

3.1 LAND USE

This section provides an abbreviated description of land use conditions and impacts. For a detailed explanation, the *Land Use Technical Memorandum* (Jacobs, 2011a) included in **Appendix C** should be reviewed.

It is important to note that development and conversion of agricultural lands to employment, commercial, and residential uses have already occurred and is occurring rapidly in the regional study area, particularly along the I-25 corridor. Therefore, descriptions of existing land use contained in this section should be considered in a general context as specific land uses may have changed.

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3.1 Land Use

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3.1.1 Affected Environment

3.1.1.1 LAND USE PLANNING

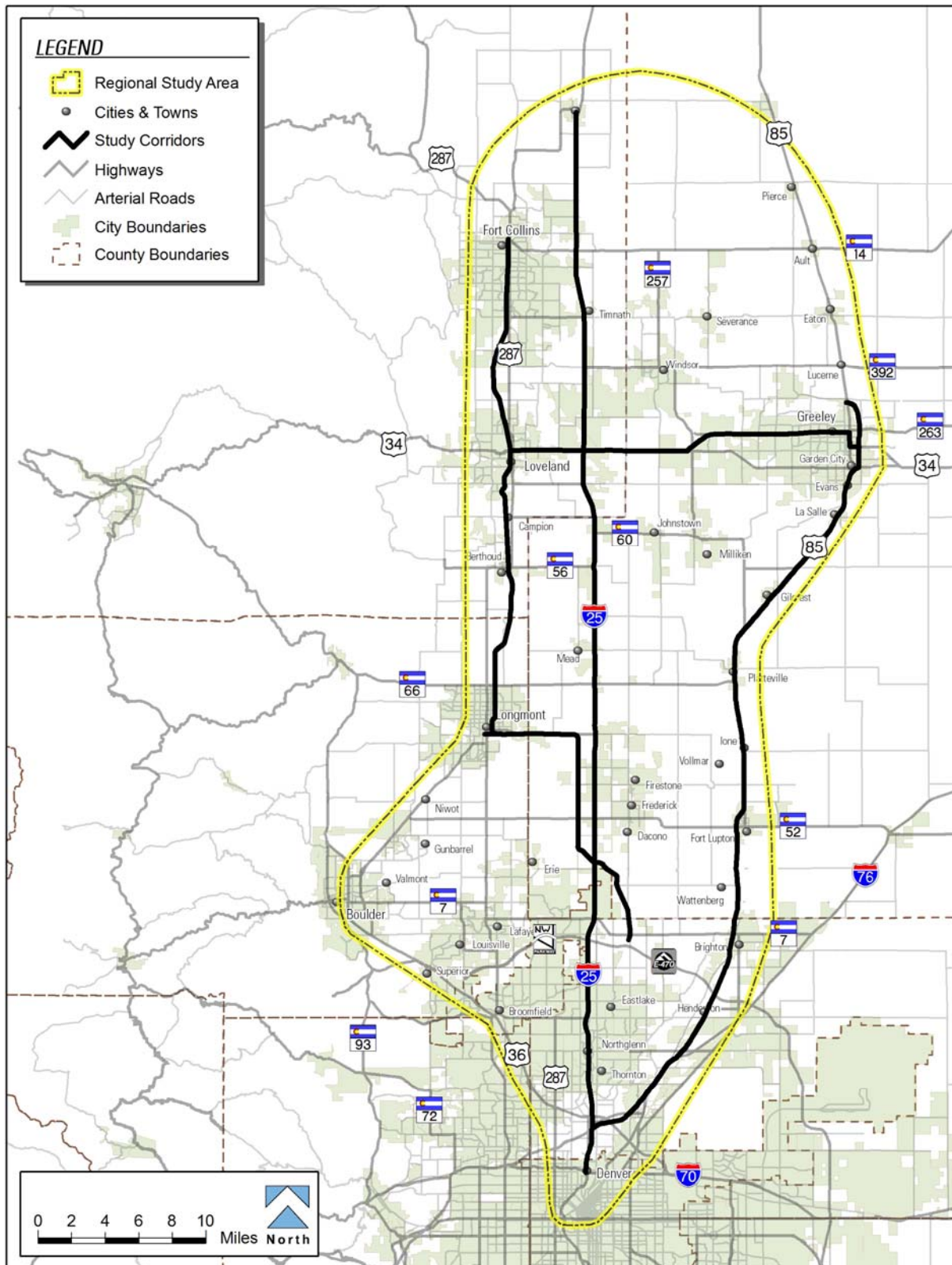
Land use planning in the regional study area is primarily undertaken by local municipal and county governments. In addition, three regional transportation planning agencies are responsible for transportation planning in the regional study area.

Local Government Planning

The regional study area covers an approximately 61-mile stretch of the I-25 corridor north of Denver and includes the parallel corridors along US 85 and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF)/Longmont North Metro Connection corridor. There are 45 local jurisdictions (counties and incorporated cities and towns) in the regional study area responsible for local land use planning (see **Figure 3.1-1**).

The regional study area includes rural unincorporated county lands as well as urban municipal lands. Land use planning for unincorporated lands in the regional study area is the responsibility of seven counties: Adams, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Jefferson, Larimer, and Weld. Both Broomfield and Denver are combined city/county governments. Existing and future development patterns in Jefferson County were not analyzed since only a portion of the county is located within the project area.

1 Figure 3.1-1 North I-25 Regional Study Area Municipal and County Boundaries
2 (as of May 2005)
3



1 There are 38 municipalities within the regional study area where improvements are being
2 considered. From north to south, municipalities along the US 85 corridor include Greeley,
3 Evans, La Salle, Gilcrest, Platteville, Fort Lupton, Brighton, and Commerce City. Municipalities
4 along the I-25 corridor from north to south include Wellington, Fort Collins, Timnath, Windsor,
5 Johnstown, Mead, Firestone, Frederick, Dacono, Erie, Broomfield (city/county), Thornton,
6 Westminster, Northglenn, and Denver (city/county). The BNSF/Longmont North Metro
7 Connection corridor includes Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud, Longmont, Firestone,
8 Frederick, and Dacono. In some cases, annexation of interchange locations or other desirable
9 development properties has resulted in municipal boundaries extending some distance from
10 core urban areas and the resulting planning area crossing two of the North I-25 transportation
11 corridors. For example, Berthoud and Fort Collins have annexed land along I-25, but their core
12 urban areas are along the BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection corridor. Although the
13 regional study area encompasses the towns of Pierce, Ault, and Eaton, for the purposes of this
14 EIS, the northern terminus is Greeley.

15 The influx of people and businesses moving into the regional study area has caused municipal
16 boundaries to expand rapidly into unincorporated county lands. For example, municipalities
17 such as Erie, Frederick, and Firestone in southwest Weld County along the I-25 corridor have
18 annexed a substantial amount of land into their towns in just the last five years, whereas in the
19 previous 50 years, very little annexation occurred. Municipalities that have development
20 constraints, such as floodplains, foothills, or closely neighboring municipalities, or require voter
21 approval for annexations, typically annex at slower rates. Also, rural municipalities farther from
22 primary transportation corridors or urban centers (e.g., Gilcrest and Platteville) generally annex
23 at slower rates.

24 With the exception of a few smaller rural municipalities, most of these jurisdictions have full-
25 time planning staff to address local land use and zoning issues. Additionally, most every
26 jurisdiction has adopted a comprehensive plan or land use plan for its planning area
27 (see **Table 3.1-1**). Review of the plans reveal that nearly every municipality has established or
28 desires some type of growth management boundary. Most define growth boundaries where
29 urban-level services are planned. Others also include an expanded growth management area
30 where the community desires to have a role in land use planning to coordinate compatible
31 adjacent land uses, open space, or rural land uses that act as community buffers.

32 **Regional Planning**

33 Regional land use planning in the regional study area primarily consists of incorporating land
34 use projections into long-range regional and statewide transportation plans. The North I-25
35 regional study area bisects parts of three transportation planning regions including North Front
36 Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO), the Upper Front Range planning area,
37 and Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG). Every four years, each region
38 prepares a regional transportation plan based on the region's needs and priorities. The
39 transportation planning regions incorporate land use projections obtained from local
40 governments into the plans, such as the location and timing of residential and commercial
41 (employment) development.

42

1 **Table 3.1-1 Summary of Comprehensive/Land Use Plans***

Jurisdiction	Plan	Year
County Plans		
Adams County	Comprehensive Plan	2004
Boulder County	Comprehensive Plan (2nd Edition)	2010
Broomfield City and County	Comprehensive Plan	2005
Denver City and County	Comprehensive Plan	2000
Larimer County	Master Plan	1997
Weld County	Comprehensive Plan	2008
US 85 Corridor Municipal Plans		
Greeley	Comprehensive Plan	2010
Evans	Comprehensive Plan	2010
Gilcrest	Comprehensive Plan	2003
Platteville	Comprehensive Plan	2000
Fort Lupton	Land Use Plan	2007
Brighton	Comprehensive Plan	2003
Commerce City	Comprehensive Plan	2010
I-25 Corridor Municipal Plans		
Wellington	Comprehensive Master Plan	2008
Timnath	Comprehensive Plan	2007
Windsor	Comprehensive Plan	2007
Johnstown	Area Comprehensive Plan	2006
Mead	Comprehensive Plan	2009
Firestone	Master Plan	2008
Frederick	Comprehensive Plan	2004
Dacono	Comprehensive Land Use Plan	2005
Erie	Comprehensive Plan	2005
Thornton	Comprehensive Plan	2007
Northglenn	Comprehensive Plan	2010
Westminster	Comprehensive Land Use Plan	2008 update
BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection Corridor Municipal Plans		
Fort Collins	City Plan	2004 Update
Loveland	Comprehensive Plan	2005
Berthoud	Comprehensive Plan	2007
Longmont	Area Comprehensive Plan	2003, as amended

* Includes municipalities and counties along primary transportation corridors. This list does not include all municipalities and counties in the regional study area.

