



**COLORADO**  
Department of  
Transportation

# 2040 | Regional Transportation Plan

February 2015

## South Central

*Transportation Planning Region*





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## A Message from your South Central Transportation Planning Region Chair

As Chair of the South Central Transportation Planning Region, representing Las Animas and Huerfano counties, it is my responsibility to ensure that our area's transportation needs and priorities are recognized, made easily accessible, and communicated to the public and key transportation decision-makers. This Regional Transportation Plan accomplishes this. The Regional Transportation Plan recognizes current needs and priorities, while formulating solutions to keep pace with regional growth and changing conditions.

The South Central Transportation Planning Region began transportation plan development in May of 2013. This document is the reflection of Transportation Planning Region member input, various types of data and information, and broad public sentiment expressed in online and printed surveys and in responses to telephone town hall questions.

A Regional Transportation Plan that reflects the overall priorities and needs for our area is vital at a time of limited funding for transportation. This Regional Transportation Plan will help inform decisions the Colorado Department of Transportation makes about the state's transportation system.

This Regional Transportation Plan has been developed in tandem with the Colorado Department of Transportation's development of the Statewide Transportation Plan. These plans will be integrated, demonstrating the important role that transportation in the South Central Region plays in the overall state transportation system. For example, the priority corridors and transportation needs identified in this plan have been rolled up into the statewide transportation plan.

This plan is intended to be a living, useful document that is referred to when transportation decisions are being made and as the Transportation Planning Region implements the action items listed in the final chapter of the Regional Transportation Plan. This Regional Transportation Plan will be revisited periodically by the Transportation Planning Region and others to ensure that we are on the right path toward accomplishing its vision and goals.

Your familiarity with our region's transportation needs, our transportation priorities, and the challenges that we face in meeting those needs is important now and into the future. I invite you to review this plan and become more engaged in the South Central Region's transportation future.

Sincerely,



Priscilla "Pete" Fraser

Chair, South Central Transportation Planning Region

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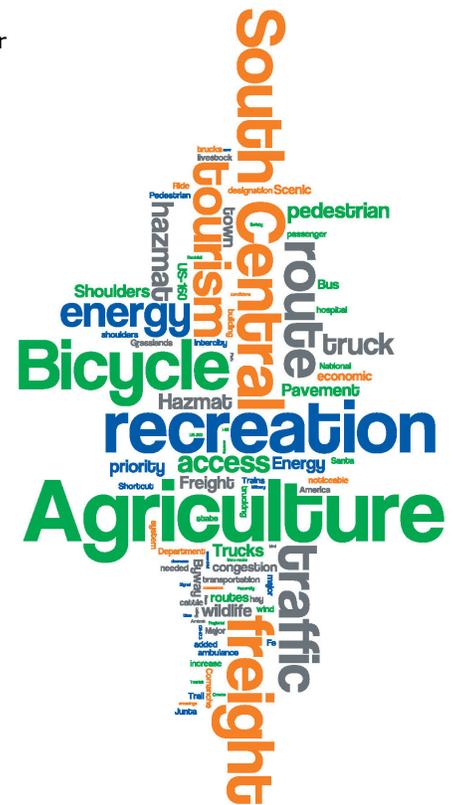
# Chapter 1 Regional Transportation Story

Anyone who has traveled across Colorado knows that it's a good idea to bring a map. Whether it's displayed on a smartphone, folded in the glove compartment, or doodled on a napkin, a map can tell you where you've been, where you're going, and the best route to arrive safely at your destination. This 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the map for the future of the South Central Transportation Planning Region (TPR). It lays out all the information needed to guide the continuing development of a multimodal transportation system for the South Central TPR. The Plan recognizes current needs and priorities, while formulating solutions to keep pace with regional growth and changing conditions. It extends out 25 years to 2040, but has a particular focus on the first 10 years, up to 2025, allowing the region to think clearly about what kind of transportation is needed in South Central Colorado today, tomorrow, and in the future.

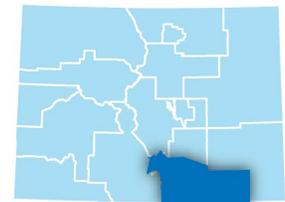
The RTP serves multiple purposes that, together, establish the foundation for regional decision-making related to the statewide transportation system. It is developed using stakeholder input, public feedback, and regional data. It allows the people in the South Central TPR to clearly communicate their needs and priorities for transportation to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the State Transportation Commission, which simultaneously helps them understand what to expect from CDOT with regard to planning, funding, and completing projects in the region. The RTP is updated periodically to adjust for changes in travel behavior, transportation policy, and the transportation system over time.

Colorado has a unique transportation story because of its diverse regions. This story is being told through a video located on CDOT's planning website. The Colorado transportation story includes local and regional aspects of life in the South Central TPR, making this regional transportation story an important part of painting the full picture of transportation in Colorado.

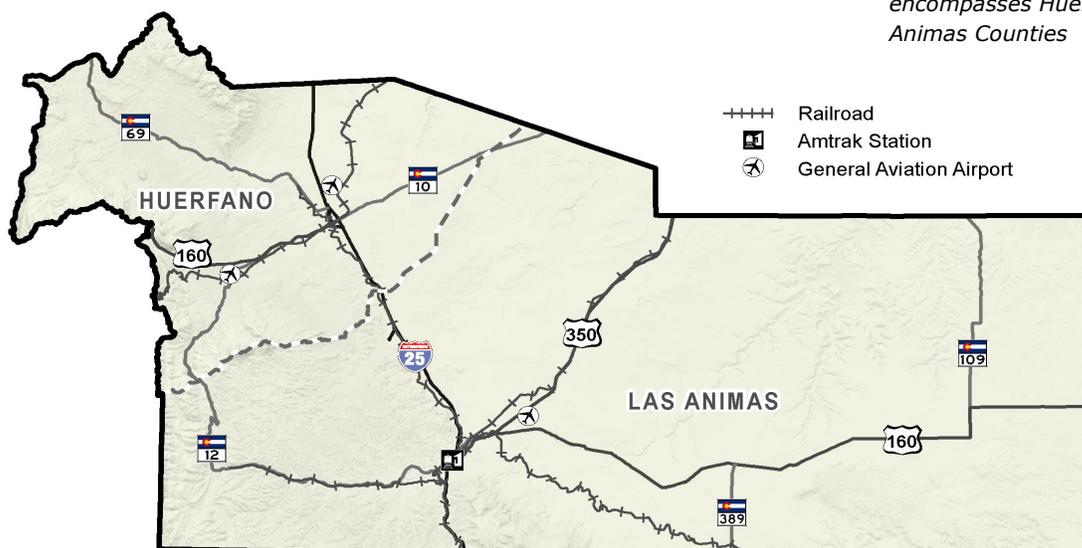
The regional transportation story for the South Central TPR describes the region's unique characteristics, along with some of the key transportation conditions that help to define the South Central TPR.



South Central TPR



The South Central TPR encompasses Huerfano and Las Animas Counties



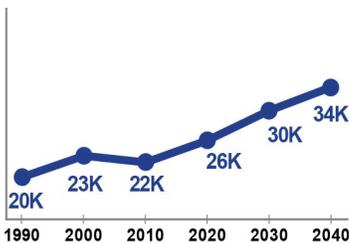
## Landscape

The South Central TPR is a large region along Colorado’s southern border with New Mexico. Terrain consists of rolling plains, high mountain peaks, and a semi-arid climate with extreme temperatures varying widely from more than 100° F in the summer to sub-zero in the winter. On occasion, the region experiences severe winter storms. On the other hand, the region also experiences an above-average number of days of sunshine throughout the year. The changing and sometimes severe weather creates the potential for road closures due to adverse weather conditions. The region has several recreational opportunities for residents and tourists, including the Highway of Legends, Santa Fe Trail, national grasslands, and others.

*Scenic settings and recreational opportunities attract visitors dependent on a viable highway network.*



### Population in the South Central TPR



*The region’s population is expected to increase by 55 percent by 2040 compared to today. (Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs)*

## Population

The population of the South Central TPR is expected to grow by approximately 1.4 percent annually through the year 2040 (from 22,200 residents in 2010 to 33,600 residents in 2040), which is slightly lower than the statewide average of 1.5 percent. People 65 years of age or older—both in the South Central TPR and statewide—make up the fastest-growing segment of the population.

## Heard Around the Region

The people of the South Central TPR value their rural way of life, which is supported by highly productive agricultural lands and their local communities that offer a small-town atmosphere. The increasing senior population will need better signing, lighting, accommodation of recreational vehicles, and public transportation services (alternatives to driving). TPR members have said that transportation options are especially vital for those without access to a vehicle or who cannot drive.

## Economic Vitality

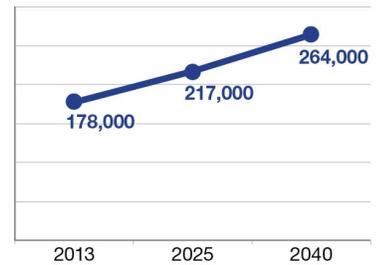
Primary economic generators in the South Central TPR include agriculture, energy development, tourism, outdoor recreation, hunting, military training, and mining. The top commodities by value exported from the TPR are grains, petroleum refining products, and signs and advertising displays. Commodity values are expected to grow by 2.0 percent annually through the year 2040.

