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7.0 Implementation and Next Steps

Implementation of the I-270 Corridor Improvements Project (project) will occur in a series of coordinated steps following issuance of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD), which constitutes the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) approval of the Selected Alternative. FHWA approval of the Selected Alternative allows CDOT to advance into final design, right-of-way acquisition, permitting, utility coordination, and phased construction. CDOT will continue to engage corridor communities, agencies, and stakeholders throughout implementation to ensure that commitments documented in this Final EIS/ROD are carried forward into construction, operations, and maintenance. This chapter outlines the anticipated phasing plan, implementation schedule, and funding approach to deliver the Selected Alternative.

7.1 Project Phasing and Schedule

The project will be constructed in multiple phases to align with available funding and to prioritize the most critical infrastructure needs. CDOT has structured the phasing strategy to maintain traffic operations through the corridor while replacing aging bridges, upgrading interchanges, improving multimodal facilities, and minimizing long-term disruption to users.

7.1.1 Phase 1: Critical Bridges

Phase 1 focuses on replacing the corridor's most structurally and operationally deficient bridges. This phase addresses key structural risks and advances two segments of mainline I-270 to the full Selected Alternative footprint. Phase 1 is fully funded through Strategic Colorado State Legislative and Statewide Bridge and Tunnel Enterprise (BTE) funding.

Bridges reconstructed or replaced in Phase 1 (Strategic Colorado State Legislative and BTE):

- Eastbound and westbound I-270 bridges over the South Platte River
- Eastbound and westbound I-270 bridges over the Burlington Ditch
- Eastbound and westbound I-270 bridges over Brighton Boulevard/Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR)/BNSF Railway (BNSF)
- Eastbound and westbound I-270 bridges over East 60th Avenue/BNSF

Mainline segments reconstructed to full width (Strategic Colorado State Legislative):

- Segment between the South Platte River and Burlington Ditch bridges
- Segment between the Brighton Boulevard/UPRR/BNSF bridges and 60th Avenue/BNSF bridges
- Segment between Burlington Ditch bridges and Brighton Boulevard/UPRR/BNSF bridges may also be reconstructed in Phase 1.

These improvements provide the structural foundation needed for future phases and help ensure continued safety and reliability along the corridor.

7.1.2 Future Phases

CDOT anticipates that completing full buildout of the project will require no more than two additional phases beyond Phase 1 and could be fully constructed within approximately five years from the start of construction, subject to the timing of funds.

Phase 2 will continue mainline reconstruction, complete the replacement of the York Street bridge over I-270 and eastbound and westbound I-270 bridges over 56th Avenue and construct the Vasquez Boulevard interchange and the Interstate 76 (I-76) ramp improvements. These elements are necessary for realizing the full safety, operational, multimodal, and Express Lane benefits of the Selected Alternative.

Phase 3 will complete non-mainline elements (such as improvements to Sandcreek Drive, the pedestrian overpass, the Vasquez Boulevard bridge over Sand Creek, and additional supporting corridor features) that do not directly impact I-270 mainline capacity or safety. If funding allows, CDOT may design and construct Phase 3 concurrently with Phase 2.

This phased implementation approach provides a clear path to delivering the full project scope while remaining responsive to funding cycles and minimizing construction-related disruption for corridor users.

The project, covering all three phases, is within the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and DRCOG is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the Denver region. The current DRCOG fiscally constrained RTP (published May 2024) lists two I-270 projects totaling \$800 million; one totaling \$500 million with a staging period of 2020-2029, and the other totaling \$300 million with a staging period of 2030-2039 and complies with the transportation conformity regulations in 40 Code of Federal Regulations Section 93. As referenced, the project is included in the DRCOG 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program Identification Number: 2020-068 (<https://apps.drcog.org/TRIPS/TIPProject/2026-2029/details/52690>) and the 2050 RTP (<https://drcog.org/sites/default/files/acc/TPO-RP-50MVRTP-EN-ACC-17x11-26-04-03-v1.pdf>).

DRCOG updates the 2050 Metro Vision RTP every four years and is currently updating its RTP, with anticipated completion and publication in late 2026. DRCOG's board of directors voted for unanimous adoption of the 2026 update during a January 2026 board meeting. CDOT coordinated with DRCOG to include updates to the 2026 RTP that align with the project's updated funding estimates. The updated RTP lists two I-270 projects totaling \$902 million:

one totaling \$340 million with a staging period of 2025-2029, and the other totaling \$562 million with a staging period of 2030-2034.

The \$340 million allocated for the 2025-2029 staging period covers all Phase 1 construction work and provides additional funding to advance the final design of Phases 2 and 3. The \$562 million allocated for the 2030-2034 staging period accounts for Phases 2 and 3 construction.

7.2 Funding Overview

Delivery of the project will rely on a combination of state and federal funding sources. Key funding partners include:

- Strategic Colorado State Legislative fund allocations for initial construction and early bridge replacements
- BTE funding for eligible bridge structures
- Colorado Transportation Investment Office funding and support for Express Lane infrastructure and tolling systems
- Federal discretionary grants sought to supplement state funding and accelerate key phases

The Selected Alternative includes Express Lane infrastructure, enabling the project to generate future toll revenues to support long-term operations, maintenance, and potentially contribute to capital delivery. As implementation progresses, CDOT will continue coordinating with FHWA, local jurisdictions, and funding partners to align available funding with project phasing needs.

The most up-to-date breakdown for all project costs, including National Environmental Policy Act, design, construction, and past bridge repair efforts, as of the end of April 2026 is shown below. This estimate will change with time, and CDOT will remain transparent on project estimates and budget. Refer to Section 3.7 of the Draft EIS for the construction phasing strategy.

Phase 1 - Critical Bridges - \$307,000,000. The cost includes the following elements:

- Design and reconstruction of eight bridges
- Design and reconstruction of limited I-270 roadway
- Environmental mitigations, permits, and other environmental commitments as described in Chapter 5.0 of this ROD
- Community enhancement efforts as described in the State Environmental Reports (<https://www.codot.gov/projects/studies/i270study>)

Phase 2 - Remaining I-270 Mainline - \$402,000,000. The cost includes the following elements:

- Design and reconstruction of three bridges
- Design and reconstruction of remaining I-270 roadway, including Intelligent Transportation Systems
- Design and reconstruction of the Vasquez Boulevard interchange
- Design and reconstruction of I-76 ramp improvements

- Environmental mitigations, permits, and other environmental commitments as described in Chapter 5.0 of this ROD
- Community enhancement efforts as described in the State Environmental Reports

Phase 3 - Remaining Project - \$97,000,000. The cost includes the following elements:

- Design and reconstruction of one bridge
- Design and reconstruction of Sandcreek Drive
- Design and construction of the pedestrian overpass
- Environmental mitigations, permits, and other environmental commitments as described in Chapter 5.0 of this ROD
- Community enhancement efforts as described in the State Environmental Reports