1 3.1.1.2 EXISTING LAND USE

2 This section describes existing generalized land use for the US 85, I-25, and BNSF/Longmont
3 North Metro Connection corridors (as of May 2005). For simplification, land uses have been
4 generally categorized into agricultural, residential, commercial (including retail, industrial,
5 office, etc.), and open space/parks. **Figure 3.1-2** depicts these generalized existing land uses.

6 Overall, existing land use consists primarily of agricultural lands which make up approximately
7 65 percent of the entire regional study area. Residential land uses make up approximately
8 17 percent of the regional study area and are concentrated around the municipalities. The
9 largest areas of residential development are found surrounding Fort Collins, Loveland,
10 Greeley, Longmont, and throughout the Denver metropolitan area. Approximately
11 eight percent of the land is commercial use including office, industrial and other employment
12 areas. Open space, parks and other protected lands make up another three percent of the
13 land use. The remainder of the lands are vacant, unknown, or surface water.

14 ***US 85 Corridor***

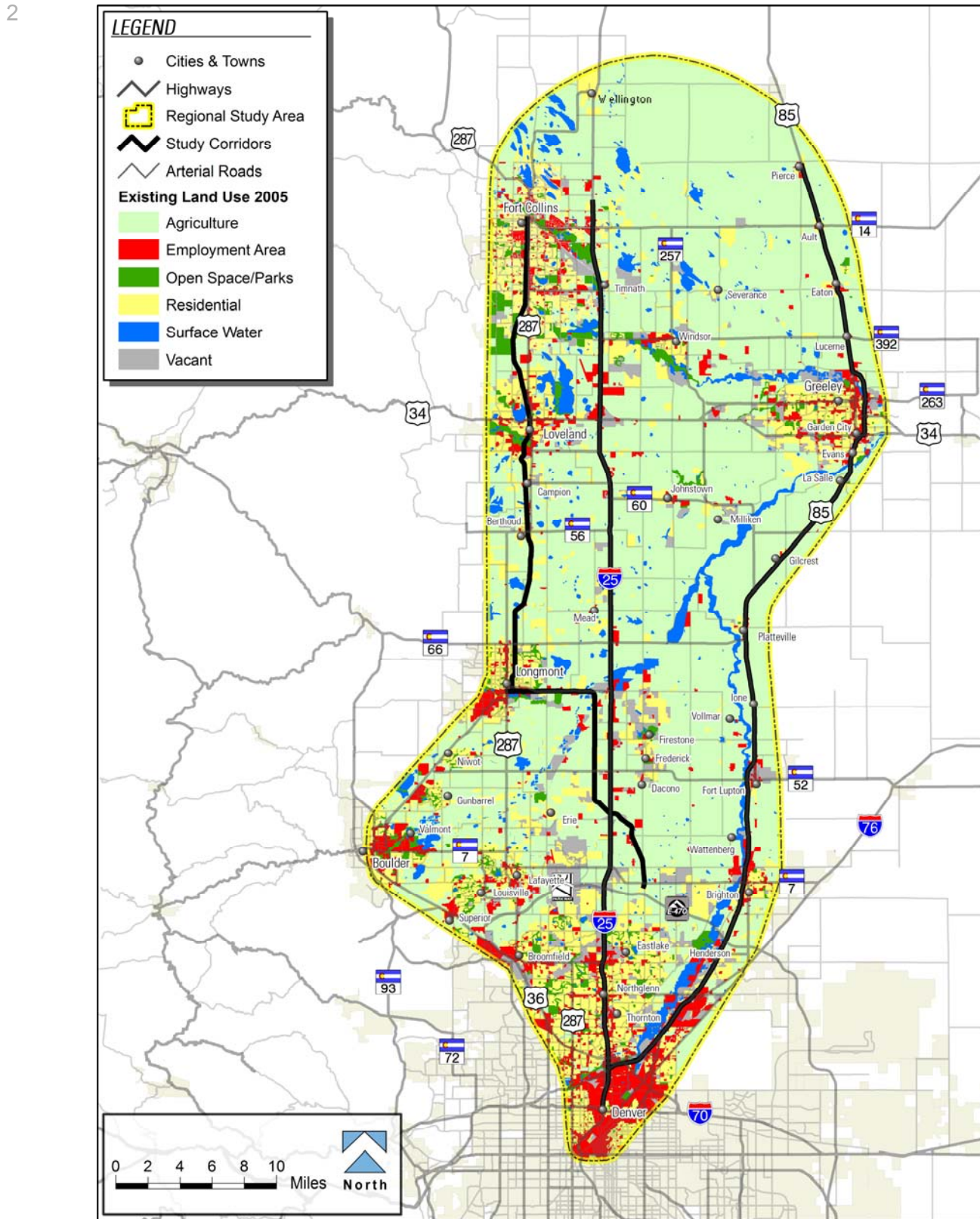
15 The US 85 corridor runs from the Town of Pierce in the north to downtown Denver in the
16 south. There are two major linear features that parallel US 85 through this corridor that
17 influenced how land has been developed: the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) that closely
18 parallels US 85 to the east and the South Platte River along the west side. As a result of
19 the UPRR, heavier industries and commercial uses tend to be concentrated on the east
20 side of US 85, adjacent to the UPRR tracks. Conversely, the downtown areas of rural
21 municipalities such as Evans, La Salle, Gilcrest, and Platteville are concentrated to the
22 west of US 85 closer to the South Platte River. Fort Lupton, Brighton, and Commerce City
23 are the exceptions and have their downtowns to the east of US 85 and bisected by the
24 UPRR corridor.

25 Another major feature that influences land use along the US 85 corridor is the presence of
26 large tracts of agricultural land. In the north end of the corridor, long stretches of
27 agricultural lands act as community buffers between the towns of La Salle, Gilcrest,
28 Platteville, and Fort Lupton, giving the area a distinctly rural character. South of Fort
29 Lupton, there are fewer agricultural land uses separating the cities of Brighton, Commerce
30 City, and Denver, leading to a more urban character associated with the growing Denver
31 Metro Area. Within the towns and cities along US 85, land uses follow a typical pattern of a
32 commercial core area associated with downtowns, surrounded by residential uses. Primary
33 transportation corridors are also usually lined with commercial and industrial uses, as well
34 as some residential uses.

35 ***I-25 Corridor***

36 The I-25 corridor begins in the north at the town of Wellington and goes south to downtown
37 Denver. The I-25 corridor can be generally defined as encompassing the interstate, as well
38 as the interchanges and frontage roads serving the interstate. Land uses are rapidly
39 changing along the I-25 corridor, particularly south of Harmony Road where agricultural
40 lands are rapidly being converted to commercial and residential uses. Land use changes
41 typically are driven by interchange locations where commercial uses are centered, and
42 stretches between interchanges where agricultural and residential uses are more likely to
43 be accessed by frontage roads.

1 Figure 3.1-2 North I-25 Regional Study Area Generalized Existing Land Use



1 At the north end of the regional study area near Wellington, land uses along I-25 are primarily
2 agricultural with a few residential enclaves and commercial properties. Commercial uses
3 increase near the highway interchanges serving Fort Collins. In between the interchanges,
4 there are mostly agricultural and low-density residential uses. Large-scale development of the
5 US 34 interchange area has converted large tracts of agricultural lands into commercial and
6 residential uses. Farther south of SH 119, agricultural and residential land uses incorporate oil
7 and gas development, which include access roads, pipelines, wells, or other related facilities.
8 From this area south to Denver, the towns of Firestone, Frederick, Dacono, and Erie are
9 developing quickly with residential and commercial uses adjacent to I-25. This area is
10 becoming an extension of the Denver metropolitan urbanized area.

11 ***BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection Corridor***

12 The BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection corridor begins north of downtown Fort Collins,
13 goes south to Longmont, east toward Firestone, and southeast toward Thornton. In the north,
14 the BNSF corridor is closer to the Front Range foothills than either of the other transportation
15 corridors considered in this study. Development constraints are more prevalent in this area
16 with an increased number of streams, open space and parks, and established residential and
17 urban centers. The northern part of the corridor from Fort Collins to Longmont is also more
18 developed than either of the I-25 and US 85 corridors. Land use is characterized by the urban
19 centers of Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud, and Longmont. These centers are surrounded by
20 lower density residential and agricultural land uses separating towns and cities. Within the
21 towns and cities along the corridor, land uses follow a typical pattern of a commercial core
22 area associated with downtowns, surrounded by residential uses. Primary transportation
23 corridors are also usually lined with commercial and industrial uses, as well as some
24 residential uses.

25 East and south from Longmont, the BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection corridor follows
26 SH 119, then south along CR 7 and across I-25 to connect with the UPRR corridor. This area
27 is developed with a patchwork of commercial, low density residential, and agricultural uses.

28 **3.1.1.3 ZONING**

29 Because zoning varies by incorporated municipal or county jurisdiction and there are
30 45 jurisdictions, there are more than 100 distinct zoning classifications within the regional
31 study area. Most of these categories are similar in nature and can be grouped into common
32 categories. For example, Residential One (R1) in Evans and Residential Low (RL) in Fort
33 Collins; both represent a low-density residential zoning classification. For the purposes of this
34 analysis, both are grouped into the low-density residential classification. A summary of these
35 generalized zoning classifications in the North I-25 regional study area is provided in
36 **Table 3.1-2.**

37 Zoning classifications for the three transportation corridors vary. In general, all corridors have
38 large stretches of land in between the municipalities that is zoned by the counties as
39 agriculture, low density residential, or open space. The US 85 corridor has the largest
40 stretches of land zoned agriculture, followed by the I-25 corridor and then the
41 BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection corridor. The majority of county zoning is agriculture
42 and low-density residential, although there are enclaves of land zoned medium-density
43 residential spread throughout the regional study area. Within the municipalities, there is a mix
44 of parks and open space, industrial, commercial, and higher density residential zoning.