The South Central TPR has a relatively high volume of truck traffic on state highways (approximately 17 percent of daily traffic). This is nearly twice the statewide average of 9 percent and indicates the important role the South Central TPR plays in a growing freight economy. The sidebar graphic shows the growth in daily truck vehicle miles traveled (VMT). VMT is defined as one vehicle traveling one mile.

Freight rail is also a key mode for commodity import and export. The Union Pacific Railroad, San Luis Rio Grande Railroad, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway provide freight rail in the South Central TPR.

There are two scenic byways in the region, the Highway of Legends and the Santa Fe Trail. The tourism generated from the scenic byways is important to the economy in the region.

## Truck Traffic in the Region



*The region is expected to experience growth in truck traffic. By 2040, the daily vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by trucks in the region will increase by 52 percent. (Source: CDOT)*



## Heard Around the Region

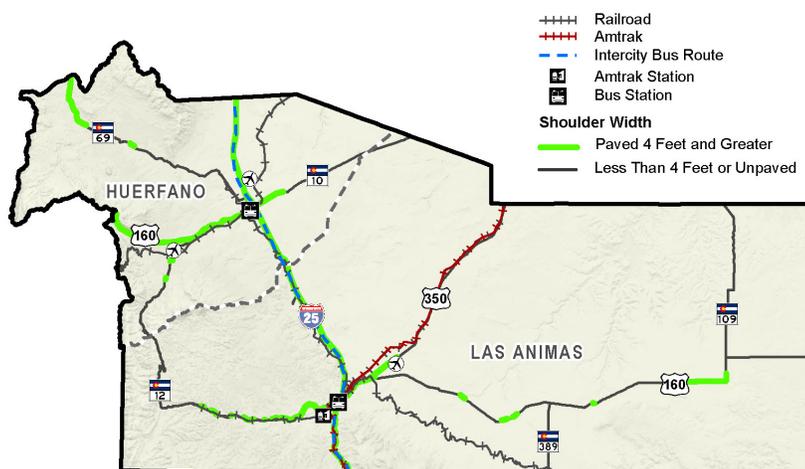
The region is experiencing increased energy production, including oil, gas, and wind. These energy industries fluctuate based on influences from the national and global economies and are, therefore, not considered as stable as other sectors, such as agriculture. The Pinon Canyon Military Maneuver Site generates military vehicle and equipment traffic. US 350, US 160, and SH 10 have experienced increased traffic because of their designation as hazardous material routes.

## Multimodal Transportation System

The multimodal transportation system in the South Central TPR includes numerous state highways, three general aviation airports, six local/human services transit providers, and two intercity bus service providers operating in the region. In addition, Amtrak's Southwest Chief travels through the South Central TPR en route between Chicago and Los Angeles. The train route includes a stop in Trinidad.

Bicycle use in the region is a popular and growing activity for both transportation and recreation. The increased use of bicycles is creating greater demand for bicycle facilities, such as improved shoulders, side paths, bicycle-friendly striping, and signing. Bicycle safety is an important consideration, especially where bicyclists and motor vehicles compete for space. The map below depicts the width of the paved shoulders on the state highways in the South Central TPR.

Local and intercity bus providers serve a vital role in the multimodal transportation system, providing mobility options to the traveling public, especially to those without access to cars or who are unable to drive. It also enhances system capacity and improves system efficiency. Transit services connect residents, employees, and visitors to major activity centers for jobs, schools, shopping, medical care, and recreation, thereby contributing to the economic vitality of the area.



## Multimodal Transportation System At-A-Glance

**969** lane miles—4.2 percent of the state system

**1.1** million VMT per day—1.4 percent of state VMT

**3** general aviation airports—Perry Stokes in Trinidad; Spanish Peaks Airfield in Walsenburg; Cuchara Valley in La Veta

**3** freight railroads—Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Union Pacific, and San Luis Rio Grande Railroads

**6** local/human services transit providers

**2** intercity bus providers:

- South Central Council of Governments—Trinidad to Pueblo
- Greyhound—Denver to Dallas through Trinidad

**1** passenger rail service—Amtrak, the Southwest Chief

## Roadway Drivability and Bridges

As is characteristic of rural regions, the South Central TPR has a high ratio of highway lane miles relative to its population and volume of vehicular travel. The TPR's population makes up 0.4 percent of the state of Colorado, yet it has 4.2 percent of the state highway lane miles and 1.4 percent of the annual VMT in the state.

### Drivability Life

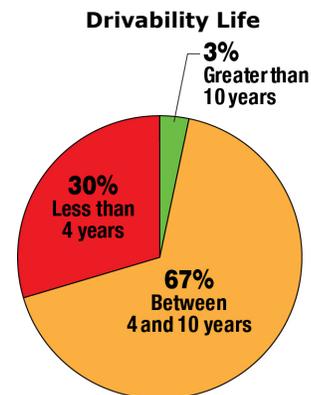
Pavement condition is described in terms of drivability. Drivability is a function of roadway smoothness, pavement distress, and safety. Drivability life (DL) is an indication—reported in years—of how long a highway will have acceptable driving conditions.

A highway with a DL of greater than 10 years is considered to have a high DL, while a highway with a DL of less than four years is considered to have a low DL. A DL is considered moderate when it is between four and 10 years. In the South Central TPR, approximately 70 percent of highways have a DL of high or moderate, while approximately 30 percent of highways have a low DL. The sidebar graphic to the right displays this information.

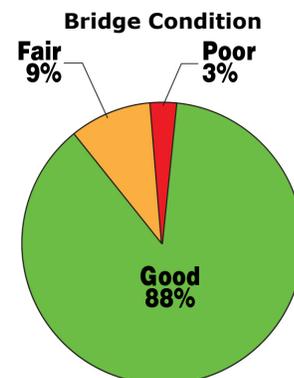
DL will improve the system by taking a more consistent and pragmatic approach to surface treatment. This means strategically utilizing limited surface treatment funds to maximize cost-benefit and minimize unacceptable driving conditions. Unacceptable driving conditions mean drivers have to reduce speeds to compensate for unsafe factors, navigate around damaged pavement, or endure rough rides. By reporting pavement conditions using DL, CDOT is able to identify which roadways will reach unacceptable driving conditions and then determine the most appropriate method of repair. The DL method also will proactively direct financial resources toward maintaining pavement to extend the life of a road and avoid or delay more costly rehabilitation or reconstruction. DL will result in a statewide network with the most drivable roads across the entire pavement network, due to routine surface treatment.

### Bridges

Bridge condition is an important element in the transportation system. The South Central TPR has 170 bridges that are maintained by CDOT. The bridge condition in the TPR is quite good, with 97 percent of bridges being in good or fair condition. The small number of bridges rated as poor are operational and safe, but may not meet current design standards or are weight restricted.



(Source: CDOT, 2014)



(Source: CDOT, 2011-2013)

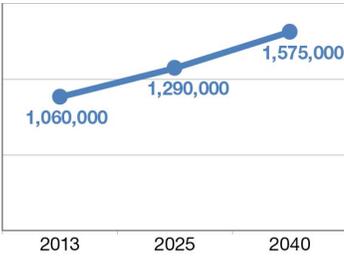
## Heard Around the Region

Communities are located far from each other, resulting in long travel distances for employment, medical services, and shopping. Potential alternate routes tend to be limited and unable to handle heavy truck traffic. As a result, isolation and lengthy detours are concerns, especially in severe winter weather conditions. Snow and ice removal is an essential need in the region so that social and economic activities can continue.

Creating transit connections to the Colorado Springs and Metro Denver areas, as well as to New Mexico, is important to the region. Other multimodal needs and desires of residents in the South Central TPR include investments in local public transit, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian improvements that provide options for local travel; and on-demand van service for elderly, disabled, and other residents to access health care and social opportunities.

## Traffic and Safety

### Total Vehicle Miles Traveled



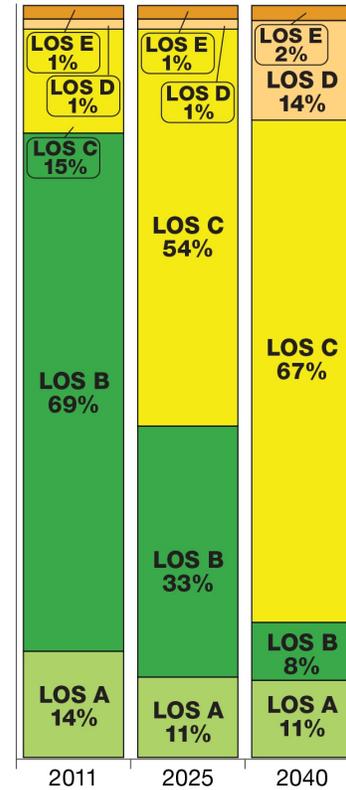
Total VMT in the region likely will grow at an annual rate of 1.5 percent. (Source: CDOT)

Traffic volume in the South Central TPR is growing. Between 2013 and 2040, the total VMT in the region likely will grow at an annual rate of 1.5 percent. This is slightly lower than the 1.6 percent growth anticipated for the state. Despite this growth, the majority of highways in the South Central TPR are expected to remain relatively free of congestion within this time period.

