

# RECALIBRATING TRANSPORTATION

*2030 Roadmap to an Efficient, Equitable,  
and Safe Future for all Coloradans*

April 2022



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## *2030 Roadmap to an Efficient, Equitable, and Safe Future for all Coloradans*

Our 2030 vision is a transportation system that is efficient, equitable, and safe for all Coloradans without needing to rely on a car; that preserves Colorado’s environmental health; and that provides access to affordable housing, employment, and education. To achieve this, we ask Colorado leaders to use transportation funding to lead the nation in creating more vibrant communities while also solving our most pressing issues on climate, air quality, safety, and equity.

Achieving an efficient, equitable, and safe transportation system begins in 2022. By the end of this year, CDOT and Front Range MPOs will obligate more than \$4.0 billion in transportation funding through the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) and Transportation Improvement Plans (TIPs). Maintaining a “business as usual” approach to funding projects means Colorado agencies will move backwards on addressing their own goals to reduce emissions, to provide equitable transportation options, and to reverse the alarming increase in bicycle and pedestrian fatalities. Now is the time for CDOT, DRCOG, and regional leaders to recalibrate the transportation system by prioritizing investments in walking, biking, transit, safety, and responsible land use decisions.

Today’s transportation system spends today’s dollars to address yesterday’s problems rather than meeting the current and future needs of all Coloradans, leaving us perpetually stuck in the past. Each year hundreds of millions of dollars are spent to increase the capacity and comfort for drivers to travel quickly while millions of Coloradans lack safe, reliable options to reach their destination without relying on a car. Without alternatives to driving, people and goods are stuck in worsening traffic across the state. Air pollution is setting records and climate change is fueling extreme weather and drought, with disproportionate impacts on those who live closest to major roads and highways. Every year hundreds of people die unnecessarily on our streets when hit by motorists, making options like walking and riding a bike unsafe.

These compounding challenges underscore the urgency for Colorado leaders to reset this cycle now. Investing Colorado’s transportation dollars in the expansion of transit, walking, and biking—rather than expanding road capacity for single-occupancy vehicles—is especially timely with the influx of new federal funding. Communities can further improve access to sustainable transportation options by supporting more compact and walkable land use patterns and updating their zoning policies to allow for infill, mixed-use development in less car-dependent neighborhoods.

This year, CDOT and DRCOG should work together to rebalance transportation investments by shifting money from new lane miles to sustainable options, which reduces vehicles on the road while improving efficiency, equity, and safety:

1. Build out the **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system** and significantly **expand transit service statewide**
2. Complete a **safe and connected regional active transportation network**

3. **Meet Vision Zero goals** by protecting vulnerable users and investing in safety measures on high-injury networks
4. Upgrade all **Main Streets to be people-friendly Complete Streets.**
5. **Foster livable communities** with policies supporting equitable Transit-Oriented Development and location-efficient land use to reduce vehicle trips and pollution.

We've identified key projects that support each of these strategies included in this roadmap. The unprecedented level of federal and state transportation funding is best invested by prioritizing these projects this year in the 10 Year Plan update and in the FY 24-27 TIP. Luckily, there are numerous formula funding programs, state programs, and discretionary grants available so these projects can be completed quickly.

Starting with shovel-ready projects in 2022 is just the first step. Moving forward, transportation planning and project selection needs to be recalibrated to meet GHG reduction requirements and ensure transportation investments are expanding sustainable transportation options. Colorado leaders must revise processes, procedures, and the general approach to transportation planning, which has been traditionally severed from land use and equity goals. We believe these five steps will help bring transportation investments into alignment with community needs while reducing GHG pollution:

**1. Redefine how to measure success by leading with equity, access, safety, and impact.**

Projects defined by metrics like Level of Service (LOS) result in an endless loop of wasting money on expansion projects that increase the number of cars on the road and enable sprawling development patterns, resulting in catastrophic environmental damage. According to [State Smart Transportation Initiative \(SSTI\)](#), the ultimate goal of most travel is to access services and activities. Instead of prioritizing vehicle speeds at the expense of other modes, CDOT and MPOs should design our system to maximize accessibility by investing in projects that connect people to jobs and other activities in ways that are sustainable, efficient, healthy, and affordable. The quality of non-auto modes, transport system connectivity, development density, and affordability all affect accessibility and should be measured and modeled as part of all transportation planning. In addition to measuring access, CDOT and MPOs should develop a system to measure and score the equity and environmental impacts of all transportation projects. Agencies can look to California, which is developing a [Transportation Equity Index](#) to quantify the benefits of clean transportation investments in disproportionately-impacted communities.