1 Commercial zoning is usually adjacent to transportation corridors or urban centers and
2 surrounded by residential zoning.

3 **Table 3.1-2 Generalized Zoning Classifications**

Zoning Classification	Description
Rural Residential	Generally includes residential areas developed at a density and character compatible with agricultural uses.
Low-Density Residential	Generally includes large lot residential uses. Often protects rural character and uses.
Single-Family Residential	Generally allows for small-lot, suburban, one-family residential developments.
Medium-Density Residential	Generally provides for a mixture of medium-density/multi-family housing types including, but not limited to triplexes, fourplexes, and attached wall townhomes.
High-Density Residential	Generally includes a mixture of high-density housing types including, but not limited to condominiums, stacked flats, garden apartments, and apartments.
Mobile Home Residential	Generally intended to allow for developments where spaces are either sold or rented for the placement of a manufactured home in a park-like setting, where the homes are used as seasonal or permanent residences.
Mixed Use	Generally designed to accommodate a variety of land uses including, but not limited to residential, commercial, office, and open space.
Business/Office	Generally designed to accommodate professional or financial services, research and development, or corporate offices.
Commercial	Generally refers to areas for the development of commercial, business, retail, and/or service uses.
Industrial	Generally includes areas for the development of research, light or heavy industrial, warehouse, and/or distribution centers.
Planned Unit Development	Generally a versatile zoning mechanism allowing for land development of any nature (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.) either as a single use or in combination, through total integrated project planning.
Agricultural	Generally includes farming, ranching, and other agricultural related uses. Residential development where compatible is often allowed.
Open Space/ Conservation	Generally established as a conservation district to preserve the environment and natural character of the landscape within the district. Land within the district may be used for trails and passive, active, and developed recreation.
Public	Generally recognizes all publicly owned lands in a jurisdiction (federal, state, or local government).
Specialized	Generally covers other special districts such as economic or business, residential enclaves, or conservation.

3.1.1.4 FUTURE (YEAR 2035) LAND USE

This section summarizes the future land use for the US 85, I-25, and the BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection corridors based on municipal and county comprehensive plans and other planning documents. For simplification, land uses have been generally categorized into agricultural, residential, commercial (including retail, industrial, office, etc.), and open space/parks. **Figure 3.1-3** depicts the North I-25 regional study area generalized future land use based on this information.

Future land use will change drastically from the existing land use depicted previously. Residential land uses will make up the predominant land use at approximately 34 percent of the regional study area more than doubling the amount of land occupied. Agricultural lands will be reduced by half and make up approximately 32 percent of the regional study area. Approximately 15 percent of the land will be in commercial use. Open space, parks and other protected lands will also increase to 16 percent of the regional study area as communities and non-governmental organizations make efforts to protect open lands that were previously agricultural. The remainder of the lands are vacant, unknown, or surface water.

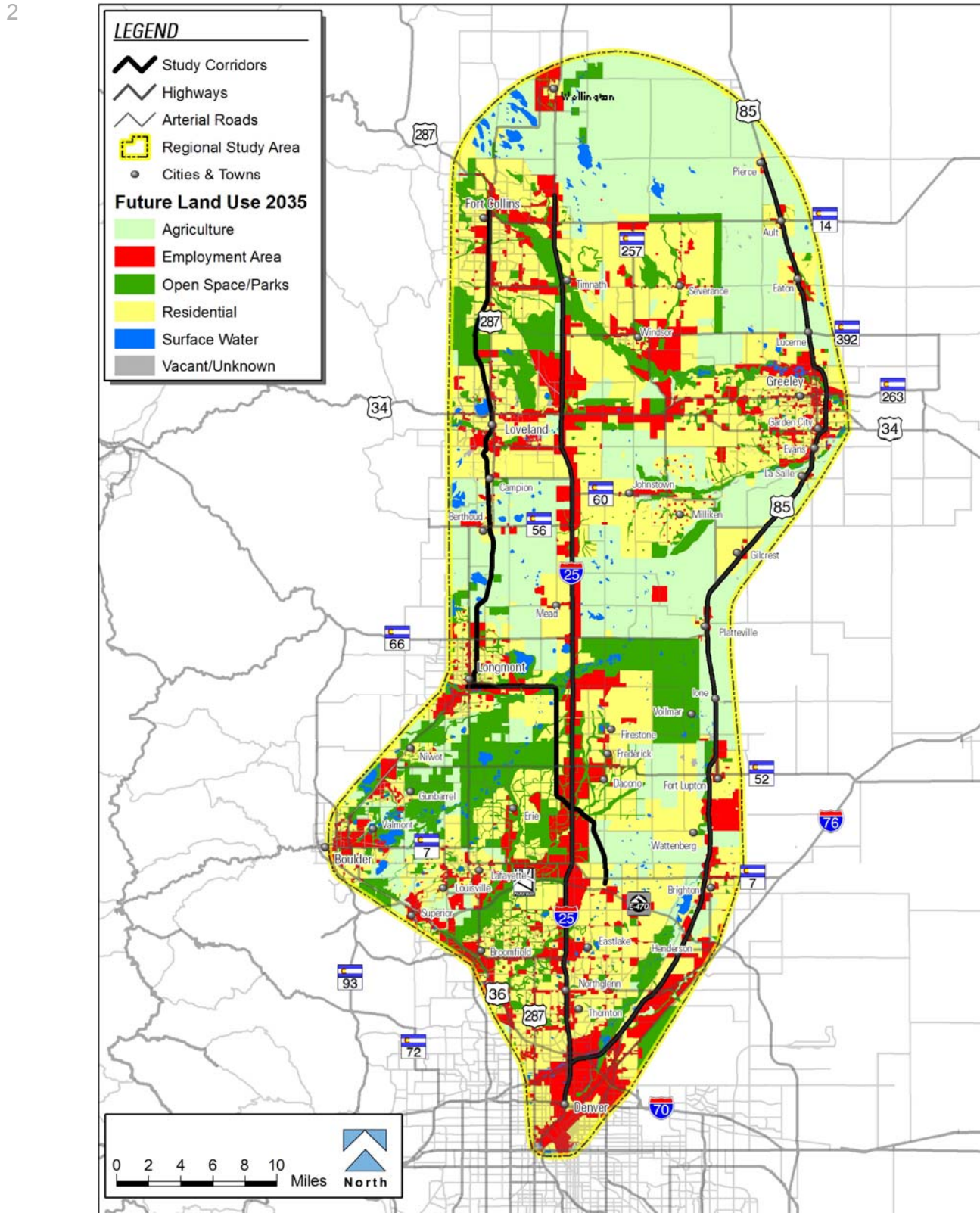
US 85 Corridor

Review of future land use designations indicates that land uses along the US 85 corridor are anticipated to generally remain similar to existing uses. Some conversion of agricultural lands to commercial and residential uses should be expected, but not as much as along the I-25 or BNSF corridors. The UPRR and South Platte River that parallel US 85 through this corridor would continue to have a major influence on how land would be developed. Heavier industries and commercial uses would continue to concentrate adjacent to the UPRR tracks, and the downtown areas of rural municipalities such as Evans, La Salle, Gilcrest, and Platteville would continue to be concentrated to the west of US 85 closer to the South Platte River. The South Platte River would generally constrain the westward spread of these towns.

Downtown Greeley would continue to be a commercial center with the addition of mixed use commercial and residential infill projects. Small towns south of Greeley along US 85, including La Salle, Gilcrest, Platteville, and Fort Lupton, anticipate little to moderate growth. For these communities, maintaining their small town feel and preserving large tracts of agricultural lands between each community is a priority. The smaller towns hope to encourage more commercial uses in their respective downtowns, creating unique or historical destinations for locals and tourists. It could also be anticipated that the smaller towns would add residents by allowing smaller or medium-sized subdivisions to be built on agricultural lands surrounding the core downtowns or along the outer edges of older subdivisions. Although with current county development policies, particularly in Weld County, there remains the possibility of large-scale developments being constructed on unincorporated lands adjacent to or in between the towns.

As the US 85 corridor approaches Brighton and the Denver Metro Area, density of residential and commercial uses would continue to increase with infill projects and eventually there would be little unincorporated lands separating the cities of Brighton, Commerce City, and Denver. Major commercial areas can be expected at the US 85/C-470/I-76 interchange area and south toward Denver where there is easy access to Denver International Airport (DIA) and downtown Denver.

1 Figure 3.1-3 North I-25 Regional Study Area Generalized Future Land Use



1 ***I-25 Corridor***

2 Based on future land use designations, land uses have been changing and would continue to
3 change rapidly along the I-25 corridor, particularly south of US 34 where agricultural lands are
4 being converted to commercial and residential uses on a regular basis. Land uses would
5 continue to be driven by interchange locations where commercial uses are centered, and
6 stretches between interchanges where residential and other commercial uses are more likely
7 to be accessed by frontage roads. Most of the communities along the I-25 corridor would
8 encourage commercial development along I-25 to take advantage of the highway system,
9 visibility, and easy access.

