

3.22 PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

3.22.1 Affected Environment

The following section describes existing conditions, programs, and services associated with public safety and security in the regional study area.

3.22.1.1 SAFETY

Public safety refers to existing potential safety hazards and existing operating public safety providers.

Highway Safety

Highway safety, as it relates to crash rates and geometric deficiencies that affect them, is analyzed in **Chapter 2 Alternatives** and **Chapter 4 Transportation Impacts**. This section focuses on the facilities and services available to commercial vehicles as they relate to safety.

Approximately 16 percent of daily traffic (approximately 8,000 vehicles) on I-25 is made up of trucks and commercial freight traffic. The Interstate Commerce Commission has set hours of service limits for commercial drivers that legislate mandatory rest periods after every 10 hours of driving. In Colorado, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates a demand for 760 rest area parking spaces during the peak hour along interstates carrying more than 1,000 vehicles per day. There is currently a supply of 167 truck parking spaces statewide (FHWA, 2002).

Truck parking is available to drivers at state rest areas and at travel plazas and truck stops. Within the regional study area, the Poudre Rest Area is located at Prospect Road (Exit 268) and I-25. There are two travel plazas: one located at SH 119 and I-25 (Exit 240), and one at Johnson's Corner, located at Exit 254, just south of SH 402.

Transit Safety

Transit safety reflects existing transit facilities in the regional study area. There are currently four transit service providers in the regional study area. The Regional Transportation District (RTD) is by far the largest transit provider, serving the Denver Metro Area at the far southern end of the regional study area (south of SH 7 and in Longmont). RTD contracts for security on vehicles and at stations, as well as park-n-Ride facilities. They also use video surveillance on vehicles and at selected stations, as well as park-n-Ride facilities. TransFort (Fort Collins), Colt (Loveland), and The Bus (Greeley), the other three transit service providers, all rely on coordination with local police departments through their dispatch centers for security services. In addition, Fort Collins has full lighting at its transfer centers (Downtown, CSU, and South) and video surveillance at the Downtown and Colorado State University (CSU) Transfer Centers.

What's in Section 3.22?

3.22 Public Safety and Security

- 3.22.1 Affected Environment
 - 3.22.1.1 Safety
 - 3.22.1.2 Security
- 3.22.2 Environmental Consequences
 - 3.22.2.1 No-Action Alternative
 - 3.22.2.2 Package A
 - 3.22.2.3 Package B
 - 3.22.2.4 Preferred Alternative
- 3.22.3 Mitigation Measures

1 **Freight Railroad Safety**

2 Three freight railroads operate in the regional study area – the Burlington Northern and
3 Santa Fe Railway (BNSF), Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), and Great Western Railroad
4 (GWR). The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) reports at-grade crossing safety using
5 accident predictions FRA, 2007a). An accident prediction is a value that indicates the statistical
6 likelihood of a collision at a crossing given the crash history at that location, physical conditions
7 (including crossing protection), and both roadway and railway traffic levels.

8 BNSF operates their Front Range Subdivision along the west side of the regional study area.
9 The railroad operates four to six trains per day on this line. The rail network interacts with the
10 roadway at 90 locations. Two crossings along the existing BNSF alignment are currently grade
11 separated: US 34 in Loveland and US 287 on the northern edge of Berthoud. Otherwise, the
12 existing BNSF crossings are all at-grade. The annual accident prediction for the 90-crossing
13 corridor is 2.37, implying that two to three collisions can be expected in this corridor each year.
14 This prediction is an analysis of the rail corridor unaffected by transportation projects.

15 UPRR operates three lines in the regional study area, one of which would be utilized in
16 proposed future transit projects. The Boulder Industrial Lead historically connected Commerce
17 City to Boulder via Thornton and Erie. This line is anticipated to be used for the North Metro
18 FasTracks rail service south of SH 7. North of SH 7, the Colorado Department of
19 Transportation (CDOT) removed the bridge over I-25 near Erie when the interstate was
20 widened. Rail service along this line has been cut back, and there are no trains that operate
21 north of SH 7 today. There were five active at-grade crossings between SH 7 and I-25 before
22 service was discontinued.