Roadway Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of congestion delay. It can be thought of as a grading scale for roadways, where LOS A is excellent and implies high levels of mobility and ease of maneuverability. LOS F represents failure and indicates that the road is experiencing heavy traffic volumes, significant congestion, and stop-and-go conditions. Grades of LOS A through LOS D are considered acceptable. More details on predicted traffic conditions in the TPR are shown to the right. Very little congestion exists on the state highway system today in the South Central TPR; and, while it will increase in the future, congestion is not expected to be a significant problem even by 2040.

From 2010 to 2011, the average crash rate in the region was 1.14 crashes per million VMT. This rate is significantly lower than the statewide average of 1.70 crashes per million VMT for the same time period. The two most prominent crash types in the South Central TPR between 2010 and 2011 were wild animal collisions and rollovers.

### Regional Level of Service



(Source: CDOT, 2013)

## Recent Accomplishments

Transportation is constantly changing in the South Central TPR. Several projects completed since the prior TPR plan addressed transportation needs in the region, including:

- SH 12 in Las Animas County—Minor widening, turning radius improvements, and guardrail
- SH 12 in Las Animas/Huerfano Counties—Replacement of Purgatoire and Cucharas bridges
- I-25 Trinidad Viaduct—Replacement of two viaducts and two bridges
- Trinidad Multimodal Transit Station—Some of the land has been purchased and construction is being planned

## Heard Around the Region

Traffic safety is a fundamental priority for transportation at the local, regional, and state levels. Shoulder additions, pavement maintenance, and strategic improvements, such as turning lanes, are key to improving safety and are highly desired by residents in the region.

State highways often serve as the main street in many communities in the South Central TPR, adding to safety concerns. Many of the roads in the area are two lanes with limited shoulders. Oversized loads frequently travel in the area, impacting mobility for other travelers on the narrow roads. Passing lanes are needed in spots—particularly on grades—to increase safety and reduce travel times.



## Key Takeaways

The South Central TPR of Colorado is unique in many ways. The following takeaways were identified by TPR members during the planning process and considered in the preparation of the RTP's recommendations.

- Agriculture remains the primary industry in the region.
- The region is experiencing increases in oil and gas production and wind energy development.
- Freight movement is increasingly characterized by larger trucks and heavier loads. The region experiences relatively high levels of truck traffic as compared to the statewide average.
- Many residents and workers in the region experience long commutes.
- Like the state overall, the average age of the population in the South Central TPR is increasing.
- The I-25 corridor is the primary southern gateway into the state. The region should enhance the gateway function of the highway and take advantage of the economic opportunities afforded by this entrance to Colorful Colorado.
- The region's two scenic byways—the Highway of Legends and the Santa Fe Trail—are important to the economic development of the region.
- Amtrak has been considering changes to its route structure and may remove or relocate the Southwest Chief from the region. Many community members have stressed the importance of retaining Amtrak's Southwest Chief passenger rail service to maintain connections to other parts of the nation. The Southwest Chief is not only a mobility alternative for inter-state travel, it also serves to define the region's identity. The passenger rail service provided by the Southwest Chief is an important component to the intermodal bus and train station planned in Trinidad.
- Multimodal needs and desires of residents in the region include investments in local public transit; bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and on-demand van service for elderly, disabled, and other residents to access health care and social opportunities.
- Rural highways experience relatively high travel speeds, limited passing opportunities, frequent animal crossings, blizzards, and other potential safety hazards. Shoulder additions, pavement maintenance, and strategic improvements—such as passing lanes—are crucial to improving safety and are highly desired by residents in the region.
- Some highways experience significant movements of military vehicles.
- Time and again, residents and business owners in the region have expressed the need for good pavement quality on state highways. In rural areas, pavement maintenance often trumps the desire for additional roadway capacity or other improvements. Pavement quality affects highway safety, ride comfort, and accommodation of truck traffic.
- Snow and ice removal are essential necessities in the region so that social and economic activities can continue.
- Improving economic development and roadway pavement condition are important issues to the TPR.

## Transportation System Vision and Goals

The vision and goals for the South Central TPR transportation system, including transit, are listed below. The South Central TPR developed a multimodal vision and goals for its transportation system based on the region's transportation story and the data presented in this RTP. The transit vision and goals are included because transit is an important part of the regional transportation system. A regional transit working group—including public and private transit agency representatives, elected officials, and others—developed the transit vision and goals in two of its three meetings conducted to guide and direct development of the regional coordinated transit plan.

### Transportation System Vision and Goals

The vision of the South Central TPR is to have a transportation system that will accommodate the region's rapidly growing multimodal transportation needs through a combination of capacity improvements in congested corridors, safety and traffic management improvements elsewhere on the transportation system, and the provision of local and regional public transportation. Transportation development will accommodate and enhance the region's high quality of life, while preserving the environmental conditions that make this a great place to live, work, and visit. The transportation system supports economic development by providing mobility for people and goods, as well as multimodal access to services. The 2040 RTP envisions a systematic approach to implementation that is understood and supported by the people of the South Central TPR. The transportation vision of the South Central TPR is supported by the following goals:

- Provide mobility to the traveling public at an acceptable level of service.
- Maintain the transportation system in the most efficient manner possible.
- Provide safe travel opportunities.
- Minimize impacts to the region's air, water, scenic view corridors, cultural resources, and wildlife habitat.
- Function as a complete system with effective connectivity, both within the region and to the rest of the state.
- Support interconnection with multimodal options and investments that support the multimodal system.
- Preserve and enhance the region's overall economic health.
- Provide new intermodal access and mobility options for individuals and commerce.
- Support a safe and efficient airport system that maximizes existing investments and meets inter-state and intra-state travel and emergency needs while supporting Colorado's diverse economy.
- Identify, evaluate, and prioritize options that enhance travel and can be implemented through existing or reasonably anticipated funding. Include options that are understood and supported by the traveling public.

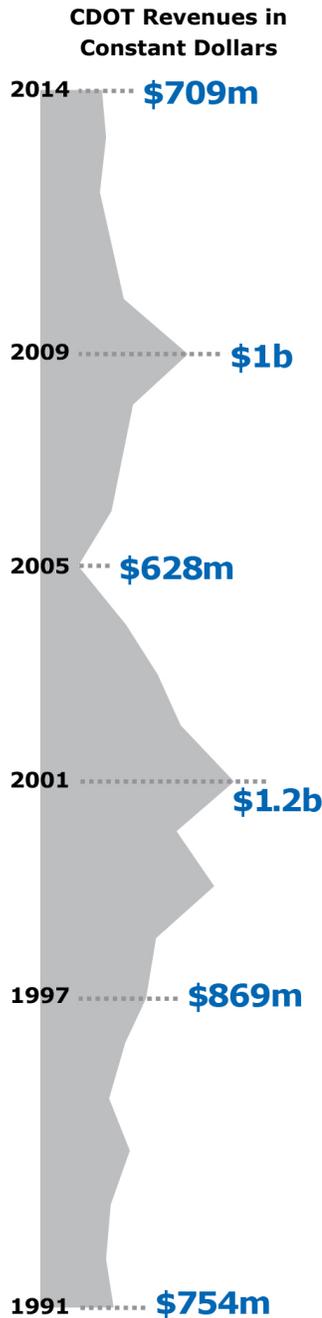
### Transit Vision and Goals

In the South Central TPR, the transit vision is to provide safe, reliable, cost-effective, and accessible transportation to all residents of Huerfano and Las Animas Counties, with special attention to individuals who cannot access or afford other transportation alternatives. The transit vision of the South Central TPR is supported by the following goals:

- Attract new passengers while continuing to serve existing passengers.
- Continue to enhance the sustainability of the transit system.
- Provide efficient, effective, safe, and reliable services.
- Promote the services provided by South Central Council of Governments Public Transit.

