funding sources and does not constitute an endorsement or a recommendation. Values are based on currently published information for Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, and Prowers counties.

Table 4-1 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	$332,674,000	$2,328,718
2.	1.0 mill levy	Assessed Property Value	$479,836,912	$479,837
3.	$15 annual fee	Total Housing Units	21,718	$325,770
4.	2% equivalent fee	Local Tourism Tax Receipts	$1,181,100	$23,622
5.	10% flex transfer	Local Highway Users Tax Fund	$8,818,193	$881,819

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 would vary but could have reached nearly $2.3 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 $479,000. 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 $325,000 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 $1 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 $23,000 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 10 percent of HUTF receipts to transit, then approximately $880,000 could have become available for transit-related investments.

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, FTA provides funding for transit services through various grant programs. FTA directly provides several grant programs 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.

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 submitting an application, 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 comprised 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 DTR and the grant applicant fully execute a contract, CDOT issues a notice to proceed. For more information on the grant application process, visit the DTR Transit Grants website.

5.0 TRANSIT NEEDS AND SERVICE GAPS

This Chapter provides an assessment of key quantitative factors that play a role in assessing and understanding needs and gaps for transit in the Southeast region. 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 Southeast Transportation Planning Region (TPR) included, but were not limited to, the Southeast Transit Working Group (TWG), provider and human service agency survey results, geographic analysis of the locations/concentrations of the likely transit user populations (see Chapter 2), CDOT Statewide Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities, and input received from two public meetings in the region.

Quantitative Assessment of Needs and Gaps

This section provides information relevant to general population growth, elderly population growth, and growth in resort/tourism dollars spent in the TPR. These data aid in the quantitative assessment of transit needs and gaps in the Southeast region.

5..1 Population and Elderly Population Growth

Based on 2012 estimates from the Colorado State Demographer's Office (see Chapter 2), the general population in the Southeast region is expected to experience significant growth by 2040, increasing from 49,600 residents in 2013 to approximately 58,500 residents in 2040, and increase of nearly 18 percent. While the general population is likely to grow quite significantly in every county in the region, the highest growth rates are in Kiowa, Crowley, and Prowers. As these large counties 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. Because transit systems in the region are already heavily relied upon for employment and access to human services, this growth will need to be considered to meet the growth projected in the long-term.

The elderly population for the region is anticipated to grow overall by 32.7 percent from 2013 to 2040. Crowley County will see the most significant growth in the 65+ population in the region with a 81.5 percent increase from 2013 to 2040, with Baca County losing 5.4 percent of its elderly population. This is considered minimal growth, when comparing these numbers to the expected growth rate of 120.5 percent on a statewide level. While the region overall will experience a slight increase, the elderly population in growing areas within the region 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.

5..2 Tourism Demand Assessment

While the region is mainly dominated by agriculture and the energy sectors, tourism and travel spending in the area does bring in some revenue. Reasonable assumptions can be made that the number of visitors will ebb and flow relative to increases and decreases in tourism dollars spent in each county and the region as a whole. In 2004 travel spending in the Southeast region was just about $35 million and it increased up to just under $49 million in 2012. The average growth in travel spending between 2004 and 2012 was 2.0 percent. Of course, this dataset includes the time period of the great economic recession, and in 2009 the region was hardest hit by the decrease in travel spending. In 2009, all counties saw a decrease in travel spending growth, ranging from negative 0.8 percent in Otero County to negative 17.8 percent in Crowley County. However, there have been annual increases in travel spending in the region since that time.

Based on the historical travel spending growth from 2004 to 2012 in the Southeast region, it is reasonable to assume that there will be an average of 2.0 percent annual growth in travel spending in future years. In 2012 travel spending in the Southeast region was approximately $48 million. Assuming a growth rate of approximately 2.0 percent in future years, travel spending could reasonably reach $57 million by 2020, $70 million by 2030, and just over $85 million by 2040. These projections indicate that transportation demand relative to tourism and recreation in the Southeast TPR could grow through the planning horizon of 2040.