**2. Reset project priorities based on current community input, data, and modeling.**

Resetting project priorities will help CDOT, DRCOG, and other regional transportation planning agencies comply with the Greenhouse Gas Rule. Project selection based on robust and authentic community engagement and GHG mitigation strategies will ensure transportation dollars are best serving the people of Colorado.

**3. Realign transportation investments to projects that reduce car dependency, increase access to mobility options, and prioritize equity.**

Vehicle Miles-Traveled (VMT) growth is not a foregone conclusion, but a policy choice reinforced by continued investment in auto-centric transportation and land use planning. Therefore, VMT growth

forecasts should not be the primary driver of transportation planning decisions. Instead, we should align our transportation spending with our social and environmental goals. Colorado is on track to spend over \$9.0 billion on transportation by 2030. Rebalancing transportation investments to focus on safe, connected mobility options, including transit and active transportation, will result in fewer cars on the road. Reducing cars on the road reduces transportation related pollution, improves safety for vulnerable road users, and improves the quality of life for all Coloradans.

**4. Rebalance funding to optimize the use of existing infrastructure rather than adding capacity.**

There will never be enough dollars to keep up with growth by building capacity. Rethinking efficient use of existing infrastructure to incorporate bus rapid transit, sidewalks, and protected bike lanes will result in mode shifts that reduce VMT and alleviate the need for expensive new highway expansions. When coupled with smart land use practices that encourage walkability and transit-oriented development, these funds are cost-effective investments to reduce GHG emissions with affordable, sustainable transportation. Surface Transportation Block Grants and the National Highway Performance Program, the two largest federal formula funds, can be used for walking, biking, transit and safety improvements.

**5. Recognize that the best projects leverage synergies between multiple smart land use, transit, walking, biking, and safety strategies to create desirable, healthy, vibrant places.**

We look forward to working with you starting this year on constructive and collaborative ways to achieve our 2030 vision of a transportation system that is efficient, equitable, and safe for all Coloradans without needing to rely on a car; that preserves Colorado’s environmental health; and that provides access to affordable housing, employment, and education. Colorado leaders can meet GHG reduction goals and begin to address historic inequities by identifying and funding transportation projects that reduce VMT by investing in transit, walking, biking, and safety.

**Lead author:** **Rachel Hultin**, Sustainable Transportation Director, Bicycle Colorado  
[rachel@bicyclecolorado.org](mailto:rachel@bicyclecolorado.org)

**Contributors:** **Matt Frommer**, Senior Transportation Associate, Southwest Energy Efficiency Project  
[mfrommer@swenergy.org](mailto:mfrommer@swenergy.org)

**Danny Katz**, Executive Director, Colorado Public Interest Research Group  
[danny@copirg.org](mailto:danny@copirg.org)

**Molly McKinley**, Policy Director, Denver Streets Partnership  
[molly@denverstreetspartnership.org](mailto:molly@denverstreetspartnership.org)

**Martha Roskowski**, National Resources Defense Council  
[martha@furtherstrategies.com](mailto:martha@furtherstrategies.com)

**Piep van Heuven**, Director of Government Relations, Bicycle Colorado  
[piep@bicyclecolorado.org](mailto:piep@bicyclecolorado.org)



# BUILD OUT THE BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) SYSTEM AND SIGNIFICANTLY EXPAND TRANSIT SERVICE STATEWIDE

## 2030 Goals:

1. Complete the top 10 BRT Routes identified in [RTD's 2019 BRT Feasibility Study](#).
2. Robust coordination between CDOT, DRCOG, and RTD to increase service by 70%, including increasing transit service frequency to every 15 minutes in urban areas.
3. Double CDOT's investments in transit service statewide.