# Chapter 2

## Changes Affecting Regional Transportation



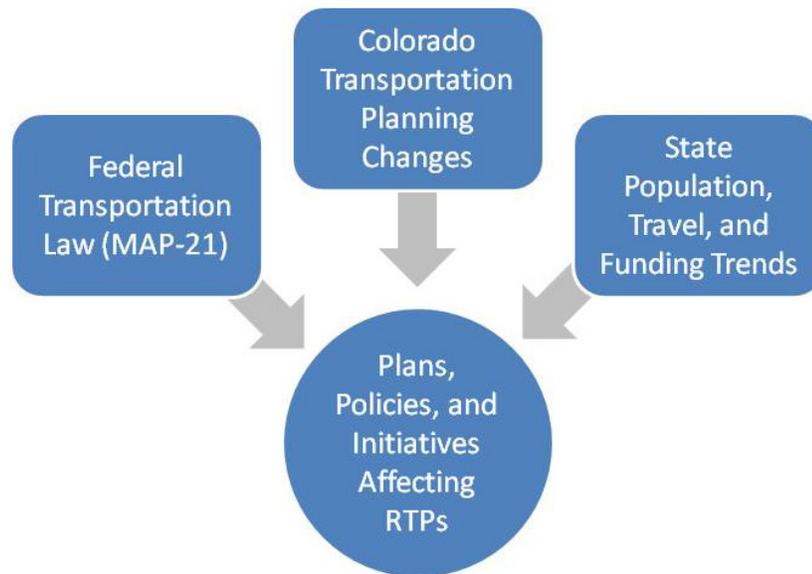
m = millions    b = billions

*When adjusted for inflation and construction costs, CDOT's annual revenues, since 2009, have declined in purchasing power to pre-1991 levels. Sharp fluctuations in annual revenues make it challenging to plan ahead beyond a few years.*

This chapter discusses policies and trends that affect the RTP. Colorado has developed several plans, policies, programs, and initiatives since the adoption of the 2035 South Central TPR RTP that affect transportation in the region and statewide. These changes respond to several trends affecting transportation in Colorado:

- Current state trends in population growth, travel demand, and transportation funding
- The federal transportation authorization bill, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21), reauthorizes federal funding for transportation while placing a new emphasis on measuring how well each state meets its goals and objectives
- Colorado revised transportation regulations, state law changes, and Transportation Commission policies

### Factors Affecting Regional Transportation



### Federal Transportation Law, MAP-21

Signed into law on July 6, 2012, MAP-21 marked the first time that a federal transportation authorization law outlined national transportation goals and required states to measure how well they addressed those national goal areas. States are required to ensure resources are distributed to meet objectives. The law established national goals for safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement, and economic vitality, and reduced project delivery delays.

Besides authorizing transportation funds, MAP-21 also consolidates funding programs, permits different financing mechanisms, and provides for streamlined environmental reviews.

## State Trends Affecting Transportation Planning

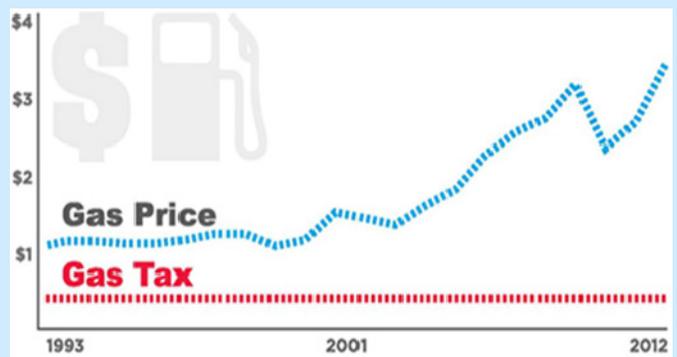
Colorado's population is growing. This growth will increase the number of transportation system users and the VMT. In 2011, the population of Colorado was 5.1 million people. By 2040, the population is expected to increase to 7.8 million people (Source: Department of Local Affairs). In 2013, there were 78 million VMT per day on the state highway system. In 2040, there are projected to be 115 VMT each day on the state highway system.

To support this growth along with an expanding and changing economy, Colorado's state transportation system needs additional revenue to balance maintenance, safety, mobility, and limited expansion. CDOT's challenge is having enough revenue to help the transportation system function at its potential. The gas tax, the main source of funding for Colorado's roads, is assessed at a flat per-gallon rate that has not increased in 20 years. That means that with increasing construction costs, the buying power of the gas tax is decreasing.

To get more out of the transportation system in the face of limited revenues, CDOT is focusing on maintaining assets, managing traffic flows, and encouraging multimodal choices like transit, bicycling, and walking. While the RTP focuses on regional priorities for highway improvements, other transportation plans incorporate other modes of travel. Guidance from all of these individual planning documents is combined in the Statewide Transportation Plan so that it can provide comprehensive guidance on statewide transportation planning decisions.

## Growing Transportation Demand, Flat Funding Source

The Colorado transportation system is funded primarily by the state and federal gas taxes at a rate of 22 cents per gallon and 18.4 cents per gallon, respectively. These rates have not increased at all since 1993. With vehicles becoming more fuel efficient and with expected growth in population and VMT, revenue from the gas tax cannot keep up with transportation demand.



## State Transportation Policy Changes

The Colorado Legislature passed Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery (FASTER) in 2009 to provide additional funds for transportation, primarily through increased vehicle registration fees. FASTER funds are to improve safety and replace poor bridges. A provision in the legislation also designates the distribution of FASTER funds into the State Transit and Rail Fund. Grants to local governments for transit projects, such as new bus stops, bike parking, maintenance facilities, or multimodal transportation centers, and transit projects of state and interregional significance are funded by the State Transit and Rail Fund. Total FASTER funding is approximately \$200 million per year, according to the CDOT Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Budget.

CDOT planning regulations were updated to reflect the performance management focus and increased emphasis on coordination with tribal governments in MAP-21, as well as additional planning factors in FASTER. The planning regulations, 2 CCR 601-22, can be accessed at CDOT's planning website.

Revised in 2015, CDOT's Policy Directive (PD) 14 provides an overall framework for the transportation planning process through which a multimodal, comprehensive Statewide Transportation Plan is developed that optimizes the transportation system by balancing preservation and maintenance, efficient operations and management practices, and capacity improvements. PD 14 performance objectives will guide distribution of resources for the Statewide Transportation Plan, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and the annual budget. The directive is in alignment with national goals in MAP-21. It also reflects CDOT's risk based asset management program and plan that incorporates a business approach intended to optimize investment for maintenance and preservation of CDOT transportation assets based on both risk and performance assessment. PD 14 will be revised periodically as federal regulations for MAP-21 become effective and as CDOT further refines its performance objectives. To review PD 14, see CDOT's planning website.

## How does the South Central TPR respond to these national goals, plans, policies, programs, and initiatives?

The Statewide Transportation Plan is effectively a roll-up of the rural TPR and urban Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) plans. For CDOT to address the national goals and federal and state planning factors, the RTPs should address as many of them as appropriate. While the South Central TPR is not subject to specific performance measures, this RTP addresses these goals where applicable. Truck freight, pavement and bridge condition, system reliability, safety, and supporting economic vitality have been emphasized in this RTP. In addition, the South Central TPR has identified several multimodal priorities, including improvements for transit and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.



# Chapter 3 Planning Purpose & Processes

This chapter discusses the purpose of developing an RTP and the process that was used to develop a plan for the South Central TPR. Transportation planning provides the framework for investment in a transportation system that will keep the South Central TPR moving forward, growing, and adapting with the needs of its residents for decades to come. It will be used to guide important decision-making for the next 25 years, but with a particular emphasis on the next 10 years.

The purpose of the South Central TPR's RTP is to provide guidance and direction related to the regional transportation vision, needs, and priorities based on input from the public and data gathered throughout the planning process. It allows the people of the South Central TPR to communicate their needs and desires for transportation in their region, and, in response, to understand what they can expect from CDOT for funding and project completion. The South Central TPR has actively developed the RTP to accurately reflect the perspectives of the public and serve the region's transportation needs over the long term.

The Colorado Transportation Commission and CDOT will refer to this document to assist in their planning and decision making. With limited dollars available, it is important to have a plan that establishes transportation priorities for the South Central TPR so that investments can be made accordingly. The implementation mechanism for the RTP is the STIP, a capital improvement program that identifies which transportation projects have been approved for funding. The STIP is based on RTPs developed by each region to establish a direct link between the corridor-based transportation needs and priorities expressed in the RTP and the selection and funding of specific system improvements.

The intent for the RTPs and the Statewide Transportation Plan is to be updated periodically to remain meaningful references for Regional Planning Commission (RPC) members and other interested parties.

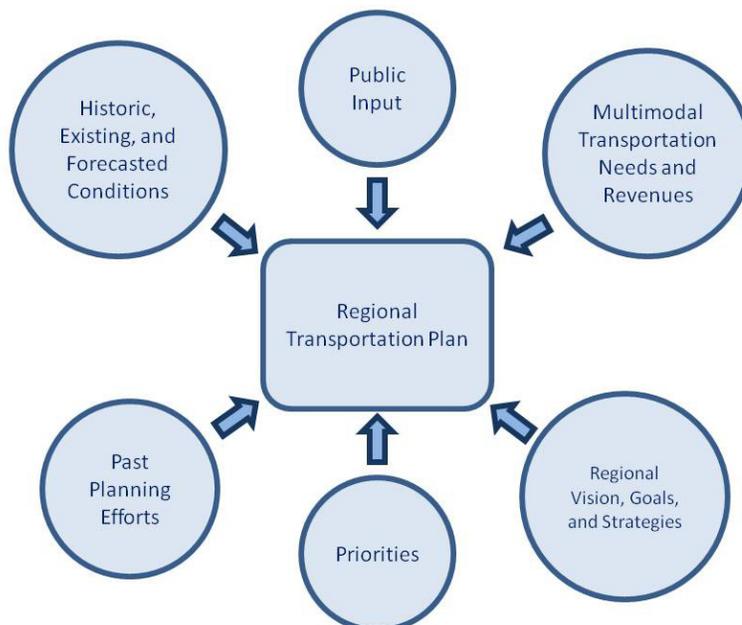
## What is a Regional Transportation Plan?

An RTP creates the transportation vision and framework for maintaining and improving all modes of transportation in the region, including motor vehicle transport, air travel, transit, rail, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian routes.

It identifies corridor-based transportation improvement goals, strategies, and priorities that support the TPR's economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and quality of life.

