COLORADO
Department of Transportation

DIVISION OF
TRANSIT AND RAIL
STATE MANAGEMENT PLAN

CHAPTER 2
Planning Process and Funding

Outline

Figures

Chapter 2 Flowcharts

Flowchart 2-1. Transit or Rail Project Planning Lifecycle

DIVISION OF TRANSIT AND RAIL
STATE MANAGEMENT PLAN

2 PLANNING PROCESS AND FUNDING

2.1 Statewide Planning Process

Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) statewide planning process, inclusive of transit, follows federal and state regulations and provides a direction and framework for decision-**making regarding investments in Colorado's multimodal transportation system. The** statewide planning process, with a documented public involvement process, supports sound investment choices that promote responsible and effective use of taxpayer dollars.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) planning regulations (23 Code of Federal Regulations part 450) require states and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) engaged in planning activities to seek out and consider the needs and input of the general public. As states and MPOs develop and conduct their public involvement activities, this must include interested parties and those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as minority and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services. Recipients engaged in planning and other decision-making activities at the local level must consider the principles embodied in the planning regulations, and develop and use a documented public participation plan or process that provides adequate notice of public participation activities, as well as early and continuous opportunities for public review and comment at key decision points.

In non-metropolitan areas, federal planning law (49 United States Code [U.S.C.] 5304) requires each state to cooperate with local officials to develop a long-range statewide transportation plan (SWP) and statewide transportation improvement program (STIP). These planning and programming documents are developed through a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative (3C) process carried out on a statewide basis and coordinated with the metropolitan planning processes of the state. For nonmetropolitan areas, the SWP must be developed in cooperation with rural officials with responsibility for transportation.

2.1.1 CDOT's Transit and Rail Planning Cycle

CDOT continuously examines the needs of Colorado's transit and rail systems and studies specific needs to address current and future issues. Previous planning efforts set the stage for the most current plans, providing a comprehensive look at current challenges and emerging opportunities across all transit and passenger rail modes in Colorado.

A high-level summary of how a transit or rail project is developed through the local, regional, and statewide planning processes is illustrated in Flowchart 2-1 Transit or Rail Project Planning Lifecycle.

State legislation created CDOT's Division of Transit & Rail (DTR) in 2009. DTR is responsible for planning, developing, operating, and integrating transit and passenger rail into the statewide multimodal transportation system. DTR works in coordination with public and private transit and rail providers to plan, promote, and implement investments in transit and rail services statewide, with the goal of providing a coordinated multimodal system to meet **Colorado's transportation challenges now and in the future. DTR's primary functions include** administering federal and state programs; planning for transit and rail services; coordinating with agencies and stakeholders; complying with federal and state regulations; and providing transit services, **such as Bustang and Outrider. DTR and CDOT's Division of Transportatio**n Development (DTD) work cooperatively to integrate transit and rail needs alongside the **state's other transportation issues. CDOT's Division of Project Support is also involved in** managing some of the infrastructure that overlaps between the divisions, such as coordinating safety improvements to railway-highway crossing infrastructure and equipment and grade-separation projects.

The statewide planning process depicted in Figure 2.1 is described in detail **on CDOT's** website (https://www.codot.gov/programs/planning) and **in CDOT's** 2017 Transportation Planning in Colorado document (https://www.codot.gov/programs/planning/documents/planning-partners/planning-manual).

