

3.2 SOCIAL CONDITIONS

3.2.1 Affected Environment

3.2.1.1 POPULATION AND HOUSING STATISTICS

Data from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census Bureau at the census tract level were used to analyze population and housing characteristics of the regional study area. Population and household projections for the regional study area were provided by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and the Northern Front Range Metropolitan Organization (NFRMPO).

From 1990 to 2000, substantial growth occurred in most regional study area census tracts. In 1990, the combined population of all regional study area census tracts was 708,688. By 2000, this population had increased by 421,498 to a total of 1,130,186. This represents a 59-percent growth rate over a 10-year period. According to the 2000 census, there are 422,366 households in the regional study area with an average household size of 2.5 persons per household. The regional study area has an estimated 438,900 housing units with owner-occupied units representing 65 percent of the total.

Seven counties and 38 incorporated municipalities are located wholly or partially in the regional study area. In the majority of these communities, substantial growth is forecasted through 2030. The largest increases in population and households likely would occur in the Weld, Broomfield, and Larimer county portions of the regional study area. As **Table 3.2-1** shows, population and households would nearly double in Broomfield and Larimer counties and triple in Weld County.

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Table 3.2-1 Population and Household Forecasts in the Weld, Broomfield, and Larimer County Portions of the Regional Study Area

County	Population			Households		
	2000	2030	Change 2000–2030	2000	2030	Change 2000–2030
Weld	162,440	443,578	281,138 (173%)	59,425	165,550	106,125 (179%)
Broomfield	40,122	78,350	38,228 (95%)	14,430	30,524	16,094 (112%)
Larimer	220,373	415,906	195,533 (89%)	85,400	165,579	80,179 (94%)

Source: NFRMPO 2030 RTP and DRCOG 2030 RTP Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) Data; Clarion Associates, 2004.

At the municipal level, substantial growth is anticipated in Loveland, Fort Collins, Greeley, and Brighton. The distribution of future population growth by municipal area is shown in **Figure 3.2-1**. Growth in regional study area counties and municipalities would inevitably increase the demand for housing, community services, and strain roadways between Northern Colorado and the Denver Metro Area.

3.2.1.2 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND ADVANCED AGE

On February 24, 2004, Executive Order 13330—Human Service Transportation Coordination—was issued, which calls for improved coordination of federally supported transportation services for people who are transportation-disadvantaged. As defined by Executive Order 13330, persons with disabilities and persons of advanced age would be considered transportation-disadvantaged.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a disability as “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such an individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment.” For the purposes of this analysis, persons of advanced age are defined as persons over 64 years of age.

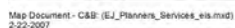
Persons with disabilities and persons of advanced age in regional study area census tracts were compared to countywide averages to identify potential concentrations of this segment of the population. In general, these populations are higher in and around urban areas (Greeley, Fort Collins, Longmont, Brighton, Denver). Concentrations of persons with disabilities are located between Denver and Northglenn along I-25, between Dacono and Fort Lupton east of I-25 to US 85, along US 85 in Greeley and Evans, and along US 287 in Longmont, Niwot, Loveland, and central Fort Collins. Concentrations of persons of advanced age are located along US 36 in Boulder and Louisville; between Denver and Northglenn along I-25; along US 85 in Brighton, Greeley, Eaton, and Ault; and along US 287 in Longmont, Loveland, and central Fort Collins.

3.2.1.3 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities and services located in the regional study area include schools, hospitals, recreation/community centers, libraries, museums, churches, police stations, and fire stations. Approximately 44 community facilities are immediately adjacent to major highway or rail corridors, including 15 schools, 14 churches, 8 public health and safety offices, 3 cemeteries, 3 community centers, and one library. Community facilities and services are shown by location in **Figure 3.2-2**.

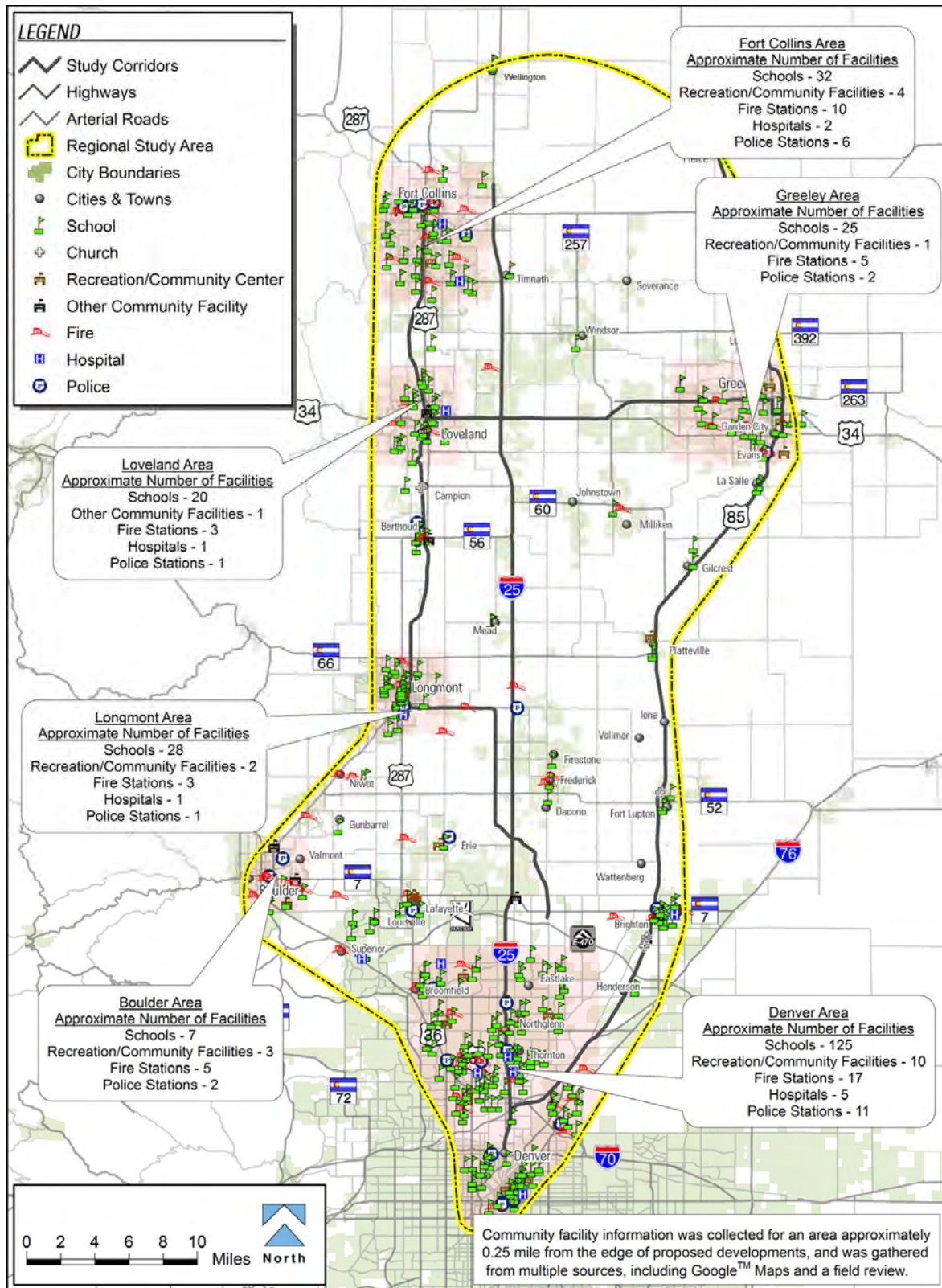
The regional study area is served by 12 different school districts. There are also three major universities and two community colleges with satellite campuses throughout the regional study area. The largest of these include the University of Colorado at Boulder, the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley, and Colorado State University in Fort Collins.

Emergency medical response services are provided to regional study area residents by local fire departments and hospitals. In addition, numerous independent agencies provide emergency response services in the regional study area and several jurisdictions have joined together to meet their emergency response needs.



Social Conditions 3.2-3

1 Figure 3.2-2 Community Facilities



Map Document C&S: (Community_Facilities_eis_updated.mxd)
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Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods in the regional study area consist of very well-defined and organized subdivisions to more informal single-family residential areas. Neighborhoods located adjacent to major highways where physical improvements are proposed are discussed below.

US 85 Corridor

The US 85 corridor is largely rural in character with informal residential developments spread out between rural agricultural and commercial/industrial lands. Just south of Greeley along US 85, there are a few informal single-family residential developments, apartments, and motels. The Southgate Mobile Home Park marks the beginning of Gilcrest. West of US 85, there is a small neighborhood with both an elementary and high school. Residential development in Platteville is similar to Gilcrest, with small single-family residential neighborhoods, apartments, and motels. Further south along the highway towards Brighton, there are several mobile home parks and motels, including Rocky Mountain Vista Mobile Home Park, Sylmar Manor Mobile Home Park, and Motel 85. South of SH 7, there are a few larger subdivisions intermixed with retail and commercial developments.

North I-25 Corridor

The northernmost portion of the regional study area (north of SH 14) is primarily rural with industrial development. The area contains two residential developments: the Mountain View Mobile Home Park and Waterglen, a planned unit development north of Vine Drive.

There are several mobile home communities along the highway corridor. The Mountain Range Shadows subdivision (a manufactured home community with a few mobile homes) is located on the west side of I-25, south of the SH 392/I-25 interchange. Access to the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision is currently from the southwest I-25 frontage road, just south of the 392 interchange. Other mobile home communities include the Loveland RV Village (west of the US 34/I-25 interchange along US 34 next to a residential subdivision called the Rocky Mountain Village), Loveland Station Campgrounds (mobile home lots and camping south of the US 34/I-25 interchange), Johnson's Corner Campground (mobile home lots and camping north of the SH 60/I-25 interchange), and River Valley Village (a mobile home community with more than 250 units south of the SH 119/I-25 interchange).

Scattered suburban developments are located near Thornton and are interspersed with auto-oriented commercial centers. In general, neighborhoods east and west of the corridor vary from being well-defined and established to more informal clusters of residential development.

The southern metropolitan portion of the corridor is dominated by non-residential-oriented land uses (commercial, light industry, industry) with very few scattered apartment complexes and informal neighborhoods. North of the US 36/I-25 interchange, there are numerous subdivisions, including Sherrelwood Estates, Metro View Park, Valley High, and Northview Estates. Near Northglenn, subdivisions and apartment complexes immediately adjacent to the highway corridor include Parkview, Huron Crossing, Huron Heights, Stone Mountain Apartment Homes, Meadows at Timber Lake, and Webster Lake Terrace.

BNSF Rail Line/US 287 Corridor

In Fort Collins, residential subdivisions and apartment complexes are intermixed with commercial development. Neighborhoods north of Harmony Road include Troutman Park, Meadowlark, Historic Fort Collins High School, Old Town West, and Martinez Park. Between Loveland and Fort Collins, a few isolated subdivisions are interspersed with open space and undeveloped lands. In Loveland, several single-family residential subdivisions are adjacent to the BNSF rail line. There are also several mobile home communities, including Homestead, Loveland Plaza, and Lago Vista Mobile Home Parks. In Berthoud, the Blue Spruce Mobile Home Park and several single-family residential neighborhoods are immediately adjacent to the BNSF rail line. North of Longmont, the regional study area is dominated by rural and agricultural land uses with a few isolated residential units. In Longmont at the SH 119 / BNSF crossing, several neighborhoods abut the BNSF rail line, including Kensington, Clark Centennial, and Lanyon. These neighborhoods consist primarily of single-family homes.

3.2.2 Environmental Consequences

The evaluation of community impacts is based on information gathered in **Section 3.2.1 Affected Environment**. Additional site visits to the regional study area, review of aerial photography, and analysis of GIS data was also conducted.

3.2.2.1 NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Given the relatively limited scope of the No-Action Alternative, impacts would be less substantial than the impacts described below for Package A and Package B. However, certain adverse effects on social conditions in the regional study area would arise as a result of transportation needs unmet by the No-Action Alternative. These would include the direct and indirect effects on communities that are typically caused by traffic congestion and impaired mobility, including an increase in air emissions and noise, longer travel times, traffic queues at key interchanges, neighborhood traffic intrusion, deteriorating safety conditions, and lengthened emergency response times.

In the absence of transit or capacity improvements, future population growth would most likely continue to occur largely on undeveloped agricultural land at the fringe of the regional study area's urbanized areas.

3.2.2.2 PACKAGE A

Component A-H1: Safety Improvements

Population and Housing. The population in Wellington is expected to increase by 78 percent between 2000 and 2030 (from 2,279 in 2000 to 4,057 in 2030). This growth would occur regardless of whether safety improvements are implemented or not. Four residential relocations would be required between SH 1 and SH 14 (A-H1). The affected properties are dispersed along I-25 south of Wellington. Given the small number of displacements in relation to the total amount of comparable housing stock in this area, no effect on local or regional population distribution or housing demand would be expected. The proposed improvements do not involve physical changes that would directly result in increases or decreases in population.

1 **Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations.** The Waterglen neighborhood is located within a
2 census tract that contains a higher percentage of persons of advanced age than the county. This
3 census tract contains more than 4,000 persons, most of who live near Lemay Avenue
4 (approximately three miles west of I-25). The proposed improvements do not involve service or
5 capacity changes that would increase or decrease mobility for these populations.

6 **Community Facilities and Services.** No community facilities would be acquired between SH 1 and
7 SH 14. The proposed improvements would provide safer access to community facilities and
8 services within Wellington by upgrading the SH 1/I-25 interchange and signaling SH 1. Access to
9 the Mountain Vista Greens Golf Course (2808 NE Frontage Road) would be maintained in its
10 existing location. Interchange improvements and bridge reconstruction at Mountain Vista Drive and
11 LCR 52 would result in temporary construction-related noise, dust, detours, traffic delays, and out-
12 of-direction travel.