23 GWR operates several lines throughout the regional study area, though there is only one
24 interaction between a GWR line and a roadway.

25 **Emergency Service Providers**

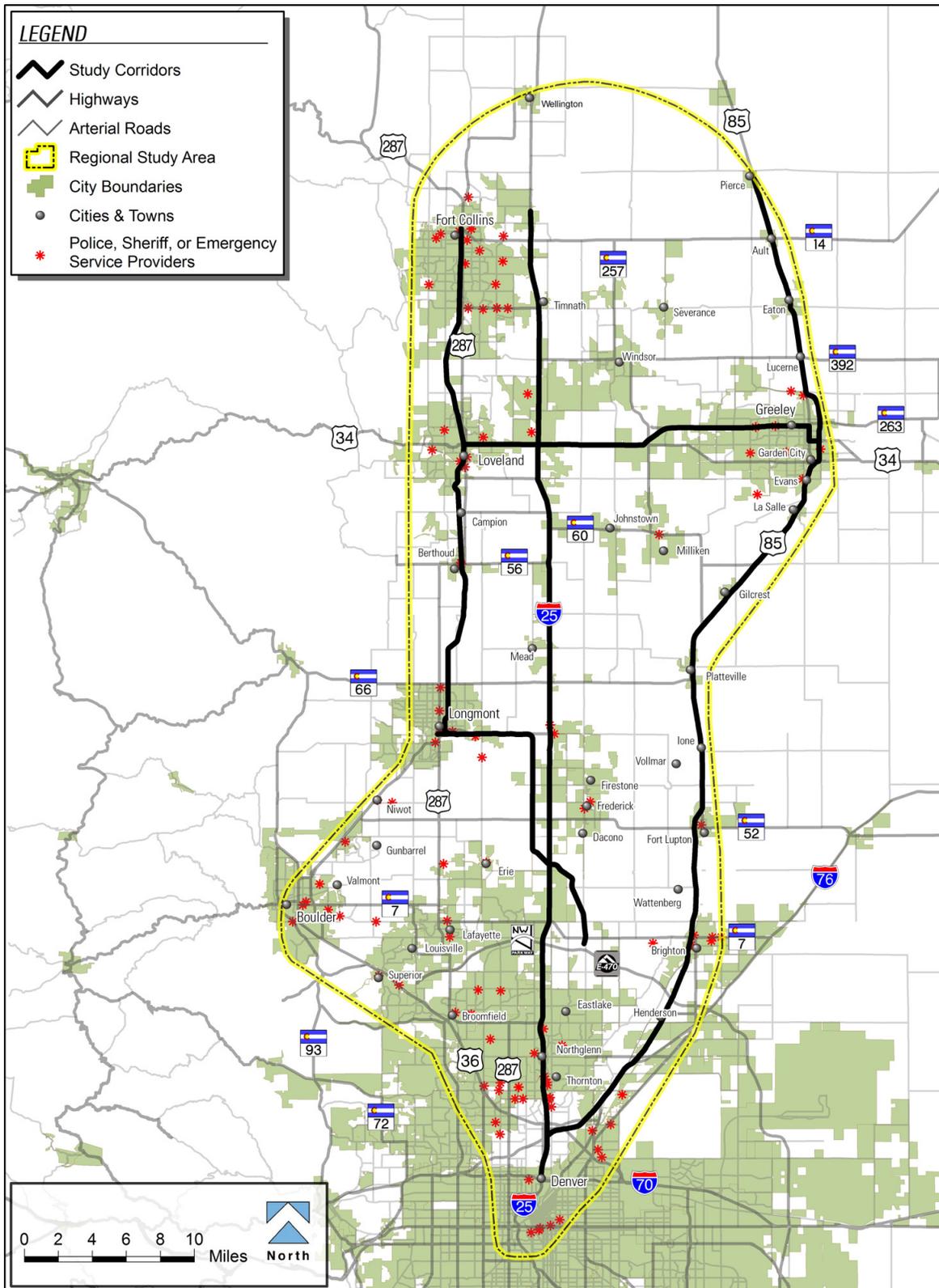
26 There are 114 fire, police, and emergency service provider locations within the regional study
27 area, as shown in **Figure 3.22-1**. In interviews with Larimer and Weld county sheriffs' officials,
28 it became clear that each responder uses I-25 differently depending on the circumstance. Lane
29 widths on the interstate are considered too narrow for most fire vehicles and police cars. Weld
30 County responders usually consider it too congested to respond in minimal times, but Larimer
31 County responders rely on it as one of the few continuous north-south routes in the county.