Figure 2.1.   CDOT's Statewide Planning Process
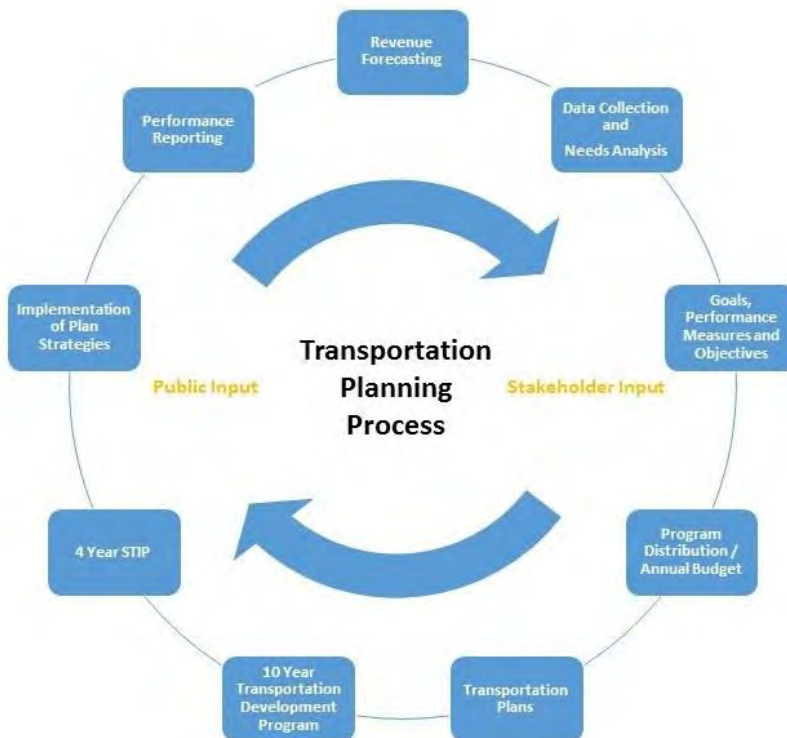
2.2 Long-Range Plans

2.2.1 Statewide Transportation Plan

The SWP represents the people of Colorado's long-range vision for the transportation system. **Prepared by CDOT's DTD, this 25**-year multimodal plan integrates Transportation Commission policies with input from regional stakeholders, multimodal transportation interests, and the traveling public. Individual modal plans for transit, rail, aviation, freight, and bicycles/pedestrians are integrated within the overall state plan. Public involvement and coordination, which includes elected officials, helps ensure that all Coloradans have a voice in deciding the vision, goals, and priorities for the statewide transportation system.

As part of the planning certification review, FTA reviews state-developed documentation to determine whether a state has:

- Analyzed regional demographic data to identify transit-dependent populations within the non-urbanized areas of the state and ensure there is fairness to all persons regardless of gender, age, race, or disability status.

- Where necessary, provided local service providers and agencies with data to assist them in identifying transit-dependent populations in their service area.

- Ensured that members of transit-dependent communities, including minority populations, are provided with full opportunities to engage in the statewide transportation planning process. This includes actions to eliminate language, mobility, temporal, and other obstacles to allow these populations to participate fully in the process.

- Monitored the activities of subrecipients with regard to Title VI compliance, where the state passes funds through to subrecipients.

In addition, the SWP guides project selection and the development of STIP, which identifies projects for funding over a 4-year period and is updated annually.

Colorado's online SWP may be accessed at: https://www.codot.gov/programs/colorado-transportation-matters/statewide-transportation-plans.

2.2.2 Statewide Transit Plan

Every 5 years, DTR updates or completes the Statewide Transit Plan (SWTP) to establish a framework for creating an integrated statewide transit system that meets the mobility needs of Coloradans, while minimizing duplication of services and leveraging limited funds. The plan **also meets state and federal planning requirements and guides CDOT's transit investments,** project processes, and actions over the short-, mid-, and long-term. The SWTP includes needs, funding, and recommendations across the entire state. The Plan also integrates **Regional Transit Plans for each of the state's ten rural Transportation Planning Regions (TPR).** Local transit agencies in rural areas that are not part of an MPO are encouraged to work with

the appropriate rural planning region regarding transit needs. The SWTP is located at: https://www.codot.gov/programs/colorado-transportation-matters/other-cdot-plans/transit/transit.

2.2.3 Transit Development Program

CDOT's Transit Development Program (TDP) bridges the gap between long-range statewide and regional plans and the 4-year STIP by involving local and regional transit stakeholders in identifying and prioritizing the major transit investment needs that cannot be funded with reasonably expected revenues. The TDP is a planning tool that supports the identification and prioritization of Colorado's transit project needs to effectively plan for and respond to future unexpected funding opportunities. The TDP inventory is derived from needs documented in planning and development studies, including Regional Transportation Plans, Regional Transit Plans, local plans, and additional input from transit agencies and transit stakeholders through their Regional Planning Commissions (RPC).