Using both data and broad public input, the RTP includes an overview of existing conditions and regional forecasts that impact transportation, while identifying solutions that address identified issues via projects, initiatives, and partnerships.

### Components of a Regional Transportation Plan



## Members of the Regional Planning Commission

Comprised of elected and appointed officials from the TPR, the RPC is responsible for establishing regional priorities and needs, developing the multimodal RTPs, and ongoing planning coordinating with CDOT.

### Counties:

- Huerfano County
- Las Animas County

### Municipalities:

- Aguilar
- Kim
- La Veta
- Trinidad
- Walsenburg

### Council of Governments:

- South Central Council of Governments

## Development of the Plan

The 2040 RTP for the South Central TPR was developed and adopted by the RPC through a concerted and efficient approach that combines data analysis with comprehensive public involvement to simultaneously meet local transportation needs and achieve statewide performance-based targets.

### Federal and State Regulations

Legislation and policies at both the state (43-1-1103, C.R.S.) and federal (23 USC 134/135) levels require the development of a comprehensive, long-range Statewide Transportation Plan that encompasses at least a 20-year period and incorporates the priorities and the needs of the TPRs across the state. MAP-21 requires states to align their own transportation goals with those defined by the law. MAP-21 goals include safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement/economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and reduced project delivery delays. CDOT's PD 14 goals include safety, infrastructure condition, system performance, and maintenance.

In accordance with state transportation planning rules (2 CCR 601-22), the Statewide Transportation Plan also must be financially feasible so that it portrays a realistic transportation future based on reasonably anticipated funding. In Colorado, RTPs are prepared to include supplemental revenue scenarios and priorities in case additional funds become available.

Every four years, CDOT conducts an update of the Colorado Statewide Transportation Plan. This plan serves as a long-range planning tool incorporating statewide trends and issues. RTPs are developed to inform the Statewide Transportation Plan and to prioritize regionally specific transportation matters.

### RTP Planning Process Components

In developing the RTP, the process evaluated the current and predicted future conditions of the region's transportation system and identified problems and potential solutions. Anticipated changes in the region's population, economy, and travel were considered so that future transportation investments are sensitive to changing conditions in the region. Key elements in developing the plan include:

- Creating RTP profile sheets that illustrate current and anticipated conditions
- Updating the region's transportation vision and goals from the 2035 RTP
- Refining and prioritizing transportation corridors
- Evaluating a range of revenue scenarios
- Integrating the RTP with other modal plans and the Statewide Transportation Plan

Actions also have been identified to provide direction for future decision-making and to monitor progress. Each of these plan components was developed in collaboration with members of the RPC over the course of six meetings held between June 2013 and June 2014. Information developed as a part of the planning process can be viewed at CDOT's website for Statewide Planning.

## Integration of Other Plans and Initiatives

The RTP for the South Central TPR is one of 15 RTPs in the state. While these documents are stand-alone plans, they also are key components of the Statewide Transportation Plan. For the needs and priorities identified at the local level to be considered in the state's overall transportation planning process, integration of the 15 RTPs must occur. Likewise, the statewide modal and operational plans developed by CDOT (such as the Transit Plan and Strategic Highway Safety Plan) must be integrated with the Statewide Transportation Plan. This integration allows for a holistic look at transportation needs.

A full list of the regional, modal, and operational plans that are integrated to form the Statewide Transportation Plan is below. These plans are available on CDOT's planning website for review.

### Plans that support a statewide multimodal transportation system:

- Regional Transportation Plans
- Colorado Statewide Transit Plan
- South Central Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan
- Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Colorado Aviation System Plan

### Plans that support the economic vitality of the state:

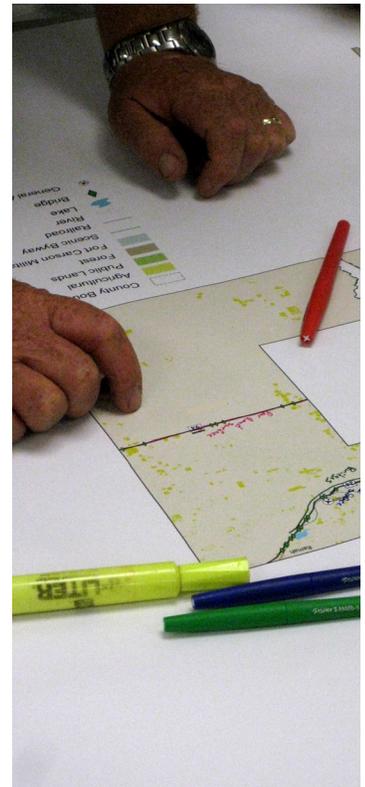
- Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan
- Statewide Freight Plan
- Colorado Airports Economic Impact Study

### Plans that assist in identifying maintenance needs for the existing transportation infrastructure:

- Risk-Based Asset Management Plan
- Colorado Bridge Enterprise 10-Year Program Plan

### Plans that aim to get more out of the existing system by focusing on traveler safety and operational improvements:

- Strategic Highway Safety Plan
- Integrated Highway Safety Plan
- Transportation System Management and Operations Plan



## Public Engagement

The purpose of public engagement is to create meaningful opportunities for the general and traveling public to learn about statewide and regional transportation issues and comment on transportation concerns and priorities. Over the course of the plan development process, CDOT sought input from the public in defining the regional transportation needs and priorities for highways, transit, rail, and other programs throughout the state. This public input will influence the selection of specific future projects in the STIP. Results of the public engagement process are below.

### Public Survey

A survey was offered via the Statewide Transportation Plan’s website so that the general and traveling public could provide valuable feedback about priorities in the TPR. The survey was available statewide in both electronic and hard-copy format and contained questions specific to the South Central TPR. A total of **61** survey responses were received from the South Central TPR. Results of the survey, combined with data, were employed by the RPC to select high-priority transportation corridors for their TPR. This public input also was used to illustrate the unique local characteristics of the South Central TPR in Chapter 1 of this plan. Survey questions and popular responses for the South Central TPR are below. To see the full list of questions and survey results, go to CDOT’s website for Statewide Planning.

#### Why is transportation important to you?

- #1** Helps economic development
- #2** Moves people and goods safely
- #3** Gets me to work and/or vital services

#### What transportation issues matter most to you?

- #1** Improving economic development
- #2** Improving roadway pavement condition
- #3** Increasing transit options

#### In light of today’s limited funds for transportation, what should be the focus of CDOT efforts?

- #1** Maintain the existing transportation system
- #2** Make safety improvements
- #3** Offer more choices for travel (transit, bike/pedestrians)
- #4** Add shoulders
- #5** Expand highways by adding lanes; Manage congestion through managed lanes
- (tie)**

### Telephone Town Hall

A telephone town hall is an interactive public meeting conducted over the telephone. On May 6, 2014, **4,090** residents in the South Central TPR were called on the phone and invited to participate in a discussion with local leaders and CDOT staff. This created a valuable connection with members of the public who might otherwise be uninvolved. A total of **562** people participated, both listening and commenting on the topics discussed. This exercise provided an opportunity to vet the work done by CDOT and the RPC with the broader public before proceeding to finalize important components of the plan. Below are some of the outcomes of the conversation with the public.

What is most important to you about transportation?	How should CDOT invest limited dollars?	What kinds of transportation improvements can best help the economy in your area?
<p><b>32%:</b> Lets me live my life the way I want</p> <p><b>29%:</b> Gets me to work or vital services</p>	<p><b>39%:</b> Maintain the existing system</p> <p><b>35%:</b> More travel options</p>	<p><b>33%:</b> Improving the pavement</p> <p><b>22%:</b> Improving rail service</p>

## Other public engagement tools

Several other methods were used to share information with the public and allow for dialogue outside of formal engagement. These included popular social media applications and an interactive website.

### [www.ColoradoTransportationMatters.com](http://www.ColoradoTransportationMatters.com)

This is the interactive website dedicated to the development and presentation of the Statewide and Regional Transportation Plans. The information provided allows the public to explore topics based on their own interests. There are multiple avenues for providing feedback, and the questions, comments, and other input received through the website were used to define priorities and highlight areas of potential improvement in both the transportation system and the planning process.



### Facebook and Twitter

The use of social media throughout the plan development process provided opportunities for the public to learn about and comment on the RTP as it was created. Facebook and Twitter profiles were deployed to solicit feedback, but also to promote upcoming public events and other opportunities for robust public involvement.



## Environmental Stakeholder Engagement

The link between transportation planning and the environment is of the utmost importance. Stakeholder engagement during the planning process that facilitates input on key environmental issues or concerns can serve as foundational information for future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies and aid in streamlining documentation.

In accordance with state and federal regulations, CDOT conducted a statewide interagency environmental discussion to identify environmental concerns or issues with the Regional Priority Corridors. Key participants included state and federal agencies, TPRs, and MPOs. These discussions were conducted via two webinars; the first focused on purpose, intent, and a collaborative identification of key information to be presented, and the second focused on interagency input. Based on the input provided, examples of potential mitigation strategies could include: wildlife crossings designed to reduce vehicular collisions, habitat conservation for threatened or endangered species, and construction of sound barriers.