Qualitative Assessment of Needs and Gaps

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

5..3 Spatial Limitations

Spatial limitations were observed in many parts of the Southeast TPR. Spatial limitations 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 imitations identified in the Southeast TPR.

- Lack of overall service in the region, presenting the problem that most residents in the region are cut off from essential services without the use of a private automobile.
- No regional service connecting from the stateline through La Junta and Lamar to Pueblo for shopping and medical trips that are necessary for elderly, low-income, disabled, or households that do not have any vehicles.
- Lack of regional transit service, on a regular basis, within the TPR and to Pueblo, Colorado Springs and Denver.
- Limited service across county lines. Many county operators operate only in their county.
- Lack of service between Campo, Springfield and Lamar for all of the essential services provided in Lamar.

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 Southeast TPR:

- Need for regional service between Lamar and Pueblo via La Junta, Rocky Ford, and Fowler
- Need for essential regional service between Springfield and Lamar

CDOT's Statewide Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities in the Southeast TPR also showed concurrence with many of the spatial needs, including:

- The majority of those surveyed (62 percent) rely on others for some or all of their transportation needs with 80 percent unable to get somewhere because they could not find transportation once or more in the last month.
- Forty eight percent of respondents have difficulty finding transportation for trips they need or want to make. Of those 66 percent have difficulty finding transportation for medical appointments, 52 percent for shopping and pharmacy trips, and 33 percent for social activities, such as visiting friends and family, and community events.
- General public transportation (52 percent) and paratransit service (53 percent) is not available where respondents live or want to go and was identified as a "major problem."
- The distance to a bus stop showed to be a major problem for 32 percent of survey respondents and is a barrier to their use of transit.

5..4 Temporal Limitations

Temporal limitations were also observed in many parts of the Southeast TPR. Similar to spatial limitations, temporal limitations 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 limitations and needs noted for the Southeast 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 8:00 AM to 5:00 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 Statewide Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities in the Southeast TPR also indicated temporal needs of those surveyed, including:

- Forty-two percent of respondents indicated that service not operating during needed times being a "major problem" and a barrier to their using transit.
- Fifty-two percent of respondents indicated that it was difficult to find transportation on weekdays from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM and 48 percent indicated this same challenge on weekdays from 7:00 PM to midnight. Lack of transportation services during the day on Saturday and Sunday also was a time that many survey respondents indicated needing transportation services, 52 percent and 47 percent, respectively.

5..5 Funding Limitations

All general transit and human services transportation providers identified funding limitations and needs in the region. 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 Southeast TPR. While capital funds are needed, all providers noted the lack of operating funds as a major limitation. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) also now requires all grantees to develop asset management plans. CDOT will work with its grant partners to meet this new requirement with the goal of having the asset management plans in place for all grantees by 2017.
- Growth in the elderly population in the Southeast region will put additional strain on general public and human services transportation agencies, which will likely require additional funds to expand services to meet demand.

5..6 Program Eligibility and Trip Purpose Limitations

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

- Many human service transportation programs are often available only to their program clients with no comingling of various subsets of the population 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..7 Human Services Transportation Coordination Limitations

The Southeast TPR has only a few human services providers with targeted client populations, making coordination of services difficult. Additionally, the absence of a Regional Coordinating Council and/or local champions leaves coordination efforts in the hands of individual service providers, who have limited means for expanding service. Coordination issues include:

- Lack of funding and staff for taking on regional coordination strategies, including creation of a mobility manager position.
- Need for a regional resource directory – no one has the money or time to take this on.
- Desire to create partnerships with area employers to fund transit.
- Need for marketing of services to include transit providers and human services.
- Difficulty maintaining volunteer drivers.
- Need for increased coordination at county lines for regional service.

