



COLORADO

Department of  
Transportation

# 2040 | Regional Transportation Plan

February 2015

## Gunnison Valley

*Transportation Planning Region*





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## A Message from your Gunnison Valley Transportation Planning Region Chair

As Chair of the Gunnison Valley Transportation Planning Region, representing Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel counties, it is my responsibility to ensure that our area's transportation needs and priorities are recognized, made easily accessible, and communicated to the public and key transportation decision-makers. This Regional Transportation Plan accomplishes these goals and more. It recognizes current needs and priorities, while formulating solutions to keep pace with regional growth and changing conditions.

The Gunnison Valley Transportation Planning Region began transportation plan development in May of 2013. This document is the reflection of Transportation Planning Region member input, various types of data and information, and broad public sentiment expressed in online and printed surveys and in responses to telephone town hall questions.

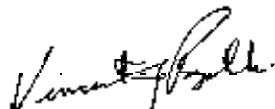
A Regional Transportation Plan that reflects the overall priorities and needs for our area is vital at a time of limited funding for transportation. This plan will help inform decisions the Colorado Department of Transportation makes about the state's transportation system.

This Regional Transportation Plan has been developed in tandem with the Colorado Department of Transportation's development of the Statewide Transportation Plan. These plans will be integrated, demonstrating the important role that transportation in the Gunnison Valley Transportation Planning Region plays in the overall state transportation system. For example, the priority corridors and transportation needs identified in this plan have been rolled up into the Statewide Transportation Plan.

This plan is intended to be a living, useful document that is referred to when transportation decisions are being made and as the Transportation Planning Region implements the action items listed in the final chapter of the Regional Transportation Plan. The plan will be revisited periodically by the Transportation Planning Region and others to ensure that we are on the right path toward accomplishing the vision and goals set forth by it.

Your familiarity with our region's transportation needs and priorities and the challenges that we face is important now and into the future. I invite you to review this plan and become more engaged in the Gunnison Valley Transportation Planning Region's transportation future.

Sincerely,



Vince Rogalski  
Chair, Gunnison Valley Transportation Planning Region

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# Chapter 1 Regional Transportation Story

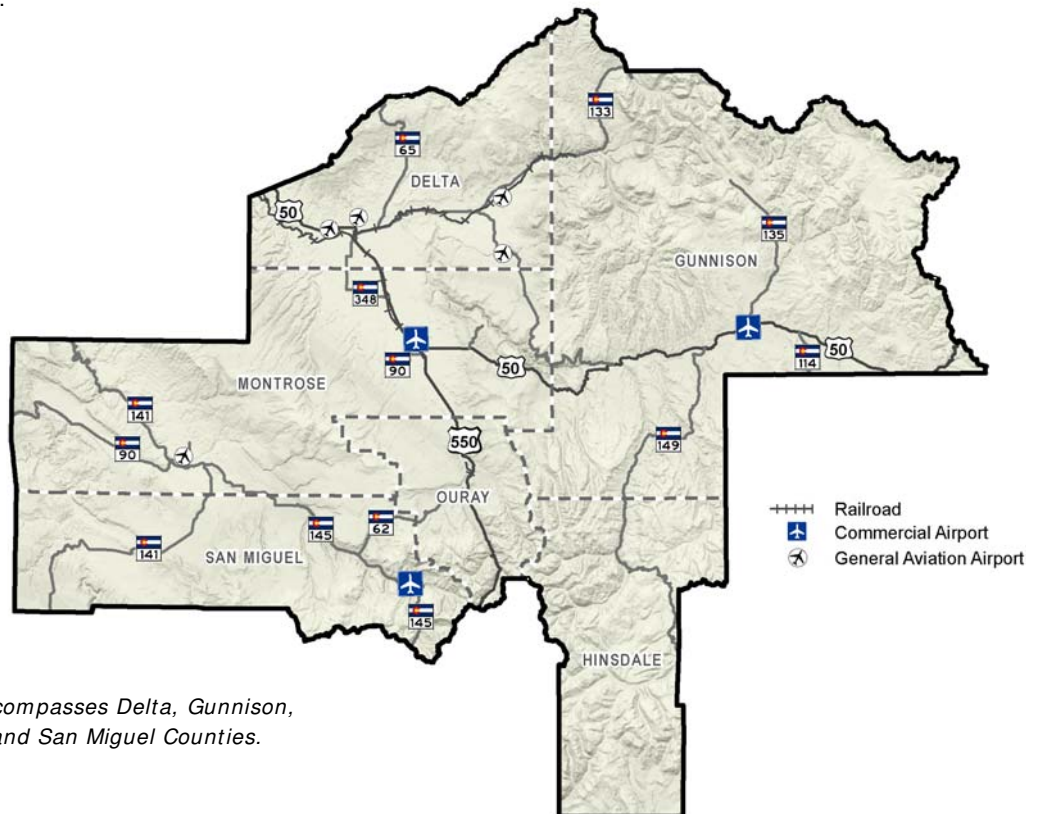
Anyone who has traveled across Colorado knows that it's a good idea to bring a map. Whether it's displayed on a smartphone, folded in the glove compartment, or doodled on a napkin, a map can tell you where you've been, where you're going, and the best route to arrive safely at your destination. This 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the map for the future of the Gunnison Valley Transportation Planning Region (TPR). It lays out all the information needed to guide the continuing development of a multimodal transportation system for the Gunnison Valley TPR. The RTP recognizes current needs and priorities, while formulating solutions to keep pace with regional growth and changing conditions. It extends out 25 years to 2040, but has a particular focus on the first 10 years, up to 2025, allowing the region to think clearly about what kind of transportation is needed in the Gunnison Valley today, tomorrow, and in the future.

The RTP serves multiple purposes that, together, establish the foundation for regional decision-making related to the statewide transportation system. It is developed using stakeholder input, public feedback, and regional data. It allows the people of the Gunnison Valley TPR to clearly communicate their needs and priorities for transportation to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the State Transportation Commission, which simultaneously helps them understand what to expect from CDOT with regard to planning, funding, and completing projects in the TPR. The RTP is updated periodically (approximately every four years) to adjust for changes in travel behavior, transportation policy, and the transportation system over time.

Colorado has a unique transportation story because of its diverse regions. This story is being told through a video located on CDOT's planning website. The Colorado transportation story includes local and regional aspects of life in the Gunnison Valley, making this regional transportation story an important part of painting the full picture of transportation in Colorado.



**Gunnison Valley TPR**

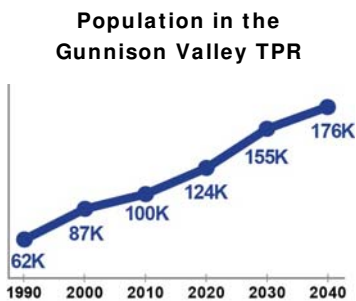


*The Gunnison Valley TPR encompasses Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties.*

The regional transportation story for the Gunnison Valley TPR describes the region's unique characteristics, along with some of the key transportation conditions that help to define the Gunnison Valley TPR. The goals and vision for the TPR are also identified.

## Landscape

The geography and climate of the region are important factors for travel. Roads in the Gunnison Valley traverse the semi-arid Western Slope; mountain passes of the San Juan, Elk, and Sawatch ranges; and deep canyons along the Gunnison River and its tributaries. These geographic conditions have an impact on the safety and efficiency of the transportation system. This region experiences severe winter storms, but also experiences an above-average number of days of sunshine throughout the year. The changing and sometimes severe weather creates potential for road closures due to adverse weather conditions.



*Population in the Gunnison Valley TPR is expected to grow at a higher rate than the rest of the state. The region's population is expected to increase by 76 percent by 2040 compared to today. (Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs)*

## Population

The population of the Gunnison Valley TPR is expected to grow approximately 1.9 percent annually through the year 2040 (from 100,000 residents in 2010 to 176,000 residents in 2040). This is a higher growth rate than the statewide annual average of 1.5 percent. People 65 years of age and older—both in the Gunnison Valley TPR and statewide—make up the fastest-growing segment of the population.

## Heard Around the Region

The people in the region value rural living and a sense of community, but they also appreciate nearby city amenities. Year-round tourism and outdoor recreational activities cause population growth with seasonal peaks. These population fluctuations create increasing demands on the transportation system.

In addition to tourism, local demographic trends affect transportation needs. Transportation options are especially vital for those without access to a vehicle or who cannot drive. Local van-based services are important for seniors, disabled residents, and those without access to a personal vehicle so they can travel to medical facilities and participate in social, recreational, and retail activities.