Outreach to environmental advocacy groups also was conducted via a webinar. Information was shared about the development of the Statewide Transportation Plan and RTPs, how CDOT is addressing state and federal planning factors, development of various modal plans and policies, and key initiatives. One of those initiatives is the CDOT Sustainability Program that includes: (1) collaboration with the Colorado Energy Office, the Regional Air Quality Council, and other groups to develop a market and infrastructure for compressed natural gas and other alternative fuel vehicles; (2) creation of a greenhouse gas model; and (3) innovations in design and construction.

During development of the RTP, corridor profiles were modified to include environmental characteristics and concerns and to develop any environmental implementation actions if desired. For further information on environmental stakeholder participants and corridor profiles, go to CDOT's planning website. To review implementation actions identified by the TPR, go to **Chapter 6, Implementation Actions and Moving Forward**.

# Chapter 4 Regional Priority Corridors

## Regional Priority Corridors

A Regional Priority Corridor is a corridor that has been selected by the stakeholders of the TPR as having high importance to the region's transportation system or it is important because of a need for near-term improvements.

This RTP emphasizes planning for transportation corridors in the South Central TPR. This approach, called corridor-based planning, is being used for the 2040 statewide and regional transportation plans. Corridor-based planning connects the long-term vision of a transportation corridor with the goals, solutions, and strategies that the TPR has identified to attain the vision. Strategies are classified into specific benefit categories. Benefit categories provide a mechanism to recognize the needs of a corridor and track progress.

This long-range transportation plan guides the shorter-term STIP. The STIP is a fiscally constrained plan that identifies funding for and the scheduling of specific transportation projects and programs. The corridor-based structure of this transportation plan provides long-term flexibility to respond appropriately to changing transportation issues with specific projects in the STIP. Defining transportation needs at the corridor level gives the TPR flexibility in implementing particular solutions on specific transportation issues.



A Regional Priority Corridor is a corridor that has been selected by the stakeholders of the TPR as having high importance to the region's transportation system or it is important because of a need for near-term improvements. While all corridors contribute to the system, some corridors connect to more cities, recreation, and tourist destinations; carry more traffic; support the industries that contribute to the economic vitality of the region; and provide multimodal options such as transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Selection of Regional Priority Corridors highlights the region's transportation needs and priorities and creates linkages to funding priorities among corridors. Through the corridor prioritization process, the South Central TPR confirms the relative importance of the corridors in the region with state officials, stakeholders, and decision makers and communicates its priorities for the dedication of resources by the Colorado Transportation Commission.

## South Central TPR Regional Priority Corridors



I-25: New Mexico state line north to Pueblo county line



I-25: Walsenburg Business Loop



US 160: Walsenburg Business Loop



US 160: I-25 at Trinidad to Baca county line



SH 12: US 160 at La Veta to I-25 at Trinidad



SH 350: US 160 at Beshoar Junction to Otero county line

## Priority Corridor Selection Process

Selection of the Regional Priority Corridors was a collaborative process with TPR members and stakeholders involving a series of meetings that included several steps and considerations. Transportation leaders' understanding of the daily travel experience in the region brought important insight into the characteristics of the corridor. As a result of this process, the most pressing transportation issues and project needs were identified.

The process began with a review of the South Central TPR Profile and the prioritization of the corridors in the 2035 RTP. Multimodal activity on the corridors was acknowledged through the existing CDOT plans for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit services. Public input, gathered through an online public survey and telephone town hall, also helped define and confirm the region's overall priorities. The economic vitality supported by the corridor and other unique characteristics, such as Scenic Byway designations, also were considered.

The result of the regional priority corridor identification process in the South Central TPR was that two corridors, US 160 east of Trinidad and SH 350, had increased in importance since the development of the last plan. Both of these corridors are experiencing increased truck freight traffic and have been newly designated as hazardous material routes. Increased bicycle use was another factor in their identification as high priority.

## Corridor Profiles

The South Central TPR has developed a corridor profile for each corridor in the region. Development of the 2030 and 2035 RTPs included extensive work on the corridor profiles. The 2040 RTP builds upon those efforts by updating the corridor profiles to reflect the changes that have occurred since adoption of the 2035 RTP.

The primary purpose of a corridor vision is to look toward the future and describe how the corridor can meet the community's desired transportation needs. Other elements of these corridor profiles include: the community's general values of the corridor, its primary type of travel, its characteristics, the industries it supports, and the types of improvements that will be needed in the future. The corridor goals describe general objectives that the corridor needs to attain to meet the vision. The corridor strategies describe discrete types of improvements intended to reach those goals.

The benefits associated with each of the strategies listed on the corridor profiles will be used to track and report on progress toward corridor goals after plan adoption. The complete set of corridor profiles for the South Central TPR can be accessed at CDOT's planning website.

## Function of Corridor Prioritization

Selection of the Regional Priority Corridors will guide future decisions for the use of resources in the South Central TPR. The importance of Regional Priority Corridors is further validated by the collaborative process by which they were identified, involving key stakeholders and grassroots interests in the region. The overall prioritization of corridors also helped to inform the subsequent and critical discussion around transportation needs and priorities when or if revenues are more or less than expected.

### Regional Priority Corridor Factors

- TPR Profile data
- Project Needs
- 2035 corridor priority information
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit plans
- Public input

# Regional Priority Corridors for the South Central TPR

## I-25: Business Loop (Walsenburg) A

### Corridor Characteristics

- Main Street in downtown Walsenburg
- Key route for energy, freight, agriculture industries
- Connector to US 160 from I-25
- Trains through town impact traffic
- Bicycles and pedestrians in town

### Corridor Goals and Strategies

- Provide for safe movement of bicycles and pedestrians
- Improve access to I-25
- Improve railroad crossings
- Provide expanded or enhanced transit services

## US 160: Trinidad to Baca county line D

### Corridor Characteristics

- Newly designated hazardous materials route
- Increasing agriculture, energy, and bicycle use
- Supports tourism for the Santa Fe Trail and Comanche Grasslands
- Hosts the Bicycle Race Across America

### Corridor Goals and Strategies

- Preserve the existing transportation system
- Eliminate shoulder deficiencies
- Provide improved truck freight linkages
- Construct turn lanes and improve intersections
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities

## I-25 New Mexico state line to Pueblo county line B

### Corridor Characteristics

- Southern Colorado urban corridor
- Increased demand for alternative fuel vehicles has heightened the need for Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) filling stations along this corridor
- Serves as the state's highest-volume corridor and a key gateway of statewide significance for passenger vehicles, trucks, and rail freight
- Intercity and regional bus service

### Corridor Goals and Strategies

- Support commuter travel
- Accommodate growth in freight transport
- Provide expanded or enhanced transit services
- Ensure airport facilities are maintained in a safe operating condition and are adequate to meet the existing and projected demands

## US 160: Business Loop (Walsenburg) E

### Corridor Characteristics

- Main Street in Walsenburg
- Commercial destinations
- Freight and tourism route
- High pedestrian and bicycle use

### Corridor Goals and Strategies

- Accommodate freight movement
- Accommodate bicycle and pedestrian travel
- Provide expanded or enhanced transit services

## SH 350: US 160 north to Otero county line C

### Corridor Characteristics

- Critical access to:
  - Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site
  - Department of Corrections facility
  - Perry Stokes Airport
- Agriculture and freight route
- Supports tourism and the Santa Fe Trail

### Corridor Goals and Strategies

- Support farm-to-market production
- Preserve and enhance system quality
- Maintain airport facilities
- Add passing lanes and improve shoulders