Following are several smaller coordination efforts the region may want to undertake as it moves more toward coordinated services:

- Develop and maintain a regional services inventory (public, human services, and private programs) to provide ease of access of transit system information and better referral processes. CDOT’s elderly and disabled survey indicated that 36 percent of respondents in the Southeast region felt that lack of information on fares, routes and schedules was a major barrier to using public transportation.
- Continuation of the TWG to facilitate coordination efforts.
- Expand collaboration among regional partners on joint procurements of vehicles, joint training programs, sharing drivers, and sharing of facilities and vehicles.
- Commission a detailed transportation demand analysis to allow more precise measurements of where and when services are needed.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND FUNDING OVERVIEW

This Chapter presents current and estimated future operating expenses and revenues available in the Southeast Transportation Planning Region (TPR) through 2040. These estimates are based on survey reported data from regional providers. Through Transit Working Group meetings, every attempt was 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.

The 2040 operating revenue and expense projections presented here are intended to estimate 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.

Current and Future Operating Expenses

In recent years, operating expenses for major transit providers in the Southeast TPR have generally kept pace with available revenues and population growth. Between 2008 and 2012, total operating expenses for all service providers in the region grew at an average annual rate of 1.3 percent. As shown in **Table 6-1**, operating expenses are projected to grow by 0.6 percent (average annual growth) between 2013 and 2040, and operating revenues are projected to grow by 0.8 percent for the same time period.

The region's resident population is expected to grow 0.7 percent between 2013 and 2040 and reach approximately 58,500 by 2040. The population over the age of 65 years will grow at an annual rate of 1.0 percent through 2040 and reach approximately 11,300.

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

Southeast TPR	Year 2013	Year 2020	Year 2030	Year 2040	Average Annual Growth (2013-2040)
Operating Expenses	$453,212	$477,000	$507,000	$528,000	0.6%
Operating Revenues	$453,212	$512,000	$551,000	$557,000	0.8%
Potential Funding (Gap) / Surplus	*0*	*$35,000*	*$44,000*	*$29,000*	0.2%

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

In 2013, approximately $453,000, or $10 per capita, was expended to support critical transit and transportation services in the Southeast TPR. To provide the same level of service (as measured by per capita expenditures) in 2040 as today, the region will require approximately $528,000 in operating funds.

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 Southeast 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 Southeast TPR Average Transit Operating Cost

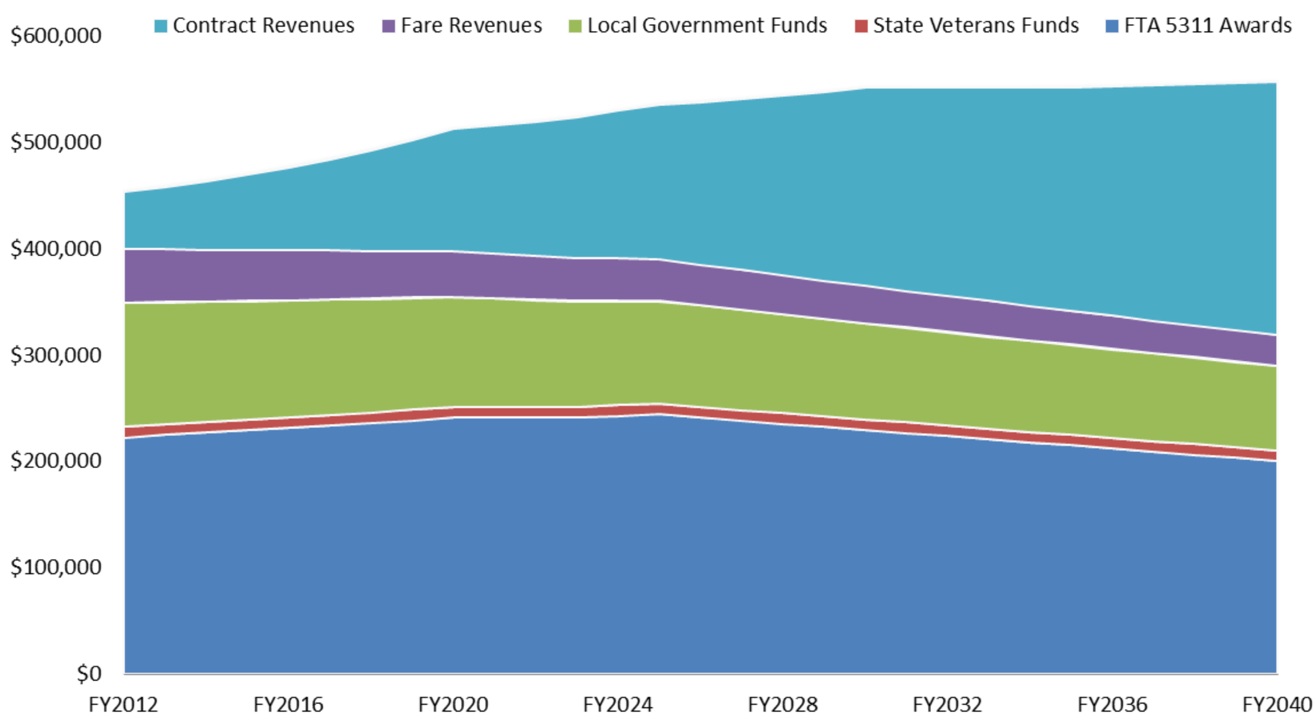
Performance Measure	Operating Cost
Cost per Capita	$10
Cost per Passenger Trip	$6
Cost per Revenue Mile	$2
Cost per Revenue Hour	$27