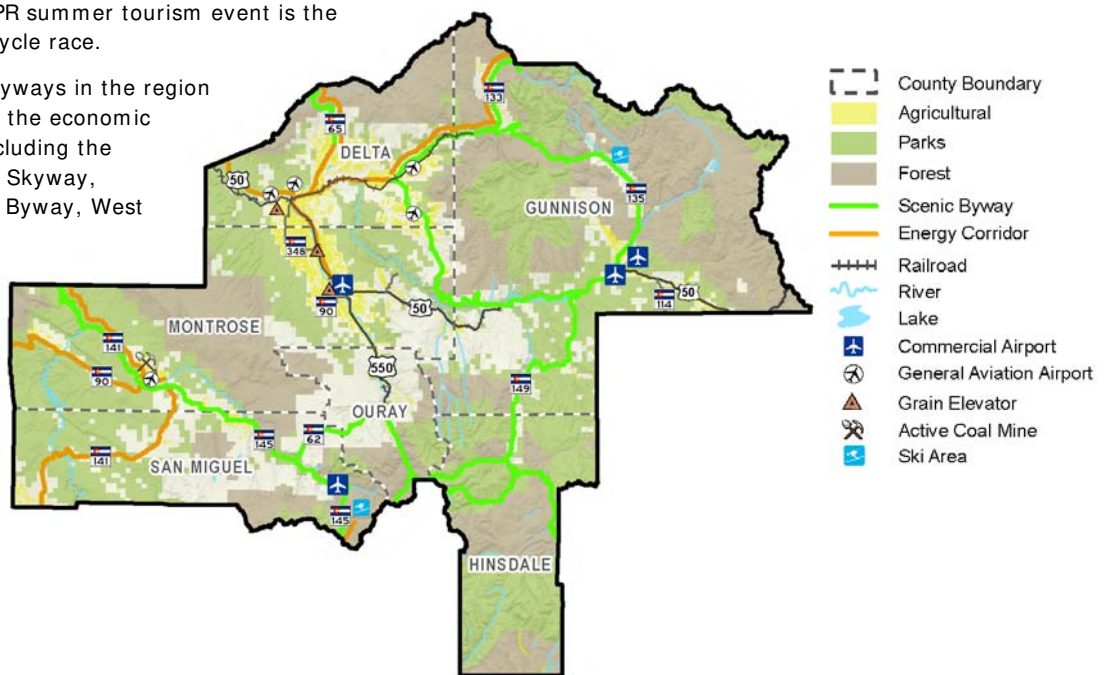
## Economic Vitality

Primary economic generators in the Gunnison Valley TPR include agriculture, energy, outdoor recreation, tourism, and hunting. The agricultural industry is particularly strong in the TPR. There is a growing energy production sector in the local economy that includes the wind, oil, and natural gas industries. Top commodities by value exported from the TPR are grains and petroleum refining products, which require transport of resources and finished materials. Commodity values are expected to grow by 2.5 percent annually through the year 2040.

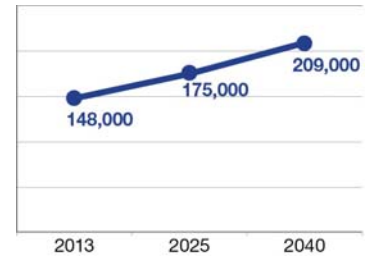
Truck traffic is an indicator of economic activity in the TPR. Although the volume of truck traffic is lower than the rest of the state (8 percent for the region, compared with 9 percent for the state), almost all of the freight movement through the TPR is done by truck. Trucks have much greater impacts on road conditions and maintenance needs due to their significant weight. These trucks can be slow-moving up steep grades, which creates the need for passing lanes and shoulders in spots. The sidebar graphic shows the growth in truck vehicle miles traveled (VMT). VMT is defined as one vehicle traveling one mile.

Tourism in the Gunnison Valley TPR is prevalent year-round, with peak tourist travel occurring during the July 4th holiday and during ski season from December to March. Crested Butte and Telluride ski areas welcome millions of visitors during their winter seasons. Tourism activities not only affect primary tourist destinations, but also the services located along routes from major urban areas. An example of a major TPR summer tourism event is the USA Pro Challenge bicycle race.

There are six Scenic Byways in the region that also contribute to the economic vitality of the area, including the Alpine Loop, San Juan Skyway, Unaweep/Tabeguache Byway, West Elk Loop, Grand Mesa Byway, and the Silver Thread Byway.



## Truck Traffic in the Region



The region is expected to experience growth in truck traffic. By 2040, the daily VMT by trucks in the region will increase by 41 percent. (Source: CDOT, 2014)

## Heard Around the Region

Local businesses, such as the sawmill in Montrose, attract traffic from across the region. Continuing industrial development at the outskirts of towns increases traffic and congestion along these routes, growing the need for access control planning—especially as the highway transitions from rural to urban areas. Increases in oil and gas production and growth in wind resource development also contribute to increasing truck traffic

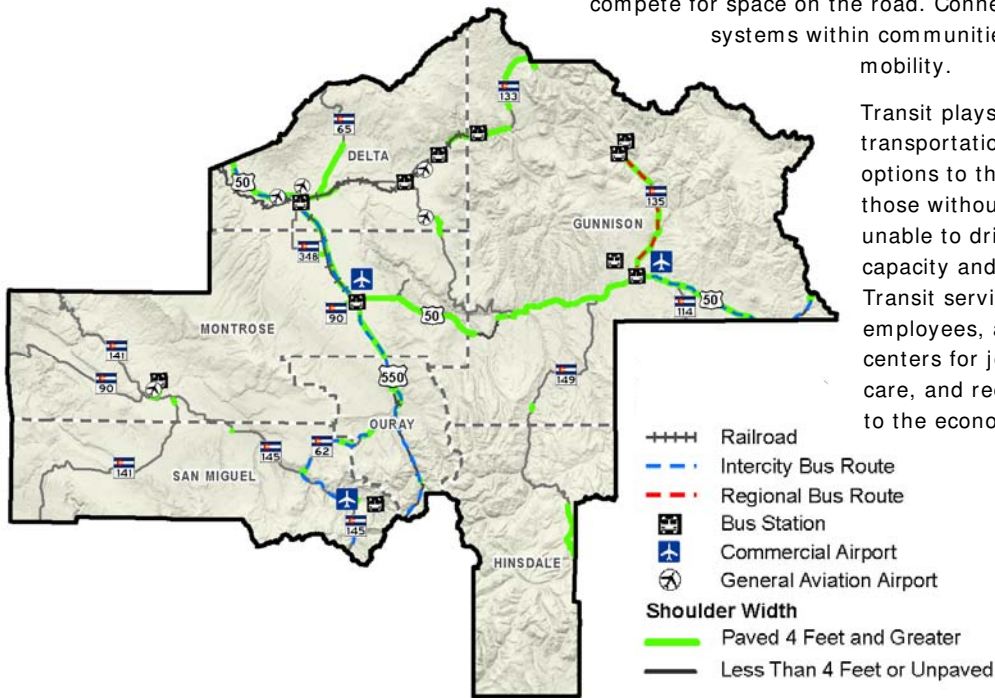
## Multimodal Transportation System

The multimodal transportation system in the Gunnison Valley TPR includes state highways, transit, airports, and rail lines. In the Gunnison Valley, there are five general aviation airports, three commercial service airports, approximately 12 local/human services transit providers, and three intercity/regional bus providers.

Bicycle use in the region is a popular and growing activity for both transportation and recreation. Improved shoulders would benefit the needs of all road users, including bicyclists. Other infrastructure improvements, including side paths, protected bike lanes, and other techniques, can greatly improve safety—particularly where bicyclists and motor vehicles

compete for space on the road. Connections to the local trail systems within communities also support bicycle mobility.

Transit plays a vital role in the multimodal transportation system, providing mobility options to the traveling public, especially those without access to cars or who are unable to drive. It also enhances system capacity and improves system efficiency. Transit services connect residents, employees, and visitors to major activity centers for jobs, schools, shopping, medical care, and recreation, thereby contributing to the economic vitality of the area.



## Multimodal Transportation System At-A-Glance

**1,500** lane miles—4.2 percent of the state system

**1.9** million VMT per day—2.5 percent of state VMT

**3** commercial service airports: Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional, Montrose Regional, Telluride Regional

**5** general aviation airports: Blake Field in Delta, Hopkins Field in Nucla, Westwinds in Delta, North Fork Valley in Paonia, and Crawford Airport

**12** local/human services transit providers

**3** intercity/regional bus providers

- All Points Transit: serving Montrose and Grand Junction
- Black Hills Stage Lines: serving Gunnison, Pueblo, and Denver
- Road Runner Stage Lines (SUCAP): serving Grand Junction, Telluride, Placerville, Ridgway, Montrose, Delta, and Durango

Source: CDOT

## Roadway Drivability and Bridges

As is characteristic of rural regions, the Gunnison Valley TPR has a high ratio of highway lane miles relative to its population and volume of vehicular travel. The TPR's population makes up 2.0 percent of the state of Colorado, yet it has 6.5 percent of the state highway lane miles and 2.5 percent of the annual VMT in the state.

### Drivability Life

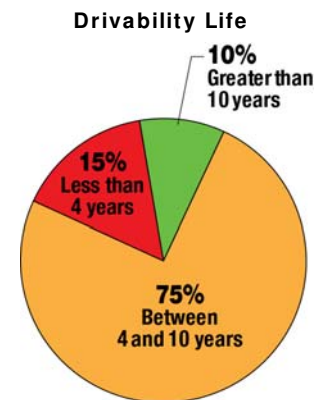
Pavement condition is described in terms of drivability. Drivability is a function of roadway smoothness, pavement distress, and safety. Drivability life (DL) is an indication—reported in years—of how long a highway will have acceptable driving conditions.

A highway with a DL of greater than 10 years is considered to have a high DL, while a highway with a DL of less than four years is considered to have a low DL. A DL is considered moderate when it is between four and 10 years. In the Gunnison Valley TPR, approximately 85 percent of highways have a DL of high or moderate, while approximately 15 percent of highways have a low DL.

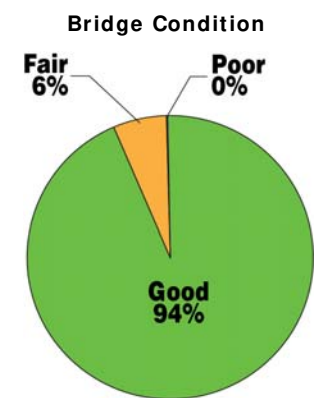
DL will improve the system by taking a more consistent and pragmatic approach to surface treatment. This means strategically utilizing limited surface treatment funds to maximize cost-benefit and minimize unacceptable driving conditions. Unacceptable driving conditions mean drivers have to reduce speeds to compensate for unsafe factors, navigate around damaged pavement, or endure rough rides. By reporting pavement conditions using DL, CDOT is able to identify which roadways will reach unacceptable driving conditions and then determine the most appropriate method of repair. The DL method also will proactively direct financial resources toward maintaining pavement to extend the life of a road and avoid or delay more costly rehabilitation or reconstruction. DL will result in a statewide network with the most drivable roads, due to routine surface treatment, across the entire pavement network.