## 2022 Actions:

1. **Projects:** Fully fund these BRT projects in the FY 24-27 TIP and the first 4 Years of the 10 Year Plan Update:
  - a. Colfax, Osage to I-225
  - b. Federal, 120th to Santa Fe
  - c. Colorado, A Line to I-25
  - d. Alameda, Wadsworth to RTD R Line
  - e. SH-119
  - f. SH-7
2. **Funding:**
  - a. Increase existing Bustang service and Outrider service by 25% in the update to the 10 Year Plan.
  - b. Use Surface Transportation Block Grant and National Highway Performance Program funding to build priority BRT corridors.
  - c. Apply for a [Fixed Guideways Capital Investments Grants \(CIG\)](#) federal grant to fully fund additional BRT corridors identified in [RTD's 2019 BRT Feasibility Study](#).
3. **Policy / Programing:**
  - a. Update FY 24-27 Calls 3 and 4 TIP scoring criteria with weighted scoring for transit infrastructure projects and transit service.
  - b. Fully fund statewide transit operations off the top before dedicating 10% to transit through the 10 Year Plan.

**Impact.** Investing in transit in rural and urban areas alike improves people's lives and expands access to opportunity in addition to significantly reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by removing cars from the road. If just one driver per household switches to taking public transportation for a daily commute of 10 miles each way, it saves 4,627 pounds of carbon dioxide per household per year—equivalent to an 8.1% reduction in the annual carbon footprint of a typical American household. Increasing access to reliable and frequent transit service results in increased ridership and decreased vehicles on the road, contributing to safer and more desirable conditions for vulnerable road users.

**Available Funding.** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) continues many established Federal Transit Agency (FTA) funding sources for transit in addition to introducing new programs. The BIL also significantly

## BUILD OUT THE BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) SYSTEM AND SIGNIFICANTLY EXPAND TRANSIT SERVICE STATEWIDE

increases flexible formula funds, including transit-friendly revisions. Below are 5 key funding programs to build-out the bus rapid transit system and expand bus service:

1. **Surface Transportation Block Grant: NEW BRT Eligibility (STBG).** The BIL revised the allowable uses for STBG to include capital projects for the construction of a bus rapid transit corridor and dedicated bus lanes making the single largest and most flexible source of transportation funding the best way to reduce GHG emissions. [§ 11130; 23 U.S.C. 142(a)(3)]
2. **National Highway Performance Program (NHPP).** Transit capital projects are eligible as long as the project is on or adjacent to a highway.
3. **NEW Carbon Reduction Program (CRP).** Federal formula program to reduce transportation emissions or the development of carbon-reduction strategies including certain transit projects that reduce VMT.
4. **Urbanized Area Formula Grant Program.** This is the funding stream for planning, operating, and capital improvement for public transportation systems including bus rapid transit and transit operating.
5. **Multimodal Transportation and Mitigations Options Fund (MMOF).** This funding can be used to fund transit operations in addition to capital projects for bus rapid transit.
6. **Fixed Guideways Capital Investments Grants (CIG):** Federal discretionary grants for new and expanded rail and bus rapid transit that reflect local priorities to improve transportation options in key corridors.

### Supporting Policies and Studies:

- **Regional**
  - [RTD Regional BRT Feasibility Study, 2019](#) / [RTD Regional BRT Feasibility Study, Handout](#)
  - [DRCOG's Metro Vision 2050](#)
    - **Healthy, inclusive and livable communities:** Transit planning and investments to support viable travel choices, including strategies and funding to address ever-evolving needs of the region's most vulnerable users.
    - **A safe and resilient natural and built environment:** Projects and programs to help manage travel demand and provide safe, convenient alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel to help reduce emissions and congestion.
    - **An efficient and predictable development pattern:** A focus on multimodal corridors that connect the region's urban centers, including investments in bus rapid transit, commuter rail and other corridor projects and programs to improve mobility, safety and operations.