Source: Transit Agency Provider Survey, 2013

Current and Future Operating Revenues

By 2040, the Southeast TPR could expect to see transit revenues for operating and administration purposes reach an estimated $557,000. 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 National Transit Database [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 Southeast TPR



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

- **Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5311 Awards** are dependent on fuel tax revenues that 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. Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) estimates future FTA funding levels per Congressional Budget Office forecasts.

- **State Veterans Transportation Fund** is assumed to remain constant over the forecast period.
- **Local government 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 assumes that some portion of local funding (e.g., City of La Junta General Fund transfers) will stay constant over the long term, while other local funding sources will continue to decline per historic trends.
- **Fare revenues** have begun to grow again following a steady decline from 2007 through 2009. Based on historic trends, growth in fare revenues is anticipated to remain steady and then grow more slowly over the long-term.
- **Contract revenues** account for 10 percent of all operating revenues in the region today. Should historic growth rates continue, these sources could account for as much as 40 percent of all revenues by 2040. However, funding from 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, funding is expected to decline in the future given the impacts of sequestration. For FY 2013, Colorado's OAA Title III funding allotment for home and community based care fell by 15 percent. Other contract revenues are also highly variable including Non-Emergent Medical Transportation (NEMT) funding through the Medicaid program and Community Service Block Grants (CSBG). Revenues from Medicaid and CSBG have grown quickly in the region, as much as 20 to 30 percent year over year. 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. Should sequestration or other changes in federal programs impact the revenues available through Medicaid, the region could face significant budget challenges in the future.
- 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, provides significant and ongoing funding for transit and transportation services, but is subject to periodic re-authorizations 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 and often one-time grants and 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.

Status Quo Revenue and Expense Summary

Based on best available information and known trends, it is currently forecast that by 2040 growth in transit revenues in the Southeast TPR will be slightly greater than the growth in transit expenses by 0.20 percent (average annual growth including inflation). As illustrated in **Table 6-1**, these trends could result in a potential funding surplus of approximately $29,000 in 2040. However, this forecast assumes continued trend growth in contract fares from federal sources. The future of these federal programs is highly uncertain, and funding may be reduced at any time. In terms of potential projects and strategies, this means the region should examine alternative and sustainable revenue sources.

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 in Chapter 4, or growth in current revenue streams will more than likely be necessary to continue to fund improvements and to meet the growing needs of the general public, seasonal visitors, businesses, elderly, veterans, low-income, and transit dependent populations.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Transit is an important economic engine that helps drive the state of Colorado's economy. Transit helps connect employees, residents, and visitors to jobs and recreation and much more throughout the Southeast 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 the financial scenarios and the projected growth in the Southeast TPR, the highest priority strategies for the region 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 vision identified by the Southeast TPR Transit Working Group (TWG), aligns with one or more of the region's supporting goals, and supports the statewide goals and performance measures (see Chapter 1) established by CDOT with input from the Statewide Steering Committee.