### Bridges

Bridge condition is an important element of the transportation system. The TPR's system has 99 bridges maintained by CDOT. Bridge condition in the TPR is relatively good, with all bridges being in good or fair condition. Currently, there are no bridges reported to be in poor condition in the TPR.



(Source: CDOT, 2014)



(Source: CDOT, 2011-2013)

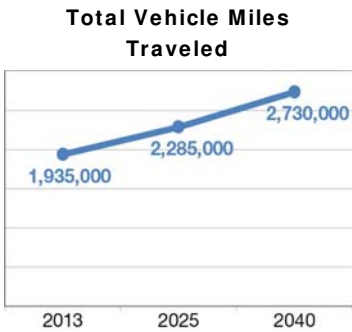
## Heard Around the Region

Transit service companies provide transportation options for elderly, disabled, and other residents to access health care and social opportunities. Opportunities to expand transit service to outlying areas exist on the major travel corridors. There is a desire to make transit more accessible by increasing the number of Park-and-Rides and bus stops.

Bicycle mobility is a high priority in the Gunnison Valley TPR. Within towns, cycling is a viable mode for commuting to work most of the year. Some mountain communities provide unique modes of transportation, including gondolas.

## Traffic and Safety

Traffic volume in the Gunnison Valley TPR is growing. Between 2013 and 2040, the VMT in the region likely will grow at an annual rate of 1.3 percent. This is slightly lower than the 1.6 percent rate anticipated for the state.

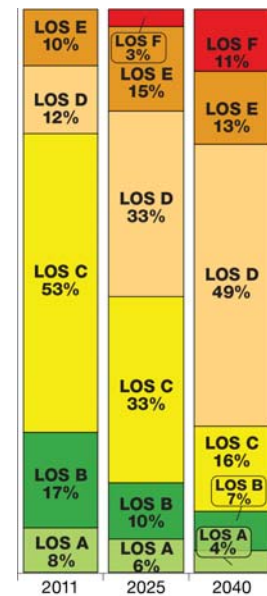


(Source: CDOT, 2014)

Roadway Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of congestion delay. It can be thought of as a grading scale for roadways, where LOS A is excellent and implies high levels of mobility and ease of maneuverability. LOS F represents failure and indicates that the road is experiencing heavy traffic volumes, significant congestion, and stop-and-go conditions. Grades of LOS A through LOS D are considered acceptable. The majority of highways in the TPR are expected to remain relatively free of congestion within this time period. Future increased congestion is anticipated to occur on highways around the towns of Montrose, Crested Butte, Ouray, and Telluride.

From 2010 to 2011, the average crash rate in the region was 1.29 crashes per million VMT. This rate is lower than the statewide average of 1.70 crashes per million VMT for the same time period. The most prominent crash types in the Gunnison Valley TPR between 2010 and 2011 were wild animal collisions. Rear-end crashes and overturning also were top crash types during that period.

### Regional Level of Service



(Source: CDOT, 2013)

Wild animal crossings mitigate animal-vehicle collisions and increase safety on the region's highways.



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## Recent Accomplishments

Transportation is constantly changing in the Gunnison Valley TPR. Several highway and transit projects completed since the prior TPR plan addressed transportation needs in the region, including:

- US 550—Bear Creek Bridge Replacement (\$4.9 million)
- US 550—Ridgway to Colona, Passing Lane (\$8.8 million)
- US 50—Cerro Summit, Phases 1 & 2 (\$7.7 million)
- SH 92—Delta County, Phases 1 & 2 (\$21 million)
- All Points Transit hired a Mobility Manager in 2011
- SUCAP began intercity bus service, Roadrunner Stage Lines, between Durango and Grand Junction in July 2014 serving several communities in the Gunnison Valley TPR.



*SH 92 through Delta County*

## Heard Around the Region

Traffic safety is a fundamental priority for transportation at the local, regional, and state levels. Shoulder additions, pavement maintenance, and strategic improvements, such as turning lanes, are crucial to improving safety and are highly desired by residents in the region.

State highways often serve as Main Street in many communities in the Gunnison Valley TPR, adding to safety concerns. Many of the roads in the area are two lanes with limited shoulders. Oversized loads frequently travel in the area, impacting mobility for other travelers on the narrow roads. Many drivers report needing to move completely off the road to let a large vehicle pass them.

## Key Takeaways

The Gunnison Valley TPR is unique in many ways. The following takeaways were identified by TPR members during the planning process and considered in the preparation of the plan's recommendations.

- Geographically, the TPR is very diverse. The transportation system covers challenging terrain with potential for adverse weather conditions.
- The regional transportation system supports a range of uses, from long-distance freight to local biking and pedestrian travel. Cycling is a viable mode for commuting to work most of the year and is becoming a major tourism attraction.
- Many transportation routes support a range of traffic at the same time.
- Recent improvements to road condition communication systems have improved the overall traveling experience in the TPR, helping residents and visitors to adjust travel plans accordingly.
- Continuing industrial development at the outskirts of towns increases traffic and congestion along these routes; the need for access control planning is apparent, especially as the highway transitions from rural to urban areas.
- Seasonal and year-round population growth will place new demands on the transportation system. This growth will cause continued increases in daily commuters within and through the TPR and create new demands for transit.
- The TPR is experiencing increases in oil and gas production and growth in wind energy development. Significant increases in truck traffic are anticipated as these industries grow.
- SH 141 is a recently designated hazardous materials route. Increasing impacts from hazardous material trucks are expected.

*US 50 at Blue Mesa Reservoir.  
Photo by Granger Meador, ©  
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# Transportation System Vision and Goals

The vision and goals for the Gunnison Valley TPR transportation system, including transit, are listed below. The Gunnison Valley TPR developed a multimodal vision and goals for its transportation system based on the region's Transportation Story and the data presented in this plan. A regional transit working group—including public and private transit agency representatives, elected officials, and others—developed the transit vision and goals in two of its three meetings conducted to guide and direct development of the regional coordinated transit plan.

## Transportation System Vision and Goals

The vision of the Gunnison Valley TPR is to have a transportation system that will accommodate the region's rapidly growing multimodal transportation needs through a combination of capacity improvements in congested corridors, safety and traffic management improvements elsewhere on the transportation system, and the provision of local and regional public transportation. Transportation development will accommodate and enhance the region's high quality of life, while preserving the environmental conditions that make this a great place to live, work and visit. The transportation system supports economic development by providing mobility for people and goods as well as multimodal access to services. The 2040 regional transportation plan envisions a systematic approach to implementing the transportation plan that is understood and supported by the people of the Gunnison Valley TPR. The Gunnison Valley TPR goals are:

- Provide mobility to the traveling public at an acceptable level of service.
- Preserve and enhance the region's overall economic health, providing for energy development and freight movement reliability.
- Maintain the transportation system in the most efficient manner possible.
- Provide new intermodal access and mobility options with particular emphasis on developing new bike and transit travel options.
- Design the transportation system to fit the existing urban and natural context, minimizing impacts to the region's air, water, scenic view corridors, cultural resources, and wildlife habitat.
- Support the transportation system to function as a complete system with effective connectivity both within the region and to the rest of the state.

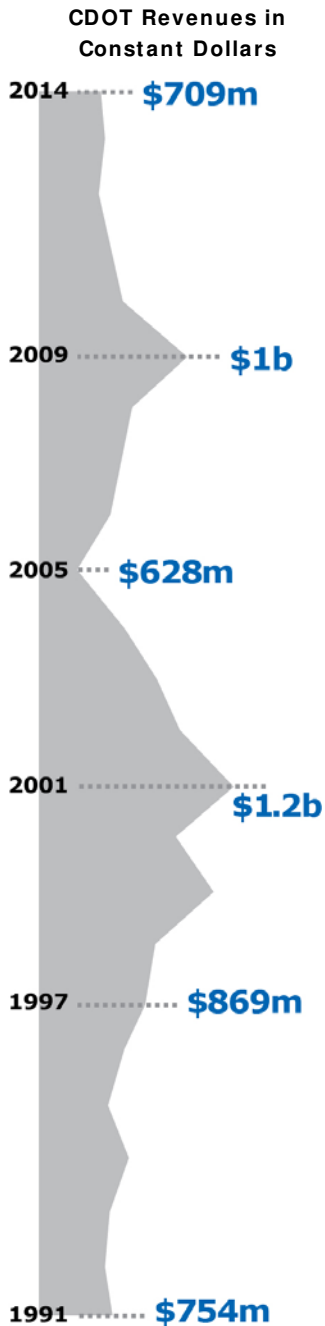
## Transit Vision and Goals

In the Gunnison Valley TPR, the transit vision is to provide a convenient, reliable, and efficient transit network to serve residents and visitors. The transit goals are:

- Preserve, maintain, and enhance existing transit services.
- Provide additional general public transit service within and between communities.
- Improve and promote transit options.
- Increase transit funding through public and private mechanisms.
- Integrate general public and human services transit modalities.