13 Emergency service providers would benefit from increased sight distance at the SH 1 and Mountain
14 Vista Drive interchanges, wider shoulders on bridges, and replacement of existing pavement and
15 bridge structures.

16 **Neighborhoods.** The proposed improvements would not split or isolate any neighborhoods or
17 separate neighborhoods from community facilities. The noise analysis identified impacts to
18 16 receivers in the northwest quadrant of the SH 1/I-25 interchange (referred to as Wellington East
19 in the noise analysis). These receivers are immediately adjacent to the highway and would also be
20 impacted under both the No-Action Alternative and Package B. The mitigation proposed for these
21 residences is a noise barrier which would reduce noise to below impact levels. Neighborhoods in
22 Wellington would benefit from interchange improvements and signalization at SH 1. In the
23 southwest quadrant of the SH 1/I-25 interchange, a carpool lot with 80 spaces would be
24 constructed. This facility would be located across from a single-family neighborhood of
25 approximately 39 homes. Although conveniently located, the traffic, noise, and activity associated
26 with the lot could disturb adjacent residents.

27 South of Wellington near Ronald Reagan Drive, undeveloped land has been subdivided and is
28 planned for new housing and commercial development. This has generated concern about
29 pedestrian traffic between new housing developments and commercial areas on the east and west
30 sides of I-25. As a result, Wellington's Chamber of Commerce has identified the need for a
31 pedestrian overpass in this location and is currently examining funding opportunities for this
32 structure. Safety concerns in this area are largely a result of development in Wellington and would
33 not be created or exacerbated by either of the build packages.

34 Interchange improvements at Mountain Vista Drive and improvements associated with service
35 roads, frontage roads, and bridge replacements would affect residents of the Waterglen
36 neighborhood. They would benefit from the upgraded interchange and signalization of Mountain
37 Vista Road. Construction activities would result in temporary noise, dust, detours, traffic delays, and
38 out-of-direction travel for local residents. Shared open space, pathways, and a community center
39 give this neighborhood a sense of cohesion, and these facilities would not be affected by either of
40 the build packages.

41 *Components A-H2 and A-H3: General Purpose Lanes*

42 **Population and Housing.** The population within 0.5 mile of the I-25 corridor is expected to
43 increase by almost 200 percent between 2000 and 2030 (from 2,282 in 2000 to 6,818 in 2030).
44 Growth would be most pronounced in the smaller municipalities of Berthoud, Dacono, Erie,
45 Firestone, Frederick, Johnstown, and Windsor. This growth is a result of a large supply of

developable land, easy access to I-25, and locally planned development. The need for additional highway capacity is a response to this growth and would not in and of itself result in increases or decreases in population.

Nineteen residential relocations would be required between SH 14 and E-470 (14 between SH 14 and SH 60 (A-H2), and 5 between SH 60 and E-470 (A-H3)). In general, these properties are dispersed along I-25 in large rural parcels that are not part of any established neighborhood. Given the small number of displacements in relation to the total amount of comparable housing stock in this area, no effect on local or regional population distribution or housing demand would occur. Improvements in mobility could influence the distribution of population. As incorporated communities adjacent to I-25 become more accessible, they could attract residents, especially if opportunities for lower cost housing in the urban fringe continue. In these locations, the demand for new or expanded public services and facilities would increase.

Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations. Persons of advanced age and persons with disabilities were identified in two census tracts adjacent to I-25 between SH 14 and E-470. One of these census tracts is located in the southwest quadrant of the SH 14/I-25 interchange and the other extends along the east side of I-25 between SH 52 and SH 7. Because there are very few residences adjacent to I-25 in these areas, these populations are most likely to live within residential subdivisions west of the SH 14/I-25 interchange and east of I-25 in Dacono. Persons of advanced age are also likely to live within the Sunflower subdivision, in the southwest quadrant of the SH 14/I-25 interchange. Sunflower is an adult community of owner-occupied, single-family homes for people over 55 years of age. Transportation improvements would improve highway safety and access to regional facilities and services for these populations.

Community Facilities and Services. Six community facilities are less than 0.25 mile from I-25 between SH 14 and E-470. These include: St. James Orthodox Christian Church (2610 Frontage Road SE), KinderCare Learning Center (4755 Royal Vista Circle), Loveland Fire Station #4 (4900 Earhart Road), Fort Collins/Loveland Airport (4900 Earhart Road), Valley Dirt Rider Complex (south and west of SH 56), and the Weld County Sheriff (at the Southwest Weld County Services Complex, northeast of SH 119). None of these facilities would be directly impacted by the proposed improvements. Access to these facilities would be maintained in their current locations.

Reconstruction of the SH 392/I-25 interchange and northeast frontage road would result in temporary noise, dust, detours, traffic delays, and out-of-direction travel for the KinderCare Learning Center. This would also be true near the SH 56/I-25 interchange for patrons of the Valley Dirt Rider Complex.

Interviews with Larimer and Weld county emergency service providers indicate that the proposed increase in capacity would improve emergency response and facilitate movement around other vehicles. Bridge reconstruction and safety improvements (e.g., adding shoulders to bridges) would also facilitate emergency response. Emergency service providers would experience some out-of-direction travel and traffic delays during construction. Aside from improvements to the existing interchange at SH 7, Adams, Broomfield, Boulder, and Denver counties would not be affected by Components A-H2 and A-H3.

Another safety consideration in the corridor is the shortage of truck parking. *The Study of Adequacy of Commercial Truck Parking Facilities*, developed by Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center for FHWA in March of 2002, reported that in Colorado there is a statewide demand of approximately 3,300 to 3,700 truck parking spaces and a supply of only 2,700. The availability of parking is related to safety because parking is required for drivers to observe Hours of Service rules set by the Interstate Commerce Commission to avoid driver fatigue. When they are not observed, for lack of

adequate parking or for other reasons, driver fatigue has been established as a major factor in truck-related crashes. Johnson's Corner is one of the current suppliers of private truck-stop parking spaces. The proposed improvements would improve access to Johnson's Corner with the addition of on ramps at Exit 254 under either build package. Existing access from the frontage road would be replaced so that trucks would travel east on LCR 16 to the frontage road, circle around the property, and enter at the south end. This configuration would not result in the removal of any truck parking spaces.

Neighborhoods. The majority of I-25 between SH 14 and E-470 (A-H2 and A-H3) is undeveloped, with a few scattered rural subdivisions and isolated single-family residences. Residential land uses that do exist developed around the existing highway. The proposed improvements would not split or isolate any neighborhoods, separate neighborhoods from community facilities, or affect community cohesion. To the extent that the proposed improvements would reduce congestion and improve access, property values would increase. It is also possible that property values could decrease in locations where proximity to improved transportation facilities would result in increased noise and air emissions, visual impacts, or access changes resulting in out-of-direction travel.

Interchange improvements at SH 14 would result in a new access configuration for the Mountain View Mobile Home Park (in the northeast quadrant of the interchange). Existing access is provided from an unsignalized intersection along SH 14. New access would be from a re-aligned frontage road that would be signalized to provide safer and more direct access for the Mountain View community. A carpool lot with 150 spaces also would be constructed across the street from the Mountain View community. Some residents may consider the proximity of this lot a convenience. Others would find the added pavement and increase in local traffic and activity disruptive. However, the area surrounding the interchange is highly urbanized and dominated by transportation facilities. The carpool lot would not considerably intensify this effect.

Access to the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision would be maintained in its current location from the I-25 frontage road southwest of the SH 392/I-25 interchange. To accommodate highway improvements, the frontage road would shift approximately 15 feet closer to the community and the centerline of I-25 would be relocated approximately 30 feet farther from the community. The noise analysis identified impacts to 69 receivers within the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision (with mitigation, impacts would occur at 32 receivers). These receivers also would be impacted under both the No-Action Alternative and Package B. In March 2006, the project team met with residents of the Mountain Range Shadows community to gather input on the SH 392 interchange design and frontage road configuration. To minimize impacts to the community, the project team suggested relocating the frontage road behind the community. Residents were concerned with this approach and indicated a strong preference for maintaining the existing access configuration.

Improvements to the SH 392/I-25 interchange would substantially improve mobility for residential communities east and west of I-25 in Windsor. This interchange serves residents of Windsor and unincorporated Larimer County, providing access to employment and services in Fort Collins, Loveland, and Denver. The existing bridge consists of one lane in each direction with no turn lanes or shoulders. The proposed structure would include two 12-foot lanes, 8-foot shoulders, and a sidewalk. A turn lane also would be provided for motorists accessing the interstate.

Construction activities would result in temporary noise, dust, detours, traffic delays, and out-of-direction travel for regional travelers and the local residents of the communities located between SH 14 and E-470 (A-H2 and A-H3).

Component A-H4: Structure Upgrades

Structure upgrades are limited to minor bridge rehabilitation and maintenance activities. No roadway widening, bridge widening, or interchange upgrades would occur. Impacts to social conditions from E-470 to US 36 (A-H4) would be the same as those discussed for the No-Action Alternative in **Section 3.2.2.1**.

Components A-T1 and A-T2: Commuter Rail

Population and Housing. The population within 0.5 mile of the BNSF rail line is expected to increase by 39 percent between 2000 and 2030 (from 18,467 in 2000 to 25,671 in 2030). Commuter rail would facilitate infill and re-development in Fort Collins, Loveland, and Longmont, accommodating population growth within the center of these communities, which is consistent with local planning efforts. The intensity and size of Longmont would likely increase due to its central location and direct connection to the FasTracks system. As the end-of-line for the commuter rail alignment, Fort Collins could attract a larger portion of growth than communities located mid-alignment. An increase in population around commuter rail stations would be expected, especially in communities with plans for transit-oriented development. These changes would not represent additional population growth, but rather a shift in its distribution. In these locations the demand for new or expanded public services and facilities would increase.

Construction of the commuter rail would require the relocation of 35 residences (18 for Component A-T1 and 17 for Component A-T2). All of the displacements associated with Component A-T1 occur in Longmont, immediately adjacent to the BNSF corridor. Given the total amount of comparable housing stock in this area, no effect on local or regional population distribution or housing demand would be expected.

Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations. Commuter rail and feeder bus connections would provide a vital service to persons of advanced age and persons with disabilities within the regional study area. The American Public Transportation Association reports that more than 50 percent of all non-drivers age 65 and older stay at home on any given day partially because they lack transportation options. This translates into fewer trips for medical care and social, family, and religious activities. Transportation-disadvantaged populations would benefit from the regional connections that commuter rail and feeder bus service would provide. The commuter rail would connect populations near its alignment to the larger communities of Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud, Longmont, and Denver. Feeder bus service would provide a linkage to the commuter rail line and a much needed connection between the communities of Fort Collins, Loveland, and Greeley. Mobility and accessibility benefits would be greatest for transportation-disadvantaged populations living within 0.25 mile of station sites. A quarter-mile distance, which equals about a five-minute walk, is considered a convenient and acceptable walking distance for most pedestrians.

Community Facilities and Services. As described in **Table 3.2-2** most community facilities would benefit from new transit access. The commuter rail would not result in the relocation of any community facilities. Community facilities that are within 0.25 mile of station sites would experience greater benefits than those in other locations along the alignment.

Commuter rail and feeder bus service would improve regional connections between communities in the regional study area. Residents in the northern communities of Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud, and Longmont would be able to use transit to attend cultural events and reach services in Denver. Feeder bus service would connect populations in Fort Collins and Loveland to populations and services in Greeley, increasing the level of interaction between these communities. Similar benefits would result from feeder bus service between Berthoud, Johnstown, and Milliken.

Table 3.2-2 Impacts to Community Facilities Within 0.25 Mile of the Commuter Rail Alignment

Facility	Impacts
Northside Aztlan Community Center (112 E. Willow St.)	Less than 0.25 mile from the proposed station at the Fort Collins Downtown Transit Center. The community center would benefit from improved access to transit. There would be a potential for increase in visitor numbers.
Fort Collins Police Department (300 La Porte Ave.)	Less than 0.25 mile from the proposed station at the Fort Collins Downtown Transit Center. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel.
Anglican Church of the Ascension (701 Oval Dr.)	Adjacent to the proposed CSU Transit Station. Improved access to transit could facilitate community participation in church events and activities.
Colorado State University	Adjacent to the proposed CSU Transit Station. Improved access to transit would facilitate community participation in campus events and activities.
Beattie Elementary School (3000 Meadowlark Ave.)	Approximately 0.25 mile from the proposed alignment and 2 miles from both the proposed stations at CSU and south Fort Collins. Although buffered by a residential neighborhood, an increase in noise and vibration would be expected. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel for students east of the BNSF.
Foothills Assembly of God (305 W. Swallow Rd.)	Adjacent to the proposed alignment and approximately 2 miles from both the proposed stations at CSU and south Fort Collins. An increase in noise and vibration would be expected. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel for church members.
Loveland Burial Park Cemetery (500 E. 3 rd St.)	Adjacent to the proposed alignment and approximately 0.5 mile from the North Loveland Transit Station. The greater distance to a station would result in modest improvements in access. Pedestrians willing to walk 0.5 mile would benefit. Although currently in an urbanized area, noise and vibration would increase.
Bill Reed Elementary School (370 W. 4 th St.)	Within 0.25 mile from the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. New access to transit would benefit school-aged children. Although currently in an urbanized area, an increase in noise and vibration would be expected.
Truscott Elementary School (410 E. 5 th St.)	Within 0.25 mile from the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. New access to transit would benefit school-aged children. Although currently in an urbanized area, an increase in noise and vibration would be expected.
Loveland Fire Station #1 (211 W. 6 th St.)	Within 0.25 mile from the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel.
Abiding Love Lutheran Church (950 Cleveland Ave.)	Within 0.25 mile from the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. Improved access to transit could facilitate community participation in church events and activities. Although currently in an urbanized area, an increase in noise and vibration would be expected.