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 Southeast region's transit vision forward. The TWG identified these strategies based on input from the public, identified needs and gaps in service, and gathered 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 Southeast 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. This includes the local plans identified in Chapter 1 as well as the Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan. 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: Maximize transit services and facilities to meet existing transit needs and those in the future.

Strategy 1.1: Maintain existing transit services at current levels.

- 2030 Operating Cost: $507,000 (0.6% average annual growth)
- Annual Capital Cost: $129,000
- Timeframe: Ongoing
- Champions/Partners: Southeast TPR, all transit providers
- Performance Measure Categories: System Preservation and Expansion, Mobility/Accessibility, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Vitality, and Safety and Security
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, agency revenues, and local government
  Capital – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FASTER

Strategy 1.2: Construct a bus/rail facility in Lamar.

- Total Capital Cost: $2 million
- Timeframe: 7-12 years
- Champions/Partners: City of Lamar
- Performance Measure Categories: N/A
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Capital – FTA 5311, FASTER

Strategy 1.3: Construct a bus/rail/park-and-ride facility in La Junta.

- Total Capital Cost: $450,000
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: City of La Junta
- Performance Measure Categories: N/A
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Capital – FTA 5311, FASTER

Regional Goal 2: Evaluate the need for additional transit services and facilities to meet unmet needs.

Strategy 2.1: Provide transit service along US 50 from the stateline to Pueblo. 2 days per week, approximately 2,000 annual hours.

- Annual Operating Cost: $150,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $10,000
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: Southeast TPR, CDOT, counties, cities, all regional stakeholders
- Performance Measure Categories: System Preservation and Expansion, Mobility/Accessibility, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Vitality
- 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: Provide transit service along US 287 from Campo to Lamar. 2 days per week, approximately 310 annual hours.

- Annual Operating Cost: $23,250
- Annual Capital Cost: $5,000
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: Southeast TPR, CDOT, Baca and Prowers counties, cities, all regional stakeholders
- Performance Measure Categories: System Preservation and Expansion, Mobility/Accessibility, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Vitality
- 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 2.3: Expand transit service in Crowley County and Sugar City (US 96). 4 additional hours daily, estimated annual hours 1,040 in both Crowley County and Sugar City.

- Annual Operating Cost: $156,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $20,000
- Timeframe: 1–15 years
- Champions/Partners: RSVP, Crowley County, Sugar City
- Performance Measure Categories: System Preservation and Expansion, Mobility/Accessibility, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Vitality
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, OAA/Title III, CDBG, CSBG, agency revenues, and local government
  Capital – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FASTER

Regional Goal 3: Maintain service of the Amtrak Southwest Chief passenger train through southeast Colorado.

Strategy 3.1: Work with Amtrak officials and regional planning partners to ensure continuity of service.

- Annual Operating Cost: N/A
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: Southeast TPR, CDOT, Amtrak, counties, cities, all regional stakeholders
- Performance Measure Categories: System Preservation and Expansion, Mobility/Accessibility, Economic Vitality

Regional Goal 4: Increase regional and intra-regional service for medical, employment, and educational trip purposes.

Strategy 4.1: Expand RSVP program to include transportation to Rocky Ford and Ordway. 2 trips per week, estimated annual hours 500.

- Annual Operating Cost: $38,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $5,000
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: RSVP, Crowley County
- Performance Measure Categories: System Preservation and Expansion, Mobility/Accessibility, Economic Vitality
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Operating – FTA 5310, 5311, OAA/Title III, CDBG, CSBG, agency revenues, and local government.
  Capital – FTA 5310, 5311, FASTER

Strategy 4.2: Provide transit service along US 50 to connect Lamar, La Junta, Las Animas and Rocky Ford. 5 days per week, 12 hours per day; estimated hours 3,720.