# Chapter 2

## Changes Affecting Regional Transportation

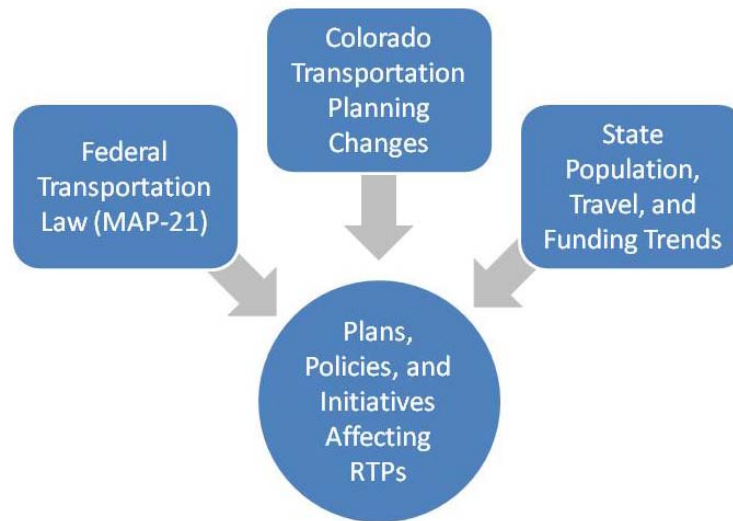


m = millions    b = billions

*When adjusted for inflation and construction costs, CDOT's annual revenues, since 2009, have declined in purchasing power to pre-1991 levels. Sharp fluctuations in annual revenues make it challenging to plan ahead beyond a few years.*

This chapter discusses policies and trends that affect the TPR's RTP. Colorado has developed plans, policies, programs, and initiatives since the 2035 plan that affect transportation in the Gunnison Valley TPR and statewide. These changes respond to several trends affecting transportation in Colorado:

- Current state trends in population growth, travel demand, and transportation funding
- The federal transportation authorization bill, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21), reauthorizes federal funding for transportation while placing a new emphasis on measuring how well each state meets its goals and objectives
- Colorado revised transportation regulations, state law changes, and Transportation Commission policies



### Federal Transportation Law, MAP-21

Signed into law on July 6, 2012, MAP-21 marked the first time that a federal transportation authorization law outlined national transportation goals and required states to measure how well they addressed those national goal areas. States are required to ensure resources are distributed to meet objectives. The law established national goals for safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement, and economic vitality, and reduced project delivery delays.

Besides authorizing transportation funds, MAP-21 also consolidates funding programs, permits different financing mechanisms, and provides for streamlined environmental reviews. A link to MAP-21 can be found at CDOT's planning website.



## State Trends Affecting Transportation Planning

Colorado's population is growing. This growth will increase the number of transportation system users and the VMT. In 2013, the population of Colorado was 5.1 million people. By 2040, the population is expected to increase to 7.8 million people (Source: DOLA). In 2013, there were 78 million VMT per day on the state highway system. In 2040, there are projected to be 115 million VMT each day on the state highway system.

To support this growth along with an expanding and changing economy, Colorado's state transportation system needs additional revenue to balance maintenance, safety, mobility, and limited expansion. CDOT's challenge is having enough revenue to help the transportation system function at its potential. The gas tax, the main source of funding for Colorado's roads, is assessed at a flat per-gallon rate that has not increased in 20 years. That means that with increasing construction costs, the buying power of the gas tax is decreasing.

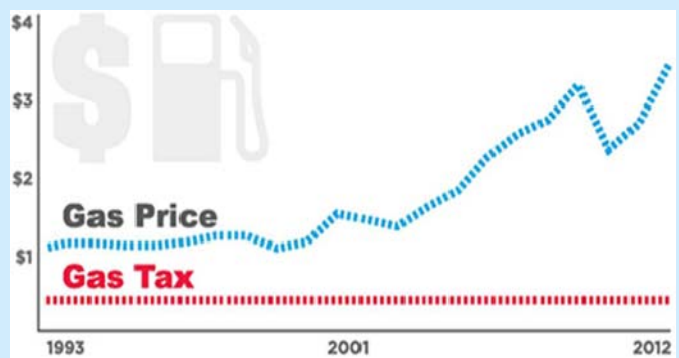
To get more out of the transportation system in the face of limited revenues, CDOT is focusing on maintaining assets, managing traffic flows, and encouraging multimodal choices like transit, bicycling, and walking. While the RTP focuses on regional priorities for highway improvements, other transportation plans incorporate different modes of travel. Guidance from all of these individual planning documents is combined in the Statewide Transportation Plan so that it can provide comprehensive guidance on statewide transportation planning decisions.



*With more people living in and traveling through Colorado, necessities such as snow removal are increasingly important for safety and the economy.*

## Growing Transportation Demand, Flat Funding Source

The Colorado transportation system is funded primarily by the state and federal gas taxes at a rate of 22 cents per gallon and 18.4 cents per gallon, respectively. These rates have not increased at all since 1993. With vehicles becoming more fuel efficient and with expected growth in population and VMT, revenue from the gas tax cannot keep up with transportation demand.



## State Transportation Policy Changes

The Colorado Legislature passed FASTER (Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery) in 2009 to provide additional funds for transportation, primarily through increased vehicle registration fees. FASTER funds are to improve safety and replace poor bridges. A provision in the legislation also designates the distribution of FASTER funds into the State Transit and Rail Fund. Grants to local governments for transit projects, such as new bus stops, bike parking, maintenance facilities or multimodal transportation centers, and transit projects of state and inter-regional significance are funded by the State Transit and Rail Fund. Total FASTER funding is approximately \$200 million per year, according to the CDOT Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Budget.

CDOT planning regulations were updated to reflect the performance management focus and increased emphasis on coordination with tribal governments in MAP-21, as well as additional planning factors in FASTER. The planning regulations, 2 CCR 601-22, can be accessed at CDOT's planning website.

Revised in 2015, CDOT's Policy Directive (PD) 14 provides an overall framework for the transportation planning process through which a multimodal, comprehensive Statewide Transportation Plan is developed that optimizes the transportation system by balancing preservation and maintenance, efficient operations and management practices, and capacity improvements. PD 14 performance objectives will guide distribution of resources for the Statewide Transportation Plan, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and the annual budget. The directive is in alignment with national goals in MAP-21. It also reflects CDOT's risk-based asset management program and plan that incorporates a business approach intended to optimize investment for maintenance and preservation of CDOT transportation assets based on both risk and performance assessment. PD 14 will be revised periodically as federal regulations for MAP-21 become effective and as CDOT further refines its performance objectives. To review PD 14, see CDOT's planning website.

## How does the Gunnison Valley TPR respond to these national goals, plans, policies, programs, and initiatives?

The Statewide Transportation Plan is effectively a roll-up of the rural TPR and urban Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) plans. For CDOT to address the national goals and federal and state planning factors, the regional plans should address as many of them as appropriate. While the Gunnison Valley TPR is not subject to specific performance measures, this RTP addresses these goals where applicable. Truck freight, pavement and bridge condition, system reliability, safety, and supporting economic vitality have been emphasized in this RTP. In addition, the Gunnison Valley TPR has identified several multimodal priorities, including improvements for transit and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.



# Chapter 3 Planning Purpose & Processes

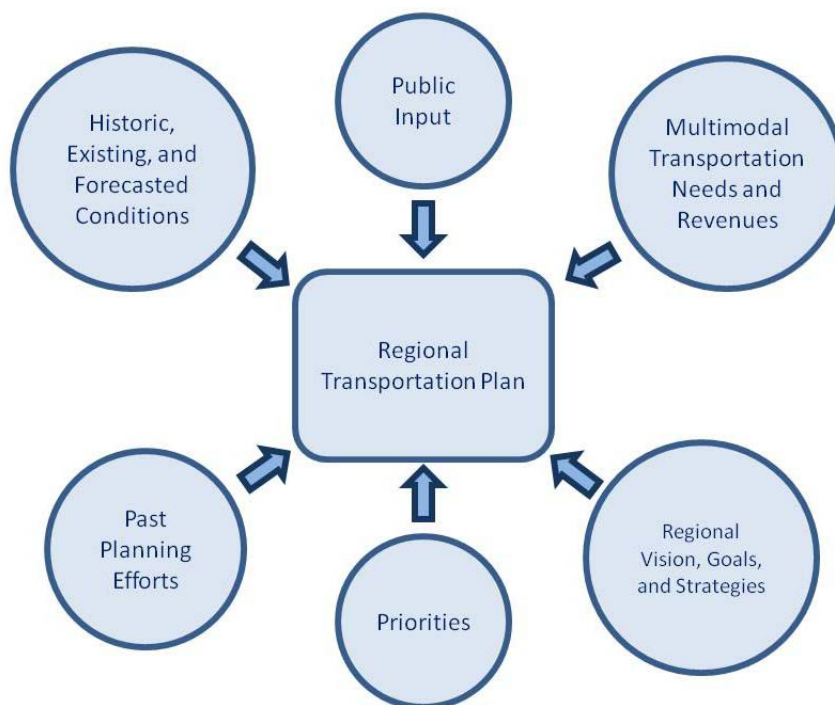
This chapter discusses the purpose of developing an RTP and the process that was used to develop a plan for the Gunnison Valley TPR. Transportation planning provides the framework for investment in a transportation system that will keep the Gunnison Valley TPR moving forward, growing, and adapting with the needs of its residents for decades to come. It will be used to guide important decision-making for the next 25 years, but with a particular emphasis on the next 10 years.

The purpose of the Gunnison Valley TPR's RTP is to provide guidance and direction related to the regional transportation vision, needs, and priorities based on input from the public and data gathered throughout the planning process. It allows the people of the Gunnison Valley TPR to communicate their needs and desires for transportation in their region, and, in response, to understand what they can expect from CDOT for funding and project completion. The Gunnison Valley TPR has actively developed the RTP to accurately reflect the perspectives of the public and serve the region's transportation needs over the long term.

The Colorado Transportation Commission and CDOT will refer to this document to assist in their planning and decision making. With limited dollars available, it is important to have a plan that establishes transportation priorities for the Gunnison Valley TPR so that investments can be made accordingly. The implementation mechanism for the RTP is the STIP, a four-year, federally required, fiscally constrained program to identify projects. The STIP is based on RTPs developed by each region to establish a direct link between the corridor-based transportation needs and priorities expressed in the RTP and the selection and funding of specific system improvements.