The TDP is a living planning document and is continually updated based on ongoing project development. Regional prioritization of project needs is facilitated as needed by -DTR. The most current is located at https://www.codot.gov/programs/planning/documents/plans-projects-reports/projects/dev-prgm/transit-rail-development-programs.

2.2.4 Regional Transit Plans

All transit agencies and transit stakeholders are encouraged to participate in local, regional, and statewide planning processes every 5 years so their needs are included in a coordinated effort of providing transit in Colorado. CDOT assists the state's 10 rural TPRs in developing their own Regional Transit Plans, which are rolled up into the SWTP. These regional plans serve as the Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plans that meet CDOT and FTA requirements for funding eligibility and planning for Colorado's transit needs, as described in 23 CFR Part 450 and 49 CFR Part 613. The state's 5 urban MPOs are responsible for preparing the plans for their regions. These are generally coordinated with and become an element of the organization's long-range transportation plan. These Regional Transit Plan documents can be accessed at: https://www.codot.gov/programs/colorado-transportation-matters/other-cdot-plans/transit/plan-documents.

2.2.5 State Rail Plan

The State Rail Plan guides policies, planning, improvements, and investments in support of Colorado's future vision for freight and passenger rail. This strategic document provides a framework for future action by CDOT and its public and private partners. The State Rail Plan aims to provide a better understanding of the complexities of the rail systems that Colorado businesses, residents, and visitors rely on by:

- Defining a vision and strategic goals for rail systems.
- Illustrating and analyzing the role of rail in Colorado's economy.

- Assessing current conditions and identifying needs and issues.
- Examining future trends and their impact on rail service demand in Colorado.
- Documenting past and planned public and private investments.
- Identifying opportunities and priority strategies.
- Developing critical implementation actions to keep Colorado moving by rail.

The State Rail Plan sets a vision for **Colorado's rail system as a critical component of our** multimodal transportation system that enhances mobility and advances economic vitality for all Coloradans. This vision is supported by strategic goals that are aligned with the SWP, the Colorado State Highway Freight Plan, and CDOT agency goals. This plan is essential to understanding current issues and needs, connecting trends and issues to opportunities, and providing implementation pathways to act on those opportunities.

As required by the Federal Railroad Administration, this plan must be updated on a four-year cycle to reflect changing conditions, needs, and opportunities. However, the framework, strategies, key actions, and coordination opportunities identified in the plan are monitored by CDOT and its partners on a regular basis to ensure that this plan is flexible, agile, and responsive to stakeholders and the traveling public.

The last update of the State Rail Plan in 2018 was funded with FTA Section 5304 state planning funds; state Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery Act of 2009 (FASTER) funds provided the match. While CDOT may provide matching funds for passenger rail projects of regional and/or statewide significance, regional rail projects are typically funded by RTD, and intercity passenger rail is funded by Amtrak. CDOT may also provide minimal matching of state funds for passenger rail projects funded by federal discretionary programs. Freight rail projects, although identified in the State Rail Plan, are generally not eligible for federal transit funds administered by DTR.

2.2.6 Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan

The Colorado Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan guides the development of bus services operating in Colorado that travel between major cities and regions. The Intercity Bus Plan was first produced in 2009 and was revised in 2014. It is anticipated that this plan will undergo some form of update every five years. The Plan is part of the long-range planning process undertaken by CDOT and is integrated into the SWTP and the SWP.

2.3   Transit and Rail Five-Year Financial Plan

DTR maintains a Five-Year Financial Plan showing projected revenues from federal, state and other sources that are reasonably expected to be available for transit and rail investments. Projected revenues are distributed in the Financial Plan among state and federal transit and rail funding programs through formal planning processes, guided by CDOT and DTR policy and priorities and adopted by the Transportation Commission. These projections provide the basis for fiscal constraint in long-term plans and short-term investment for transit projects statewide. An example Five-Year Financial Plan is included in Chapter 3.

2.4   Transportation Improvement Programs

2.4.1   STIP and TIP

The SWP, which comprises all modes of transportation in Colorado, is implemented by programming projects into the STIP (Figure 2.2). Figure 2.3 presents the STIP development cycle. The STIP programs capital and non-capital highway and transit projects intended to be funded over a 4-year period. The STIP is updated annually and is fiscally constrained based on projections of reasonably anticipated revenue.