- Annual Operating Cost: $279,400
- Annual Capital Cost: $20,000
- Timeframe: 7–15 years
- Champions/Partners: Southeast TPR, CDOT, counties, cities, regional stakeholders
- Performance Measure Categories: System Preservation and Expansion, Mobility/Accessibility, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Vitality
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Operating – FTA 5310, 5311, OAA/Title III, CDBG, CSBG, agency revenues, and local government.
  Capital – FTA 5310, 5311, FASTER

Strategy 4.3: Provide after-hours service for substance abuse program participants in La Junta. 1,040 estimated annual hours.

- Annual Operating Cost: $78,000
- Annual Capital Cost: $10,000
- 7–15 years
- Champions/Partners: Southeast TPR, counties, cities, all regional stakeholders
- Performance Measure Categories: Mobility/Accessibility, Economic Vitality
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Operating – FTA 5310, 5311, OAA/Title III, CDBG, CSBG, agency revenues, and local government.
  Capital – FTA 5310, 5311, FASTER

Regional Goal 5: **Increase coordination between state, regional, local public, non-profit and private entities to more effectively achieve shared community goals.**

Strategy 5.1: Create a centralized resource directory of transportation services and agencies in the Southeast TPR to help market available services

- Annual Operating Cost: N/A
- Timeframe: 1–2 years
- Champions/Partners: Southeast TPR, CDOT, CASTA, counties, cities, all regional stakeholders
- Performance Measure Categories: Mobility/Accessibility, Transit Systems Development and Partnerships

Strategy 5.2: Hire a Mobility Manager for the Southeast TPR.

- Annual Administrative Cost: $60,000
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: Southeast TPR, CDOT, counties, cities, all regional stakeholders
- Performance Measure Categories: Transit Systems Development and Partnerships
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, agency revenues, and local government.
  Capital – FTA 5310

Strategy 5.3: Expand volunteer driver program and include recruiting/retaining volunteer drivers.

- Annual Operating Cost: $15,000
- Annual Capital Cost: N/A
- Timeframe: 1–6 years
- Champions/Partners: Future Mobility Manager
- Performance Measure Categories: Mobility/Accessibility, Economic Vitality
- Potential Funding Sources:
  Operating – FTA 5310, FTA 5311, FTA 5311(b)

Implementation Plan Financial Summary

Table 7-1 provides an overview of estimated costs over the next 15 years associated with maintaining the existing system compared to implementing the high-priority strategies as identified in Section 7.1.

To maintain existing service levels in 2030, the region would require operating funds in the amount of approximately $507,000. 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 $1.3 million of operating and administrative dollars would be required between now and 2030. Capital costs associated with the high-priority strategies will require an additional $2.6 million between 2014 and 2030 in 2013 dollars to implement.

As shown, to maintain existing services and implement high priority strategies identified in the region, $1.8 million is needed. Based on the projects there is a shortfall of $1.2 million in 2030. The Southeast TPR will need to secure new funding to ensure growth and expansion of transit and human services transportation in the region.

Table 7-1 Financial Summary

2030 Projected Annual Operating/Administrative Costs	
Status Quo – Maintain Existing Service Levels	$507,000
Growth – Implement High Priority Strategies	$1.3 million
Total - Status Quo and Growth Costs	**$1.8 million**
2030 Anticipated Revenues	$551,000
Shortfall	**($1.2 million)**

Values in 2030 dollars

2014–2030 Projected Capital Costs	
Growth – Implement High Priority Strategies	$2.6 million in 2013 dollars $4.2 million in 2030 dollars

As discussed in Chapter 6, it is currently forecast that transit revenues in the Southeast region will exceed transit expenses through 2040. However, this forecast assumes continued trend growth in contract fares from federal sources. The future of these federal programs is highly uncertain, and funding may be reduced at any time. In terms of potential projects and strategies, this means the region should examine alternative and sustainable revenue sources.

To provide the same level of service (as measured by per capita expenditures) in 2040 as today, the region will require approximately $528,000 in operating funds.

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