The intent is for the RTPs and the Statewide Transportation Plan to be updated periodically to remain meaningful references for Regional Planning Commission (RPC) members and other interested parties.

## Components of a Regional Transportation Plan



## What is a Regional Transportation Plan?

An RTP creates the transportation vision and framework for maintaining and improving all modes of transportation in the region, including motor vehicle transport, air travel, transit, rail, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian routes.

It identifies corridor-based transportation improvement goals, strategies, and priorities that support the TPR's economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and quality of life.

Using both data and broad public input, the RTP includes an overview of existing conditions and regional forecasts that impact transportation, while identifying solutions that address issues via projects, initiatives, and partnerships.

## Members of the Regional Planning Commission

Comprised of elected and appointed officials from the TPR, the RPC is responsible for establishing regional priorities and needs, developing the multimodal RTPs, and coordinating ongoing planning with CDOT.

### Counties:

- Delta County
- Gunnison County
- Hinsdale County
- Montrose County
- Ouray County
- San Miguel County

### Municipalities:

- Cedaredge
- Crested Butte
- Delta
- Gunnison
- Montrose
- Mountain Village
- Ouray
- Ridgway
- Telluride

## Development of the Plan

The 2040 RTP for the Gunnison Valley TPR was developed and adopted by the RPC through a concerted and efficient approach that combines data analysis with comprehensive public involvement to simultaneously meet local transportation needs and achieve statewide performance-based targets.

### Federal and State Regulations

Legislation and policies at the state (43-1-1103, C.R.S.) and federal (23 USC 134/135) levels require the development of a comprehensive, long-range Statewide Transportation Plan that encompasses at least a 20-year period and incorporates the priorities and the needs of the TPRs across the state. MAP-21 requires states to align their own transportation goals with those defined by the law. MAP-21 goals include safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement/economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and reduced project delivery delays. CDOT's PD 14 goals include safety, infrastructure condition, system performance, and maintenance and are in alignment with the national goals.

In accordance with state transportation planning rules (2 CCR 601-22), the Statewide Transportation Plan also must be financially feasible so that it portrays a realistic transportation future based on reasonably anticipated funding. In Colorado, RTPs are prepared to include supplemental revenue scenarios and priorities in case additional funds become available.

Every four years, CDOT conducts an update of the Colorado Statewide Transportation Plan. This plan serves as a long-range planning tool incorporating statewide trends and issues. RTPs are developed to inform the Statewide Transportation Plan and to prioritize regionally specific transportation matters.

### RTP Planning Process Components

In developing the RTP, the process evaluated the current and predicted future conditions of the region's transportation system and identified problems and potential solutions. Anticipated changes in the region's population, economy, and travel were considered so that future transportation investments are sensitive to changing conditions in the region. Key elements in developing the plan include:

- Creating TPR profiles that illustrate current and anticipated conditions
- Updating the region's transportation vision and goals from the 2035 RTP
- Refining and prioritizing transportation corridors
- Evaluating a range of revenue scenarios
- Integrating the RTP with other modal plans and the Statewide Transportation Plan

Actions also have been identified to provide direction for future decision-making and to monitor progress. Each of these plan components was developed in collaboration with members of the RPC over the course of six meetings held between June 2013 and June 2014. Information developed as a part of the planning process can be viewed at CDOT's planning website.

## Integration of Other Plans and Initiatives

The RTP for the Gunnison Valley TPR is one of 15 RTPs in the state. While these are stand-alone documents, they also are key components of the Statewide Transportation Plan. For the needs and priorities identified at the local level to be considered in the state's overall transportation planning process, integration of the 15 RTPs must occur. Likewise, the statewide modal and operational plans developed by CDOT (such as the Transit Plan and Strategic Highway Safety Plan) must be integrated with the Statewide Transportation Plan. This integration allows for a holistic look at transportation needs.

A full list of the regional, modal, and operational plans that are integrated to form the Statewide Transportation Plan is below. These plans are available on CDOT's planning website.

### Plans that support a statewide multimodal transportation system:

- Regional Transportation Plans
- Colorado Statewide Transit Plan
- Gunnison Valley Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan
- Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Colorado Aviation System Plan

### Plans that support the economic vitality of the state:

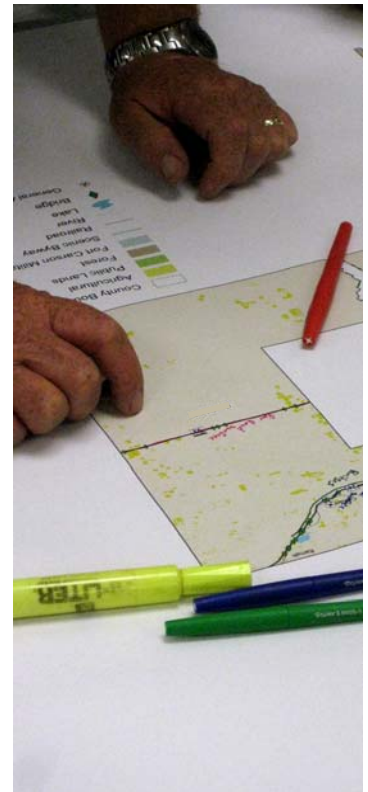
- Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan
- Statewide Freight Plan
- Colorado Airports Economic Impact Study

### Plans that assist in identifying maintenance needs for the existing transportation infrastructure:

- Risk-Based Asset Management Plan
- Colorado Bridge Enterprise 10-Year Program Plan

### Plans that aim to get more out of the existing system by focusing on traveler safety and operational improvements:

- Strategic Highway Safety Plan
- Integrated Highway Safety Plan
- Transportation System Management and Operations Plan



## Public and Stakeholder Engagement

The purpose of public engagement is to create meaningful opportunities for the general and traveling public to learn about statewide and regional transportation issues and comment on transportation concerns and priorities. Over the course of the plan development process, CDOT sought input from the public in defining the regional transportation needs and priorities for highways, transit, rail, and other programs throughout the state. This public input will influence the selection of specific future projects in the STIP. Results of the public engagement process are below.

### Public Survey

A survey was offered via the Statewide Transportation Plan's website so that the general and traveling public could provide valuable feedback about priorities in the TPR. The survey was available statewide in both electronic and hard-copy format and contained questions specific to the Gunnison Valley TPR. A total of **155** survey responses were received from the Gunnison Valley TPR. Results of the survey, combined with data, were employed by the RPC to select high-priority transportation corridors for their TPR. This public input also was used to illustrate the unique local characteristics of each TPR in Chapter 1 of this plan. Survey questions and popular responses for the Gunnison Valley TPR are below. To see the full list of questions and survey results, go to CDOT's website for Statewide Planning.

#### Why is transportation important to you?

- # 1 Moves people and goods safely
- # 2 Lets me live life the way I want
- # 3 Helps economic development; gets me to work  
(tie) and/or vital services

#### What transportation issues matter most to you?

- # 1 Increasing bike/pedestrian options
- # 2 Improving economic development; improving road-  
(tie) way conditions
- # 4 Increasing transit options

#### In light of today's limited funding for transportation, what should be the focus of CDOT's efforts?

- # 1 Make safety improvements
- # 2 Maintain the existing transportation system
- # 3 Offer more choices for travel (transit, bike, pedestrian)
- # 4 Add shoulders
- # 5 Expand highways by adding lanes

### Telephone Town Hall

A telephone town hall is an interactive public meeting conducted over the telephone. On April 2, 2014, **9,762** residents in the Gunnison Valley TPR were called on the phone and invited to participate in a discussion with local leaders and CDOT staff. This created a valuable connection with members of the public who might otherwise be uninvolved. A total of **2,302** people participated, both listening and commenting on the topics discussed. This exercise provided an opportunity to vet the work done by CDOT and the RPC with the broader public before proceeding to finalize important components of the plan. Below are some of the outcomes of the conversation with the public.

What is most important to you about transportation?	How should CDOT invest limited dollars?	What kinds of transportation improvements can best help the economy in your area?
<b>43%</b> : Safety  <b>25%</b> : Lets me live my life the way I want	<b>44%</b> : Maintain the existing system  <b>42%</b> : Safety improvements	<b>49%</b> : Improving the pavement  <b>23%</b> : Better bus or rail to support tourism

## Other Public Engagement Tools

Several other methods were used to share information with the public and allow for dialogue outside of formal engagement. These included popular social media applications and an interactive website.

### [www.ColoradoTransportationMatters.com](http://www.ColoradoTransportationMatters.com)

This interactive website is dedicated to the development and presentation of the Statewide and Regional Transportation Plans. The information provided allows the public to explore topics based on their own interests. There are multiple avenues for providing feedback, and the questions, comments, and other input received through the website were used to define priorities and highlight areas of potential improvement in both the transportation system and the planning process.



### Facebook and Twitter

The use of social media throughout the plan development process provided opportunities for the public to learn about and comment on the RTP as it was created. Facebook and Twitter profiles were deployed to solicit feedback, but also to promote upcoming public events and other opportunities for robust public involvement.



## Environmental Stakeholder Engagement

The link between transportation planning and the environment is of the utmost importance. Stakeholder engagement during the planning process that facilitates input on key environmental issues or concerns can serve as foundational information for future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies and aid in streamlining documentation.

In accordance with state and federal regulations, CDOT conducted a statewide interagency environmental discussion to identify environmental concerns or issues with the Regional Priority Corridors. Key participants included state and federal agencies, TPRs, and MPOs. These discussions were conducted via two webinars; the first focused on purpose, intent, and a collaborative identification of key information to be presented, and the second focused on interagency input. Based on the input provided, examples of potential mitigation strategies could include: wildlife crossings designed to reduce vehicular collisions, habitat conservation for threatened or endangered species, and construction of sound barriers.