Table 3.2-2 Impacts to Community Facilities Within 0.25 Mile of the Commuter Rail Alignment (cont'd)

Facility	Impacts
First Congregational Church (800 Lincoln Ave.)	Within 0.25 mile from the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. Improved access to transit could facilitate community participation in church events and activities. Although currently in an urbanized area, an increase in noise and vibration would be expected.
Trinity United Methodist Church (801 Cleveland Ave.)	Within 0.25 mile from the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. Improved access to transit could facilitate community participation in church events and activities. Although currently in an urbanized area, an increase in noise and vibration would be expected.
First United Methodist Church Pre-School (533 Grant Ave.)	Within 0.25 mile from the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. New access to transit would benefit pre-school attendance. Although currently in an urbanized area, an increase in noise and vibration would be expected.
Message of Life Ministries (605 18 th St. SW)	Within 0.25 mile of the proposed alignment and approximately 2 miles south of the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. An increase in noise and vibration would be expected. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel for church members.
Seventh Day Adventist Church (300 SW 42 nd St.)	Adjacent to the commuter rail just south of SH 60. No access improvements as no stations are planned in this location. An increase in noise and vibration would be expected.
Berthoud Elementary School (560 Bunyan Ave.)	Within 0.25 mile from the proposed Berthoud Maintenance Station. Operations would result in noise and vibration impacts. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel. There would be visual impacts for students playing outside in the school yard.
Berthoud Fire Department (275 Mountain Ave.)	Within 0.25 mile of the proposed Berthoud Transit Station. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel.
Berthoud Police Department (328 Massachusetts Ave.)	Within 0.25 mile of the proposed Berthoud Transit Station. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel.
Berthoud Public Library (236 Welch Ave.)	Within 0.25 mile of the proposed Berthoud Transit Station. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel for patrons driving to the library; however, access to the library would be improved for non-driving patrons. An increase in noise and vibration would be expected.
Longmont Police Department (225 Kimbark St.)	Adjacent to the commuter rail alignment in Longmont. Frequency of trains would result in minor delays and out-of-direction travel.
Columbine Elementary School (111 Longs Peak Ave.)	Adjacent to the commuter rail alignment in Longmont. No access improvements would occur as no stations are planned in this location. An increase in noise and vibration would be expected.
Spangler Elementary School (1440 Collyer St.)	Adjacent to the commuter rail alignment in Longmont. No access improvements would occur as no stations are planned in this location. An increase in noise and vibration would be expected.
Outreach United Resource (OUR) Center (303 Atwood St.)	Adjacent to the commuter rail alignment in Longmont. No access improvements would occur as no stations are planned in this location. An increase in noise and vibration would be expected.

Community facilities would be impacted by new rail construction and noise and vibration from rail operations. Transit would ease traffic congestion and improve mobility for emergency service providers. Emergency service providers would experience some out-of-direction travel and traffic delays during construction and following construction, as a result of train frequency and at-grade crossings. Safety concerns relating to the commuter rail operations and station sites are addressed in **Section 3.21 Safety and Security**.

Neighborhoods. The commuter rail alignment would not further split any neighborhoods or separate neighborhoods from community facilities. The BNSF rail line currently acts as a physical and perceived barrier between development on each side of the railway in Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud, and Longmont. This “barrier effect” would be exacerbated in areas south of CSU where an additional track would be placed east of the existing track. Because commuter rail would operate in an existing rail corridor, existing access to neighborhoods along the rail alignment would not change.

In general, transit stations are located within urban areas and are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. When located within walking distance, neighborhood integrity and community cohesion are strengthened by the provision of transit. The increased frequency of trains in the corridor would create out-of-direction travel and travel time delay for residents traveling across the BNSF. Through traffic would increase in neighborhoods adjacent to stations.

The increased frequency of trains in the corridor would increase noise and vibration in all neighborhoods adjacent to the commuter rail alignment. The noise analysis identified moderate impacts at 167 residences along the BNSF rail corridor (151 for Component A-T1 and 16 for Component A-T2). Impacts are concentrated in Longmont (140 impacted receivers) and Dacono (14 impacted receivers). The majority of these impacts are a result of current freight operations. The increase associated with Package A is 1 to 2 dBA over existing noise levels in Longmont and about 3 dBA over existing levels in Dacono. Noise level increases of less than 3 dBA generally are not noticeable by most people. The vibration analysis identified impacts at 87 residences within 65 feet of the nearest track (37 in Loveland) and (50 in Longmont). Noise and vibration may disturb sleep or normal conversation for people in affected areas. The majority of these impacts can be mitigated with noise barriers, sound insulation, quiet zones, and other methods as described in detail in **Section 3.6.3.2 Package A**.

Research has shown that the value of residential properties near a station generally increases following the implementation of a transit system. The increase is highest for those properties located within 0.25 mile to 1 mile from a station. For residential properties between stations, there is the potential for a decrease in property valuation as a result of noise, vibration, visual impacts, or access changes resulting in out-of-direction travel (Transportation Research Board, 2004).

Several neighborhoods in Fort Collins would benefit from close proximity to transit stations. These include the Martinez Park, Historic Fort Collins High School, and Troutman Park. Residents of these neighborhoods would be able to reach the transit station by foot or bicycle. Residents of the Meadowlark and Troutman Park neighborhoods would be farther from transit stations (approximately 2 miles and 0.5 mile respectively). The added track in Fort Collins would exacerbate the existing barrier between the rail corridor and the retail services provided along US 287 and the Foothills Fashion Mall to the east. This would also occur in Loveland for residents adjacent to Lake Loveland. Lakeside homes would be in walking distance to the North Loveland Transit Station. The commuter rail, station, and associated parking would intensify transportation activity in the adjacent neighborhood. Residents between the lake and commuter rail line could potentially feel more isolated. For some residents, access to transit would strengthen their sense of community, while for others, the opposite would be true.

The proposed maintenance facility at East Vine Drive and North Timberline Road would be adjacent to the northern portion of the Collins Aire Park (a mobile home park). This community would likely experience an increase in activity and visual impacts as a result of the new facility. However, such land uses are consistent with the area, as industrial, rail, and airport uses are in close proximity. The proposed maintenance facility at CR 46 and US 287 would result in an increase in activity and visual impacts to the single-family residential subdivision adjacent to the BNSF rail line in the northernmost portion of Berthoud. The maintenance facility would magnify the presence of the rail and introduce an industrial component to the neighborhood. Neighborhoods in downtown Berthoud would benefit from the new commuter rail and feeder bus connections.

In Longmont, the commuter rail would primarily travel through single-family residential neighborhoods. Because commuter rail would operate in an existing rail corridor, no neighborhoods would be further divided nor would existing access or travel patterns change. On Atwood Street between 3rd Avenue and 8th Avenue street parking would be removed to accommodate the additional track for the commuter rail line. Although some access revisions would occur, all homes would retain access to their properties from their driveways and/or alleys. Some residents in this area appear to use street parking instead of the alley (i.e., alley is fenced off) or driveway (i.e., driveway is used for storage). These residents would have to begin using their driveway or access their property from the alley when street parking is no longer available. Loss of street parking in this area would not affect Collyer Park because no street parking is currently allowed in front of the park. Columbine Elementary School would lose street parking, but currently has on-site parking and street parking or drop-off areas on all other streets surrounding the school.

The widened right-of-way, operational impacts, and the acquisition of 35 residences could affect community cohesion. The community of Longmont is currently divided by the BNSF rail line. As a result local residents frequently experience delays when traveling across town; these delays would become more frequent. Transit stations in north and south Longmont would improve mobility for local neighborhoods. A station at the Sugar Mill location would support the Casa Vista neighborhood (between 119 and County Line Road on Quicksilver) by connecting it to the greater Longmont community.

Comments received from Longmont community leaders in September of 2006 indicated that they feel that there would be no additional community division resulting from the commuter rail. Participants also felt that if the frequency of freight trains decreased, commuter rail would strengthen community cohesion.

Components A-T3 and A-T4: Commuter Bus

Population and Housing. The population within 0.5 mile of the US 85 corridor is expected to increase by 13 percent between 2000 and 2030 (from 7,585 in 2000 to 8,606 in 2030). This growth is expected to occur with or without commuter bus service. Population and housing may increase around commuter bus stations; however, bus stations are less likely to attract significant transit-oriented development and growth than commuter rail stations. One residential relocation would be required for the construction of a bus station at US 85 and 42nd Street in Evans.

Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations. Persons of advanced age and persons with disabilities have been identified in census tracts adjacent to US 85 in Greeley, Fort Lupton, and Brighton. Commuter bus would improve mobility for these populations. Transit would give non-drivers access to communities along US 85 and DIA. Mobility and accessibility benefits would be greatest for transportation-disadvantaged populations living within 0.25 mile of station sites or bus stops.

Community Facilities and Services. No community facilities would be acquired for the commuter bus stations, maintenance facilities, queue jumps, or parking lots. Community facilities would benefit from new access to transit. Eighteen community facilities are located within 0.25 mile of the feeder bus line and three are within 0.25 mile of commuter bus stations. Twelve of these are schools; therefore, transit improvements would expand transportation options for school-aged children. Commuter bus service would improve regional connections between US 85 communities. Service to DIA would improve access to the airport over the No-Action Alternative. Limiting the number of stops would benefit residents that travel between communities (for employment, school, or services) on a regular basis.

Interviews with Weld County emergency service providers indicate that transit would benefit emergency response by potentially easing traffic congestion and improving mobility. Aside from these benefits, emergency service providers in Adams, Broomfield, Boulder, and Denver counties would not be affected by commuter bus service. Emergency service providers in Weld County would experience some temporary out-of-direction travel and traffic delays during construction at queue jump locations.

Neighborhoods. The majority of US 85 between Greeley and Denver is undeveloped, with a few scattered rural subdivisions, isolated single-family residences, and mobile home parks. The proposed improvements would not split or isolate any neighborhoods, separate neighborhoods from community facilities, or affect community cohesion.

Impacts to neighborhoods would primarily result from the increased transportation activity at bus stations. Residents adjacent to bus stations would experience noise, air, and visual impacts. According to the noise analysis conducted for this project, noise associated with commuter bus elements would not reach impact levels.

The commuter bus station at 42nd Street and US 85 is adjacent to a small single-family residential neighborhood in Evans. The bus station is consistent with the character of the land that surrounds this neighborhood (agriculture, industry, and rail). An increase in bus traffic, noise associated with buses, and change in the visual environment would impact residents adjacent to 42nd Street. As a result, the value of properties adjacent to 42nd Street could decrease.

Residents adjacent to maintenance facilities proposed at 31st Street and west of 1st Avenue in Greeley and north of Trilby and Portner Roads in Fort Collins would experience an increase in bus traffic, noise, air, and visual impacts. Noise associated with these stations would not reach impact levels.

Summary of Key Impacts for Package A

Adverse impacts associated with Package A would include:

- ▶ Relocation of 59 residences
- ▶ Increased noise and vibration, out-of-direction travel, and travel time delays associated with commuter rail
- ▶ Air emissions and visual impacts to residents near carpool lots, commuter rail, transit stations, bus stations, and maintenance facilities
- ▶ Exacerbated “barrier effect” in Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud, and Longmont
- ▶ Temporary construction-related impacts such as, noise, dust, out-of-direction travel, and travel-time delays
- ▶ Potential re-distribution of population in response to highway capacity or transit improvements

Beneficial impacts associated with Package A would include:

- ▶ Regional connections between communities
- ▶ Improvements in mobility, safety, and emergency response
- ▶ Improved mobility for transportation-disadvantaged populations

3.2.2.3 PACKAGE B

Component B-H1: Safety Improvements

Safety improvements under this component would result in four residential relocations. One of the affected properties is located in east Wellington and the others are dispersed along I-25 south of Wellington. Given the small number of displacements in relation to the total amount of comparable housing stock in this area, no effect on local or regional population distribution or housing demand would be expected. The proposed improvements do not involve physical changes that would directly result in increases or decreases in population.

Impacts to transportation-disadvantaged populations, community facilities and services, and neighborhoods are the same as those discussed for Package A, Component A-H1.

Components B-H2, B-H3, and B-H4: Tolloed Express Lanes

Adding one additional northbound and southbound tolloed express lane on I-25 would have a similar affect on social resources as adding one general purpose lane in each direction under Package A, Components A-H2 and A-H3. Interchange improvements for these components are also the same. Because many of the direct and indirect impacts associated with tolloed express lanes are similar in nature to those of general purpose lanes, the following discussion focuses on the differences or incremental changes between them.

Population and Housing. Twenty residential relocations would be required between SH 14 and E-470 (15 between SH 14 and SH 60 (B-H2) and 5 between SH 60 and E-470 (B-H3)). Given the

small number of displacements in relation to the total amount of comparable housing stock in this area, no effect on local or regional population distribution or housing demand would be expected.

Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations. Financial access to tolling is an issue that often emerges when addressing the impacts of express lanes. To use the new express lanes, tollway users would be required to pay for their travel. Limited studies have been conducted regarding the fairness of new toll facilities and their implementation remains controversial. Equity studies conducted on express lane projects implemented in California and Texas reveal that economically disadvantaged drivers use express lanes voluntarily and are not necessarily excluded, although more frequent use is often exhibited by higher-income drivers. The studies revealed that low-income drivers approved of the express toll concepts, similar to opinions of higher-income households. Most users, even those from higher-income households, choose the express lanes judiciously when they need to benefit most from reduced congestion.

Free travel lanes, access points, and frontage roads would be maintained along I-25. In addition, transit options would be available to all I-25 commuters. Because a variety of transportation choices would be available to all income levels, the toll lanes would not adversely affect access to transportation for economically disadvantaged populations.

Community Facilities and Services. No community facilities would be acquired between SH 14 and E-470 (B-H2 and B-H3). The increase in capacity would improve emergency response where toll lanes are buffer-separated south of SH 60 in portions of Weld, Broomfield and Adams Counties. Interviews with Larimer and Weld county emergency service providers indicated that barrier-separated lanes would restrict mobility. In these locations (between Harmony Road and SH 60), improvements in emergency response would not be expected. Boulder and Denver counties would not be affected by Components B-H2, B-H3, or B-H4.