32 **Fire.** There are numerous fire districts within the regional study area including volunteer, rural,
33 and metro fire departments. In addition to fire and emergency response services, these
34 departments are often responsible for disaster/emergency planning and fire prevention education
35 in their communities.

36 There are 61 fire stations providing fire and emergency response services to residents throughout
37 the regional study area. Each town, city, and county within the regional study area has individual
38 fire facilities or combines its fire services with other jurisdictions. For example, the North Metro
39 Fire Rescue District provides service to the cities of Broomfield and Northglenn as well as
40 portions of unincorporated Adams, Boulder, Jefferson, and Weld counties.

41

1 **Figure 3.22-1 Emergency Service Provider Locations within the Regional Study Area**
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1 In addition, a fire and police station is proposed and would be located east of Johnson's Corner
2 and south of CR 16. This fire and emergency facility would service the Johnstown Fire Rotation
3 District with officers also present from the police. It would be a new and additional service for the
4 fire protection district that is currently north of US 60 at CR 15. The location was selected
5 because of its proximity to I-25 and because of community development near the I-25 corridor.
6 Driveway access would be to CR 16, which has access to I-25 at Exit 254 and at SH 402.

7 **Police.** There are 21 police departments and 8 sheriffs' offices providing public safety services
8 to residents throughout the regional study area. Sheriffs in Adams, Boulder, Broomfield,
9 Denver, Larimer, and Weld counties coordinate search-and-rescue efforts, handle civil
10 processes and evictions, provide animal control services, respond to hazardous material
11 events, and provide public safety services to residents living in unincorporated portions of the
12 regional study area. In addition to these county services, each municipality within the regional
13 study area has individual police departments geared toward crime prevention, law
14 enforcement, and traffic management. Sheriff's offices and police departments that serve the
15 regional study area are shown by location in **Figure 3.22-1**.

16 **Emergency Service.** Emergency medical response services are provided to regional study
17 area residents by local fire departments and hospitals. In addition to these service providers,
18 numerous independent agencies provide emergency response services in the regional study
19 area. Several jurisdictions have joined together to meet their emergency response needs. One
20 example is the Weld County Paramedic Services, which was created through a joint
21 agreement between Weld County and Greeley to serve both incorporated and unincorporated
22 communities in Weld County.

23 3.22.1.2 SECURITY

24 Security refers to crime, and related crime-prevention methods and services.

25 In general, security in the regional study area is typical of many growing portions of the nation,
26 with property-related crimes being most prevalent (theft, vandalism, etc.). The various policing
27 entities described above respond to these crimes.

28 Currently there is a security presence at the existing carpool lots along I-25. County and
29 municipal police officers patrol the existing carpool lots on an as-needed basis in response to
30 police calls and reported crimes. There has been growth in crime rate related to property
31 (vehicle break-ins and/or thefts), illegal drug trafficking, and illicit sexual activity at these
32 facilities. In response, CDOT and the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization
33 (NFRMPO) are working cooperatively to improve carpool lots at the following locations
34 including installing lighting and security cameras:

- 35 ▶ SH 34 – installation of security cameras
- 36 ▶ SH 402 – installation of security cameras and entrance lighting
- 37 ▶ SH 60 – implementation of access control (one-way in and out with curb added between
38 the frontage road and the park and ride)
- 39 ▶ SH 119 – installation of security cameras

40 Both CDOT and NFRMPO have identified available funding to make these improvements.

1 3.22.2 Environmental Consequences

2 Public transit and transportation projects could impact public safety and security by increasing the
3 demand for police and fire protection in the communities they serve, or by increasing or
4 decreasing the potential for accidents involving pedestrians or automobiles. Potential impacts to
5 safety and security as a result of the No-Action Alternative and the build packages were
6 evaluated.