10 Residential uses would be generally set back farther from I-25, although there would likely
11 remain stretches of residential and agricultural lands adjacent to I-25. At the north end of the
12 regional study area in Wellington, moderate growth is anticipated and the area would
13 generally continue to have moderate-density commercial and residential uses adjacent to
14 I-25. South of Wellington at the SH 14, Prospect Road, and Harmony Road interchanges in
15 Fort Collins, existing agricultural uses would likely be converted into commercial uses to take
16 advantage of access. At the US 34 interchange, agricultural lands are already being
17 converted to commercial uses and this trend is anticipated to continue. South of US 34, there
18 are long stretches of unincorporated agricultural lands without convenient access that would
19 likely remain mostly agricultural until such time that a system of frontage roads or east-west
20 cross roads provide access for development.

21 Farther south, towns along I-25, such as Mead, Firestone, Frederick, and Dacono in the
22 central portion of the corridor, would continue to grow toward each other. Absent of
23 developmental controls, these towns may eventually reach a point where there are no
24 unincorporated areas separating them. As with towns along the US 85 corridor, these towns
25 express a desire to maintain agricultural lands and open space between them in their land
26 use plans. However, without specific efforts to protect these lands, there remains the
27 possibility of large-scale developments being constructed on unincorporated lands adjacent to
28 or in between the towns. From this area south into the Denver Metro Area, most all
29 agricultural land uses adjacent to I-25 would likely be converted to commercial and residential
30 uses, with some land set aside for open space or recreation.

31 ***BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection Corridor***

32 The BNSF corridor through Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud, and Longmont has more
33 development constraints than the I-25 and US 85 corridors because of an increased number
34 of streams, open space and parks, and existing residential and urban centers. The corridor is
35 also more built out than either of the I-25 and US 85 corridors. Therefore, existing land use
36 patterns, characterized by urban centers surrounded by suburban residential and
37 neighborhood centers, are likely to continue into the near future.

38 Based on future land use designations, likely future trends would include densification of the
39 existing land uses in the urban centers and some conversion of agricultural lands to
40 residential uses between the urban centers. Fort Collins is approaching build-out and would
41 not likely see large-scale conversion of lands to new uses. Much of the currently undeveloped
42 land between Fort Collins and Loveland is dedicated public lands, such as natural areas and
43 open space, and is not likely to be converted to other uses. Some conversion of agricultural
44 lands to commercial or residential uses along the north side of Loveland city limits can be
45 expected, but most lands within city limits along the BNSF corridor are already developed.
46 The largest areas of undeveloped lands that are not protected as open space are south of

1 Loveland, and to the north and south of Berthoud. This area is likely to see more conversion
2 of agricultural lands to residential uses.

3 At the south end of the corridor through Longmont, most of the lands are already
4 developed and would not change much, with the exception of the Sugar Mill property along
5 Ken Pratt Boulevard. In this former industrial property, Longmont is proposing a mix of
6 commercial and residential uses that can take advantage of regional transit improvements.
7 East from the Sugar Mill property along SH 119, future land uses would likely be similar to
8 existing, with more commercial and residential development replacing agricultural uses.
9 South along CR 7, more residential uses can be expected interspersed among the former
10 and current gravel mining operations and major cross streets, such as SH 52 and CR 8,
11 where commercial uses may tend to concentrate. As the BNSF/Longmont North Metro
12 Connection corridor joins with the UPRR corridor and traverses southeast toward Thornton,
13 much of the existing agricultural land would likely be developed into residential uses. Only
14 at major cross streets would there be a densification of commercial uses that require
15 access and other infrastructure.

16 **3.1.2 Environmental Consequences**

17 The following section provides a summary of potential direct and indirect land use impacts
18 from the No-Action Alternative and the three build alternatives (Package A, Package B, and
19 the Preferred Alternative).

20 Direct land use impacts were evaluated by comparing the alternatives to existing land uses
21 and considering whether or not the alternatives were compatible with existing
22 comprehensive plans and zoning. It is important to note that, in many cases,
23 comprehensive plans and zoning have not been updated by communities to reflect any of
24 the three build alternatives. Detailed information related to compatibility with a specific
25 community's comprehensive plan is included in the *North I-25 Land Use Technical*
26 *Memorandum* (Jacobs, 2011a), which is included in **Appendix C** of this document. The
27 methodology was used to determine compatibility with existing land use, existing zoning,
28 and comprehensive plans.

29 Indirect land use impacts, in particular the potential for induced growth, were evaluated
30 through a process using a local expert panel. The panel consisted of municipal planners
31 from Dacono, Firestone, Fort Collins, Frederick, Greeley, Longmont, Loveland, Mead, and
32 Windsor. Also on the panel were representatives from two large developers who have
33 projects in the area, and agency representatives from NFRMPO, DRCOG, FHWA, and
34 CDOT. The panel convened in October 2006 during which current induced growth research
35 was described, along with the current "drivers" of growth. The panel then provided input on
36 potential induced growth patterns for each corridor based on the alternatives. The insights
37 offered by the local expert panel remain valid for the Preferred Alternative because it is a
38 combination of Package A and Package B. Conclusions regarding induced growth in this
39 analysis were primarily based on the input provided by the expert panel.

40

3.1.2.1 NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Growth would continue to occur largely on undeveloped agricultural land at the fringe of the regional study area's urbanized areas in accordance with municipal and county comprehensive plans, pending the availability of infrastructure. However, this low-density, dispersed pattern of development could eventually become constrained by increased congestion, increased travel times, and existing access issues hampered by a lack of interchange improvements. As a result, development could decrease in quality (e.g., highway-oriented strip commercial or warehouses would likely occur at interchange locations due to access limitations rather than coordinated, master-planned developments) unless market conditions are strong enough to warrant investment from the private sector in strategic locations to facilitate specific developments.

As major roadways such as I-25 become more congested, development could be pushed towards outlying areas to avoid this congestion. This would hasten the conversion of agricultural land as market forces push towards the path of least resistance. This may also be the case for many of the east-west and alternate corridors (e.g., US 34, SH 7, SH 52, SH 402) in the regional study area. The more dispersed development pattern that would occur in response to the No-Action Alternative would result in greater land consumption and a broader potential impact to the regional study area's environmental resources. The continuation of leap-frog type growth practices in southern portions of the regional study area east of I-25 would further fragment remaining agricultural lands, reducing the long-term viability of the remaining lands and potentially impacting sensitive lands such as wildlife habitat. The extent of this impact would depend upon existing policies and regulations pertaining to the protection of environmental resources, which vary from community to community and from county to county.

Due in part to the limited availability of transit, development intensities are unlikely to increase substantially over those which exist today. However, more focused development could occur towards the southern end of the regional study area where transit enhancements are planned and highway improvements are likely (FasTracks/I-25 widening).

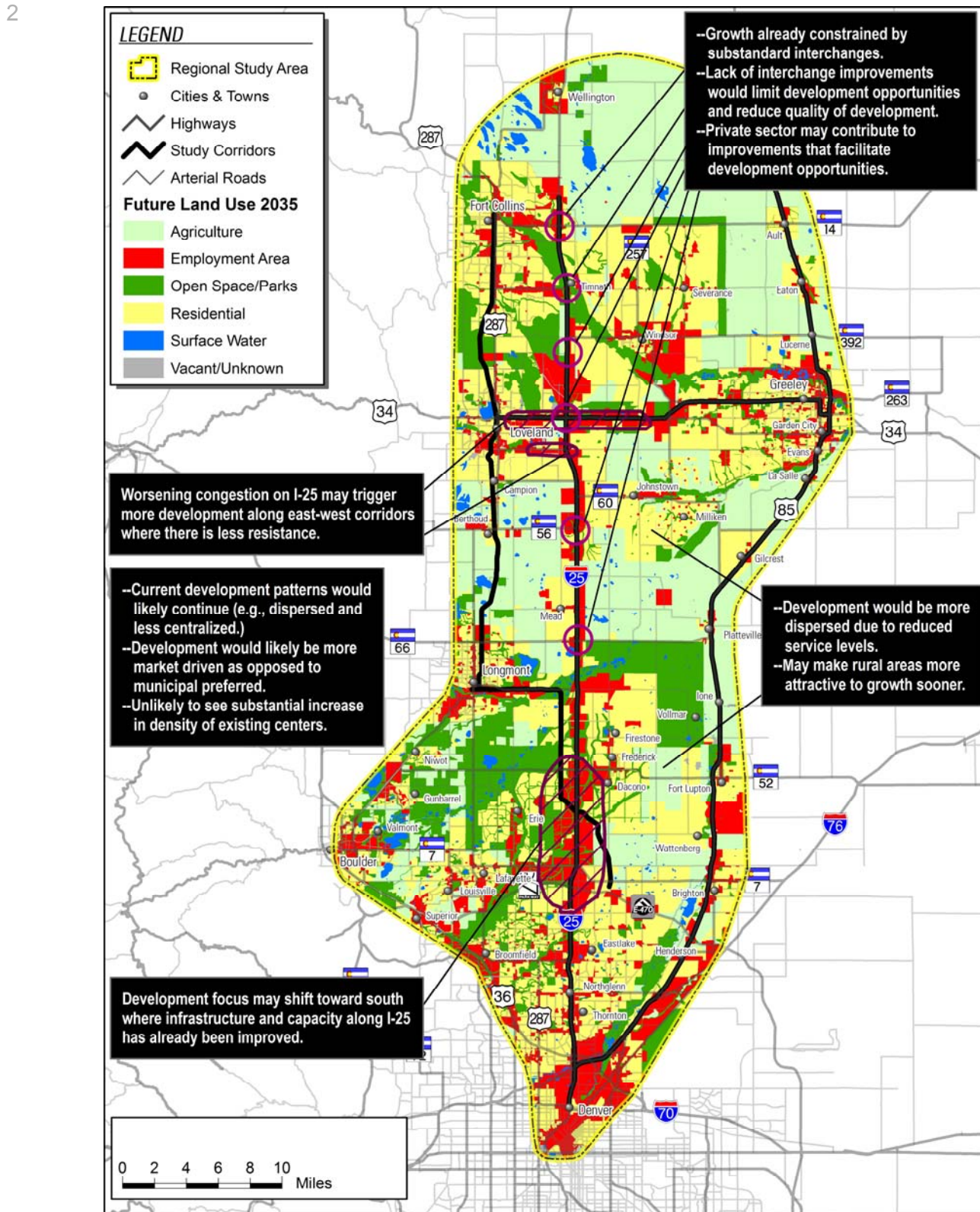
Induced growth impacts for the No-Action alternative are illustrated in **Figure 3.1-4**.