Outreach to environmental advocacy groups also was conducted via a webinar. Information was shared about the development of the Statewide Transportation Plan and RTPs, how CDOT is addressing state and federal planning factors, development of various modal plans and policies, and key initiatives. One of those initiatives is the CDOT Sustainability Program that includes: (1) collaboration with the Colorado Energy Office, the Regional Air Quality Council, and other groups to develop a market and infrastructure for compressed natural gas and other alternative fuel vehicles; (2) creation of a greenhouse gas model; and (3) innovations in design and construction.

During development of the RTP, corridor profiles were modified to include environmental characteristics and concerns and to develop any environmental Implementation Actions if desired. For further information on environmental stakeholder participants and corridor profiles, go to CDOT's planning website. To review implementation actions identified by the TPR, go to **Chapter 6, Implementation Actions and Moving Forward**.

# Chapter 4 Regional Priority Corridors

## Regional Priority Corridors

A Regional Priority Corridor is a corridor that has been selected by the stakeholders of the TPR as having high importance to the region's transportation system or it is important because of a need for near-term improvements.



This RTP emphasizes planning for transportation corridors in the Gunnison Valley TPR. This approach, called corridor-based planning, is being used for the 2040 statewide and regional transportation plans. Corridor-based planning connects the long-term vision of a transportation corridor with the goals, solutions, and strategies that the TPR has identified to attain the vision. Strategies are classified into specific benefit categories. Benefit categories provide a mechanism to recognize the needs of a corridor and track progress.

This long-range transportation plan guides the shorter-term STIP. The STIP is a fiscally constrained plan that identifies funding for and the scheduling of specific transportation projects and programs. The corridor-based structure of this transportation plan provides long-term flexibility to respond appropriately to changing transportation issues with specific projects in the STIP. Defining transportation needs at the corridor level gives the TPR flexibility in implementing particular solutions on specific transportation issues.

A Regional Priority Corridor is a corridor that has been selected by the stakeholders of the TPR as having high importance to the region's transportation system or it is important because of a need for near-term improvements. While all corridors contribute to the system, some corridors connect to more cities, recreation, and tourist destinations; carry more traffic; support the industries that contribute to the economic vitality of the region; and provide multimodal options such as transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel. Selection of Regional Priority Corridors highlights the region's transportation needs and priorities and creates linkages to funding priorities among corridors. Through the corridor prioritization process, the Gunnison Valley TPR confirms the relative importance of the corridors in the region with state officials, stakeholders, and decision makers and communicates its priorities for the dedication of resources by the Colorado Transportation Commission.

## Gunnison Valley TPR Regional Priority Corridors

-  US 50: Montrose to Sargents
-  US 550: Durango to Montrose
-  SH 62: Placerville to Ridgway
-  SH 65: Junction with SH 92 to I-70
-  SH 92: Delta to Hotchkiss
-  SH 145: US 160 through Telluride to SH 141



## Priority Corridor Selection Process

Selection of the Regional Priority Corridors was a collaborative process with TPR members and stakeholders involving a series of meetings that included several steps and considerations. Transportation leaders' understanding of the daily travel experience in the region brought important insight into the characteristics of the corridor. As a result of this process, the most pressing transportation issues and project needs were identified.

The process began with a review of the Gunnison Valley TPR Profile and the prioritization of the corridors in the 2035 RTP. Multimodal activity on the corridors was acknowledged through the existing CDOT plans for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit services. Public input, gathered through an online public survey and a telephone town hall, also helped define and confirm the region's overall priorities. The economic vitality supported by the corridor and other unique characteristics, such as Scenic Byway designations, also were considered.

Six corridors were selected as regional priority corridors. Many of the corridors identified as a high priority in the previous 2035 plan were carried forward as a high priority into this RTP. SH 133 and SH 135 were updated from a high to a medium priority in this plan. Although these corridors will continue to be important for regional mobility, the TPR will focus immediate funding resources on the corridors selected as high priorities.

## Corridor Profiles

The Gunnison Valley TPR has developed a corridor profile for each corridor in the region. Development of the 2030 and 2035 RTPs included extensive work on the corridor profiles. The 2040 RTP builds upon those efforts by updating the corridor profiles to reflect the changes that have occurred since adoption of the 2035 plan.

The primary purpose of a corridor vision is to look toward the future and describe how the corridor can meet the community's desired transportation needs. Other elements of these corridor profiles include: the community's general values of the corridor, its primary type of travel, its characteristics, the industries it supports, and the types of improvements that will be needed in the future. The corridor goals describe general objectives that the corridor needs to attain to meet the vision. The corridor strategies describe discrete types of improvements intended to reach those goals.

The benefits associated with each of the strategies listed on the corridor profiles will be used to track and report on progress toward corridor goals after plan adoption. The corridor profiles for the Regional Priority Corridors are summarized and highlighted on the following pages.

## Function of Corridor Prioritization

Selection of the Regional Priority Corridors will guide future decisions for the use of resources in the Gunnison Valley TPR. The importance of Regional Priority Corridors is further validated by the collaborative process by which they were identified, involving key stakeholders and grassroots interests in the region. The overall prioritization of corridors also helped to inform the subsequent and critical discussion around transportation needs and priorities when or if revenues are more or less than expected.

## Regional Priority Corridor Factors

- TPR Profile data
- Project Needs
- 2035 corridor priority information
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit plans
- Public input

## Regional Priority Corridors for the Gunnison Valley TPR

### SH 92: Delta to Hotchkiss A

#### *Corridor Characteristics*

- Commuter route and critical access to medical care facilities
- Heavy vehicular and rail freight traffic
- Energy development and agricultural activity
- Tourism and recreation connections
- Regional bus service

#### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Support commuter and passenger travel with increased transit access
- Increase travel reliability for economic development industries
- Increase safety for cyclists and pedestrians

### US 50: Montrose to Sargents C

#### *Corridor Characteristics*

- National Highway System route—supports inter-regional connections
- Supports urban, rural, mountain, and agricultural activities
- Tourism, commuters, freight, and farm-to-market products
- Multimodal travel corridor—access to Montrose, Gunnison, and Crested Butte Regional Airports
- Hazardous materials transport

#### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Increase travel reliability and mobility for all users
- Support economic development while maintaining environmental responsibility
- Add safety improvements to reduce conflicts with slow-moving vehicles: passing lanes, turn-outs
- Provide regional bus service (between Montrose and Gunnison)

### SH 62: Placerville to Ridgway B

#### *Corridor Characteristics*

- San Juan Skyway Scenic Byway
- Tourism, wildlife, and natural resources
- Commuters, freight, agricultural production freight, medical facility access
- Intercity and regional bus service

#### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Increase travel reliability and improve mobility
- Provide for tourist-friendly travel and context-sensitive design
- Support multimodal travel options
- Reduce animal/vehicle collisions

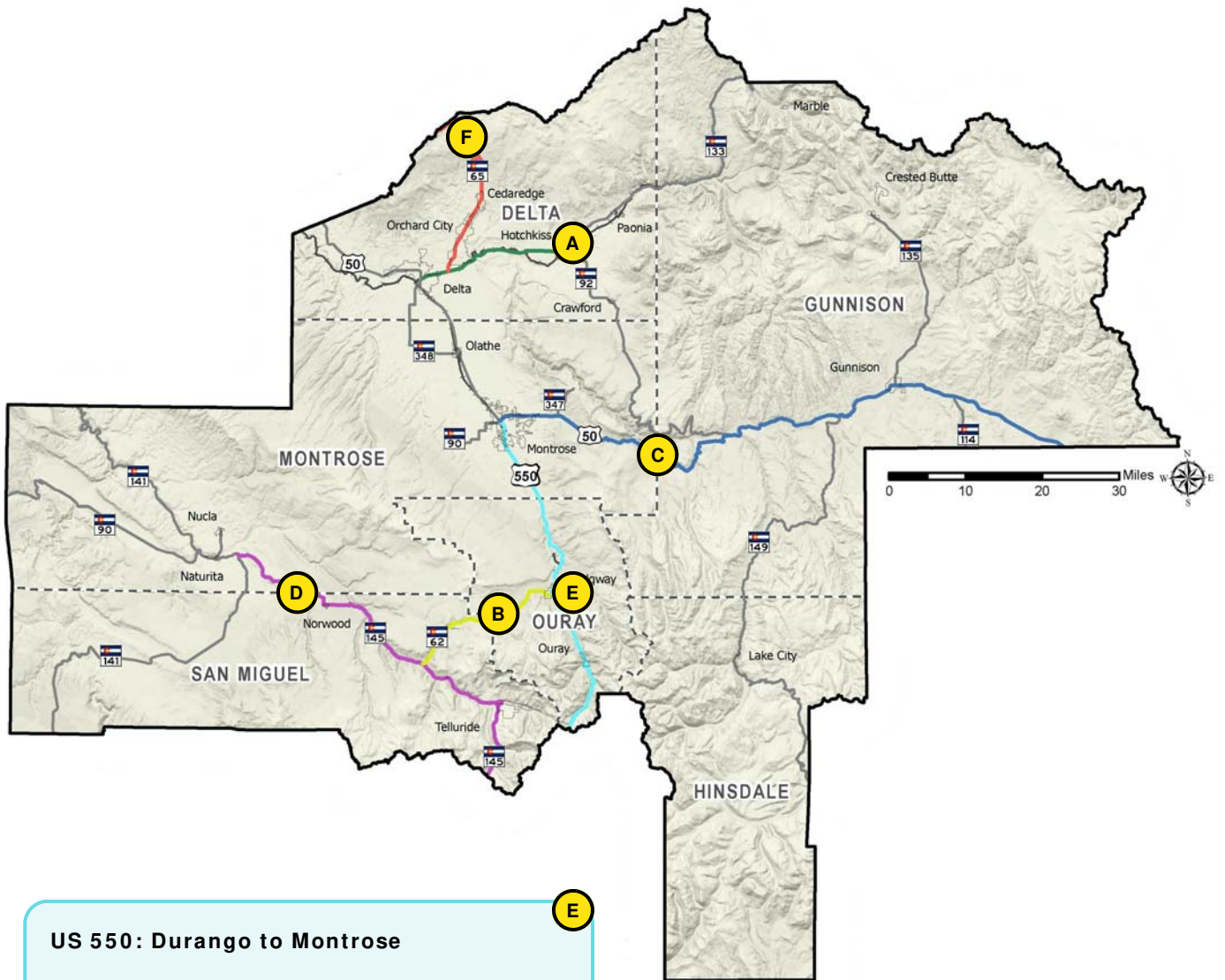
### SH 145: US 160 through Telluride to SH 141 D