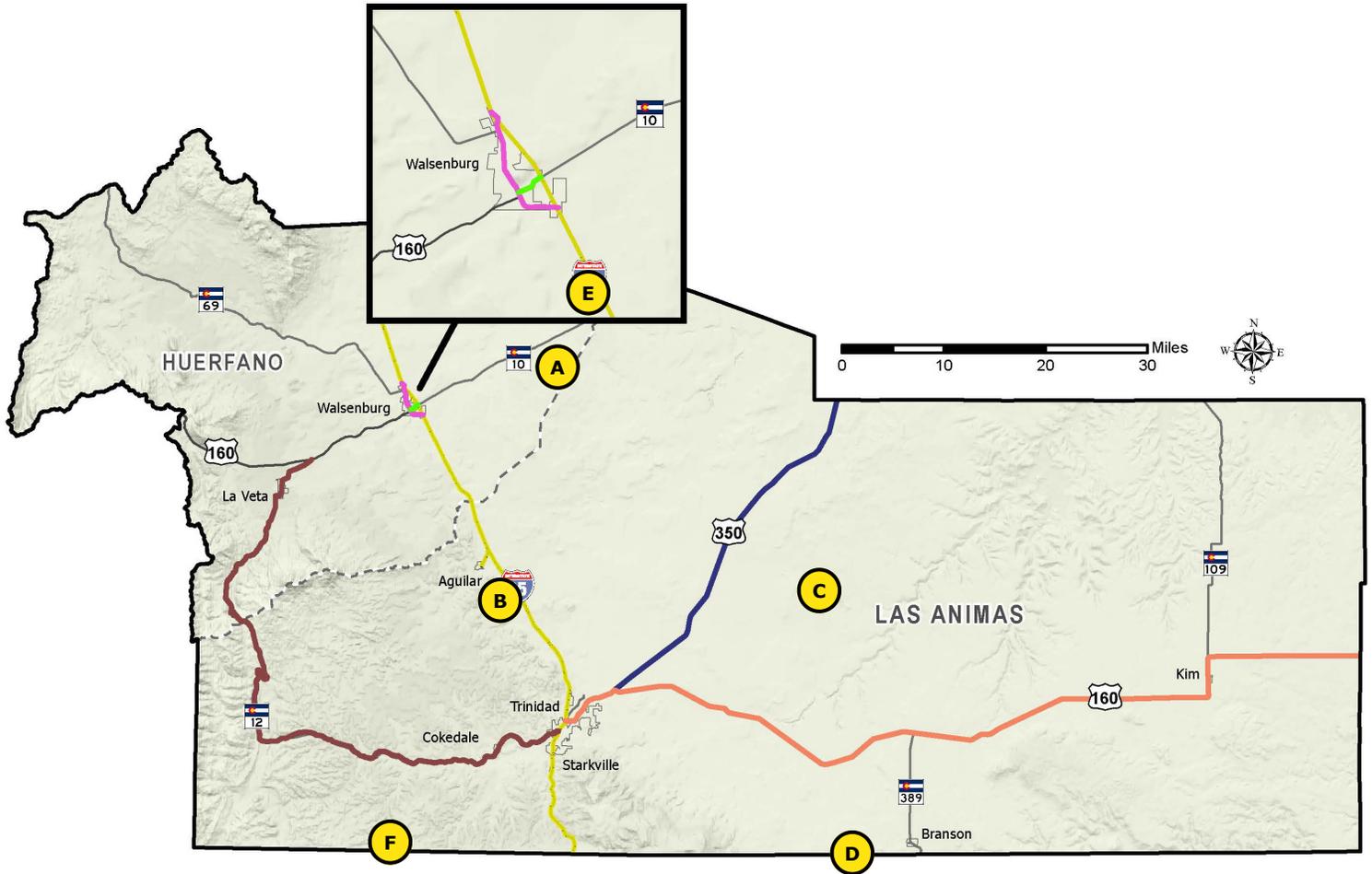
## SH 12: US 160 at La Veta to I-25 at Trinidad F

### Corridor Characteristics

- Location of Highway of Legends Scenic Byway
- Cucharas Pass
- Host for bicycle events and motorcycle rides
- Serves tourism, recreation, and natural resources industries
- Key route for truck freight and agriculture
- School access route

### Corridor Goals and Strategies

- Provide for safe movement of bicycles and pedestrians
- Accommodate growth in freight transport
- Mitigate rock fall
- Add and improve shoulders
- Provide expanded or enhanced transit services



# Chapter 5

## Transportation Needs and Revenue

In this RTP, the South Central TPR has identified a range of transportation needs through the year 2040 and has prioritized regional issues that are most important to the transportation system, particularly for the next 10 years. Because of the limited availability of funding for transportation, the TPR must have a plan to focus on those priorities that could be realistically accomplished, but also to have a contingency plan in case the TPR receives more or less transportation funding. In this chapter, funding scenarios have been applied to the TPR's priorities to give decision makers a vantage point of possible future scenarios related to three assumptions for future revenue: baseline revenue, less-than-baseline revenue, and additional revenue.

The results of scenario planning are particularly important for the first 10 years of the planning horizon. Within this period, both transportation needs and funding availability are more predictable. The identification of priorities for the first 10 years aligns with development of the STIP, the four-year program to distribute funds to actual transportation projects within each planning region.

### Regional Multimodal Needs

Multimodal issues and regional trends for the South Central TPR were considered throughout this planning effort. Some of these needs are discussed in **Chapter 1, Regional Transportation Story**. These include:

- Amtrak's Southwest Chief travels through the South Central TPR en route between Chicago and Los Angeles, with a stop in Trinidad.
- The increased use of bicycles is creating greater demand for bicycle facilities, such as improved shoulders, side paths, bicycle-friendly striping, and signing.
- The transportation system needs to accommodate a high volume of truck freight, including oversize loads.

Highway and multimodal needs are described in **Chapter 4, Regional Priority Corridors**. Detailed needs for transit, aviation, freight, and rail have been developed through CDOT modal plans. The modes and applicable plans are discussed below and are not in priority order.

### Highway Corridors

Highway corridor needs include adding passing lanes, widening shoulders, enhancing safety, and improving pavement condition. **Chapter 4, Regional Priority Corridors** describes the highway and multimodal needs for the Regional Priority Corridors, which are designated as such because of their importance to the region's transportation system or because of a need for short-term improvements. In addition, strategies and benefits for every highway corridor in the region are listed in the corridor visions.

### Transit

Transit needs include enhancing transit service for effective and efficient use by all populations. Investments in transit facilities are needed in the region.

### Aviation

Statewide estimates to fund aviation needs are detailed in the 2011 Colorado Aviation System Plan for the general aviation airports within the South Central TPR. Aviation improvement needs in the South Central TPR include pavement maintenance, onsite weather improvements, emergency access improvements, and published instrument approach.

### Transit Needs

Transit needs include expanding service between communities; increasing access to jobs, recreation, education, health/human services, and medical facilities; promoting transit; and integrating general public transit with human services on the following corridors:

- I-25 Business Loop: Provide demand-response transit service in Walsenburg
- I-25 (New Mexico state line to Pueblo county line): Expand transit usage, including service between Trinidad, Walsenburg, and Pueblo
- US 160: Expand transit usage, including demand-response service in Walsenburg
- SH 12: Provide demand-response service between Walsenburg, La Veta, Trinidad, and Primero

## Bicycle and Pedestrian

Plans that specifically address bicycle and pedestrian needs and strategies are conducted at the state level in the Colorado Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. However, some improvements that improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility, such as wider highway shoulders or pedestrian safety at key crossings, are related to highway projects. Bicycle and pedestrian needs for the South Central TPR noted during plan development include wider shoulders and pedestrian crossing improvements at intersections in towns.

## Freight

The Colorado Freight Plan contains a broad discussion of the Colorado Freight Corridors and measures to improve freight movement throughout the state. The freight plan has a statewide list of potential projects for the first year, but no costs are associated with the potential projects. Projects proposed in the Freight Plan aim to address needs for intersection and geometric improvements, the addition of pullouts and passing lanes, as well as shoulder widening, and general safety improvements.

Colorado Freight Corridors are roadways that are critical to the interregional, intrastate, interstate, or national freight movement, and play an important role in the regional and state economy. The designated Colorado Freight Corridors in the South Central TPR are:

- I-25
- US 160
- SH 10

## Rail

The Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan discusses statewide-level needs for rail improvements and includes cost estimates for making those improvements. This document recommends that Colorado create a Short Line Assistance Program, as some states have done, to modernize the rail system to accommodate 286,000-pound railcars and increase allowable speeds on short line railroads. Such a program could benefit agriculture and other industries, promote economic development in rural Colorado, and save taxpayer monies from excess highway truck usage. The following rail lines are located in the South Central TPR:

- Amtrak, Southwest Chief (Passenger rail)
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (Freight rail)
- San Luis Rio Grande Railroad (Freight rail)
- Union Pacific Railroad (Freight rail)



*At-grade crossing equipment and issues of safety and security are among the South Central TPR's priorities for improving the rail system.*

## Statewide Regional Priority Program distribution

In the adopted program distribution, the Colorado Transportation Commission sets aside \$50 million per year statewide in Regional Priority Program (RPP) funding to distribute these funds to CDOT regions. The statewide formula for the distribution of RPP funds to the CDOT regions is based on a calculation of 50 percent population, 35 percent on-system lane miles, and 15 percent on-system truck vehicle miles traveled.

## South Central TPR Priorities for Funding

The TPR used three funding scenarios to prioritize transportation improvements. These scenarios are based on the Statewide Revenue Scenarios, discussed on the following pages. The South Central TPR is in CDOT Region 2, which is projected to receive approximately \$11.6 million of Regional Priority Program (RPP) funding in FY 2016 and a total of \$116 million by the end of the first 10 years. This is split between other planning areas within CDOT Region 2, including the Central Front Range TPR, Southeast TPR, Pueblo Area TPR, the Pueblo Area Council of Governments (MPO), and the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (MPO).

While there are several different sources of funding available for addressing transportation needs within the TPR, the RPP is the most flexible funding source for CDOT Regions to use with input from the TPRs. RPP funding is intended to help the TPRs address their regional transportation priorities. The TPR expects RPP funding may be combined with other funding sources to fund individual projects.

### Baseline Revenue Scenario

The South Central TPR discussed how RPP funds could be used to address transportation priorities with the current funding availability. The Baseline Revenue Scenario is a forecast of reasonably expected resources for CDOT as a component of the 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan. Based on the adopted Statewide RPP distribution formula and the Statewide Baseline Revenue Scenario (discussed on the following pages) the South Central TPR used a planning estimate of \$1.06 million per year in RPP funds for the first 10 years of the RTP. For planning purposes, the TPR doubled the amount of possible RPP funding for a total of **\$22 million**. The regional priority corridors, discussed in Chapter 4, were used to decide which locations should be considered for funding during the first 10 years of the plan. The TPR decided to prioritize the RPP funding as follows:

### South Central TPR Priorities for RPP Funds

Priority Corridor	Amount (Millions)
SH 12	\$6
I-25	\$4
I-25 Business Loop	\$4
US 160 Business Loop	\$1
US 160	\$5
SH 350	\$1
SH 389	\$1
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$22</b>

Due to the limited funding, the majority of dollars identified in the baseline scenario will be dedicated to maintaining and preserving the system. CDOT is developing processes to identify critical needs and help maximize returns on taxpayer dollars. This will be accomplished through CDOT's Risk-Based Asset Management Program.