## BUILD OUT THE BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) SYSTEM AND SIGNIFICANTLY EXPAND TRANSIT SERVICE STATEWIDE

- **A vibrant regional economy:** Investments that improve multimodal access within and to a variety of opportunity-rich destinations. A focus on equitable outcomes and opportunities through catalytic investments.
- **State**
  - [CDOT's Statewide Transportation Plan 2045](#)
    - **Mobility Goals:** Increase the share of Coloradans commuting using multimodal options and improve ridership of rural and small urban transit agencies. Mobility is tied closely to sustainability – Colorado's transportation system generates emissions that reduce air quality. Providing Coloradans with transportation options such as buses, trains, and safe bicycling and walking paths not only gives people more travel choices and reduces congestion, but also improves air quality. Increase access to transit.
  - [CDOT's Statewide Transit Plan 2045](#)
    - **Mobility Goal:** A modally integrated transit system that provides local, regional, and interregional connectivity and is affordable, efficient, and easy to use.
    - "Expand Intercity Transit" and "Enhance Local and Regional Transit" were ranked the #1 and #2 strategies to improve multimodal travel options across the state.
- **Federal**
  - [FTA Federal Programs that Support Public Transportation](#)



# COMPLETE A SAFE AND CONNECTED REGIONAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

## 2030 Goals:

1. Complete the Active Transportation Network adopted in DRCOG's Active Transportation Plan.
2. Complete key trail and community connection projects identified in the 10 Year Plan.

## 2022 Actions:

1. **Projects:** Fully fund construction of these projects in the FY 24-27 TIP and the first 4 Years of the 10 Year Plan Update:
  - a. SH 119 Bikeway, Boulder to Longmont
  - b. SH 7 Multi Use Path, Boulder to Brighton
  - c. US 85 / Plum Creek Trail, the Chatfield State Park to Castle Rock section of the Front Range Trail
  - d. South Havana Bikeway
  - e. 32nd Avenue, Ford Street to Elderidge
  - f. Smith Road multi-use path in Aurora
  - g. Gunnison Valley Shoulder Improvements
  - h. Trail link between Clear Creek Greenway to Peaks to Plains Trail
  - i. SH 96 bike lanes, Pueblo
  - j. Southern Mountain Loop Trail, Trinidad to Walsenburg
2. **Funding:**
  - a. Apply for a [Rebuilding American Infrastructure Sustainably and Equitably \(RAISE\)](#) grant for system-wide investments in the regional active transportation network.
3. **Policy / Programming:**
  - a. Comply with [CDOT PD 902](#) and include shoulders on resurfacing projects along High Demand Bicycle Corridors, specifically US 24, US 40, US 50, CO 69, and CO 96
  - b. Comply with FHWA's [Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel](#) policy statement that "*bicycling and walking facilities will be incorporated into all transportation projects unless exceptional circumstances exist*". This includes federally funded bridge projects.

**Impact.** Building safe, connected active transportation networks provides people of all ages and mobilities an option to reach their destination without a car. According to [DRCOG's Active Transportation Plan \(2019\)](#), over 1 million drive-alone trips of two miles or less are made each day in the Denver metro region. Since the average length of a conventional bicycle trip is approximately 1.8 miles (3 miles for e-bikes) and over a third of trips are less than two miles, these trips offer strong potential to be converted from driving to walking and biking, which are zero emissions modes of transportation. Thanks to forward-thinking policies, many transportation projects include walking and biking facilities in their designs. Unfortunately, these elements are either value-engineered down or removed for cost savings when the project goes out to bid. Using transportation dollars to build sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and multi-use trails as stand-alone projects



## COMPLETE A SAFE AND CONNECTED REGIONAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

instead of elements of burdensome expansion projects is cost effective while allowing these investments to move forward quickly.

**Available Funding.** Transportation Alternatives and Federal Lands Trails continue to provide dedicated funding for active transportation. Below are 5 formula funds and a discretionary grant program that can also be used:

1. **Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG).** STBG funds can be used for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including trails, making the single largest and most flexible source of transportation funding the best way to reduce GHG emissions.
2. **National Highway Performance Program (NHPP).** Active transportation investments are eligible as long as they are adjacent to or on a roadway corridor or bridge designated by the National Highway System.
3. **Highway Safety Improvement Program (STBG).** In FY 23, Colorado will be required to spend 15% of its HSIP funding on vulnerable road users because 15% or more of roadway deaths were people walking, riding a bike, or using mobility assistance.
4. **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and NEW Carbon Reduction Program (CRP).** These two formula programs both fund active transportation facilities as a proven method to reduce transportation emissions because safe places to walk and ride a bike reduces the number of vehicles on road.
5. **Rebuilding American Infrastructure Sustainably and Equitably (RAISE) Grants.** Funding for multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional projects that are more difficult to support through traditional DOT programs. 50% of funds are reserved for urbanized areas with reduced local match for areas of persistent poverty or rural areas.