#### *Corridor Characteristics*

- Connection to employment centers and tourist destinations
- Abundant wildlife
- Economic development—tourism, energy, and agriculture
- Alternative route to Red Mountain Pass between Ouray and Durango
- Narrow, steep, and winding segments
- Access to Telluride Regional Airport
- Intercity and regional bus service

#### *Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Add shoulders and passing lanes for safety improvements
- Address rockfall issues
- Provide for tourism and recreation opportunities



**US 550: Durango to Montrose** E

*Corridor Characteristics*

- San Juan Scenic Byway—tourism and recreation access
- Through-traffic and connections between populated areas
- Energy development and freight movement
- Abundant wildlife—bighorn sheep, elk, mountain lions
- Intercity and regional bus service (between Montrose and Ridgway)

*Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Mitigate for increased energy production impacts
- Add bike facilities, turnouts, shoulders
- Add wildlife mitigation
- Address rockfall issues, mitigate avalanche conditions
- Add slow-moving vehicle turnouts on scenic byways

**SH 65: Junction with SH 92 to I-70** F

*Corridor Characteristics*

- Grand Mesa National Forest, Plateau Valley, and Surface Creek Valley
- Increasing energy and logging traffic
- Major tourist connection between I-70 and US 50
- Rail and pedestrian crossings
- Access to medical facilities
- Regional bus service

*Corridor Goals & Strategies*

- Increase travel reliability and mobility
- Support travel to tourist and recreational resources
- Improve safety at pedestrian and rail crossings
- Improve access control at and around busy intersections

# Chapter 5

## Transportation Needs and Revenue

In this plan, the Gunnison Valley TPR has identified a range of transportation needs through the year 2040 and has prioritized regional issues that are most important to the transportation system, particularly for the next 10 years. Because of the limited availability of funding for transportation, the TPR must have a plan that allows them to focus on those priorities that could be realistically accomplished, but also to have a contingency plan in case they receive more or less transportation funding. In this chapter, funding scenarios have been applied to the TPR's priorities to give decision makers a vantage point of possible future scenarios related to three assumptions for future revenue: baseline revenue, less-than-baseline revenue, and additional revenue.

The results of scenario planning are particularly important for the first 10 years of the planning horizon. Within this period, both transportation needs and funding availability are more predictable. In addition, the identification of priorities for the first 10 years aligns with development of a four-year STIP. The STIP is a federally required, fiscally constrained program of projects.

### Regional Multimodal Needs

Multimodal issues and regional trends for the Gunnison Valley TPR were considered throughout this planning effort. Some of these needs are discussed in **Chapter 1, Regional Transportation Story**. These include:

- Improving freight rail lines due to aging infrastructure
- Adding pedestrian crossings and wider shoulders to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Enhancing bus transit services to improve mobility options

Highway and multimodal needs are described in **Chapter 4, Regional Priority Corridors**. Detailed needs for transit, aviation, freight, and rail have been developed through CDOT modal plans. The modes and applicable plans are discussed below and are not in priority order.

### Highway Corridors

Highway corridor needs include adding wildlife/vehicle crash reduction measures, creating passing lanes, widening shoulders, and enhancing safety. **Chapter 4, Regional Priority Corridors** describes the highway and multimodal needs for the Regional Priority Corridors, which are designated as such because of their importance to the region's transportation system or because of a need for short-term improvements. In addition, strategies and benefits for every highway corridor in the region are listed in the corridor visions.

### Transit

Transit needs and services and funding gaps are described in the Gunnison Valley Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan. Transit providers in the TPR have stressed the need for more operating funds. Transit expenses in the Gunnison Valley TPR are forecast to outpace the growth in transit revenues.

### Transit Needs

Transit needs include expanding service between communities; increasing access to jobs, recreation, education, health/human services, and medical facilities; promoting transit; and integrating general public transit with human services on the following corridors:

- US 50
- US 550
- SH 62
- SH 65
- SH 92
- SH 145

## Aviation

Statewide estimates to fund aviation needs are detailed in the 2011 Colorado Aviation System Plan for the general aviation airports within the Gunnison Valley TPR. Published approach, vertical guidance approach, emergency access improvements, runway extension, and pavement maintenance were some of the aviation needs identified. There are major airports in Montrose, Gunnison/Crested Butte, and Telluride. Intermediate airports are Hopkins and Blake. The minor airports are North Fork, Westwinds, and Crawford.



*The regional airports in the area play an important role in transporting visitors and residents.*

## Bicycle and Pedestrian

Plans that specifically address bicycle and pedestrian needs and strategies are conducted at the state level in the Colorado Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. However, some improvement categories, such as wider highway shoulders or pedestrian safety at key crossings, are multimodal improvements related to highway projects. Bicycle and pedestrian needs for the Gunnison Valley TPR noted during meetings include bike lanes on SH 62, pedestrian crossings in Cedaredge, and bridge widening in Hotchkiss.

## Freight

The State Freight Plan contains a broad discussion of the Colorado Freight Corridors and measures to improve freight movement throughout the state. The freight plan has a statewide list of potential projects for the first year, but no costs are associated with the potential projects. Colorado Freight Corridors are roadways that are critical to the inter-regional, intra-state, inter-state, or national freight movement, and play an important role in the regional and state economy.

The designated Colorado Freight Corridors in the Gunnison Valley TPR are:

- US 50
- US 550
- SH 141

## Rail

Cost estimates for statewide-level needs for rail improvements are available in the Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan. The following rail lines are located in the Gunnison Valley TPR:

- Freight rail: Union Pacific

More information about statewide and regional modal plans is available on CDOT's planning website.



*Additional at-grade crossing equipment, and addressing issues of safety and security are among the Gunnison Valley TPR's priorities for improving the rail system.*

## Statewide Regional Priority Program distribution

In the adopted program distribution, the Colorado Transportation Commission sets aside \$50 million per year statewide in Regional Priority Program (RPP) funding to distribute these funds to CDOT regions. The statewide formula for the allocation of RPP funds to the CDOT regions is based on a calculation of 50 percent population, 35 percent on-system lane miles, and 15 percent on-system truck VMT.

## Gunnison Valley TPR Priorities for Funding

The TPR used three funding scenarios to prioritize transportation improvements. These scenarios are based on the Statewide Revenue Scenarios, discussed on the following pages. The Gunnison Valley TPR is in CDOT Region 3 and CDOT Region 5. CDOT Region 5 is projected to receive about \$3.5 million of Regional Priority Program (RPP) funding in FY 2016 for a total of \$35 million for the first 10 years. This is split between other planning areas in Region 5, including the Southwest TPR and the San Luis Valley TPR. CDOT Region 3 is projected to receive about \$7.1 million of RPP funding in 2016 for a total of \$71.5 million for the first 10 years of the plan. This will be split between the other planning areas in CDOT Region 3, including the Intermountain TPR, Northwest TPR, Grand Valley TPR, and the Grand Junction MPO.

While there are several different sources of funding available for addressing transportation needs within the TPR, the RPP is the most flexible funding source for CDOT Regions to use with input from the TPRs. RPP funding is intended to help the TPRs address their regional transportation priorities. RPP funding often is combined with other funding sources to fund individual projects.

### Baseline Revenue Scenario

The Gunnison Valley TPR discussed how RPP funds could be used to address transportation priorities with the current funding availability. The TPR reviewed a list of candidate RPP/FASTER corridor projects from CDOT Region 3 and a list of candidate projects from the CDOT Region 5 Passing-Lane and Pull-Out Study to decide which locations could be considered for funding during the first 10 years of the plan. The TPR used a planning estimate of \$30 million of RPP from CDOT Region 3 and a combined planning estimate for RPP and FASTER Safety of \$28 million from CDOT Region 5. The TPR decided to apply percentages of funding to corridors and continue to work with CDOT to develop the specific projects. The TPR allocated the planning estimate in this way:

Priority Corridor	% of CDOT Region 3 Planning Estimate	% of CDOT Region 5 Planning Estimate
US 50	39%	
SH 92	39%	
US 550	19%	
SH 65/SH 92 intersection	3%	
US 550 Colona to Ridgway		40%
SH 145 Placerville to Norwood		50%
US 550 Ridgway to Ouray		10%

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Due to limited funding, the majority of dollars identified in the baseline scenario will be dedicated to maintaining and preserving the system. CDOT is developing processes to identify critical needs and help maximize returns on taxpayers' dollars. This will be accomplished through CDOT's Risk-Based Asset Management Program.

### **Less-Than-Baseline Revenue Scenario**

With less money available, some CDOT programs—such as snow and ice removal, bridge maintenance, and roadway maintenance—could be reduced. The Gunnison Valley TPR identified which CDOT programs could be reduced in the event of less-than-expected revenues. The TPR determined that reducing the scope of the RPP program would be the best way to adjust for less revenue. This recommendation will be one of the factors considered for future project selection should there be a decrease in funding available to the TPR for transportation improvements from any funding resource, including RPP.