Neighborhoods. Toll roads can result in a redistribution of traffic into local neighborhoods as drivers take alternate routes in an effort to avoid the toll. This is unlikely to occur in neighborhoods along I-25 because most are set back from the highway, making local roadways an unreasonable detour; in addition, the current free lanes would still be available to drivers. However, traffic may increase along frontage roads adjacent to the highway. This would result in an increase in traffic and traffic-related impacts (noise, visual, air emissions) for the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision, which is immediately adjacent to the frontage road west of I-25 and south of SH 392. The noise analysis identified impacts to 69 receivers in the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision (with mitigation, impacts would occur at 32 receivers). These receivers also would be impacted under both the No-Action Alternative and Package A.

Although no residences would be displaced between E-470 and US 36 (B-H4), approximately ten garages would need to be acquired from condominiums adjacent to I-25 near 120th Avenue. Neighborhoods in this segment extend east and west of the highway and have developed around the interstate. Residences immediately adjacent to the highway would experience an increase in traffic and traffic-related impacts (noise, visual, air emissions).

Numerous neighborhoods and apartment complexes abutting I-25 in Broomfield, Thornton, Westminster, Northglenn, and Adams County also would experience an increase in traffic and traffic-related impacts (noise, visual, air emissions). However, these impacts would be largely limited to first- and second-tier homes and would not result in a deterioration of the overall neighborhood.

Construction impacts would be greater than those identified for Package A. Maintaining access to cross streets would be more difficult during construction of the barrier and tolled lanes adjacent to

the existing lanes. This would result in some out-of-direction travel for local residents and I-25 commuters.

Components B-T1 and B-T2: Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Population and Housing. The introduction of BRT along the I-25 corridor represents a more modest improvement in transit than commuter rail and as a result provides less incentive for transit-oriented development and population growth. The location of BRT stations along I-25 and US 34 (e.g., center-running versus side-running) and the distance of the stations from any associated development would limit the likelihood that they would attract new housing and population. No residential displacements would occur under Components B-T1 or B-T2.

Transportation-Disadvantaged Populations. Public transportation would improve mobility and regional connections for transportation-disadvantaged populations in the regional study area. The location of BRT stations (e.g., center-running versus side-running) and the distance of the stations from these populations would result in more modest improvements in access to transit when compared to Package A, Components A-T1 and A-T2. In addition, BRT and feeder bus would not provide the direct connection between communities along US 287 and US 85 and would reach fewer communities (Johnstown, Milliken, Firestone) than would commuter rail and feeder bus as described for Package A, Components A-T1 and A-T2. However feeder bus service would provide a connection between Niwot and Fort Lupton, currently not included in Package A.

Community Facilities and Services. No community facilities would be acquired for the BRT stations, queue jumps, or parking lots. Community facilities would benefit from new access to transit. Twenty-three community facilities are located within 0.25 mile of BRT and feeder bus lines and four are within 0.25 mile of BRT stations. Fifteen of these are schools; therefore, transit improvements would expand transportation options for school-aged children. Service to Denver Union Station would improve the regional connections provided by FasTracks. Where existing stations within the RTD district would be converted to a median BRT station, pedestrians would need to walk farther from the parking lot to reach the bus at the median.

Feeder bus service along Highway 52 would connect tri-town communities (Frederick, Firestone, Dacono) to FasTracks Stations at Niwot or Gunbarrel, and to BRT at I-25. Service to DIA would improve access to the airport over the No-Action Alternative.

Transit would benefit emergency response in Weld, Larimer, Broomfield, Adams, and Denver Counties by easing traffic congestion and improving mobility. Boulder County would not be affected by Components B-T1 or B-T2. Emergency service providers would experience some temporary out-of-direction travel and traffic delays during construction at queue jump locations.

Neighborhoods. The proposed improvements would not split or isolate any neighborhoods, separate neighborhoods from community facilities, or affect community cohesion. Impacts to neighborhoods would primarily result from the intensification of transportation activity at BRT stations and maintenance facilities. Such impacts would be anticipated near five of the twelve new stations: South Fort Collins, Harmony and Timberline, Windsor, Firestone, and Downtown Greeley. Residents adjacent to stations would experience noise, air, and visual impacts. The noise analysis determined that noise would not reach impact levels in any neighborhoods as a result of the BRT (see **Section 3.6.3.3 Package B**).

Impacts to the neighborhoods adjacent to the proposed maintenance facilities at 31st Street and west of 1st Avenue in Greeley and north of Trilby and Portner Roads in Fort Collins would be the same as those identified for Package A, Components A-T3 and A-T4.

Summary of Key Impacts for Package B

Adverse impacts associated with Package B would include:

- ▶ Relocation of 24 residences
- ▶ Increased noise, air emissions, and visual impacts to residents near frontage roads, parking lots, bus routes, transit stations, and maintenance facilities
- ▶ Temporary construction-related noise, dust, out-of-direction travel, travel-time delays, and access revisions

Beneficial impacts associated with Package B would include:

- ▶ Regional connections between communities
- ▶ Overall improvements in safety, mobility, and emergency response, but no improvements in emergency response where toll lanes are barrier-separated
- ▶ Moderate improvements in mobility for transportation-disadvantaged populations

3.2.3 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation for impacts associated with residential and public property acquisitions are addressed in **Section 3.4 Right-of-Way**.

If either of the build packages is implemented, a traffic maintenance plan would be developed to minimize interference to traffic flow from construction equipment and activities. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) would provide advance notice to emergency service providers, local schools, home owners associations (Mountain Range Shadows), and the public of upcoming activities that are likely to result in traffic disruption. Such notifications would be accomplished through radio and public announcements, newspaper notices, on-site signage, and CDOT's website.

Where feasible, retaining walls would be constructed along I-25 and the BNSF to minimize impacts to residential development.

If toll lanes are constructed, ways to make tolling more equitable would be sought. For example, payment options would be considered to enable the broadest opportunity for all economic groups to use toll facilities. This might entail providing alternative payment options for transponder purchases (for persons who don't own credit cards) and toll replenishment using cash or employer-based payroll deductions. Toll booths would not be installed so additional impacts related to idling vehicles (e.g., noise, air quality) would not occur.

Mitigation for impacts associated with noise and vibration are addressed in **Section 3.6 Noise and Vibration**.

In spite of these efforts, some community and neighborhood impacts would still occur and would not be able to be mitigated. These include operational impacts associated with commuter rail or BRT (noise, vibration, and traffic delays) as well as increased transportation activity for residences adjacent to commuter rail, bus stations, and maintenance facilities. It is important to consider that these impacts would be highly localized. Benefits associated with access to transit, regional mobility and connectivity, as well as improvements in safety and emergency response would outweigh these impacts.

3.2.4 Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is a public policy goal of promoting the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people in the transportation planning and decision-making process. Satisfying this goal means ensuring that minority and low-income communities receive an equitable distribution of the benefits of transportation activities without suffering disproportionately high and adverse impacts.

This section documents the presence of minority and low-income populations and minority-owned businesses in the regional study area, identifies important community resources and connections that serve these populations, and evaluates the potential for impacts to these populations and resources. Special efforts made to involve minority and low-income populations in the decision making process are also described.

This analysis has been prepared in accordance with applicable federal and state guidance for addressing environmental justice, including:

- ▶ Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (Federal Register, February 11, 1994).
- ▶ DOT Order 5610.2, Order To Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (Federal Register, April 15, 1997).
- ▶ FHWA Order 6640.23, Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (December 2, 1998).
- ▶ FTA Circular (FTA C 4702.1A), Title VI Guidelines for FTA Administration Recipients (May 13, 2007).
- ▶ DOT 70 FR 74087, Policy Guidance Concerning Recipient's Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons (December 14, 2005).
- ▶ EPA's Final Guidance for Incorporating Environmental Justice Concerns in EPA's NEPA Compliance Analyses (April 1998).
- ▶ CDOT's Title VI and Environmental Justice Guidelines for NEPA Projects – Rev.3 (May 27, 2005).

Due to the size and complexity of the environmental justice analysis, an *Environmental Justice Technical Memorandum* (Jacobs, 2008b) has been prepared for this study. The technical memorandum includes a thorough summary of the regulatory background for environmental justice, detailed census data analysis, and the dates and locations of specialized outreach activities. Appendices to the technical memorandum include minutes from small group meetings, completed business surveys, and correspondence with local planning agencies.

3.2.4.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Minority Populations

Minority populations are comprised of ethnic and/or racial minorities. As defined in FHWA Order 6640.23, a minority is a person who is Black, Hispanic, Asian American, or an American Indian or Alaskan Native. Year 2000 census data at the block level were used to identify minority populations. The percentage of minorities in each census block was compared to county averages. Any blocks with

1 a higher percentage of minorities than the respective county are evaluated for disproportionately high
2 and adverse effects and are selected for outreach. These blocks are shown in **Figure 3.2-3**.

3 As shown in **Figure 3.2-3**, minority populations are primarily located in and around urban areas in the
4 regional study area, although some are scattered throughout the regional study area. Census blocks
5 that do not contain minority populations were excluded from the analysis. This includes blocks in which
6 a small population has the effect of exaggerating the percentage of minorities in that block. For
7 example, there are 60 blocks with two people, one of which is a minority. In these blocks, 50 percent of
8 the population is minority. While 50 percent appears high, one minority person out of a total population
9 of two persons does not indicate a minority population.

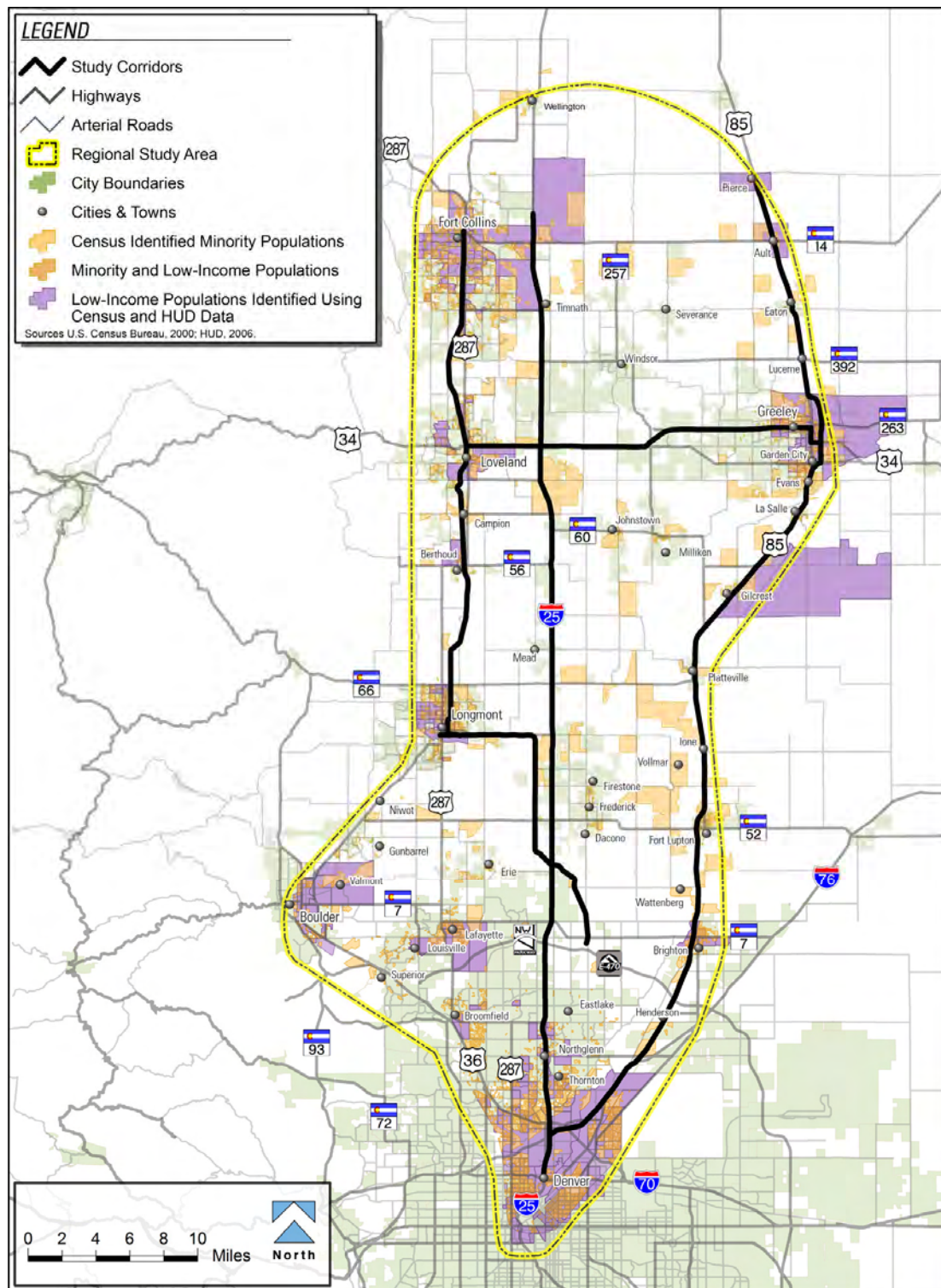
10 *Low-Income Populations*

11 FHWA Order 6640.23 defines low-income as "...a household income at or below the U.S. Department
12 of Health and Human Services (HHS) poverty guidelines." A different threshold (e.g., U.S. Census
13 Bureau poverty threshold or HUD Community Development Block Grant income thresholds) may be
14 used as long as it is not selectively implemented and is inclusive of all persons at or below the HHS
15 poverty guidelines. CDOT's recommended approach in determining low-income populations is to derive
16 the low-income threshold from a combination of census average household size data at the block
17 group level and low-income thresholds set annually by HUD for the distribution and allocation of
18 Community Development Block Grant funds.