3.1.2.2 PACKAGE A

In general, proposed improvements along existing highway and railroad alignments, such as I-25 and BNSF, would be compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans.

Much of the right-of-way for these alignments has existed for many years. While in some locations residential and commercial development has subsequently encroached to within close proximity of these alignments, they have been planned with the knowledge of adjacent transportation uses. This is particularly important when considering residential uses adjacent to existing transportation corridors, where there may be a perceived incompatibility with land uses. Entirely new transportation alignments or access points along existing alignments, such as interchanges and transit stations, are where direct land use conflicts would be more likely.

1 **Figure 3.1-4 Induced Growth Impacts - No-Action**



1 **Component A-H1: Safety Improvements**

2 Safety improvements along I-25 between SH 1 and SH 14 would be compatible with existing
3 land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Land uses along this section of I-25 are
4 predominately agricultural. Similarly, upgrades to existing I-25 interchanges at SH 1 and
5 Mountain Vista Drive would be compatible since land uses and zoning are mostly
6 commercial-related.

7 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 81 acres of mostly
8 commercial and agricultural land to transportation use.

9 **Component A-H2: General Purpose Lanes**

10 Adding one additional northbound and southbound general purpose lane on I-25 between
11 SH 14 and SH 60, plus auxiliary lanes between Harmony Road and SH 60, would be
12 compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Land uses along this
13 section of I-25 are predominately agricultural and commercial. Upgrades to existing I-25
14 interchanges at SH 14, Prospect Road, Harmony Road, SH 392, Crossroads Boulevard,
15 US 34, SH 402, Weld County Road (WCR) 52, and SH 60 would be compatible since land
16 uses and zoning are mostly commercial-related.

17 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 406 acres of mostly
18 commercial and agricultural land to transportation use.

19 **Component A-H3: General Purpose Lanes**

20 Adding one additional northbound and southbound general purpose lane on I-25 between
21 SH 60 and E-470 would be compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive
22 plans. Land uses along this section of I-25 are mostly commercial and agricultural, with a
23 few residential enclaves. Upgrades to existing I-25 interchanges at SH 56, WCR 34,
24 SH 119, SH 52, and SH 7 would generally be compatible since land uses and zoning are
25 mostly commercial-related, although there are still some areas zoned agricultural (i.e., near
26 SH 7).

27 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 231 acres of mostly
28 commercial and agricultural land to transportation use.

29 **Component A-H4: Structure Upgrades**

30 This component includes improvements under the No-Action Alternative as described in
31 **Chapter 2 Alternatives**. Upgrading structures on I-25 between E-470 and US 36 would be
32 compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans. There would be
33 one acre of additional right-of-way converted to transportation use.

34 **Component A-T1: Commuter Rail**

35 A double-tracked commuter rail line using the existing BNSF railroad track plus one new
36 track from Fort Collins to downtown Longmont would be mostly compatible with existing
37 land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. However, there are a number of residential
38 developments that have encroached near the alignment that could create some
39 incompatible uses (e.g., a residential use next to a railroad use).

1 **Table 3.1-3** depicts the compatibility of the proposed new commuter rail stations associated
 2 with this component. The locations are in core urban areas and were identified during the
 3 station alternatives process based on local government and community input and therefore,
 4 would not likely create major land use incompatibilities. Zoning in many of these areas,
 5 however, has not been updated to be consistent with the comprehensive plans, and many
 6 of these locations are not currently zoned for transportation uses. The proposed Berthoud
 7 Station was not envisioned as a transit center in the local comprehensive plan.

8 The Fort Collins commuter rail maintenance facility would be compatible with existing land
 9 use and the comprehensive plan, although current zoning does not include transit facilities.
 10 The Berthoud commuter rail maintenance facility would be compatible with existing land uses,
 11 but is not included in a comprehensive plan and current zoning does not include transit
 12 facilities.

13 The three feeder bus routes from 1) Greeley to Windsor to Fort Collins, 2) Greeley to
 14 Loveland, and 3) Milliken to Johnstown to Berthoud would be compatible with existing land
 15 use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Local mass transit opportunities are desirable to
 16 communities along these routes.

17 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 165 acres of mostly
 18 commercial and agricultural land and some residential land to transportation use.

19 **Table 3.1-3 Component A-T1 Compatibility**

Commuter Rail Station	Existing Land Use?	Zoning?	Comprehensive Plan?
Fort Collins Downtown Transit Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
CSU	Yes	No	Yes
South Fort Collins Transit Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Loveland	Yes	No	Yes
Downtown Loveland	Yes	No	Yes
Berthoud	Yes	No	No
North Longmont	Yes	No	Yes

20 **Component A-T2: Commuter Rail**

21 A new double-tracked commuter rail line, extending from Longmont parallel to SH 119 to
 22 WCR 7, then south to the existing UPRR line, and connecting to the FasTracks North Metro
 23 end-of-line station, would have some incompatibilities with existing land use, zoning, and
 24 comprehensive plans. From Longmont to the existing UPRR line, A-T2 is an entirely new mass
 25 transit alignment that local governments generally have not previously envisioned in their
 26 comprehensive planning or zoning. Existing land uses are mostly commercial with some
 27 residential along SH 119, and agricultural and residential uses along WCR 7. Incompatibilities
 28 would be the greatest adjacent to existing residential uses.

1 **Table 3.1-4** depicts the compatibility
2 of the proposed new commuter rail
3 stations associated with this
4 component. The Longmont location is
5 in a core urban area and was
6 originally identified based on local
7 government and community input and
8 therefore, would not likely create
9 major land use incompatibilities. The
10 I-25 and WCR 8 location is in a non-urban area that is mostly agricultural and therefore, would
11 be incompatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans.

Table 3.1-4 Component A-T2 Compatibility

Commuter Rail Station	Existing Land Use?	Zoning?	Comprehensive Plan?
Longmont at Sugar Mill	Yes	No	Yes
I-25 and WCR 8	No	No	No

12 The feeder bus route from Firestone to Frederick to Dacono to Erie would be compatible
13 with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Local mass transit opportunities
14 are desirable to communities along this route.

15 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 166 acres of mostly
16 commercial and agricultural land and some residential land to transportation use.

17 **Component A-T3: Commuter Bus**

18 Commuter bus service along US 85 between Greeley and downtown Denver would be
19 compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Nearly all of the
20 communities along the corridor envision US 85 as a multi-modal transportation corridor.

21 **Table 3.1-5** depicts the compatibility
22 of the proposed new commuter bus
23 stations associated with this
24 component. The locations are in core
25 urban areas and were originally
26 identified based on local government
27 and community input and therefore,
28 would not likely create major land use
29 incompatibilities. However, many of
30 these locations are not currently
31 zoned for transportation facilities and
32 some are not specifically referenced
33 in comprehensive plans.

Table 3.1-5 Component A-T3 Compatibility

Commuter Bus Station	Existing Land Use?	Zoning?	Comprehensive Plan?
Greeley	Yes	No	Yes
South Greeley	Yes	Yes	Yes
Evans	Yes	No	Yes
Platteville	Yes	No	No
Fort Lupton	Yes	Yes	No

34 The 10 commuter bus queue jumps on US 85 associated with this component would
35 generally be compatible with existing land use, zoning, or comprehensive plans since US 85
36 is an existing transportation corridor.

37 The commuter bus maintenance facility in Greeley at 31st Street and 1st Avenue would be
38 compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans.

39 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 18 acres of mostly
40 commercial and agricultural land and some residential land to transportation use.

41

1 **Component A-T4: Commuter Bus**

2 Commuter bus service only along E-470 between US 85 and DIA would be compatible with
3 existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans because the service would use existing
4 travel lanes. There would be no additional right-of-way required for this component.

5 **Package A Indirect Effects**

6 There is little difference in indirect effects from induced growth along the I-25 corridor between
7 the build packages since highway widening and improvements at existing interchanges are
8 common to all packages. Under the No-Action Alternative, development activity along I-25
9 might shift more toward the south to the Denver Metro Area where there is a greater
10 concentration of newer infrastructure (interchanges). Under the build packages, improvements
11 to existing interchanges could stimulate some growth, but not as much as if completely new
12 interchanges were proposed.

13 Under Package A, commuter rail would likely facilitate a shift in growth towards urban
14 centers within the project area (e.g., Fort Collins, Loveland, and Longmont). This shift would
15 help municipalities realize plans for downtown redevelopment and would increase the
16 overall density and footprint of these urban centers. As the end-of-line for the commuter rail
17 alignment, Fort Collins would likely attract a somewhat larger portion of urban center growth
18 than stations located mid-alignment. As a result, the rate at which environmental resources
19 would be affected in undeveloped and suburban areas within the project area could be
20 slowed because growth pressures would likely be concentrated more at the existing urban
21 centers. This would be the case particularly along the I-25 corridor where substantial
22 agricultural lands, several floodplains, and a number of other resources exist. Increased
23 densities along the BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection corridor would likely have a
24 limited impact upon natural-resource related environmental resources, as the corridor is
25 nearly built out and most growth would occur in the form of infill and redevelopment.