### **Additional Revenue Scenario**

The Gunnison Valley TPR identified which corridors in the region would receive funding if additional revenues became available. Within this additional revenue scenario, the TPR planned for an additional \$120 million. The result of this process identifies that additional funds would be spent on these corridors:

- US 50
- US 550
- SH 33
- SH 62
- SH 65
- SH 90
- SH 92
- SH 135
- SH 145

For further information, refer to CDOT's planning website.

## Statewide Multimodal Needs

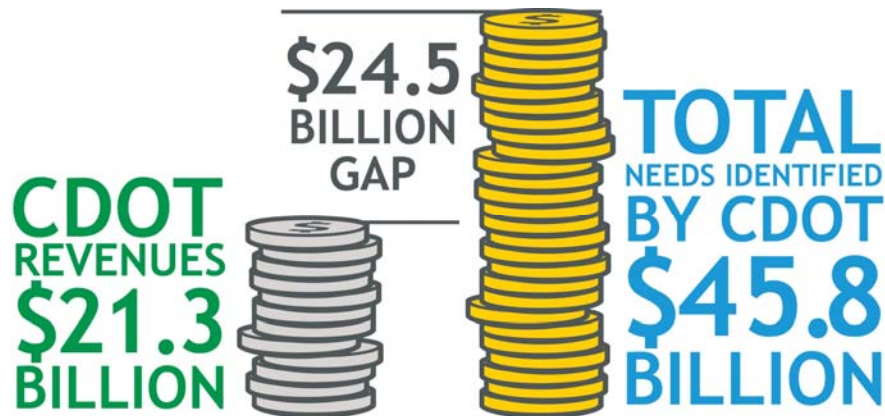
The needs and priorities that are identified at the regional level are combined with the needs of other regions to make up the transportation needs of the state. Concurrently developed with the RTPs, the statewide transportation planning process emphasizes multimodal needs made up of costs for highway, transit, freight, rail, aviation, and non-motorized modes of transportation for the first 10 years of the plan. The horizons for statewide planning match those of the regions (10-year and 25-year). Factors considered in identifying needs include: preserving transportation infrastructure and assets (i.e., pavement and bridges), addressing safety and operational concerns, and expanding the transportation system. Similar to the Gunnison Valley TPR regional multimodal needs, the statewide transportation needs were derived from relevant data and stakeholder input.

The Colorado Transportation Commission considered variations of assumptions for projected future funding and adopted a statewide baseline revenue scenario as a forecasting tool for the 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan. Besides making reasonable projections for future revenues, good planning also requires preparing for when revenues are more or less than projected.

Future projections show baseline revenues will fall short of addressing all of the statewide transportation needs. Comparing cost estimates for statewide needs to the baseline revenue scenario reveals a funding gap. For the 10-year planning horizon, from 2016 until 2025, the gap between projected revenues and the estimated cost of transportation improvement needs is \$8.8 billion.

For the longer-term, 25-year planning horizon, the projected revenues are \$21.3 billion while the total identified needs are estimated to cost \$45.8 billion. This results in an approximate \$24.5 billion funding gap. CDOT will have to consider other revenue sources, such as public-private partnerships and tolling, to close this funding gap and fulfill future statewide transportation needs.

### 25-Year System Funding Gap (2016-2040)



*Estimated amounts in 2016 dollars. Source: CDOT, 2014*



# Statewide Revenue Scenario Planning

The 2040 forecast includes three revenue scenarios: baseline, additional, and less-than-baseline. The Colorado Transportation Commission adopted the baseline scenario as the expected revenue projection for the Colorado Statewide Transportation Plan (Transportation Commission Resolution #3070). This statewide forecast forms the basis for projections of revenues for the TPR.

## Less-Than-Baseline Revenue Scenario

- No federal or state General Fund transfers

Under this scenario, revenues in 2016 would drop from \$1.4 billion to \$1.2 billion and then hold steady at about \$1.2 billion per year through 2040. **This represents an estimated 15-percent decrease from the Baseline Revenue Scenario over the period extending to 2040.**

*Source: March 2014  
Transportation Commission  
Revenue Projection Packet*

## Baseline Revenue Scenario

- Based on current law and current economic assumptions
- Average annual National Gross Domestic Product increases by 2.5 percent
- Federal transportation revenues increase 1 percent per year for fiscal years 2016 to 2020.
- Federal revenues and General Fund transfers are adjusted from 2021 to 2040 to match the Congressional Budget Office forecast
- Off-the-top transfers are based on CDOT projections
- Senate Bill 09-228 will create a transfer of funds to CDOT in fiscal years 2016 to 2020

Except for the brief addition of SB 09-228 funds during the time period from 2016 to 2020, baseline revenues are projected to be flat, at around \$1.3 billion per year, rising to just under \$1.4 billion per year in 2040. More recent forecasts of revenues, however, suggest that funds from SB 09-228 may be substantially reduced or eliminated. The latest forecast calls for only a little over \$100 million as compared to the nearly \$800 million over five years included in the Baseline Revenue Scenario.

*Source: Colorado Transportation  
Commission Resolution #3070*

## Additional Revenue Scenario

- Baseline revenue scenario
- Senate Bill 09-228 revenues anticipated in 2016 through 2020 would be replaced by some other revenue source of similar magnitude.

Under this scenario, revenues in 2021 would increase from \$1.3 billion in the Baseline Revenue Scenario to \$1.5 billion per year and increase to nearly \$1.6 billion in 2040. **This represents approximately a 10-percent increase from the Baseline Revenue Scenario over the period extending to 2040.**

*Source: March 2014  
Transportation Commission  
Revenue Projection Packet*

# Chapter 6

## Implementation Actions and Moving Forward

### Implementation Actions

The following discussion contains information about actions that the TPR will take to implement its RTP. Implementation actions are meant to be near-term, practicable measures related to the Gunnison Valley TPR's vision, goals, and corridor profile strategies and benefits. Actions presented below are likely to be initiated before the next update of the RTP and will have limited funding needs, focusing primarily on education, coordination, research, and advocacy. The following actions have been developed as a way for the RPC members to actively promote the RTP.

#### Implementation Actions for the Gunnison Valley TPR

Implementation Action	Strategies/ Benefits	Applicable RTP Vision and Goals
Make safety a top priority and work with CDOT regional staff to identify regional safety concerns and advocate for potential improvements.	Safety	The highway system will provide mobility to the traveling public at an acceptable level of service.
Utilize local advocates or groups such as bicyclists, walkers, seniors, persons with disabilities, etc., to identify connectivity gaps and other needed biking and walking improvements within the TPR.	Bicycle & Pedestrian	The transportation system will provide new intermodal access and mobility options with particular emphasis on developing new bike and transit travel options.
Meet with the local regional economic development office once or twice a year on mutually beneficial ways to support the local economy by identifying local partnerships and transportation champions.	Economic Development	The transportation system will continue to preserve and enhance the region's overall economic health, providing for energy development and freight movement reliability.
Meet with representatives of federal and state land management agencies on ways to improve signage and services for bike trails through federal and state lands.	Economic Development	The transportation system will continue to preserve and enhance the region's overall economic health, providing for energy development and freight movement reliability.
Work with local agriculture industry representatives to identify locations and specific problems hindering farm-to-market movement.	Economic Development	The transportation system will continue to preserve and enhance the region's overall economic health, providing for energy development and freight movement reliability.
Coordinate with local transit operators, transit advocates, CDOT regional staff, and the private sector to discuss ways of advancing mutual goals and implementing the Gunnison Valley TPR's Regional Transit Plan.	Transit	The transportation system will provide new intermodal access and mobility options with particular emphasis on developing new bike and transit travel options.

### Implementation Actions for the Gunnison Valley TPR (continued)

Implementation Action	Strategies/ Benefits	Applicable RTP Vision and Goals
Form relationships with neighboring TPRs, member government entities, transportation advocates, and the private sector to work on transportation issues of mutual concern and leverage resources to augment available funding for maintenance, operation, and expansion of the regional transportation system.	Leveraging Partnerships	The transportation system will function as a complete system with effective connectivity both within the region and to the rest of the state.
Work with CDOT regional staff and local stakeholders to identify potential locations along rural freeways and state highways for shoulder widening and other structural ways to maximize the carrying capacity of the regional transportation system.	Capacity	The highway system will provide mobility to the traveling public at an acceptable level of service.

#### High Priority Transit Strategies

In addition, the Regional Transit Plan identified several high priority transit strategies for implementation over the next 15 to 20 years to guide the region in making meaningful investments in transit. These strategies address the transit needs identified in region through surveys, Transit Working Group meetings and public input. Each strategy falls in line with the regional transit vision and goals, and supports the overall statewide transit vision, goals and objectives. Strategies include, but are not limited to coordination activities, maintaining, expanding and/or enhancing of transit service, and facility improvements. For more information on the high priority transit strategies for the Gunnison Valley TPR, please see the Gunnison Valley Regional Coordinated Transit and Human Services Plan on CDOT's planning website.

#### Moving Forward with the RTP

After adoption of the RTP, the Gunnison Valley TPR will use implementation actions to monitor progress and will re-evaluate its actions accordingly. The TPR also will work with CDOT to develop activities that carry forward implementation actions. This will keep the plan actionable. In addition, regularly assessing progress on the plan based on these implementation actions can help the TPR decide whether to add or remove actions, as appropriate.

**To find out about how you can get involved in the Gunnison Valley TPR's ongoing transportation planning process, please visit CDOT's planning website.**

#### Corridor Strategies and Benefits

The actions discussed in this chapter will help achieve the benefits identified in the RTP corridor profiles as documented in **Chapter 4, Regional Priority Corridors**. The corridor profiles for the Gunnison Valley TPR are available for review on CDOT's planning website.

Benefits include: Aviation, pedestrian and bicycle, transit, capacity, economic development, environmental stewardship and sustainability, freight, operations, rail, safety, system preservation and leveraging partnerships.