Figure 2.2.   STIP Development
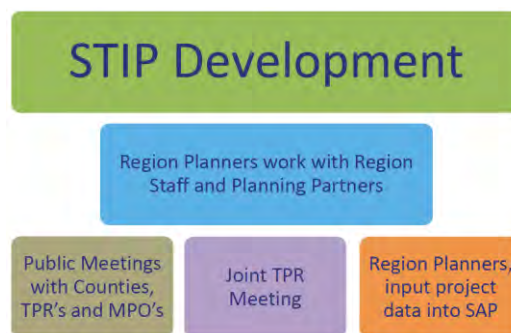
Figure 2.3. STIP Development Cycle

STIP Development/4P Schedule	
MONTH	**ACTIVITY**
May through September	CDOT Regions begin Project Priority Programming Process (4P)
December	CDOT Regions conclude 4P
January	CDOT Regions submit Draft STIP requests and MPOs submit draft TIP requests
February through May	CDOT distributes Draft STIP for public review and comment
March/April	MPOs and Governor approve TIPs
April	TC holds a statewide public hearing on the Draft STIP
May	TC adopts the Draft. Once adopted, the STIP is released to FHWA/FTA for their review and approval
June	FHWA and FTA approve STIP

Local agencies are responsible for making sure their projects are identified through the statewide transit planning process and the annual STIP update, as follows:

- **Local agencies within an MPO request projects be included in the MPO's** Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIPs developed by MPOs are incorporated without modification into the STIP.

- Local agencies in the rural TPRs work with the CDOT Region Planners to select priority projects from their Regional Transportation Plans to include in the STIP. https://www.codot.gov/programs/planning/planning-process/4p.html and https://www.codot.gov/programs/planning/documents/planning-process/4p-and-stip-development-guide

Projects included in the STIP generally fall into two categories—Regionally Significant and Pool projects.

- Regionally Significant projects are stand-alone projects that meet specific federal criteria or are deemed significant to the entire region. Transit projects in this category might include fixed guideway transit facilities.

- STIP Pools are groups of projects that are generally smaller in scope. The transit pools are organized by MPO or FTA program (e.g., Section 5310, Section 5311, etc.).

Transit projects in the STIP include federal transit projects, as well as Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) or Surface Treatment Program (STP)-Metro projects that qualify to be **flexed to FTA for transit. Also included are those projects funded by Colorado's FASTER** transit dollars, SB 228, or any other state funding sources.

Most transit projects are listed in the STIP in pools (or groups) of projects—either by MPO or by FTA program (e.g., Section 5310, Section 5311, etc.). The STIP accounts for the total amount of funding for the group of projects or specific program. Individual projects are accounted for as they are ready and funded as long as the total committed funds for the pool **in one fiscal year do not exceed the pool's programmed total. When a transit project receives** funding through the application process, DTR amends the projects listed in the pools to be consistent with the current Program of Projects. These are considered Administrative Amendments that do not require a public review period and are quickly approved by **CDOT's** Office of Financial Management & Budget (OFMB).

The OFMB verifies the fiscal constraint of the draft STIP by comparing the total dollars programmed in the STIP to the amount of funding available within the fiscal year. The draft STIP includes an illustrative program as a placeholder for projects that can be funded if there is additional revenue in the fiscal year.

After fiscal constraint is verified, the Colorado Transportation Commission releases the STIP for public review and comment. The review and approval cycle is shown in Figure 2.4. The STIP takes effect at the start of a fiscal year on July 1.

Figure 2.4.   STIP Review and Approval Cycle
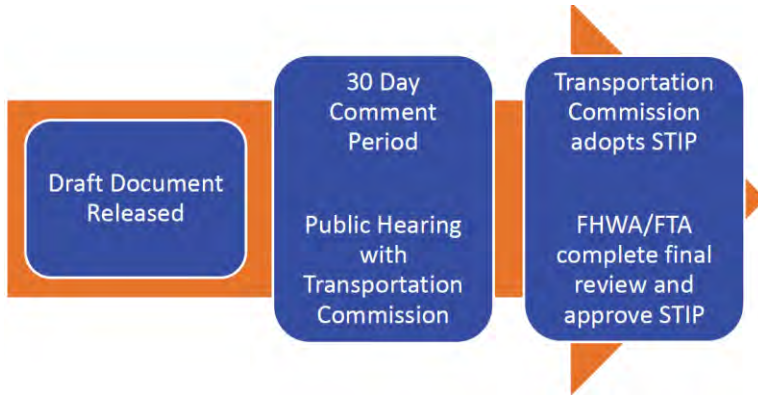
2.5   Performance-Based Planning