26 Longmont would likely become a focus within the project area due to its central location, its
27 direct connection to the FasTracks system and the commuter rail, and its close proximity to
28 DIA. Overall, the combination of these factors likely would increase the density and size of
29 Longmont, strengthening its role as a major center for the north Front Range.

30 Outside of established urban centers, commuter rail could help municipalities realize plans
31 that otherwise would not be feasible—for example, the City of Longmont has plans for
32 transit-oriented development along the proposed alignment at SH 66. Without commuter rail
33 as a catalyst, this area would likely develop at typical suburban densities with a limited mix
34 of uses. Smaller communities in the southern end of the regional study area, such as
35 Frederick and Erie, could see impacts that extend beyond the immediate station area.
36 These impacts could come in the form of an increased demand in service levels as former
37 low-intensity commercial and industrial uses are redeveloped at higher intensities.

38 Feeder bus routes along east-west corridors designed to serve commuter rail stations could
39 also stimulate increased levels of development as roadways become more congested. As a
40 result, underused lands along these corridors could begin to be redeveloped as higher
41 intensity residential uses become more desirable in close proximity to established
42 employment centers and transit lines.

43

1 Induced growth impacts for Package A are illustrated in **Figure 3.1-5**.

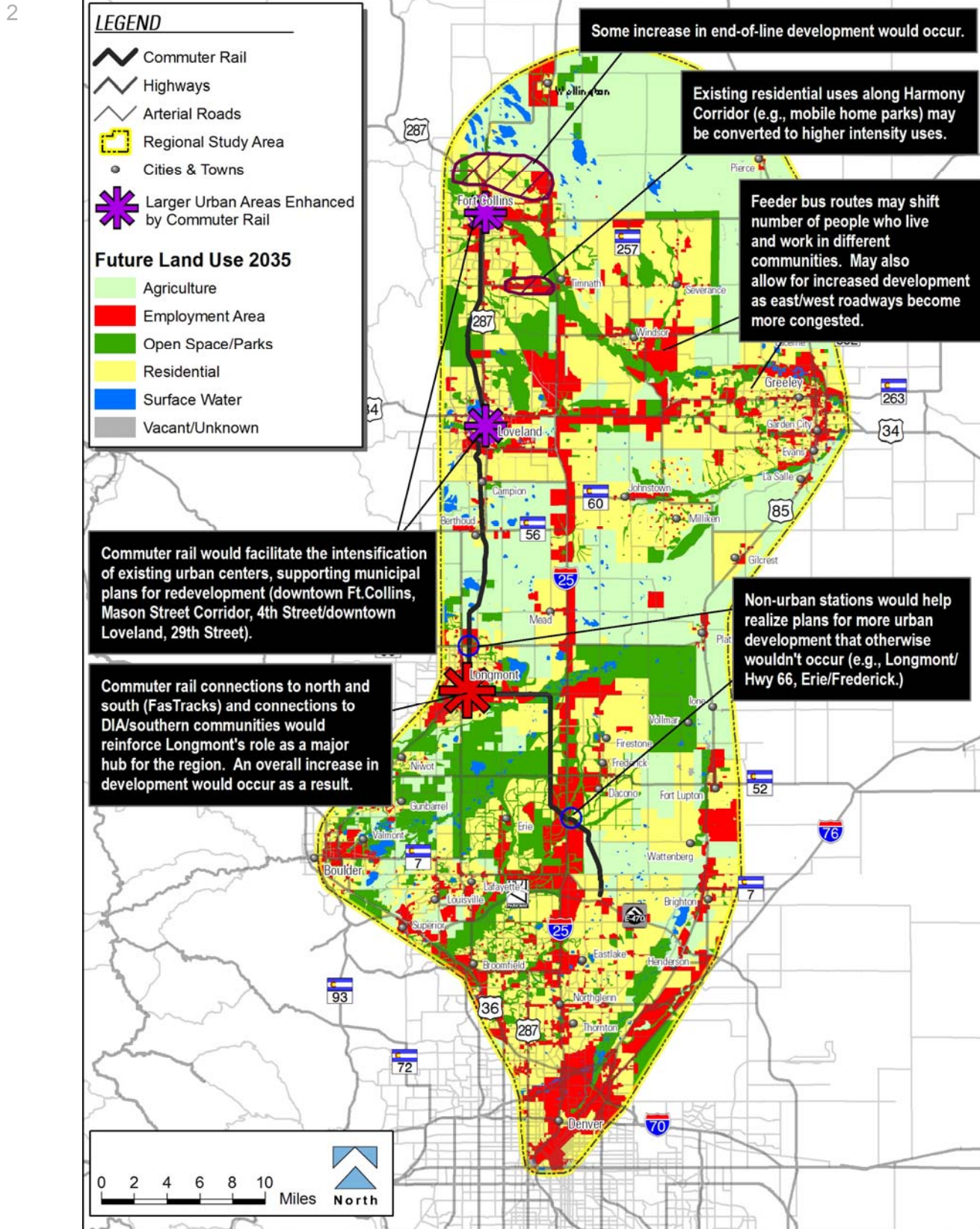
2 **3.1.2.3 PACKAGE B**

3 Package B consists of four highway components and three transit components. Direct
4 impacts are described by component. Indirect impacts are more regional in nature and
5 therefore, are described for the entire package at the end of this subsection.

6 Overall, proposed improvements along the existing I-25 highway alignment would be
7 compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans. The right-of-way for this
8 alignment has existed for many years. While in some locations residential and commercial
9 development has subsequently encroached to within close proximity of this alignment, they
10 have been planned with the knowledge of adjacent transportation uses.

11

1 Figure 3.1-5 Induced Growth Impacts - Package A



1 **Component B-H1: Safety Improvements**

2 Safety improvements under this component are the same as those in Package A, Component
3 A-H1. Therefore, potential land use impacts associated with this component would be the
4 same under either Package A or Package B.

5 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 81 acres of mostly
6 agricultural use to transportation use.

7 **Component B-H2: Tolloed Express Lanes**

8 Adding one additional northbound and southbound tolloed express lane on I-25 between SH 14
9 and SH 60 and another two tolloed lanes from Harmony Road to SH 60 would have a similar
10 effect on land use as adding one general purpose lane in each direction under Package A,
11 Component A-H2. Upgrades to nine existing interchanges would be the same as Package A,
12 Component A-H2. Therefore, potential land use impacts associated with this component would
13 be the same under either Package A or Package B.

14 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 465 acres of mostly
15 commercial and agricultural land to transportation use.

16 **Component B-H3: Tolloed Express Lanes**

17 Adding one additional northbound and southbound tolloed express lane on I-25 between SH 60
18 and E-470 would have a similar effect on land use as adding one general purpose lane in each
19 direction under Package A, Component A-H3. Additionally, upgrades to five existing
20 interchanges would be the same as Package A, Component A-H3. Therefore, potential land
21 use impacts associated with this component would be the same under either Package A or
22 Package B.

23 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 236 acres of mostly
24 commercial and agricultural land to transportation use.

25 **Component B-H4: Tolloed Express Lanes**

26 Adding one additional northbound and southbound tolloed express lane on I-25 between E-470
27 and US 36 could create some land use incompatibilities. Most of the corridor is lined with
28 commercial uses and improvements would be compatible with this use. However, there are
29 also residential uses adjacent to I-25 between 128th Avenue and US 36. In these locations,
30 additional right-of-way needs would require converting residential uses to transportation uses.

31 Upgrades to existing I-25 interchanges at 144th, 136th, 120th, 104th, and Thornton Parkway
32 would be compatible since land uses and zoning are already mostly commercial-related.

33 The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 51 acres of mostly
34 commercial and residential land to transportation use.

35

Component B-T1: Bus Rapid Transit

Bus rapid transit (BRT) from Fort Collins along Harmony Road and from Greeley along US 34, south along I-25 to downtown Denver would be compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. These corridors have been identified by local communities as important multi-modal transportation corridors.

Table 3.1-6 depicts the compatibility of the proposed new BRT stations associated with this component. Stations along I-25 would be located in the median. Only the stations at Fort Collins and downtown Greeley are located in core urban areas. The other stations are located on or adjacent to agricultural lands where future development is proposed. Also, a number of the locations are not currently zoned for transportation uses, and in one case, not identified as a transit center in the local comprehensive plan. The Firestone site is zoned both planned unit development (PUD) and residential. Only PUD allows transit facilities.

The BRT queue jumps on US 34 associated with this component would be compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans since the roads are existing transportation corridors.

The BRT maintenance facility in Fort Collins would generally be compatible with existing land use and the comprehensive plan. Current zoning for the site does not include transit facilities. The BRT maintenance facility in Greeley would be compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans.

The right-of-way for this component would convert approximately 80 acres of mostly commercial and agricultural land to transportation use.

Component B-T2: Bus Rapid Transit

Similar to B-T1, BRT service from Fort Collins/Greeley along I-25 and E-470 to DIA would be compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. There would be no additional right-of-way required for this component.