19 The percentage of low-income households in each block group was compared to county averages. Any
20 block group in the regional study area with a higher percentage of low-income households than that of
21 its respective county was evaluated for disproportionately high and adverse effects and targeted for
22 outreach. These block groups are shown in **Figure 3.2-3**.

23 As shown in **Figure 3.2-3**, low-income households are concentrated around US 287 and the BNSF
24 rail line in Lafayette, Longmont, Loveland, and Fort Collins; US 85 in Greeley, Gilcrest, and
25 Brighton; SH 119 in Boulder; and I-25 in the Fort Collins and Denver County portions of the regional
26 study area.

Figure 3.2-3 Minority and Low-Income Populations Identified Using Census and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Data



Additional Data Sources

Census data alone are too broad to accurately represent the social and economic make-up of the households in the regional study area. For this reason, additional efforts were made to identify minority and low-income populations and services in the regional study area. These efforts included contacting local planners, non-profit organizations, health and human services, chambers of commerce, and housing authorities. Locations of minority and low-income populations and services identified by these contacts are shown in **Figure 3.2-4**.

Minority-Owned Businesses

Minority-owned businesses were initially identified through the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Minority Business Office. In all, 56 minority businesses were identified through this resource. To ensure adequate identification of minority-owned businesses and gather more specific employment information, a business survey was also prepared and distributed in December 2006 to 1,297 businesses throughout the regional study area. Of these, 175 (14 percent) were returned. Surveys were distributed in both English and Spanish and were hand-delivered to large employers and targeted locations along SH 85. Results of the survey are summarized below. The complete survey is contained in the *Environmental Justice Technical Memorandum* (Jacobs, 2008b) in Appendix C.

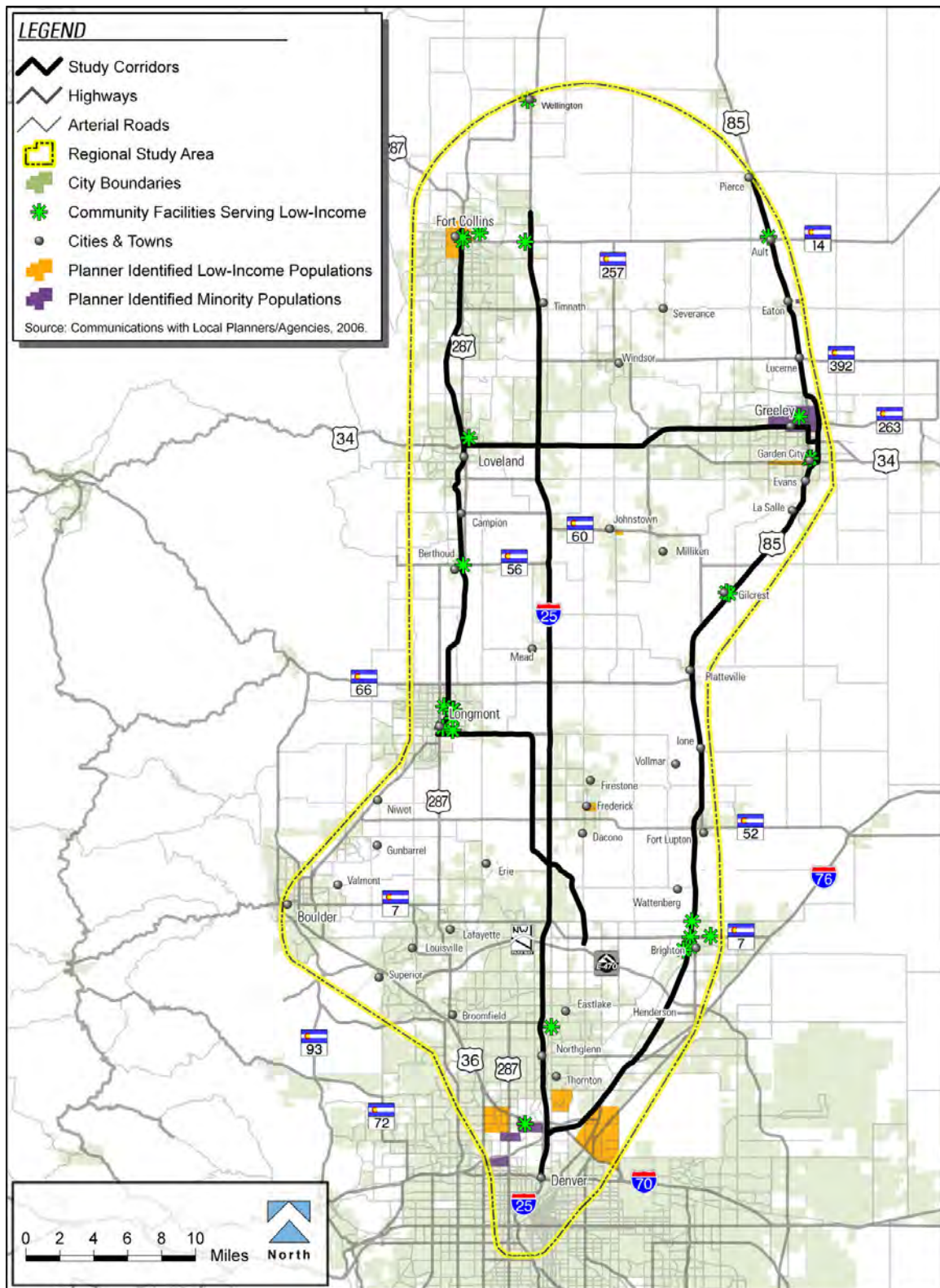
The analysis that can be derived from a survey is only as good as the response. Some responses were incomplete or left unanswered. This analysis uses only those responses that were answered completely.

Of the businesses surveyed, 17 percent are minority-owned. Approximately 113 businesses reported having full-time minority employees. For 35 of these businesses, more than 50 percent of their full-time staff was comprised of minorities. Approximately 87 businesses reported having part-time minority employees. For 68 of these businesses, more than 50 percent of their part-time staff is comprised of minorities.

Minority-owned businesses in the regional study area provide a variety of services that range from food and clothing to automotive and insurance services. Seventeen percent of the minority-owned businesses surveyed have been in their current location for 15 years or more.

Approximately 25 percent of businesses surveyed (minority- and non-minority-owned) reported transportation concerns. Many cited long commutes and heavy congestion along I-25 and other roadways; others indicated a need for transit along roadways. Of minority-owned businesses, seventeen percent reported transportation concerns, including long commutes, high fuel prices, and the need for public transportation. When asked what mode of transportation most employees use to get to and from work, 74 percent of businesses surveyed reported that all of their employees use a vehicle. Only six businesses surveyed reported less than 50 percent of employees using a vehicle to travel to work. None of these businesses were minority-owned.

Figure 3.2-4 Minority and Low-Income Populations and Services Identified through Additional Data Sources



3.2.4.2 SPECIALIZED OUTREACH TO MINORITY AND LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS

Political Context of Specialized Outreach Efforts

Some of the public involvement and specialized outreach activities associated with the North I-25 project occurred during a local and national immigration debate as well as during an electoral campaign where immigration was one of the key issues. Many members of the Hispanic/Latino community may have considered public meetings as a low-priority event or may have been hesitant to attend public meetings for fear of persecution. Declining participation in planning processes already has been noticed in Colorado. At recent planning meetings and public events for unrelated projects in Silverthorne and in Aspen, for example, there was no Hispanic/Latino participation, even though there are known Hispanic/Latino populations in these towns.

Every effort was made to inform and involve the Hispanic/Latino community throughout the project: community leaders were identified to build trust and guide public involvement efforts, small group meetings were held in local communities after regularly scheduled events, informational booths were set up during cultural events and activities, local print and electronic media were used to announce meetings and provide information about the project, flyers were posted in key community locations, and project information was hand delivered to major businesses. In spite of these efforts, participation by the Hispanic/Latino community may have been hindered by the political climate. In general, participation in small group meetings was low (several meetings had less than 10 attendees). In addition, multiple attempts made to distribute information and organize small group meetings in Greeley were met with resistance by the local community. Because of this, fewer small group meetings were held in minority communities than had originally been anticipated.

Specialized Outreach Activities

While it was expected that minority and low-income populations would receive project information through the general public outreach discussed in **Chapter 8 Comments and Coordination**, additional efforts were made to ensure an increased level of awareness and participation in the project. These efforts included coordination with community leaders and liaisons, targeted distribution of project information, translation of materials into Spanish, the use of Spanish language media, attendance at cultural and community events, and use of small group meetings.

The project team contacted approximately 42 Hispanic/Latino community and church leaders. Hispanic/Latino community leaders were offered information about the project and the opportunity for small group meetings. Eleven small group meetings were held in minority and low-income neighborhoods at various times throughout the process. Specialized outreach efforts also identified the potential for a Hmong population, an Asian ethnic group from southern China and southeast Asia, in the northern communities of the regional study area. Consultation with community leaders in the North Front Range revealed that the Hmong population consists of five clans with patriarchs.

Hmong community leaders indicated that they would be more responsive to project fact sheets and surveys than community or small group meetings. Based on this information, the project fact sheet, business survey, and travel survey were translated into Hmong and given to community leaders for distribution to the Hmong population.

Input Received through Specialized Outreach

Input received through specialized outreach centered on community needs and concerns regarding the proposed improvements. Participants indicated repeatedly that transit service between Longmont, Loveland, Denver, Boulder, and southwest Weld County was needed. Congestion on I-25 limits access to businesses and participation in cultural events in Metro Denver. Most residents from Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland, and Longmont would be willing to drive to access transit service to Denver.

Participants expressed general concern about the cost of the build packages and how they would be funded. Participants disagreed about the impacts of tolling. Some felt that public transportation should be open to all and that tolling would exclude citizens. Others preferred tolling because it provided revenue for construction and would ease congestion.

Participants indicated a need for transit options to reach important community facilities (local schools and churches), regional employment centers (DIA and the Denver Technical Center), and commuter cities (Cheyenne, Fort Collins, Greeley, Longmont, Loveland, and Denver). It was also pointed out that much of the minority community does not work typical business hours and may hold multiple jobs. For transit to be effective, it would need to be flexible, affordable, accommodate persons with disabilities and bicycles, and operate on weekends and evenings.

In a meeting held in Brighton, attendees indicated that there were negative feelings toward transit because it is unreliable, provides limited service, and requires lengthy wait times. In addition, transit was not deemed feasible for those with construction jobs who are required to be in several locations throughout the day. While some suggested that bus service should be provided along US 85, most felt that more lanes are needed on US 85, SH 7, and I-25. Other than Brighton, participants generally felt that transit would enhance employment opportunities and increase access to shopping, cultural events, and services for minority and low-income populations throughout the Front Range. Many participants also preferred transit to highway widening because they considered it a cheaper, safer, and a less stressful option.

Most participants said that existing transit does not adequately serve minority and low-income communities. Some underserved locations identified by meeting participants include the Outreach United Resource (OUR) Center in Longmont, new development east of SH 119 in Longmont, Casa Vista residential subdivision (Longmont), St. John's Church (Longmont), Casa Esperanza (Longmont), Bill Reed middle school (Loveland), Centerra (Loveland), and the Holy Catholic Church (Fort Collins). Participants preferred options that included transit to these destinations.

Participants also identified key community facilities, minority and low-income neighborhoods, and minority-owned businesses throughout the regional study area. These include the Pullman Center (12th and Garfield in Loveland); Wal-Mart (Loveland); Loveland Lake Park; Wynona Elementary School (Loveland); the Hispanic neighborhoods of Cherry Street, Buckingham, La Colonia, Andersonville, Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park, and Cloverleaf Mobile Home Park (Fort Collins); Hispanic businesses along US 287 north of Cherry Street in Fort Collins; and Hispanic businesses along US 34 east of US 287 in Longmont. Participants also preferred options that included transit to these destinations.

Participants indicated that immigration policy is a concern for Hispanic/Latino populations throughout the regional study area. Hispanic or Latino populations may not use public transit if they have to show identification or are distrustful of authority. In terms of the highway options, some indicated that they avoid using I-25 because they feel that Hispanic/Latino drivers are pulled over more frequently by the State Highway Patrol.

3.2.4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

The environmental justice analysis evaluated each alternative to determine whether there is a potential for disproportionately high and adverse impacts to minority or low-income populations when compared to populations that are not minority or not low-income in the regional study area. A disproportionate impact is defined by FHWA as one that is:

Predominantly borne by a minority and/or low-income population, or

Suffered by the minority and/or low-income population and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that would be suffered by the non-minority/non-low-income population

An adverse impact is defined by FHWA as the totality of significant individual or cumulative human health or environmental effects, including interrelated social and economic effects, which may include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Bodily impairment, infirmity, illness, or death
- ▶ Air, noise, water pollution, or soil contamination
- ▶ Destruction or disruption of man-made or natural resources
- ▶ Destruction or diminution of aesthetic values
- ▶ Destruction or disruption of community cohesion or a community's economic vitality
- ▶ Destruction or disruption of the availability of public and private facilities and services
- ▶ Vibration
- ▶ Adverse employment effects
- ▶ Displacement of persons, businesses, farms, or nonprofit organizations
- ▶ Increased traffic congestion, isolation, exclusion, or separation of minority or low-income individuals within a given community or from the broader community
- ▶ The denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of, benefits of FHWA programs, policies, or activities

Supporting technical documentation and other analyses prepared in conjunction with this Draft Environmental Impact Statement were reviewed to determine whether the build packages overall, as well as individual modal components, would have adverse impacts on the overall population, as well as minority and low-income population groups. If no adverse impacts were expected for a resource, then no further environmental justice analysis was undertaken with regard to that particular resource. If, however, adverse effects were identified for a resource, additional

environmental justice analysis was performed and is described below. Note that impacts to natural resources (i.e., flora and fauna, geology and soils, wetlands) were assumed not to have any direct impacts or indirect effects on human populations.