### Supporting Policies and Studies:

- **Regional**
  - [DRCOG's Metro Vision 2050](#)
    - **Healthy, inclusive and livable communities:** Investments in active transportation and multimodal options that improve the safety and convenience of healthy and active travel choices. Actions to reduce regional disparities through a focus on environmental justice and equitable outcomes among diverse households and communities.
    - **A safe and resilient natural and built environment:** Investments in trails, paths and other connections for recreation, active transportation and a more well-connected trail network.
    - **A vibrant regional economy:** Investments that improve multimodal access within and to a variety of opportunity-rich destinations.
  - [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan, 2019](#) & [DRCOG Regional Bike Network Map](#)

## COMPLETE A SAFE AND CONNECTED REGIONAL ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

- **State**
  - [CDOT's Statewide Transportation Plan 2045](#)
    - **Mobility Goal:** Increase the share of Coloradans commuting using multimodal options and improve ridership of rural and small urban transit agencies. Mobility is tied closely to sustainability – Colorado's transportation system generates emissions that reduce air quality. Providing Coloradans with transportation options such as buses, trains, and safe bicycling and walking paths not only gives people more travel choices and reduces congestion, but also improves air quality.
    - **Enhancing Walking and Bicycling:** To encourage more bicycling and walking in Colorado, CDOT will invest in bicycle and pedestrian projects that improve connectivity and help reduce congested roadways.
  - [CDOT's Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 2015](#)
    - Increase bicycle and pedestrian levels of service
    - Increase the number of multi-use pathways
  - [CDOT's High Demand Bicycle Corridor Map](#)
- **Federal**
  - [US DOT Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations](#)
  - [FHWA Bicycle and Pedestrian Program](#)
  - [FHWA Active Transportation Funding and Finance Toolkit, 2022](#)



## MEET VISION ZERO GOALS BY PROTECTING VULNERABLE USERS AND INVESTING IN SAFETY MEASURES ON HIGH-INJURY NETWORKS

### 2030 Goals:

1. Fully fund safety improvements to the Critical Corridors identified in DRCOG's Regional Vision Zero Plan by accelerating the investment of \$465M in Arterial Safety/Regional Vision Zero projects.
2. Reduce vulnerable road user fatalities to zero.

### 2022 Actions:

#### 1. Projects:

- a. Fund Vision Zero safety improvements for Colfax, Federal and Peoria, the three most dangerous corridors in the DRCOG Region, in the FY 24-27 TIP and the first 4 years of the updated 10 Year Plan.
- b. Fully fund Regions 1 and 4 Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Study top 10 ranked projects.

#### 2. Funding:

- a. Allocate \$200M statewide for Vision Zero program funding for each of the first 4 years of the updated 10 Year Plan.
- b. Apply for a *Safe Streets for All* federal grant for system-wide improvements.

#### 3. Policy / Programming:

- a. Incorporate USDOT's Safe Systems Approach into all transportation planning and design, including updating CDOT design manual and local design guidelines to place a greater emphasis on safety and consideration for vulnerable roadway users (e.g., adequate pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, micro transit, such as near transit stations.)
- b. Include Vulnerable Road Users safety training such as Shift Driving as part of CDOT's *Whole System, Whole Safety Program*.

**Impact.** Vision Zero is a transportation safety philosophy based on the principle that loss of life is not an acceptable price to pay for mobility. Underlying the Vision Zero strategy is the Safe Systems Approach: a preventive, proactive approach that shifts responsibility from the people using roads to the people designing them to create a mobility system forgiving of human error. The new National Roadway Safety Strategy from USDOT embraces the Safe Systems Approach. It emphasizes safer roads and designing for safer speeds as key strategies to reduce fatalities, a marked shift from the failed strategy of blaming people's behavior.

Colorado, like the rest of the nation, has seen an alarming rise in deaths on our roads, especially people walking and biking. In 2021, 672 people were killed in crashes on our roads, the most since 2002. Deaths are up 50% over 2011 figures. Low-income neighborhoods and communities of color see disproportionately higher rates of deaths and injuries. A survey conducted for DRCOG's Active Transportation Plan found that 59% of respondents are interested in biking but concerned about their safety.