Table 3.1-6 Component B-T1 Compatibility

Bus Rapid Transit Station	Existing Land Use?	Zoning?	Comprehensive Plan?
South Fort Collins Transit Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harmony Road and Timberline	Yes	Yes	No
I-25 and Harmony Road	Yes	No	Yes
Windsor	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greeley Downtown Transfer Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
West Greeley	No	No	Yes
US 34 and SH 257	Yes	No	Yes
Crossroads	Yes	Yes	Yes
Berthoud	Yes	Yes	Yes
Firestone	Yes	Yes/No	Yes
Frederick/Dacono	No	No	Yes
I-25 and SH 7	No	No	Yes

1 **Package B Indirect Effects**

2 There is little difference in indirect effects from induced growth along the I-25 corridor between
3 the build packages since highway widening and improvements at existing interchanges are
4 common to all packages. Under the No-Action Alternative, development activity along I-25
5 might shift more toward the south to the Denver Metro Area where there is a greater
6 concentration of newer infrastructure (interchanges). Under the build packages, improvements
7 to existing interchanges could stimulate some growth, but not as much as if completely new
8 interchange locations were proposed.

9 The introduction of BRT along the I-25 corridor would represent a less permanent form of
10 transit improvement than commuter rail and as a result would provide less incentive for transit
11 oriented development (TOD). Review of a limited number of case studies nationwide supports
12 this thesis: BRT-related TOD is more tenuous than TOD associated with rail. As a result, under
13 Package B, growth would continue to be market-driven and to occur in accordance with
14 municipal and county comprehensive plans. Growth would continue to be focused along the
15 I-25 corridor, which would function as a “Main Street” for the North Front Range. Communities
16 west of I-25 would continue to expand towards the east—spreading—rather than shifting in
17 their concentration. Interchange improvements along the I-25 corridor would also improve
18 access and reinforce this pattern. As a result, downtown infill and redevelopment efforts in
19 established urban centers (Fort Collins, Greeley, Longmont, Loveland) could be hampered.

20 Some concentration of growth could occur near BRT stations along the I-25 corridor. The more
21 dispersed development pattern that could occur in response to Package B would result in
22 greater land consumption and a broader potential impact to the regional study area’s
23 environmental resources. The continuation of non-contiguous growth practices in southern
24 portions of the regional study area east of I-25 would further fragment remaining agricultural
25 lands, reducing the long-term viability of the remaining lands and potentially impacting wildlife
26 habitat. The extent of this impact would be dependent upon existing policies and regulations
27 pertaining to the protection of environmental resources, which vary from community to
28 community and from county to county.

29 The location of the BRT stations (e.g., center median versus along side the highway) and the
30 distance of the stations from any associated development would limit the likelihood that they
31 would attract substantial new types of development. However, some increase in density and
32 the rate of growth could occur in the surrounding station areas.

33 Feeder bus service along the Highway 52 feeder would connect tri-town communities
34 (Frederick, Firestone, Dacono) to the FasTracks Station at Niwot or Gunbarrel and to the BRT
35 at I-25, reinforcing existing patterns of employment and housing (employment to the west and
36 housing to the east) and limiting the ability of the these communities to shift away from being
37 bedroom communities.

38 As the FasTracks end-of-line, Longmont could experience some intensification in development
39 within its urban center.

40 Induced growth impacts for Package B are illustrated in **Figure 3.1-6**.

41

3.1.2.4 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The Preferred Alternative is a combination of components presented in Packages A and B and includes multimodal improvements on multiple corridors. Under the Preferred Alternative, I-25 would be widened with general purpose lanes and TEL and substandard interchanges would be reconstructed or upgraded to accommodate future travel needs. Express bus service would operate in the TEL to connect northern Colorado communities to downtown Denver and DIA and utilize existing, expanded and new carpool lots along the highway. Commuter bus service along US 85 would connect Greeley with downtown Denver with stops at the communities along the route. The Preferred Alternative also includes commuter rail transit service from Fort Collins to the anticipated FasTracks North Metro end-of-line. Service to Denver would travel through Longmont and along the FasTracks North Metro Corridor. A connection to Boulder would also be made with a transfer to Northwest Rail at the Sugar Mill Station in Longmont.

In general, proposed improvements associated with the Preferred Alternative would be compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans. The right-of-way for these alignments has existed for many years. While in some locations residential and commercial development has subsequently encroached to within close proximity of these alignments, they have been planned with the knowledge of adjacent transportation uses. This is particularly important when considering residential uses adjacent to existing transportation corridors, where there may be a perceived incompatibility with land uses. Entirely new transportation alignments or access points along existing alignments, such as interchanges and transit stations, are where direct land use conflicts would be more likely.

I-25 Highway Improvements

I-25 highway improvements consist of interchange reconstruction at 13 interchanges and 11 interchanges which receive ramp or cross-street modifications, two new TEL between SH 14 and US 36, and two new general purpose lanes between SH 14 and SH 66. Direct impacts that may result from implementation of this component of the Preferred Alternative are described below from north to south. Indirect impacts are more regional and are therefore described for the entire Preferred Alternative at the end of this section.

Overall, proposed improvements along the existing I-25 highway alignment would be compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans. The right-of way for this alignment has been existing for many years. While in some locations residential and commercial development has subsequently encroached to within close proximity of the alignment, they have been planned with the knowledge of adjacent transportation uses.

Improvements along I-25 between SH 1 and SH 14 would be compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Land uses along this section of I-25 are predominately agricultural. Similarly, upgrades to existing I-25 interchanges at SH 1 and Mountain Vista Drive would be compatible since land uses and zoning are mostly commercial-related.

Adding one additional northbound and southbound general purpose lane and one additional northbound and southbound TEL on I-25 between SH 14 and SH 66 would be compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Land uses along this section of I-25 are predominately agricultural and commercial.

1 Upgrades to existing I-25 interchanges at SH 14, Prospect Road, Harmony Road, SH 392,
2 Crossroads Boulevard, US 34, SH 402, LCR 16, SH 60, SH 56, and WCR 34 would be
3 compatible since land uses and zoning are mostly commercial-related.

4 Adding one additional northbound and southbound TEL on I-25 between SH 66 and E-470
5 would be compatible with existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Land uses
6 along this section of I-25 are mostly commercial and agricultural with a few residential
7 enclaves.

8 Upgrades to existing I-25 interchanges at SH 119, SH 52, WCR 8, and SH 7 would generally
9 be compatible since land uses and zoning are mostly commercial-related, although there are
10 still some areas zoned agricultural (i.e., near SH 7).

11 Adding one additional northbound and southbound TEL on I-25 between E-470 and US 36
12 could create some land use incompatibilities. Most of the corridor is lined with commercial
13 uses and improvements would be compatible with this use. However, there are also residential
14 uses adjacent to I-25 between 128th Avenue and US 36. In these locations, additional right-of-
15 way needs would require converting residential uses to transportation uses.

16 Upgrades to the existing I-25 interchange at Thornton Parkway would be compatible with
17 existing land uses, zoning, and comprehensive plans.

18 The right-of-way requirements for the I-25 improvements component would convert
19 approximately 635 acres of mostly commercial and agricultural land to transportation use.
20 South of E-470 right-of-way requirements would no longer include agricultural lands but
21 instead would consist of some residential in addition to the commercial lands. It should be
22 noted that this total of right-of-way acquisition also accommodates improvements related to the
23 express bus component which would run in the TEL lanes. Express bus stations along I-25
24 would generally be located in right-of-way directly adjacent to that acquired for other highway
25 improvements.

26 ***Commuter Rail (Fort Collins to North Metro)***

27 A commuter rail line along the existing BNSF alignment from Fort Collins to Longmont would
28 be mostly compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. However,
29 there are a number of residential developments that have encroached near the alignment that
30 could create some incompatible uses (e.g., a residential use next to a railroad use). The
31 alignment extending from Longmont along a new alignment parallel to SH 119 to WCR 7, then
32 south to the existing UPRR line to North Metro Denver (Longmont/North Metro Connection)
33 would have incompatibilities with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans.

1 **Table 3.1-7** depicts the
2 compatibility of the proposed new
3 commuter rail stations associated
4 with this component. Most locations
5 are in core urban areas and were
6 identified during the station
7 alternatives process based on local
8 government and community input
9 and therefore, would not likely
10 create major land use
11 incompatibilities. The I-25 and
12 WCR 8 location is in a non-urban
13 area that is mostly agricultural and
14 therefore, would be incompatible
15 with existing land uses, zoning, and
16 comprehensive plans.

17 Zoning in many of these areas,
18 however, has not been updated to
19 be consistent with the
20 comprehensive plans, and many of
21 these locations are not currently
22 zoned for transportation uses.

23 The commuter rail maintenance facility located at LCR 10 in Berthoud would be compatible
24 with existing land use, zoning, and the comprehensive plan.

25 The right-of-way requirements for this component would convert approximately 196 acres of
26 mostly commercial and agricultural land and some residential land to transportation use.

27 **Express Bus (Fort Collins/Greeley to Denver DIA)**

28 Express bus from Fort Collins along Harmony Road and from Greeley along US 34, south
29 along I-25 to 120th Avenue would be compatible with existing land use, zoning, and
30 comprehensive plans. These corridors have been identified by local communities as important
31 multi-modal transportation corridors.

Table 3.1-7 Commuter Rail Component Compatibility

Commuter Rail Station	Existing Land Use?	Zoning?	Comprehensive Plan?
Fort Collins Downtown Transit Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
CSU	Yes	No	Yes
South Fort Collins Transit Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Loveland	Yes	No	Yes
Downtown Loveland	Yes	No	Yes
Berthoud	Yes	No	Yes
North Longmont	Yes	No	Yes
Longmont at Sugar Mill	Yes	No	Yes
I-25 and WCR 8	No	No	No

1 **Table 3.1-8** depicts the compatibility
2 of the proposed new express bus
3 stations associated with this
4 component. Stations along I-25 are
5 generally within existing
6 transportation right-of-way and often
7 are additions to existing park-n-Ride
8 lots. Only the stations at Fort Collins
9 and downtown Greeley are located
10 in core urban areas. The other
11 stations are located on or adjacent
12 to agricultural lands where future
13 development is proposed. Also,
14 a number of the locations are not
15 currently zoned for transportation
16 uses, and in one case, not identified
17 as a transit center in the local
18 comprehensive plan. The Firestone
19 site is zoned both PUD and
20 residential. Only PUD allows transit
21 facilities.