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act of 2012 directs the U.S. Department of Transportation to establish a set of performance measures to increase the accountability and transparency of the federal highway and transit programs and improve project decision-making through performance-based planning and programming through the rulemaking process. Once national performance measures are established, state Departments of Transportation and providers of public transportation must:

- Establish performance targets that reflect the measures.
- Report on progress towards achieving those targets.
- Develop performance-based plans for safety and asset management.
- Implement a performance-based approach to planning and programming.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) of 2015 continued the performance management and performance-based planning and programming requirements of MAP-21 with minor changes. CDOT, MPOs, and transit providers are responsible for performance targets in two areas related to transit:

- Transit Asset Management
- Safety and Security

CDOT manages all programs in an effort to improve the overall state of good repair of capital assets within the state. Projects are selected for funding based on FTA minimum useful life guidelines for buses and related facilities and FTA program guidance, including asset management principles. Furthermore, **CDOT's** Policy Directive 14 puts performance goals in

place for the overall preservation of the statewide transportation system. Policy Directive 14 can be found on-line at: http://coloradotransportationmatters.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Policy-Directive-14-Development-Technical-Memorandum-with-Appendices-2015-04-07.pdf

2.5.1 Transit Asset Management Plan

In 2016, FTA published the National Transit Asset Management (TAM) Final Rule (https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2016-07-26/pdf/2016-16883.pdf). The rule requires recipients of FTA Chapter 53 funding for assets used to deliver or support public transportation services to develop asset management plans for all transit assets owned, operated, or managed by the agency, including vehicles, facilities, equipment, and other infrastructure. The TAM is an asset inventory and condition assessment with a prioritized list of investments.

The rule establishes a strategic and systematic process to plan for the replacement and rehabilitation of capital assets. The TAM Final Rule includes the following components:

- **Defines "state of good r**epair.**"**
- Requires providers to develop a TAM Plan.
- Establishes performance measures.
- Establishes annual reporting requirements to the National Transit Database (NTD).
- Requires FTA to provide technical assistance.

Tier I agencies (recipients that own, operate, or manage either 101 or more vehicles in revenue service during peak regular service across all fixed route modes or in any one non-fixed route mode, or rail transit) (Figure 2.5), must develop and carry out their own TAM Plan. Tier II agencies (recipients that own, operate, or manage 100 or fewer vehicles in revenue service during peak regular service across all non-rail fixed route modes or in any one non-fixed route mode, subrecipients under the 5311 Rural Area Formula Program, or any American Indian tribe) have the option to develop their own agency TAM Plan or participate in a Group TAM Plan.

Figure 2.5.   Tier I and Tier II Agencies

The rule requires Departments of Transportation, such as CDOT, to develop a Group TAM Plan. In October 2018, CDOT adopted the first Group TAM Plan, which covers the requisite 4-year term. Group TAM Plans must be updated no less than every 4 years. More frequent Group TAM Plan updates are made when necessary or desired. Tier II agencies are given an

opportunity to opt in or opt out of the Group TAM Plan prior to the commencement of each year**'s Group TAM Plan update cycle.**

The most recent CDOT Group TAM Plan, is found at
https://www.codot.gov/programs/transitandrail/plans-studies-reports/2018-TAMplan.

The TAM Rule necessitates additional NTD reporting obligations. FTA 5310 recipients that provide public transportation and who had not been previously required to report, are required to submit asset inventories, performance measures, and performance targets beginning with report year 2018. As the Group TAM Plan sponsor, CDOT reports State of Good Repair (SGR) measures, SGR targets, and TAM Plan narrative to the NTD on behalf of the agencies participating in the plan. Agencies that have reported directly to NTD previously submit their own asset inventory modules to the NTD, while CDOT submits asset inventories on behalf those agencies new to NTD reporting (FTA Section 5310 recipients) and those not directly reporting previously.