The DRCOG Regional Vision Zero Plan shows that 75% of fatal crashes occur on 9% of roads, mostly major arterials. These roads should be redesigned for more appropriate speeds with better crosswalks, sidewalks and protected bike lanes for vulnerable road users. Every community across the Front Range has dangerous

## MEET VISION ZERO GOALS BY PROTECTING VULNERABLE USERS AND INVESTING IN SAFETY MEASURES ON HIGH-INJURY NETWORKS

corridors, including Colfax Avenue in Lakewood, Denver and Aurora, Federal Boulevard in Denver and Westminster, 28th Street in Boulder, 6th Ave and Mississippi in Aurora, Wadsworth in Lakewood, Main Street in Longmont, and Washington St in Thornton.

Rather than a one-corridor-at-a time approach, DRCOG and CDOT should direct funding to a set of improvements across multiple corridors. The USDOT guidance states, “*Consider selection of projects that improve the safety of existing transportation infrastructure within the existing right of way first.*” Retooling existing pavement is significantly less expensive than roadway expansions, so savings can be directed to proven safety countermeasures rather than encouraging more driving.

**Available Funding.** Nearly all funding pots can be used to address safety. Below are 4 funding options available now and an exciting new federal grant program to consider.

1. **Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG).** STBG funds can be used to apply the Safe System Approach safety improvements on corridors.
2. **National Highway Performance Program (NHPP).** Active transportation investments are eligible as long as they are adjacent to or on a roadway corridor or bridge designated by the National Highway System.
3. **Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).** In FY 23, Colorado will be required to spend 15% of its HSIP funding on vulnerable road users because 15% or more of roadway deaths were people walking, riding a bike, or using mobility assistance. HSIP funds can be used on sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and better crosswalks.
4. **Regional Priority Program (RPP).** CDOT’s RPP incorporates regional priorities into TIPs and STIPs through coordination between CDOT and MPOs and TPRs. While not a specific funding source, the RPP is an important process to integrate Safe Systems Approach into all transportation planning and projects.
5. **NEW Safe Streets and Roads for All.** Colorado agencies should apply for this federal discretionary safety projects grant program for system-wide improvements to high-crash corridors.

### Supporting Policies and Studies

- **Regional**
  - [DRCOG’s Metro Vision 2050](#)
    - **A connected and multimodal region:** A renewed focus on approaches that enhance and ensure safety for all users, incorporating the safety action plan, Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero.
    - **Healthy, inclusive and livable communities:** Actions to reduce regional disparities through a focus on environmental justice and equitable outcomes among diverse households and communities.
    - **A safe and resilient natural and built environment:** The risks and effects of natural and human-created hazards are reduced.
  - [DRCOG Regional Vision Zero Plan \[entire doc\]](#)

## MEET VISION ZERO GOALS BY PROTECTING VULNERABLE USERS AND INVESTING IN SAFETY MEASURES ON HIGH-INJURY NETWORKS

- [DRCOG Denver Metro High Injury Network Map \[PDF\]](#)
- [DRCOG Denver Regional High Injury Network & Critical Corridors interactive map](#)
- **State**
  - [CDOT's Statewide Transportation Plan 2045](#)
    - **Safety:** The future of Colorado is zero deaths and serious injuries so all people using any transportation mode arrive at their destination safely.
    - Pedestrian fatalities increased from 65 in 2014 to 90 in 2018, a 38 percent increase. Bicyclist fatalities went from 10 in 2014 to 22 in 2018, more than doubling.
  - [CDOT Statewide Strategic Transportation Safety Plan, 2020 - 2023](#)
    - **Vision:** The future of Colorado is zero deaths and serious injuries so all people using any transportation mode arrive at their destination safely.
    - **Goal:** 15% reduction in fatalities and serious injuries for both off-system and on-system crashes by 2023.
    - **Actions:** Amend Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Improvement Programs to more highly prioritize projects that address identified safety issues.
- **Federal**
  - [USDOT National Roadway Safety Strategy](#)
  - [FHWA Integrating Safe System Approach with the Highway Safety Improvement Program](#)
  - [FHWA Highway Safety Improvement Program](#)
  - [FHWA HSIP Older Drivers and Pedestrians Special Rule requiring 15% to Vulnerable Road Users](#)



# UPGRADE ALL MAIN STREETS TO BE PEOPLE-FRIENDLY COMPLETE STREETS

## 2030 Goals:

1. Every Main Street in Colorado is safe and welcoming for people to access and enjoy without needing a car.
2. Every transportation project on a Main Street is a Complete Street.