22 The express bus stations proposed
23 as part of the Preferred Alternative
24 are off to one side of the interstate
25 as opposed to the BRT stations
26 proposed under Package B which
27 are located within the median.

28 Location of the stations next to one
29 side makes the stations more likely
30 to attract new development because the development will be located directly adjacent to the
31 stations. Median located stations reduce the amount of developable land within the distance
32 typically associated with prime TOD opportunities, which is typically understood to be
33 between ¼ and ½ mile from the station. It should be noted however that substantial TOD is not
34 generally expected when associated with express bus stations unless additional
35 developmental incentives exist such as active promotion of TOD from the local jurisdiction.

36 The express bus queue jumps on US 34 associated with this component would be compatible
37 with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans since the roads are existing
38 transportation corridors.

39 The bus maintenance facility in Greeley would be compatible with existing land use, zoning,
40 and comprehensive plans.

41 The right-of-way requirements for this component would result in the conversion of
42 approximately 34 acres of mostly commercial and agricultural land to a transportation use.

43

Table 3.1-8 Express Bus Component Compatibility

Express Bus Station	Existing Land Use?	Zoning?	Comprehensive Plan?
South Fort Collins Transit Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
Harmony Road and Timberline	Yes	Yes	No
I-25 and Harmony Road	Yes	No	Yes
Windsor	Yes	Yes	Yes
West Greeley	No	No	Yes
US 34 and SH 257	Yes	No	Yes
Crossroads	Yes	Yes	Yes
Berthoud	Yes	Yes	Yes
Firestone	Yes	Yes/No	Yes
Frederick/Dacono	No	No	Yes
I-25 and SH 7	No	No	Yes
I-25 and WCR 8	No	No	No
Downtown Denver	Yes	Yes	Yes
DIA	Yes	Yes	Yes

1 Express bus service along I-25 from 120th Avenue to Denver Union Station would be
2 compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans because the service
3 would use existing travel lanes. There would be no additional right-of-way required for this
4 component.

5 Express bus service along E-470 between I-25 and DIA would be compatible with existing
6 land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. There would be no additional right-of-way
7 required for this component.

8 **US 85 Commuter Bus**

9 Commuter bus service along US 85 between Greeley and Denver Union Station would be
10 compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans. Nearly all of the
11 communities along the corridor envision US 85 as a multi-modal transportation corridor.

12 **Table 3.1-9** depicts the compatibility
13 of the proposed new commuter bus
14 stations associated with this
15 component. The locations are in core
16 urban areas and were originally
17 identified based on local government
18 and community input and therefore,
19 would not likely create major land use
20 incompatibilities. However, many of
21 these locations are not currently
22 zoned for transportation facilities and
23 some are not specifically referenced
24 in comprehensive plans. In addition to
25 the five stations listed in this table,
26 the US 85 commuter bus will also make stops in Brighton, Commerce City, and downtown
27 Denver. These stops will not include additional parking or infrastructure and therefore would be
28 compatible with existing land use, zoning, and comprehensive plans.

Table 3.1-9 US 85 Commuter Bus Component Compatibility

Commuter Bus Station	Existing Land Use?	Zoning?	Comprehensive Plan?
Greeley	Yes	No	Yes
South Greeley	Yes	Yes	Yes
Evans	Yes	No	Yes
Platteville	Yes	No	No
Fort Lupton	Yes	Yes	No

29 The 17 commuter bus queue jumps on US 85 associated with this component would generally
30 be compatible with existing land use, zoning, or comprehensive plans since US 85 is an
31 existing transportation corridor.

32 The commuter bus maintenance facility in Greeley would be compatible with existing land use,
33 zoning, and comprehensive plans.

34 The right-of-way requirements for the commuter bus component would convert approximately
35 14 acres of mostly commercial and agricultural land and some residential land to a
36 transportation use.

37 **Preferred Alternative Indirect Effects**

38 There is little difference in indirect effects from induced growth along the I-25 corridor between
39 the build packages since highway widening and improvements at existing interchanges are
40 common to all packages. Under the No-Action Alternative, development activity along I-25
41 might shift more toward the south to the Denver Metro Area where there is a greater
42 concentration of newer infrastructure (interchanges). Under the build packages, improvements

1 to existing interchanges could stimulate some growth, but not as much as if completely new
2 interchanges were proposed.

3 Under the Preferred Alternative, commuter rail would likely facilitate a shift in growth towards
4 urban centers within the project area (e.g., Fort Collins, Loveland, and Longmont). It should be
5 noted, however, that since no commuter rail construction is planned for the first phase of
6 construction, this growth shift is not likely to occur in the immediate future. This shift would
7 help municipalities realize plans for downtown redevelopment and would increase the overall
8 density and footprint of these urban centers. As the end-of-line for the commuter rail
9 alignment, Fort Collins would likely attract a somewhat larger portion of urban center growth
10 than stations located mid-alignment. As a result, the rate at which environmental resources
11 would be affected in undeveloped and suburban areas within the project area could be slowed
12 because growth pressures would likely be concentrated more at the existing urban centers.
13 This would be the case particularly along the I-25 corridor where substantial agricultural lands,
14 several floodplains, and a number of other resources exist. Increased densities along the
15 BNSF/Longmont North Metro Connection corridor would likely have a limited impact upon
16 natural-resource related environmental resources, as the corridor is nearly built out and most
17 growth would occur in the form of infill and redevelopment.

18 Longmont would likely become a focus within the project area due to its central location, its
19 direct connection to the FasTracks system and the commuter rail, and its close proximity to
20 DIA. Overall, the combination of these factors likely would increase the density and size of
21 Longmont, strengthening its role as a major center for the north Front Range.

22 Outside of established urban centers, commuter rail could help municipalities realize plans that
23 otherwise would not be feasible—for example, the City of Longmont has plans for transit-
24 oriented development along the proposed alignment at SH 66. Without commuter rail as a
25 catalyst, this area would likely develop at typical suburban densities with a limited mix of uses.
26 Smaller communities in the southern end of the regional study area, such as Frederick and
27 Erie, could see impacts that extend beyond the immediate station area. These impacts could
28 come in the form of an increased demand in service levels as former low-intensity commercial
29 and industrial uses are redeveloped at higher intensities.

30 Some recent information from RTD confirms these conclusions on the induced growth effect of
31 commuter rail. In 2007, RTD conducted a survey of over 25 experts in the fields of economic
32 development, transit, and land use planning from cities around the United States. A conclusion
33 of the survey is that investment in transit redistributes growth and also can attract new growth
34 to the region under certain conditions. However, the amount of new growth is a minor
35 consideration in overall regional growth patterns (RTD, 2007a).

36 RTD additionally in 2007 studied the effect of its current light rail transit (LRT) lines on
37 development patterns. It was found the LRT service is providing an impetus for
38 redevelopment/revitalization of land near stations and allowing for a greater mix of land use
39 types and densities. The report states that development along the LRT system at that time
40 (consisting primarily of the southwest and southeast lines) is extensive: 9,635 residential units,
41 2,214 hotel rooms, 2.5 million square feet of retail, 2.6 million square feet of office space, and
42 2.4 million square feet of institutional space (including medical, cultural, and convention uses)
43 had been built or was under construction. These development projects are within an
44 approximate half-mile radius of LRT stations (RTD, 2007b).

1 RTD is currently planning, designing, and constructing the FasTracks system (a transit
2 expansion plan to build 122 miles of new commuter rail and light rail, 18 miles of bus rapid
3 transit, and enhanced bus service across the eight-county district). In anticipation of rail
4 service, many communities have demonstrated a proactive approach to update their local
5 plans to promote higher density, mixed-use TOD near FasTracks stations.

6 The introduction of express bus along the I-25 corridor would represent a less permanent form
7 of transit improvement than commuter rail and as a result would provide less incentive for
8 TOD. Review of a limited number of case studies nationwide supports this thesis: TOD related
9 to express bus type service is more tenuous than TOD associated with rail. Some limited
10 concentration of growth could occur near some express bus stations along the I-25 corridor.

11 Such development would depend upon the type and proximity of adjacent land use activity. At
12 stations located in areas with development, some limited higher density growth patterns due to
13 the express bus station might be realized.

14 Feeder bus routes along east-west corridors designed to serve commuter rail and express bus
15 stations could also stimulate increased levels of development as roadways become more
16 congested. As a result, underused lands along these corridors could begin to be redeveloped
17 as higher intensity residential uses become more desirable in close proximity to established
18 employment centers and transit lines.

19 Induced growth impacts for the Preferred Alternative are illustrated in **Figure 3.1-7**.

20 **3.1.3 Mitigation Measures**

21 There will be no mitigation measures required by CDOT for the build alternatives. While this
22 analysis identified a number of incompatibilities between proposed transportation
23 improvements and land use, particularly with current zoning and in some cases
24 comprehensive plans, actions to address these incompatibilities are the responsibility of local
25 municipal and county governments. It is important to remember that most incompatibilities are
26 simply the result of comprehensive plans and zoning not being updated to reflect the results of
27 this study. Once the Preferred Alternative is formally identified in the Record of Decision,
28 CDOT will encourage the local governments to address the incompatibilities through their
29 existing land use processes. Typical processes local governments use to address land use
30 incompatibilities include public involvement and visioning, amendments to comprehensive
31 plans, and zoning changes.

32

1 Figure 3.1-7 Induced Growth Impacts - Preferred Alternative