7 The differences in public safety and security between the No-Action Alternative and the three build
8 packages are difficult to quantify. There is a potential for moderate increases in theft, vandalism,
9 and other emergency services at commuter rail and bus stations but no quantifiable evidence to
10 show that these increases would result from implementation of any build package.

11 3.22.2.1 NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE

12 Because the No-Action Alternative involves the existing highway and bus system, local
13 jurisdictions and the Colorado State Patrol would continue to provide security. The existing railway
14 system would be maintained by the freight companies who operate them.

15 As congestion increases, there would be a greater likelihood of both highway and railway crashes
16 within the regional study area and emergency response times would be negatively affected. Weld
17 County emergency responders have indicated that they would avoid I-25 due to increased
18 response times as described in **Section 3.22.1.1**. The likely higher number of crashes also could
19 affect the likelihood of a crash involving a transporter of hazardous waste.

20 3.22.2.2 PACKAGE A

21 Package A includes safety improvements, structure upgrades, construction of additional
22 general purpose plus auxiliary lanes on I-25, and the implementation of commuter rail and bus
23 service. This alternative is described in detail in **Chapter 2 Alternatives**.

24 ***Police Protection and Community Safety Services***

25 **Components A-H1 and A-H4: Safety Improvements and Structure Upgrades.** Police
26 protection services would be required for project security during both the construction and
27 operation phases. During the construction phase, security would be required to minimize or
28 prevent construction site thefts. Control of security at the construction site would be the
29 responsibility of the construction contractor. When a site theft occurs, modest increases in
30 police services would be required for investigation, arrests, citations, report writing, and court
31 appearances. Responding to site thefts is within the existing responsibilities of the affected
32 municipalities listed in the section detailing existing conditions. Responding to construction site
33 theft would represent a minimal impact to the overall police workload and is not envisioned to
34 necessitate an increase in staff to maintain existing levels of service.

35 **Components A-H2 and A-H3: General Purpose Lanes.** I-25 would continue to be patrolled
36 by the Colorado State Patrol. In addition, each county or municipality would have a local law
37 enforcement agency that has jurisdiction on intersecting streets. During the construction
38 phase, security would be required to minimize or prevent construction site thefts.
39 The construction of general purpose lanes also would potentially result in an increased need
40 for security and municipal law enforcement due to increased traffic. The accident rate is
41 projected to decrease, however.

1 **Components A-T1, A-T2, A-T3, and A-T4: Commuter Rail and Commuter Bus.** During the
2 construction phase, security would be required to minimize or prevent construction site thefts.

3 During the operation phase of the commuter rail project, police protection would be required to
4 ensure safety on the trains and at the stations and park and rides. Although an operational
5 authority for the commuter rail has not yet been identified, the creation and maintenance of a
6 transit system that has a consistent level of service, safety, and security would be one of the
7 over-arching goals. For discussion of impacts, it can be assumed that the standards practiced
8 by RTD, the largest transit service provider in the regional study area, would be implemented
9 by the commuter rail operational authority.

10 The commuter rail operational authority would provide uniformed, armed security officers who
11 patrol, by vehicle and on foot, the park and rides, trains, and platforms associated with the
12 commuter rail system. Security would be provided seven days a week during all hours of
13 revenue service. All elements of the commuter rail system would likely be designed generally
14 in accordance with RTD's Comprehensive Safety Certification Program (Interview with Dave
15 Genova, RTD, May, 2006), ensuring that safety issues are addressed and that the level of
16 service is consistent throughout the transit corridor.

17 Security on Commuter Trains. Armed security officers would be provided on vehicles and, at
18 times, off-duty police officers would be utilized. Increased demand for local police protection
19 could be required. The operational authority would likely have surveillance cameras on board
20 commuter trains. As with existing commuter trains, police and firefighters would be permitted
21 and encouraged to ride the system for free if identification were presented to the operator.

22 Security on Commuter Buses. Armed security officers would likely be provided on vehicles
23 and, at times, off-duty police officers would be utilized. Increased demand for local police
24 protection could be required. As with existing commuter bus services, police and firefighters
25 would be permitted and encouraged to ride the system for free if identification were presented
26 to the operator.