No-Action Alternative

Given the relatively limited scope of the No-Action Alternative, impacts would be less substantial than the impacts described below for Package A and Package B. However, certain adverse effects on minority and low-income residents in the regional study area would arise as a result of transportation needs unmet by the No-Action Alternative. These would include the direct and indirect effects on communities from traffic congestion and impaired mobility. These effects would include an increase in air emissions and noise, longer travel times, traffic queues at key interchanges, neighborhood traffic intrusion, deteriorating safety conditions, and lengthened emergency response times. These impacts would be experienced by all segments of the population.

Safety improvements at SH 1 and SH 392 would benefit the minority and low-income populations in these areas. While these improvements would provide some relief, traffic congestion would continue to result in traffic queues and delays for travelers.

The No-Action Alternative would not provide local communities with the accessibility benefits associated with transit services, as would Package A, and to some extent Package B. Low-income populations are often dependent on transit service and would particularly benefit from the provision of new transit services along US 287 and US 85.

The noise analysis identified impacts to a total of 100 residential receivers between SH 14 and SH 60. Sixty-nine of these are residences concentrated within the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision, a community with minority populations in the southwest quadrant of the SH 392/I-25 interchange. Noise impacts would occur at all 69 residences and would range in intensity from 66 dBA to 77 dBA, an increase of less than 2 dBA over existing conditions. Noise level increases of less than 3 dBA generally are not noticeable by most people. These receivers also would be impacted under Package A and Package B. The 31 impacted residences not part of the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision represent a combination of minority and non-minority residences. Many of these are scattered along North I-25 and are not part of a neighborhood or community. Because of the noise impacts to the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision, there are more low income and minorities that would be impacted by noise than non minority and low income. However, the increase in noise level is very small and would not be noticeable to most people. There are no plans in the No Action alternative to do any noise mitigation for these impacts.

Package A

Component A-H1: Safety Improvements. For this component, safety improvements have the potential to impact minority and/or low-income populations at two locations: near the SH 1/I-25 interchange in Wellington and north of the SH 14/I-25 interchange in Fort Collins. There are seven populated census blocks adjacent to the SH 1/I-25 interchange in Wellington. Of these, three are identified as having minority populations. Three households characterized as low-income are located between Wellington and north of SH 14. These households are located on rural properties and are not part of an established neighborhood.

Minority populations would benefit from interchange improvements and signalization at SH 1. The carpool lot in the southwest quadrant of the SH 1/I-25 interchange would be located across from a single-family neighborhood of approximately 39 homes, which is approximately 37 percent minority.

Although conveniently located, the traffic, noise, and activity associated with the lot could disturb adjacent residents. Of the four residential displacements in this section, three are located in census blocks/block groups identified as having minority or low-income populations. The affected residences are widely distributed in rural parcels south of Wellington.

The noise analysis identified impacts to the residential area (16 receivers) in the northwest quadrant of the SH 1/I-25 interchange (referred to as Wellington East in the noise analysis). All of the receivers are located within three adjacent census blocks that contain minority populations. The impacted receivers are immediately adjacent to the highway and also would be impacted under both the No-Action Alternative and Package B. The mitigation proposed for these residences is a noise barrier which would reduce noise to below impact levels. The noise barrier would result in a moderate visual effect to the surrounding community.

Table 3.2-3 summarizes environmental justice impacts for Component A-H1: Safety Improvements.

Table 3.2-3 Environmental Justice Impact Summary for Component A-H1: Safety Improvements

Minority/Low-Income Populations	Non-Minority/Non-Low-Income Populations
Three residential property displacements; traffic impacts from carpool lot	One residential property displacement; traffic impacts from carpool lot
Residential area (16 receivers) in the northwest quadrant of the SH 1/I-25 interchange impacted by traffic noise levels; proposed mitigation reduces noise to below impact levels	No residential areas impacted by traffic noise levels

Components A-H2 and A-H3: General Purpose Lanes. These components have the potential to impact minority and/or low-income populations in four locations:

- ▶ SH 14/I-25 Interchange. In the northeast quadrant of the interchange, the Mountain View Mobile Home Park and adjacent single-family neighborhood are identified as having a concentration of minorities and low-income households. A small single-family neighborhood that does not contain minority or low-income populations is located in the southeast quadrant of the interchange.
- ▶ SH 392/I-25 Interchange. In the southwest quadrant of the interchange, the Mountain Range Shadows Subdivision is identified as having a concentration of minorities. A newer single-family residential subdivision is located in the southeast quadrant and does not contain a concentration of minorities.
- ▶ LCR 16/I-25 Interchange. The Johnson's Corner RV Park and a few single-family residences are identified as having a concentration of minorities. The Johnson's Corner RV Park allows short and long-term stays. There are no non-minority populations in the vicinity of the interchange.
- ▶ SH 119/I-25 Interchange. The River Valley Village Mobile Home Park and a small single-family residential neighborhood about a strip of commercial properties in the southwest quadrant of the interchange. These residences are located in a census block with a concentration of minorities. There are no non-minority populations in the vicinity of the interchange.

These four locations are the only areas with concentrated populations. Between these locations, scattered residences are contained within large rural census blocks that extend outward from I-25 (up to a mile).

1 Nineteen residential displacements would occur between SH 14 and E-470 (14 between SH 14 and
2 SH 60 (A-H2), and five between SH 60 and E-470 (A-H3)). Of these, three are located in census
3 blocks with minority populations and 16 are located in census blocks and block groups that do not
4 contain minority or low-income populations. In general, displaced properties are dispersed along I-
5 25 in large rural parcels that are not part of any established neighborhood.

6 The social analysis identifies the potential for impacts to residents within the Mountain View Mobile
7 Home Park in the northwest quadrant of the SH 14/I-25 interchange. Census data indicate that this
8 community contains minority and low-income populations. Impacts would include a new access
9 configuration for residents of the Mountain View community. Existing access is provided from an
10 unsignalized intersection along SH 14. New access would be from a re-aligned frontage road that
11 would be signalized to provide safer and more direct access for the Mountain View community. A
12 carpool lot with 150 spaces would also be constructed across the street from the community. Some
13 residents may consider the proximity of this lot a convenience. Others might find the added
14 pavement and increase in local traffic and activity disruptive. However, the area surrounding the
15 interchange is highly urbanized and dominated by transportation facilities. The carpool lot would not
16 considerably alter this setting.

17 The Mountain Range Shadows subdivision in the southwest quadrant of the SH 392/I-25
18 interchange consists of three census blocks that contain minority populations. To accommodate
19 highway improvements, the frontage road would shift approximately 15 feet closer to the community
20 and I-25 would be relocated approximately 30 feet farther from the community. This would result in
21 a net reduction in traffic-related impacts when compared to the No-Action Alternative. In March
22 2006, the project team met with residents of the Mountain Range Shadows community to gather
23 input on the SH 392 interchange design and frontage road configuration. To minimize impacts to the
24 community, the project team suggested relocating the frontage road behind the community.
25 Residents were concerned with this approach and indicated a strong preference for the proposed
26 configuration. As a result, the highway would be moved approximately 30 feet east of the interstate,
27 resulting in two property displacements from a neighborhood that does not contain minority
28 populations.

29 At the Johnson's Corner truck stop and café, existing access would be replaced so that customers
30 would have to travel east on LCR 16 to the frontage road, circle around the property, and enter at
31 the south end. A consequence of this configuration would be the displacement of a single minority
32 residence that would otherwise be isolated by the new access road. Near the Johnson's Corner RV
33 Park, I-25 would be widened to the east. As a result, access to the park would not change and no
34 displacements would occur.

35 Improvements near the SH 119/I-25 interchange would include a realignment of the northbound off-
36 ramp. Residents of the River Valley Village Mobile Home RV Park would experience short-term,
37 construction-related impacts including, noise, dust, detours, and traffic delays. No long-term impacts
38 would occur.

39 The proposed improvements would require the relocation of twelve businesses between SH 14
40 and E-470 (eleven between SH 14 and SH 60 (A-H2) and one between SH 60 and E-470
41 (A-H3)). Assessor data indicate that these businesses provide services that include equipment
42 storage, car sales and service, warehouse, food sales, gas/convenience, and home and RV sales.
43 These businesses were not identified as being minority-owned by the Colorado Office of Economic
44 Development and International Trade, Minority Business Office; through public involvement efforts;
45 or through the business survey distributed for this project. There is no evidence to suggest that
46 these businesses have any particular connection to a minority community or provide employment,
47 goods, and/or services uniquely important to a minority population group.

The noise analysis identified impacts to a total of 93 receivers between SH 14 and SH 60 (B-H2). Sixty-nine of these receivers are concentrated within the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision. Noise levels would increase at 63 of the 69 residences and would range in intensity from 67 dBA to 77 dBA, an increase of up to 3.6 dBA over existing conditions. Noise level increases of less than 3 dBA generally are not noticeable by most people. Proposed mitigation would reduce the number of impacted receivers within the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision to 32, an improvement over the No-Action condition. Of the 24 impacted receivers not part of the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision, 21 are located in census blocks/block groups that do not contain minority or low-income populations and three are located in census blocks with minority populations. Noise levels in these areas would range in intensity from 66 dBA to 82 dBA, an increase of up to 6 dBA over existing conditions. These receivers are scattered along North I-25 and are not part of a neighborhood or community.

The visual analysis (**Section 3.14.3.2**) determined that new retaining walls 15 feet and greater in height and new bridges would result in a high effect on visual conditions. A total of 31 retaining walls (18 for Component A-H2 and 13 for Component A-H3) would be distributed along I-25, affecting minority and low-income populations as well as non-minority/non-low-income populations. New bridges proposed at US 34 would impact visual conditions for all segments of the population. Noise barriers constructed to mitigate noise impacts at Mountain Range Shadows would also change the visual environment for homes adjacent to the highway, affecting views to the east. However, some may find the visual barrier to the highway an improvement over the existing condition.

According to the bicycle and pedestrian analysis (**Section 4.9**), impacts to bicycle and pedestrian facilities would be temporary in duration, would not be concentrated in areas with minority or low-income population groups, and would be offset by the overall benefits from added shoulders and sidewalks. **Table 3.2-4** summarizes environmental justice impacts for Component A-H2 and A-H3: General Purpose Lanes.

Table 3.2-4 Environmental Justice Impact Summary for Component A-H2 and A-H3: General Purpose Lanes

Minority/Low-Income Populations	Non-Minority/Non-Low-Income Populations
Three residential property displacements; access revision	16 residential property displacements
No known displacement of businesses owned by minorities or of special importance to minority populations	12 business displacements
76 receivers impacted by traffic noise levels increasing 0-2 dbA (69 from the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision); after mitigation, 32 receivers impacted.	17 receivers impacted by traffic noise levels increasing 0-7 dbA - receivers are scattered along North I-25
Retaining walls would impact residential areas; retaining walls (> 15') and new bridges would result in a high effect on visual conditions	Retaining walls would impact residential areas; retaining walls (> 15') and new bridges would result in a high effect on visual conditions

Component A-H4: Structure Upgrades. Structure upgrades are limited to minor bridge rehabilitation and maintenance activities. No roadway widening, bridge widening, or interchange upgrades would occur. Impacts to minority and low-income populations south of E-470 would be the same as those discussed for the No-Action Alternative in **Section 3.2.2.1**.

Components A-T1 and A-T2: Commuter Rail. Minority and low-income populations are distributed along the BNSF alignment with concentrations in Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud, and Longmont. One hundred and sixty populated census blocks and 50 block groups are adjacent to the BNSF rail line. Of these, 50 census blocks have higher than average populations of minorities and 21 census block groups have higher than average numbers of low-income households.

Construction of the commuter rail would require the relocation of 35 residences (18 for Component A-T1 and 17 for Component A-T2). For Component A-T1, 16 of the 18 residential displacements (88 percent) would occur in census blocks or block groups containing minority or low-income populations. All of these would occur in Longmont, in minority and low-income neighborhoods adjacent to the BNSF corridor. The additional commuter rail tracks plus the displacements would exacerbate the existing barrier effect of the existing BNSF corridor, so would not result in a new impact to an established community. No residential displacements associated with Component A-T2 are located in a census block or block group with minority or low-income populations.

Commuter rail would improve access to the following community facilities that were identified through specialized outreach efforts as being important to minority and low-income populations:

- ▶ Bill Reed Middle School. This school has a high concentration of Hispanic/Latino students. Existing transit to the school is limited. The school is within 0.25 mile from the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. Access to commuter rail would benefit school-aged children. Although the school is currently located in an urbanized area, an increase in noise and vibration would be expected. The commuter rail option would benefit these students by providing service to the school and alleviating a long bus ride for many students.
- ▶ Impacto De Fe. This largely Hispanic church in Loveland, with a historic presence, is located approximately 0.5 mile from the proposed Downtown Loveland Transit Station. Access to commuter rail could facilitate community participation in church events and activities.
- ▶ Salud Family Health Center. This health center is located approximately 0.5 mile from the proposed Sugar Mill Station in Longmont. Access to commuter rail would benefit persons along the Front Range who are uninsured or underinsured and in need of medical care.
- ▶ St. John's Church. This church is located approximately 1 mile from the proposed Sugar Mill Station in Longmont. Access to commuter rail could facilitate community participation in church events and activities.
- ▶ OUR Center. This medical center is located approximately 1 mile from the proposed Sugar Mill Station in Longmont. Access to commuter rail would benefit families in need of medical care.
- ▶ St. Joseph's Church. This church is located approximately 0.5 mile from the Fort Collins Downtown Transit Center. Access to commuter rail could facilitate community participation in church events and activities.
- ▶ The Pullman Center. This community center is located less than 1 mile from the Downtown Loveland Transit Station. Access to commuter rail could facilitate community events and activities.