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## **Less-Than-Baseline Revenue Scenario**

With less money available, some CDOT programs—such as snow and ice removal, bridge maintenance, and roadway maintenance—could be reduced. The South Central TPR identified which CDOT programs should be prioritized in the event of less-than-baseline revenues. The TPR determined that roadway maintenance is their top priority. This recommendation will be one of the factors considered for future project selection should there be a decrease in funding available to the TPR for transportation improvements from any funding resource, including RPP.

## **Additional Revenue Scenario**

The South Central TPR identified which corridors in the region would receive funding if additional revenues became available. Within this additional revenue scenario, the TPR planned for an additional \$60 million. The result of this process identified that additional funds would be spent on these corridors:

- SH 12
- I-25
- US 160
- SH 350

For further information, refer to CDOT’s planning website.

## Statewide Multimodal Needs

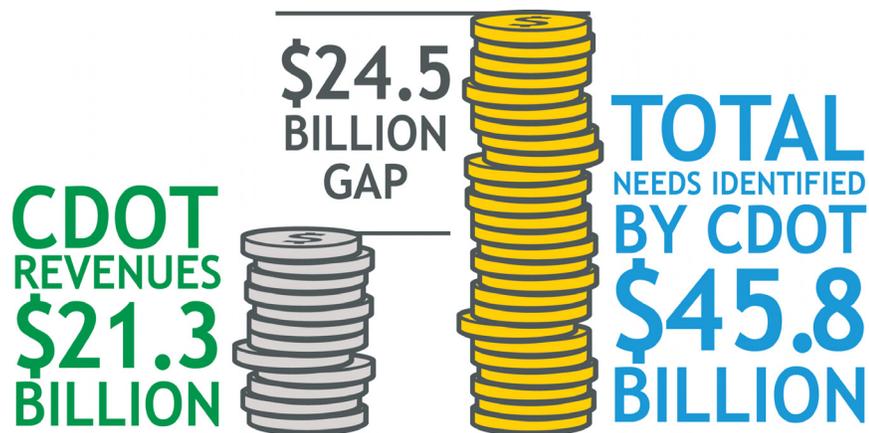
The needs and priorities that are identified at the regional level are combined with the needs of other regions to make up the transportation needs of the state. Concurrently developed with the RTPs, the statewide transportation planning process emphasizes multimodal needs made up of costs for highway, transit, freight, rail, aviation, and non-motorized modes of transportation for the first 10 years of the plan. The horizons for statewide transportation planning match those of the regions (10-year and 25-year). Factors considered in identifying needs include: preserving transportation infrastructure and assets (i.e., pavement and bridges), addressing safety and operational concerns, and expanding the transportation system. Similar to the South Central TPR regional multimodal needs, the statewide transportation needs were derived from relevant data and stakeholder input.

The Colorado Transportation Commission considered variations of assumptions for projected future funding and adopted a statewide baseline revenue scenario as a forecasting tool for the 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan. Besides making reasonable projections for future revenues, good planning also requires preparing for when revenues are more or less than projected.

Future projections show baseline revenues will fall short of addressing all of the statewide transportation needs. Comparing cost estimates for statewide needs to the baseline revenue scenario reveals a funding gap. For the 10-year planning horizon, from 2016 until 2025, the gap between projected revenues and the estimated cost of transportation improvement needs is \$8.8 billion.

For the longer-term, 25-year planning horizon, the projected revenues are \$21.3 billion while the total identified needs are estimated to cost \$45.8 billion. This results in an approximate \$24.5 billion funding gap. CDOT will have to consider other revenue sources, such as public-private partnerships and tolling, to close this funding gap and fulfill future statewide transportation needs.

### 25-Year System Funding Gap (2016-2040)



*Estimated amounts in 2016 dollars. Source: CDOT, 2014*

## Statewide Revenue Scenario Planning

The 2040 forecast includes three revenue scenarios: baseline, additional, and less-than-baseline. The Colorado Transportation Commission adopted the baseline scenario as the expected revenue projection for Colorado as a whole (Transportation Commission Resolution #3070). This statewide forecast forms the basis for projections of revenues for the TPR.

### Less-Than-Baseline Revenue Scenario

- No federal or state General Fund transfers

Under this scenario, revenues in 2016 would drop from \$1.4 billion to \$1.2 billion and then hold steady at about \$1.2 billion per year through 2040. **This represents, roughly, a 15-percent decrease from the Baseline Scenario.**

*Source: March 2014  
Transportation Commission  
Revenue Projection Packet*

### Baseline Revenue Scenario

- Based on current law and current economic assumptions
- Average annual National Gross Domestic Product increases by 2.5 percent
- Federal transportation revenues increase 1 percent per year for fiscal years 2016 to 2020.
- Federal revenues and General Fund transfers are adjusted from 2021 to 2040 to match the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) forecast
- Off-the-top transfers are based on CDOT projections
- Senate Bill 09-228 will create a transfer of funds to CDOT in fiscal years 2016 to 2020

Except for the brief addition of SB 09-228 funds during the time period from 2016 to 2020, baseline revenues are projected to be flat, at around \$1.3 billion per year, rising to just under \$1.4 billion per year in 2040. More recent forecasts of revenues, however, suggest that funds from SB 09-228 may be substantially reduced or eliminated. The latest forecast calls for only a little over \$100 million as compared to the nearly \$800 million over five years included in the Baseline Revenue Scenario.

*Source: Colorado Transportation  
Commission Resolution #3070*

### Additional Revenue Scenario

- Baseline revenue scenario
- MAP-21 revenues increase 1 percent for fiscal years 2016 to 2020
- Senate Bill 09-228 revenues anticipated in 2016 through 2020 would be replaced by some other revenue source of similar magnitude.

Under this scenario, revenues in 2021 would increase from \$1.3 billion in the Baseline Revenue Scenario to \$1.5 billion per year and increase to nearly \$1.6 billion in 2040. **This represents approximately a 10-percent increase from the Baseline Revenue Scenario over the period extending to 2040.**

*Source: March 2014  
Transportation Commission  
Revenue Projection Packet*

# Chapter 6 Implementation Actions and Moving Forward

## Implementation Actions

The following discussion contains information about actions that the TPR will take to implement its RTP. Implementation actions are meant to be near-term, practicable measures related to the South Central TPR’s vision, goals, and strategies. Actions presented below are likely to be initiated before the next update of the RTP and will have limited funding needs, focusing primarily on education, coordination, research, and advocacy. Implementation actions are meant to be near-term, practicable measures related to the South Central TPR’s vision, goals, and corridor profile strategies and benefits. The following actions have been developed as a way for the RPC members to actively promote the RTP.

### Implementation Actions for the South Central TPR

Implementation Action	Strategies/ Benefits	Applicable RTP Vision and Goals
Advocate with elected officials for lower weight limits on state highways.	System preservation, safety	Provide mobility to the traveling public at an acceptable level of service.
Improve communication between CDOT, cities, and counties concerning planned transportation improvements.	Leveraging partnerships	Maintain the existing transportation system in the most efficient manner possible.
Encourage and participate in efforts to keep the Southwest Chief on its current alignment.	Rail	Provide new intermodal access and mobility options for individuals and commerce.

## High Priority Transit Strategies

In addition, the Regional Transit Plan identified several high priority transit strategies for implementation over the next 15 to 20 years to guide the region in making meaningful investments in transit. These strategies address the transit needs identified in region through surveys, Transit Working Group meetings and public input. Each strategy falls in line with the regional transit vision and goals, and supports the overall statewide transit vision, goals and objectives. Strategies include, but are not limited to coordination activities, maintaining, expanding and/or enhancing of transit service, and facility improvements. For more information on the high priority transit strategies for the South Central TPR, please see the South Central Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan on CDOT's planning website.

## Moving Forward with the RTP

After adoption of the RTP, the South Central TPR will use implementation actions to monitor progress and will re-evaluate its actions accordingly. The TPR also will work with CDOT to develop activities that carry forward implementation actions. This will keep the plan actionable. In addition, regularly assessing programs in the plan based on these implementation actions can help the TPR decide whether to add or remove actions, as appropriate.

## Corridor Strategies and Benefits

The actions discussed in this chapter will help achieve the benefits identified in the RTP corridor profiles, as documented in **Chapter 4, Regional Priority Corridors**. The corridor profiles for the South Central TPR are available for review on CDOT's planning website.

The benefits include: Aviation, pedestrian and bicycle, transit, capacity, economic development, environmental stewardship and sustainability, freight, operations, rail, safety, system preservation, and leveraging partnerships.

**To find out about how you can get involved in the South Central TPR's ongoing transportation planning process, please visit CDOT's planning website.**