27 Security at Commuter Rail Stations, Commuter Bus Stations, and Park and Rides. Passengers
28 would congregate at station platforms and at the park and rides, providing an increased
29 opportunity for crime. Parked cars also would be potentially exposed to theft and vandalism.
30 Security forces hired by the commuter rail operational authority would be responsible for public
31 security at the stations, in conjunction with cooperation from local law enforcement
32 jurisdictions. The stations would incorporate security design features, such as lighting and in
33 some cases cameras, to deter criminals.

34 Based on historic RTD experience, special security at the park and rides is not anticipated,
35 although cameras would be placed at any identified high crime park and rides. When thefts
36 occur at park and ride facilities, security forces would work with local police to apprehend
37 criminals. When a crime at the stations or a park-n-ride facility occurs, police involvement
38 would be required for investigation, arrest, citation, report writing, and court appearances. The
39 presence of security forces at the stations would not require increased staffing for local police
40 within any of the affected municipalities.

1 **Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services**

2 **Components A-H1, A-H2, A-H3, and A-H4: Safety Improvements, General Purpose**
3 **Lanes, and Structure Upgrades.** The impacts to fire protection and emergency medical
4 services as a result of safety improvements, construction of general purpose and auxiliary
5 lanes, and structure upgrades would not be expected to differ substantially from those
6 described for Police Protection and Community Services relating to Component A-H2. Service
7 for the regional study area would continue to be provided by existing local jurisdictions. Safety
8 improvements, construction of general purpose and auxiliary lanes, and structure upgrades
9 would potentially result in an increased need for fire protection and emergency services due to
10 increased roadway traffic.

11 **Components A-T1, A-T2, A-T3, and A-T4: Commuter Rail and Commuter Bus.** A
12 commuter rail line and commuter bus service would require fire protection services for control
13 of fires in the vehicles and at the stations. It is unlikely that a fire would occur at the stations
14 because of the simple design and nonflammable construction materials. There is the potential
15 for fire in the trash receptacles and because of the concentration of passengers at the
16 commuter train and bus stations, the potential for increased demands for emergency services
17 exists.

18 Because the potential for fire is low, it is not anticipated that the commuter trains or buses
19 would necessitate the hiring of additional fire protection personnel in any of the affected
20 communities in the corridor. While the stations may occasionally require first aid calls, the
21 potential impact is considered negligible.

22 **Pedestrian and Vehicle Safety**

23 **Components A-H1, A-H2, A-H3, and A-H4: Safety Improvements, General Purpose**
24 **Lanes, and Structure Upgrades.** Highway safety information, relating to crash rates and the
25 geometric deficiencies that affect them, is documented in **Chapter 4 Transportation Impacts**.
26 All four transit service providers in the regional study area operate buses, which are subject to
27 highway crashes.

28 Planned construction at the interchange from I-25 to Johnson's Corner at Exit 254 would
29 provide improved access to the rest area and higher capacity for truck and commercial freight
30 parking in accordance with standards for mandatory rest periods as set by the Interstate
31 Commerce Commission.

32 The addition of pedestrian facilities in certain locations to ensure safe access to and from
33 transit stations would enhance pedestrian safety within the project area.

34 **Components A-T1 and A-T2: Commuter Rail.** Proposed commuter trains would interact with
35 the roadway network at 90 locations spread along the length of the rail components. Some of
36 these are already grade-separated, others would be grade-separated as part of the project,
37 and the remainder would stay at-grade. To determine design alternatives of rail crossings, two
38 distinct analyses were undertaken: an "exposure factor analysis" and the Federal Railroad
39 Administration's GradeDec.Net analysis, which evaluates benefits and costs of rail
40 investments.

41

1 Exposure factors are used to evaluate whether a crossing should be grade-separated.
2 An exposure factor is the product of train volumes and roadway volume. Crossings where the
3 exposure factor is largest are typically candidates for grade separations. Exposure factors
4 were calculated and evaluated for each of the 90 crossings. Crossings are generally clustered
5 in developed areas such as downtown Longmont and downtown Fort Collins. Exposure factors
6 were calculated for existing conditions and project conditions in the year 2035 for the
7 No-Action Alternative and the build packages. Of the 90 crossings evaluated, 12 crossings had
8 exposure factors at or above 1,000,000. Many of the rural crossings in the corridor had
9 exposure factors under 100,000. Every crossing in the corridor received at least lights and
10 gates as a suggested minimum improvement. Each of the crossings with exposure factors over
11 1,000,000 was further evaluated for grade separation and recommended for improvements.