1 Because commuter rail would operate in an existing rail corridor, minority and low-income
2 neighborhoods in Berthoud, Fort Collins, Longmont, and Loveland would not be newly divided nor
3 would existing access or travel patterns change. Local residents frequently experience delays when
4 traveling across the BNSF rail line. These delays would become more frequent and would be
5 experienced by all segments of the population. Several neighborhoods in Fort Collins would benefit
6 from close proximity to transit stations. These include Martinez Park (minority and low-income),
7 Historic Fort Collins High School (minority), and Troutman Park (minority). Residents of these
8 neighborhoods would be able to reach the transit station by foot or bicycle. Transit stations in north
9 and south Longmont would improve mobility for minority and low-income neighborhoods,
10 connecting residents to cultural events and employment in Fort Collins, Loveland, Boulder, and
11 Denver. Property values would likely increase near station sites. Over time, this could make housing
12 less affordable for existing residents.

13 Minority and low-income residents on Atwood Street would lose street parking between 3rd Avenue
14 and 8th Avenue. Although some access revisions would occur as a result, all homes would retain
15 access to their properties from their driveways and/or alleys. For example, some residents in this
16 area appear to use street parking instead of the alley (i.e., alley is fenced off) or driveway (i.e.,
17 driveway is used for storage). These residents would have to begin using their driveway or access
18 their property from the alley when street parking is no longer available. Loss of street parking in this
19 area would not affect OUR Center because this facility currently has alley access and on-site
20 parking.

21 The proposed maintenance facility at East Vine Drive and North Timberline Road would be adjacent
22 to the northern portion of the Collins Aire Park (a mobile home park that is both minority and low-
23 income). This community would likely experience an increase in activity and visual impacts as a
24 result of the new facility. However, such land uses are consistent with the area, as industrial, rail,
25 and airport uses are in close proximity

26 Feeder bus service would connect minority and low-income populations in Fort Collins and
27 Loveland to populations and services in Greeley, increasing the level of interaction between these
28 communities. Similar benefits would result from feeder bus service between Berthoud, Johnstown,
29 and Milliken. Feeder bus service along US 34 would improve mobility for Hispanic/Latino residents
30 in apartment complexes adjacent to the highway as well as provide access to key community
31 facilities, such as Wal-Mart and a regional bus line that provides service to Mexico.

32 Construction of the commuter rail would require the relocation of 16 businesses for right-of-way
33 acquisition. Fifteen of these would occur between Fort Collins and Longmont (Component
34 A-T1). The remaining relocation would occur between Longmont and FasTracks North Metro
35 (Component A-T2). Assessor data indicate that these businesses provide services that include food
36 sales, rail related, lumber, investment services, automotive, warehouse/storage,
37 equipment/machinery, and manufacturing. None of these businesses were identified as being
38 minority-owned by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Minority
39 Business Office; through public involvement efforts; or through the business survey distributed for
40 this project. However, due to their proximity to minority populations along the BNSF rail line, these
41 businesses most likely provide employment for minority persons.

42 The increased frequency of trains in the corridor would increase noise and vibration in
43 neighborhoods adjacent to the commuter rail alignment. The noise analysis identified moderate
44 impacts at 167 residences along the commuter rail corridor (151 for component A-T1 and 16 for
45 component A-T2). For Component A-T1, 149 of the 151 impacted receivers would occur in areas
46 with minority or low-income populations. The majority of these (140) would occur in Longmont, in
47 minority and low-income neighborhoods adjacent to the BNSF corridor. For Component A-T2, one

of the 16 impacted receivers would occur in areas with minority or low-income populations. Noise levels would range in intensity from 59 dBA to 78 dBA, an increase of between 1 dBA and 4 dBA over existing conditions. The majority of these impacts can be mitigated with, quiet zones, wayside horns, noise barriers and/or other methods as described in detail in **Section 3.6.4.4 Rail Noise and Vibration Mitigation Evaluation**.

The vibration analysis identified impacts at 87 residences within 65 feet of the nearest track (37 in Loveland and 50 in Longmont). The majority of these (81) are located in areas with minority or low-income populations. Noise and vibration may disturb sleep or normal conversation for people in affected areas. All of these impacts can be mitigated with ballast mats, tire derived aggregate, under-tie pads, and other methods as described in detail in **Section 3.6.4.4 Rail Noise and Vibration Mitigation Evaluation**.

It is important to note that the noise and vibration analysis was based on the best available right-of-way information. As design continues, some of the impacted properties may be acquired for right-of-way purposes. Refer to **Section 3.6.3.2** for a detailed analysis of potential noise and vibration impacts.

An increase in bus and vehicular traffic around station sites would result in localized increases in air emissions. Minority and/or low-income populations at five of the nine proposed station sites (Downtown Fort Collins Transit Center, Downtown Loveland, Berthoud, North Longmont, and Sugar Mill) would be affected. According to the air quality analysis prepared for this project (**Section 3.5.3**), emissions associated with increased activity at stations would not exceed National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The proximity of the station sites would be beneficial for the nearby populations, especially those within walking distance.

The visual analysis (**Section 3.14.3.2**) concluded that the introduction of retaining walls, noise barriers, and new bridges would have a high visual effect to residents adjacent to the rail corridor. Overall, retaining walls would impact 14 residential areas with concentrations of minority or low-income populations and 7 residential areas with non-minority/non-low-income populations. Retaining walls would be constructed on the east side of the rail (where new track would be laid) between Mountain View Avenue and 21st Street in minority and low-income portions of the Clark Centennial and Lanyon neighborhoods. Twelve residences immediately adjacent to the proposed track also would be displaced from these neighborhoods. Retaining walls and noise barriers would shield residences from the existing rail line, lessening the visual impacts of the railroad.

As described in **Section 3.6.4.4 Rail Noise and Vibration Mitigation Evaluation**, noise barriers will be considered if quiet zones and/or wayside horns are not feasible and reasonable. Fourteen of the 16 potential locations for noise barriers are adjacent to minority and/or low-income populations. The majority of these (12) are in Longmont. While these would reduce noise levels for the surrounding communities, they would alter the visual landscape primarily affecting minority and low-income residences adjacent to the BNSF rail line in Loveland, Berthoud, and Longmont. However, these same residences would benefit the most from the noise barriers.

The North Loveland, Downtown Loveland, Berthoud, and North Longmont stations would have a high visual effect on the surrounding community because they would require relocation of a business or residence and the station would impede views from the east to the mountains. Minority and/or low-income populations would be affected by three of these stations - Downtown Loveland, Berthoud, and North Longmont.

Adverse effects would occur to two historic properties between Longmont and FasTracks North Metro (A-T2). Both of these properties would be acquired for right-of-way purposes. Adversely affected properties include the Old City Electric Building (5BL.1245) and Colorado & Southern/BNSF Depot (5BL.1244). Both of these buildings are in Longmont adjacent to the BNSF rail line within areas identified as having minority and/or low-income populations. The Old City Electric Building is designated by the City of Longmont as a local landmark. Loss of these buildings could negatively affect community character and cohesion for both low income and minority populations as well as non-low income and non-minority populations.

According to the bicycle and pedestrian analysis (**Section 4.9**), impacts to bicycle and pedestrian facilities would be temporary in duration, would not be concentrated in areas with minority or low-income population groups, and would be offset by the overall benefits from added shoulders and sidewalks.

The additional commuter rail track, operational traffic impacts, right-of-way fencing noise, vibration, and visual impacts would negatively affect minority and low-income neighborhoods and community cohesion in Longmont. These impacts could reduce property values in minority and low-income areas, except for the areas within walking distance of the two stations, where property values would likely be increased. In addition, two stations would serve the community of Longmont: SH 66 in the north and SH 119 in the south. Residents along the commuter rail alignment in Longmont would have to drive or take a local bus north or south to access the rail.

Comments received at a meeting with El Komite de Longmont (a Latino community organization in Longmont) in September 2006 indicated that these residents feel that there would be no additional community division resulting from the commuter rail. According to El Komite, minority and low-income communities in Longmont rely heavily on local bus service. Underserved areas that are important to the minority community include the OUR Center (medical clinic) and Casa Vista (a minority neighborhood between SH 119 and County Line Road on Quicksilver). A station at the Sugar Mill location would support these areas and connect the Casa Vista neighborhood to the northern part of Longmont as well as Fort Collins, Loveland, Boulder and Denver. **Table 3.2-5** summarizes environmental justice impacts for Component A-T1 and A-T2: Commuter Rail.

The provision of commuter bus service would benefit minority and low-income communities along US 85. Bus stations in Greeley, South Greeley, Evans, Platteville, and Fort Lupton are all located in minority and/or low-income areas and would expand employment opportunities and services to these populations. Commuter bus service would improve regional connections between US 85 communities. Service to DIA would improve access to the airport over the No-Action Alternative. Limiting the number of stops would benefit residents that travel between communities on a regular basis.

Construction of queue jumps, bus stations, and maintenance facilities would require the relocation of five businesses. Assessor data indicate that these businesses provide services that include a convenience store, welding, and professional services. Impacted businesses were not identified as being minority-owned by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Minority Business Office; through public involvement efforts; or through the business survey distributed for this project. However, due to their proximity to minority populations along US 85, these businesses most likely provide employment for minority persons. Site visits indicated numerous businesses that appeared to be minority-owned (e.g., company name and signage was in Spanish). None of the businesses identified during site visits would be directly impacted by the commuter bus components. Employees and business owners would benefit from the improved access that would be provided by commuter bus service.

Table 3.2-5 Environmental Justice Impact Summary for Component A-T1 and A-T2: Commuter Rail

Minority/Low-Income Populations	Non-Minority/Non-Low-Income Populations
16 residential property displacements (all in Longmont); improved access to Front Range communities, community facilities, and services; potential degradation of community cohesion in Longmont; travel time delays at at-grade crossings	19 residential property displacements (none in Longmont); improved access to Front Range communities, community facilities, and services; travel time delays and out-of-direction travel at at-grade crossings
No known displacement of businesses owned by minorities; displaced businesses most likely provide services and employment for minority persons	16 business displacements
150 receivers impacted by rail noise levels, 140 from minority or low-income neighborhoods along the BNSF in Longmont; vibration impacts at 81 residences; after mitigation, 1 receiver impacted by noise and none impacted by vibration	17 receivers impacted by rail noise levels; vibration impacts at 6 residences; proposed mitigation reduces noise and vibration to below impact levels
Localized increase in air emissions affecting populations at five proposed station sites; emissions would not exceed NAAQS	Localized increase in air emissions affecting populations at four proposed station sites; emissions would not exceed NAAQS
Retaining walls would impact 14 residential areas; sound walls would result in a high effect on visual conditions at 14 locations; commuter rail stations would have a high effect on visual conditions at three locations	Retaining walls would impact 7 residential areas; sound walls would result in a high effect on visual conditions at two locations; commuter rail stations would have a high effect on visual conditions at one location

An increase in bus and vehicular traffic around station sites would result in localized increases in air emissions. Impacts would primarily affect minority and/or low-income populations at four of the five proposed station sites (Greeley, South Greeley, Platteville, and Fort Lupton). According to the air quality analysis prepared for this project, emissions associated with increased activity at stations would not exceed NAAQS. **Table 3.2-6** summarizes environmental justice impacts for Component A-T3 and A-T4: Commuter Bus.

Table 3.2-6 Environmental Justice Impact Summary for Component A-T3 and A-T4: Commuter Bus

Minority/Low-Income Populations	Non-Minority/Non-Low-Income Populations
One property displacement; improved access to communities along US 85	No property displacements; improved access to communities along US 85.
No known displacement of businesses owned by minorities; displaced businesses most likely provide services and employment for minority persons	Five business displacements. Displaced businesses provide services and employment for all populations.
Localized increase in air emissions affecting populations at four proposed station sites; emissions would not exceed NAAQS	Localized increase in air emissions affecting populations at one proposed station site; emissions would not exceed NAAQS.

Benefits of Package A. Package A would provide overall improvements in the operation of local and regional transportation systems. Other benefits associated with implementing Package A would include:

- ▶ Short-term and long-term employment opportunities would occur during the construction of the facilities as well as their ongoing operation and maintenance (refer to the economic analysis in Section 3.3.2.2 for more specific information)
- ▶ The provision of shoulders and sidewalks would better accommodate bicycle and pedestrian travel
- ▶ Safety and emergency response times would improve
- ▶ Transit components would improve access to community facilities, provide broader opportunities for employment, facilitate participation in regional social and cultural events, promote interaction between communities, and stimulate business activity

Minority and low-income populations are concentrated around transit improvements and would benefit from the transit-related components.

Package B

Component B-H1: Safety Improvements. Safety improvements under this component are similar to those associated with Package A, Component A-H1. The potential for impacts exists in the same two locations as under Component A-H1: near the SH 1/I-25 interchange in Wellington and north of the SH 14/I-25 interchange in Fort Collins. Impacts would be the same as those identified in Package A for Component A-H1. **Table 3.2-7** summarizes environmental justice impacts for Component B-H1: Safety Improvements.

**Table 3.2-7 Environmental Justice Impact Summary for Component B-H1:
Safety Improvements**

Minority/Low-Income Populations	Non-Minority/Non-Low-Income Populations
Three residential property displacements; traffic impacts from carpool lot	One residential property displacement; traffic impacts from carpool lot
One residential area (16 receivers) impacted by traffic noise levels; proposed mitigation reduces noise to below impact levels	No residential areas impacted by increased noise levels

Components B-H2, B-H3, and B-H4: Tolloed Express Lanes. Adding one additional northbound and southbound tolloed express lane on I-25 would have a similar effect on minority and low-income populations as adding one general purpose lane in each direction under Package A, Components A-H2 and A-H3. Interchange improvements for these components are also the same. Because many of the direct and indirect impacts associated with tolloed express lanes are similar in nature to those of general purpose lanes, the following discussion focuses on the differences between them.

Twenty residential relocations would be required between SH 14 and E-470 (15 between SH 14 and SH 60 (B-H2) and five between SH 60 and E-470 (B-H3)). Four of the 15 displacements between SH 14 and SH 60 (B-H2 and B-H3) are located in census blocks with minority populations and eleven are located in census blocks and block groups that do not contain minority or low-income populations. None of the residential displacements between SH 14 and E-470 are located in census blocks or block groups that contain minority or low-income populations. In general, displaced

properties are dispersed along I-25 in large rural parcels that are not part of any established neighborhood.