2.5.2 Safety and Security Plan

In 2018, FTA published the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Final Rule (https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2018-07-19/pdf/2018-15167.pdf). The rule requires that certain operators of public transportation systems receiving federal funds develop safety plans that include the processes and procedures to implement Safety Management Systems (SMS). The plan must include safety performance targets and must be updated and certified by the transit agency annually.

The rule applies to all operators of public transportation systems that are recipients and subrecipients of federal financial assistance under the Urbanized Area Formula Program (49 U.S.C. § 5307). However, FTA deferred applicability of this requirement for operators that **only receive funds through FTA's** Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Formula Program (Section 5310) and/or Rural Area Formula Program (Section 5311).

The FTA requires that CDOT certifies a safety plan on behalf of any public transportation provider that is located in a small urban area in the state. These agencies may alternately choose to draft their own safety plans.

2.6 National Intelligent Transportation Systems Architecture Consistency Policy

All projects with Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) components funded with through CDOT transit awards and subawards must support the integration of ITS from a national and regional perspective and maintain consistency with Regional and Statewide ITS Architectures. Examples of ITS projects include, but are not limited to, traveler information, automatic vehicle location and computer aided dispatch, electronic payment systems, transit signal priority, automatic passenger counters, security surveillance both within stations and on

vehicles, highway/rail intersection protection, collision warning and driver assistance, vehicle system monitoring, advanced scheduling and run-cutting, and ITS data archiving.

Transit agencies are encouraged to participate in the development of Regional ITS Architectures through public planning processes, particularly if their projects or plans include ITS, or if others in their area are planning ITS systems that will impact their operations.

DIVISION OF TRANSIT AND RAIL
STATE MANAGEMENT PLAN

CHAPTER 2 FLOWCHART

Flowchart Shapes/Key

Process	Decision
Subprocess	Document
Connecting Flowchart	COTRAMS
TraMS	SAP Database
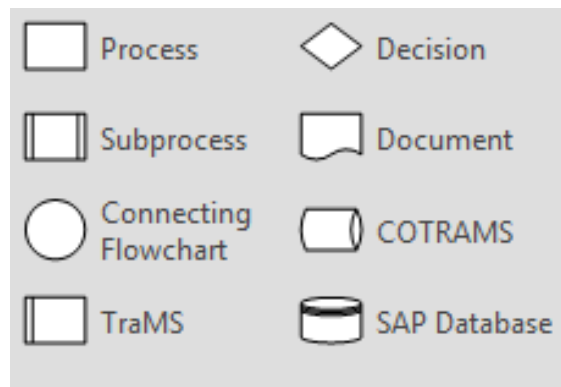
Flowchart 2-1. Transit or Rail Project Planning Lifecycle

2-1 Transit or Rail Project Planning Lifecycle

Project & Needs Identification	Project Consolidation & Prioritization	CDOT Funding Decisions

Transit and Rail Agencies/Commissions/Councils

- Service and Operations Plans
- Asset Management Plans
- Transportation Master Plans
- Capital Plans and Studies
- Safety and Security Plans
- Feasibility Plans and Studies
- 5311/5310 Quarterly Reports

Transportation Planning Region/Metropolitan Planning Organization (TPR/MPO)

- Cities and Counties
- Stakeholder Groups
- Individuals
- Public Outreach
- Local Plans

- Regional Transportation Plan
- Regional Transit Plan (Consolidated Human Services Transportation Plan)

Local Coordinating Council/Regional Coordinating Council (LCC/RCC)

- Human Services Agencies
- Public Health Organizations
- Community Organizations
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Transit Providers

DTR Planning and Programming

- State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan (every 4 years)
- Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan
- Other Plans or Studies

- Statewide Transit Plan (every 5 years)
- Transit Development Program
- Statewide Asset Management Plan

- DTR Calls for Projects process (federal/state funding)
- CDOT Strategic Projects selection process
- FTA Discretionary Funding Projects selection process

Start Application Process (DTR and FTA Discretionary) → 3-4, 3-17

Transportation Commission, Transit and Rail Advisory Committee, Transit and Intermodal Committee

- Transportation Commission
- Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

Start Budgeting Process → 3-10