12 The commuter rail operational authority would be responsible for implementing design plans
13 and coordinating efforts with freight railroad companies to ensure that at-grade crossings
14 would maximize safety to vehicles and pedestrians. Design measures could include grade
15 separation, installation of gates and lights, and installation of 4-quadrant gates with medians.

16 In the base year, a point of analysis that evaluates the regional study area in a year with
17 no planned construction projects, the overall corridor was predicted to have about 2.4 grade
18 crossing accidents per year. With the improvements defined during the exposure factor
19 analysis, the corridor accident prediction rate dropped to 0.7 grade crossing accidents per
20 year. This is a 70 percent reduction in predicted accidents. Assuming a 2035 design year,
21 a corridor-wide benefit/cost analysis was performed. The results indicate an overall
22 benefit/cost ratio of approximately 2.8. This positive benefit/cost ratio indicates that the
23 recommendations made would increase corridor safety without over-designing it.

24 To help ensure passenger and pedestrian safety, transit stations would likely be designed in
25 accordance with RTD's life-safety standards. Warning signs, tactile strips, signals, and fencing
26 would be provided to protect pedestrians at station locations. Some stations would require
27 pedestrian overpasses or underpasses to get patrons from the park and rides to the station
28 platforms. These overpasses and underpasses would be designed with adequate fencing and
29 lighting to protect patrons as they walk to the stations.

30 **Components A-T3 and A-T4: Commuter Bus.** The addition of commuter bus service to the
31 transportation corridor, as well as highway safety related to crash rates and the geometric
32 deficiencies that affect them, is described in **Chapter 2 Alternatives** and **Chapter 4**
33 **Transportation Impacts**. Each of the transit providers in the regional study area operate buses
34 that are subject to highway crashes. Impacts associated with the addition of commuter bus
35 service are described in **Chapter 2 Alternatives** and **Chapter 4 Transportation Impacts**.

36 **Summary of Key Impacts for Package A**

37 Key safety and security impacts associated with implementing Package A would occur
38 temporarily during construction and permanently after implementation. Temporary impacts
39 include:

- 40 ▶ There is a potential for increased theft during the construction phase.

41

1 Permanent changes include:

- 2 ▶ There is a potential for modest increases to police services in response to increases in
3 crime.
- 4 ▶ An increased security presence would be needed on trains, buses, and at proposed
5 stations and associated existing park and rides.
- 6 ▶ A 70 percent reduction in at grade crossing collisions is predicted.

7 **3.22.2.3 PACKAGE B**

8 Package B includes safety improvements, construction of tolled express lanes on I-25, and the
9 implementation of bus rapid transit service. This alternative was described in detail in
10 **Chapter 2 Alternatives.**

11 ***Police Protection and Community Safety Services***

12 **Components B-H1, B-H2, B-H3, B-H4, B-T1, and B-T2 : Safety Improvements, Tolled**
13 **Express Lanes, and Bus Rapid Transit.** Impacts to police protection and community
14 services from implementing Package B components would not differ substantially from those
15 described for Package A.

16 ***Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services***

17 **Components B-H1, B-H2, B-H3, B-H4, B-T1, and B-T2 : Safety Improvements, Tolled**
18 **Express Lanes, and Bus Rapid Transit.** Impacts to police protection and community
19 services from implementing Package B components would not differ substantially from those
20 described for Package A.

21 ***Pedestrian and Vehicle Safety***

22 **Components B-H1, B-H2, B-H3, B-H4, B-T1, and B-T2 : Safety Improvements, Tolled**
23 **Express Lanes, and Bus Rapid Transit.** The construction of tolled express lanes and the
24 addition of bus rapid transit service to the transportation corridor, as well as highway safety
25 related to crash rates and the geometric deficiencies that affect them, is described in
26 **Chapter 2 Alternatives** and **Chapter 4 Transportation Impacts.** Each of the transit providers in
27 the regional study area operate buses that are subject to highway crashes. Buses operating in
28 an exclusive facility with only one lane would be safer than buses operating in multiple general
29 purpose lanes. Impacts associated with these bus components are described in **Chapter 2**
30 **Alternatives** and **Chapter 4 Transportation Impacts.**

31 ***Summary of Key Impacts for Package B***

32 Key safety and security impacts associated with implementing Package B would occur temporarily
33 during construction and permanently after implementation. A temporary impact includes:

- 34 ▶ There would be a potential for increased theft during the construction phase.