Although no residences would be displaced between E-470 and US 36 (B-H4), approximately 10 garages would need to be acquired from condominiums adjacent to I-25 near 120th Avenue. None of these would be from areas with minority or low-income populations. Neighborhoods in this segment extend east and west of the highway and have developed around the interstate. Residences immediately adjacent to the highway would experience an increase in traffic and traffic related impacts (noise, visual, air emissions). This would affect all segments of the population.

Numerous neighborhoods and apartment complexes abutting I-25 in Broomfield, Thornton, Westminster, Northglenn and Adams County would also experience an increase in traffic and traffic related impacts (noise, visual, air emissions). These neighborhoods consist of both minority/low-income and non-minority/non-low-income populations. Impacts would be largely limited to first- and second-tier homes and would not result in a deterioration of the overall neighborhood.

The proposed improvements would require the relocation of 15 businesses between SH 14 and E-470 (13 between SH 14 and SH 60 (B-H2) and two between SH 60 and E-470 (B-H3)). Assessor data indicate that these businesses provide services that include equipment storage, car sales and service, warehouse, food sales, gas/convenience, and home and RV sales. These businesses were not identified as being minority-owned by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Minority Business Office; through public involvement efforts; or through the business survey distributed for this project. There is no evidence to suggest that these businesses have any particular connection to a minority community or provide employment, goods, and/or services uniquely important to a minority population group.

Financial access to tolling is an issue that often emerges when addressing the impacts of express lanes. To use the new tolled express lanes, tollway users would be required to pay for their travel. Limited studies have been conducted regarding the fairness of new toll facilities and their implementation remains controversial. Equity studies conducted on express lane projects implemented in California and Texas reveal that economically disadvantaged drivers use express lanes voluntarily and are not necessarily excluded, although more frequent use is often exhibited by higher-income drivers. The studies revealed that low-income drivers approved of the express toll concepts, similar to opinions of higher-income households. Most users, even those from higher-income households, choose the express lanes judiciously when they need to benefit most from reduced congestion.

A general discussion with minority and low-income residents at a town hall meeting at the Northside Atzlan Community Center in Fort Collins (January 2006) indicated mixed feelings toward tolled express lanes. While some supported the tolling concept, others felt that tolling would exclude citizens with lower incomes. Free travel lanes, access points, and frontage roads would be maintained along I-25. In addition, bus rapid transit (BRT) and vanpools would be available to all I-25 commuters.

The noise analysis identified impacts to a total of 93 receivers between SH 14 and SH 60 (B-H2). Sixty-nine of these receivers are concentrated within the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision. Noise levels would increase at 63 of the 69 residences and would range in intensity from 67 dBA to 77 dBA, an increase of up to 3.6 dBA over existing conditions. Noise level increases of less than 3 dBA generally are not noticeable by most people. Proposed mitigation would reduce the number of impacted receivers within the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision to 32, an improvement over the No-Action condition. Of the 24 impacted receivers not part of the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision, 21 are located in census blocks/block groups that do not contain

minority or low-income populations and three are located in census blocks with minority populations. Noise levels in these areas would range in intensity from 66 dBA to 82 dBA, an increase of up to 6 dBA over existing conditions. These receivers are scattered along North I-25 and are not part of a neighborhood or community.

The noise analysis identified impacts to numerous neighborhoods and isolated receivers abutting I-25 in Broomfield, Thornton, Westminster, Northglenn, and Adams County. These neighborhoods consist of both minority/low-income and non-minority/non-low-income households. Impacts also would be experienced under the No-Action Alternative and Package A as a result of growing traffic volumes through 2030. However, a greater number of receivers would be impacted under Package B because it would result in the most vehicles traveling on the widest I-25 profile at the highest speeds, thus producing more traffic noise. Refer to **Section 3.6.3.3** for a detailed analysis of potential noise impacts.

The visual analysis (**Section 3.14.3.3**) determined that structural impacts associated with Components B-H2 and B-H3 would result in a high effect on visual conditions. Structural impacts include new retaining walls 15 feet and greater in height and new bridges. A total of 28 retaining walls (19 for Component B-H2 and 9 for Component B-H3) would be distributed along I-25, affecting minority and low-income populations as well as non-minority/non-low-income populations. New bridges proposed at US 34 would impact visual conditions for all segments of the population. Noise barriers constructed to mitigate noise impacts at Mountain Range Shadows would also change the visual environment for homes adjacent to the highway affecting views to the east. However, some may find the visual barrier to the highway an improvement over the existing condition.

Noise barriers would also be constructed in several residential areas from E-470 to US 36 (B-H4) along I-25: Thorncreek Parkway, Community Center Drive, Badding Reservoir, and Brittany Ridge. Residences adjacent to the proposed barrier at Community Center Drive are considered low-income. The visual analysis determined that sound walls would have a moderate visual effect to the surrounding community and would reduce the visual effect of the highway.

Highway widening near the 104th Avenue/I-25 interchange would impact 0.17 acre of Grant Park's approximately 14 acres. The park, which is located in an area with minority and low-income populations, provides aesthetic benefits and recreational opportunities for surrounding residents. The affected area of the park is immediately adjacent to I-25, which would not result in adverse effects to minority and low-income populations. **Table 3.2-8** summarizes environmental justice impacts for Component B-H2, B-H3, and B-H4: Tolled Express Lanes.

Table 3.2-8 Environmental Justice Impact Summary for Component B-H2, B-H3, and B-H4: Tolled Express Lanes

Minority/Low-Income Populations	Non-Minority/Non-Low-Income Populations
Four residential property displacements; access revision at Mountain View Mobile Home Park	16 residential property displacements; acquisition of 10 garages
No known displacement of businesses owned by minorities or of special importance to minority populations	15 business displacements
72 receivers impacted by traffic noise levels increasing 0-3.6 dbA between SH 14 and SH 60 (69 in the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision); after mitigation, 32 receivers impacted; impacts to numerous neighborhoods and isolated receivers abutting I-25 in Broomfield, Thornton, Westminster, Northglenn, and Adams County	21 receivers impacted by traffic noise levels between SH 14 and SH 60 increasing 0-6 dbA; impacts to numerous neighborhoods and isolated receivers abutting I-25 in Broomfield, Thornton, Westminster, Northglenn and Adams County
Retaining walls would impact residential areas; retaining walls (> 15') and new bridges would result in a high effect on visual conditions	Retaining walls would impact residential areas; retaining walls (> 15') and new bridges would result in a high effect on visual conditions
Acquisition of 0.17 acre of a 14-acre park within a minority and low-income neighborhood	No park acquisitions from non-minority/non-low-income neighborhoods.

Components B-T1 and B-T2: Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). No residential displacements would occur under Components B-T1 or B-T2. Feeder bus service would provide benefits similar to those described under Package A for Components A-T1 and A-T2. However, BRT would improve access to some community facilities in Longmont over the No-Action Alternative and Package A. In Longmont, the feeder bus line would run east along SH 119 and north along US 287. Frequent stops would provide more direct service than commuter rail to Casa Vista, Salud Family Health Center, St. Johns Church, the OUR Center, and Hispanic-owned businesses along US 287.

Construction of the BRT station in Firestone would require the relocation of one business. This business provides services that include a home center and RV sales. This business was not identified as being minority-owned by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Minority Business Office; through public involvement efforts; or through the business survey distributed for this project. There is no evidence to suggest that this business has any particular connection to a minority community or provides employment, goods, and/or services uniquely important to a minority population group.

An increase in bus and vehicular traffic around station sites would result in localized increases in air emissions. Impacts would primarily affect minority and/or low-income populations at three of the 12 proposed stations sites (Harmony Road and Timberline, Firestone, and Greeley Downtown Transfer Center). There are no residential populations in the immediate vicinity of six of the proposed station sites. According to the air quality analysis prepared for this project, emissions associated with increased activity at stations would not exceed NAAQS.

Impacts to the neighborhoods adjacent to the proposed maintenance facility at 31st Street and west of 1st Avenue in Greeley would be the same as those identified for Package A, Components A-T3 and A-T4.

BRT stations in Windsor (southwest of the SH 392/I-25 interchange) and Firestone (southwest of Firestone Road) would have a high visual effect to the surrounding community. The station platforms would be 20 feet wide by 300 feet long, with a pedestrian overpass, parking, bus bays,

kiss-and-ride, lighting, and landscaping. The station in Firestone would require one business relocation. This relocation would change the visual landscape for travelers, affecting all population segments including minority residents of River Valley Village Mobile Home Park and adjacent neighborhoods west of the Firestone Road interchange. **Table 3.2-9** summarizes environmental justice impacts for Component B-T1 and B-T2: Bus Rapid Transit.

Benefits of Package B. Package B would provide overall improvements in the operation of local and regional transportation systems. Other benefits associated with Package B would include:

- ▶ Short-term and long-term employment opportunities would occur during the construction of the facilities as well as their ongoing operation and maintenance (refer to the economic analysis in Section 3.3.2.3 for more specific information).
- ▶ The provision of shoulders and sidewalks would better accommodate bicycle and pedestrian travel.
- ▶ Safety and emergency response times would improve.
- ▶ Transit components would result in moderate improvements in mobility and would improve regional connectivity.
- ▶ Minority and low-income populations are concentrated around transit improvements and would benefit from the transit-related components.

**Table 3.2-9 Environmental Justice Impact Summary for Components B-T1 and B-T2:
Bus Rapid Transit**

Minority/Low-Income Populations	Non-Minority/Non-Low-Income Populations
No residential property displacements	No residential property displacements
No known displacement of businesses owned by minorities or of special importance to minority populations	One business displacement
Localized increase in air emissions affecting populations at three proposed station sites; emissions would not exceed NAAQS	Localized increase in air emissions affecting populations at three proposed station site; emissions would not exceed NAAQS
Station platforms and overpasses would result in visual impacts to the surrounding community in two locations	Station platforms and overpasses would result in visual impacts to the surrounding community in two locations

Conclusion

Safety improvements between SH 1 and SH 14 (Components A-H1 and B-H1) would result in three residential relocations from census blocks/block groups with minority and low-income populations. This is compared to one residential relocation for the general population. The affected residences are distributed along I-25 in large census blocks/block groups that are generally not part of an established neighborhood or community. Both the minority and low-income households and the non-minority/non-low-income household could be relocated to comparable housing in the area. In addition, the safety benefits to minority and low-income populations in Wellington outweigh the impact associated with relocation.

Although a concentration of noise impacts was identified within the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision, mitigation proposed for this community (under Components A-H2 and B-H2) improves noise levels at 37 receivers over the No-Action condition, resulting in a net benefit to the community.

Minority and low-income residents in Longmont would experience impacts from the implementation of Component A-T1 (commuter rail between Fort Collins and Longmont), which would include 16 residential relocations, noise above impact levels at one receiver (after mitigation), visual impacts, traffic impacts, and the potential for exacerbating the existing barrier created by the BNSF corridor.

In addition, two stations would serve the community of Longmont: SH 66 in the north and SH 119 in the south. Residents along the commuter rail alignment in Longmont would have to drive or take a local bus (323 or 324) north or south to access the commuter rail. RTD local bus service would be modified as needed to serve the two commuter rail stations in Longmont. The commuter rail would, however, improve regional connections and access to some community facilities.

A determination of whether disproportionately high and adverse effects to minority and low income populations will occur will be made in the Final EIS. The following factors will be considered in this determination:

- ▶ Comparison of adverse impacts that would occur to minority and low income populations vs those that would occur to the non-low income and non-minority population
- ▶ Benefits of the transportation investment
- ▶ Mitigation that would be provided
- ▶ Opinions related to the impacts, mitigation, and benefits as obtained in the public and agency review process and from additional targeted outreach that will occur

3.2.4.4 MITIGATION MEASURES

In accordance with U.S. DOT Order 5610.2 on Environmental Justice, DOT decision makers (i.e., FHWA) will ensure that any of their programs, policies, or activities that could have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority populations or low-income populations will be carried out only if further mitigation measures or alternatives that will avoid or reduce the disproportionately high and adverse effect are not practicable. In determining whether a mitigation measure or an alternative is “practicable,” decision makers will take into account the social, economic, and environmental effects of avoiding or mitigating the adverse effects.

Mitigation has already been factored in to the analysis of impacts to minority and low-income populations. For example, mitigation for noise impacts in Wellington will reduce the effects of traffic noise to below impacts levels, avoiding a disproportionate impact to this community. The mitigation will be carried out for that alternative even if there is not a finding of disproportionately high and adverse effects.

Mitigation for construction related impacts to minority and low-income populations could include the provision of reduced price bus passes during construction, acceptable access modifications, and translated information on construction processes and alternate modes available during construction and pre-opening day.

Right-of-way acquisition will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Uniform Act). This purpose of this act is to provide fair and equitable treatment for all persons displaced from their homes, businesses, or farms. Owners of property to be acquired will be compensated at fair market value for their property.

If toll lanes are constructed, ways to make tolling more equitable will be sought. For example, payment options will be considered to enable the broadest opportunity for all economic groups to use toll facilities. Alternate payment options will be provided so that persons who do not have a credit card can still participate in the tolled express lanes. Toll replenishment using cash or employer-based payroll deductions could also be included in the tolling program.

A context sensitive approach to project design and mitigation is encouraged to ensure that project elements enhance the community. This will include involving the public in the development of rail or bus station design treatments.

Efforts will continue to be made to ensure meaningful opportunities for public participation during the development and review process. During the public review and comment period for the Draft EIS, all segments of the population (including minority and low-income populations) will have the opportunity to review the project alternatives, their associated benefits, adverse impacts, and any proposed mitigation, and can propose additional mitigation to reduce adverse effects. Additional meetings with the Mountain Range Shadows subdivision and El Comite de Longmont will be held to invite participants to comment on the analysis, identify additional concerns, and propose additional mitigation measures.

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