35

1 Permanent changes include:

- 2 ▶ There would be a potential for modest increases to police services in response to
- 3 increases in crime.
- 4 ▶ An increased security presence would be needed on buses and at proposed and
- 5 associated existing park and rides.

6 **3.22.3 Preferred Alternative**

7 The Preferred Alternative would include four components: single track commuter rail with
8 occasional passing tracks and maintenance roads from Fort Collins to the proposed FasTracks
9 North Metro end-of-line; highway improvements including tolled express lanes in each
10 direction and a general purpose lane in each direction from SH 14 to SH 66; express bus
11 service from Fort Collins and Greeley to Denver and DIA; and commuter bus service along
12 US 85. This alternative was described in detail in **Chapter 2 Alternatives**.

13 For the commuter rail and commuter bus components of the Preferred Alternative, impacts to
14 police protection and community services, fire protection and emergency medical services,
15 and pedestrian and vehicle safety would not differ substantially from those described for
16 Package A. For the highway improvements and express bus service components of the
17 Preferred Alternative, impacts to police protection and community services, fire protection and
18 emergency medical services, and pedestrian and vehicle safety would not differ substantially
19 from those described for Package B.

20 **Summary of Key Impacts for the Preferred Alternative**

21 Key safety and security impacts associated with implementing the Preferred Alternative would
22 occur temporarily during construction and permanently after implementation. A temporary impact
23 includes:

- 24 ▶ There is a potential for increased theft during the construction phase.

25 Permanent changes include:

- 26 ▶ There is a potential for modest increases to police services in response to increases in
- 27 crime.
- 28 ▶ An increased security presence would be needed on trains, buses, and at proposed
- 29 stations and associated existing park and rides.
- 30 ▶ A 70 percent reduction in at grade crossing collisions is predicted.

31 **3.22.4 Mitigation Measures**

32 Mitigation measures for temporary impacts during construction include:

33 Potential losses at construction sites will be mitigated through fencing and on-site security
34 provided by contractors. All construction contractors will be responsible for safety at their
35 respective sites and be required to follow all Occupational Safety and Health Administration
36 (OSHA) requirements applicable to construction site safety. Each contractor's site safety plans
37 will be approved by the appropriate agencies or a construction management consultant, if
38 chosen. The appropriate agencies will provide a site safety officer to monitor site safety.

1 Mitigation measures for permanent impacts include:

2 The design of bus stations will incorporate life-safety standards, similar to RTD's
3 Comprehensive Safety Certification Program. To ensure consistency of service across the
4 transit corridor, the commuter rail operating authority will be expected to adhere to these same
5 standards. These include measures such as fencing to protect patrons from the track area;
6 well-designed pedestrian underpasses; lighting as a deterrent to crime and to ensure good
7 visibility in stations and parking areas; and, where walls and elevator shafts are constructed,
8 the use of transparent materials to provide better sight lines and reduce concealment areas for
9 criminals. The commuter rail operational authority will likely use applicable National Fire
10 Protection Association guidelines for life-safety and fixed-guideway transit systems. Local
11 police will be encouraged to use the park and ride lots when they need to fill out paperwork in
12 order to increase their visibility at stations. It also will be helpful for the commuter rail operating
13 authority to work with neighborhoods adjacent to stations and park and rides to establish
14 neighborhood watch programs and encourage regular attendance of police and security
15 personnel at neighborhood meetings.

16 Before project startup, the commuter rail operational authority will host training sessions for all
17 affected police, fire, emergency response teams, schools, and employers who either are
18 responsible for police or emergency response or are located in the immediate project corridor.
19 These training sessions will cover the details of commuter train and bus operations, potential
20 security issues, and agency responsibilities.

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