## 2022 Actions:

1. **Projects.** Fund these projects as Complete Streets in the FY 24-27 TIP and the first 4 years of the update to the 10 Year Plan
  - a. West Colfax
  - b. Broadway
  - c. Federal
  - d. Longmont
  - e. Lyons
  - f. Franktown / Hwy 83
2. **Funding**
  - a. Fund Revitalizing Main Streets at \$300M for FY23
  - b. Apply for a *Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program* federal grant.
3. **Policy / Programming**
  - a. Open rolling applications for both Revitalizing Main Streets grant programs: *Larger Safety Infrastructure* and *Small Multimodal and Economic Resiliency Projects*.

**Impact.** Streets, especially our main streets, are not just there to move cars. They are also where people live, work, play, shop, sit outside, and enjoy the (mostly) sunny weather that makes the quality of life in Colorado so great. Unfortunately, too many of our streets are unsafe for people. Designed to maximize “throughput” and vehicle speeds, many streets are barriers that unnecessarily endanger people’s lives every day. Many “main streets” are also state highways, whether it’s Federal and Colorado Boulevard in Denver or the literal main street of one of our rural towns, which means CDOT has some or all of the responsibility for design and maintenance. In 2020, CDOT launched their Main Streets program (sometimes called Safer Main Streets, sometimes Revitalizing Main Streets). The programs have funneled money into making the streets more people friendly, including expanding outdoor livable spaces, building out sidewalks, adding safety signals, improving intersections, and increasing safe access to transit and bikeways. These investments don’t require costly expansion projects while reducing cars on the road, which is an efficient way to reduce GHG emissions.

## Available Funding.

1. **Revitalizing Main Streets.** Every dollar spent through this program invests in desirable, safe places for people to access and enjoy without needing a car. This program adds value to urban, suburban, and rural communities and directly contributes to the quality of life residents consistently prioritize.
2. **Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG).** STBG funds can be used to apply the Safe System Approach safety improvements on corridors.

## UPGRADE ALL MAIN STREETS TO BE PEOPLE-FRIENDLY COMPLETE STREETS

3. **NEW Increasing Safe and Accessible Transportation Options: Complete Streets Set-Aside for MPOs and State DOTs.** Dedicated funding to develop active transportation and complete streets plans that emphasize connecting communities and public transportation to improve regional multimodal mobility and safety.
4. **NEW Safe Streets and Roads for All.** Colorado agencies should apply for this federal discretionary safety projects grant program for system-wide improvements to high-crash corridors.
5. **NEW Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program.** Discretionary grants to restore community connectivity by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating highways or other transportation facilities that create barriers to community connectivity including to mobility, access, or economic development.

### Supporting Policies and Studies

- **Regional**
  - [DRCOG's Metro Vision 2050](#)
    - **Healthy, inclusive and livable communities:** Investments in active transportation and multimodal options that improve the safety and convenience of healthy and active travel choices.
    - **A safe and resilient natural and built environment:** Projects and programs to help manage travel demand and provide safe, convenient alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel to help reduce emissions and congestion.
    - **An efficient and predictable development pattern:** Connected urban centers and multimodal corridors throughout the region accommodate a growing share of the region's housing and employment. Connected urban centers and multimodal corridors throughout the region accommodate a growing share of the region's housing and employment.
    - **A vibrant regional economy:** Investments that improve multimodal access within and to a variety of opportunity-rich destinations.
- **State**
  - [CDOT's Statewide Transportation Plan 2045](#)
- **Federal**
  - [FHWA Complete Streets Design Model](#)
  - [FHWA Moving to a Complete Streets Design Model Report to Congress, 2022](#)



## FOSTER LIVABLE COMMUNITIES WITH POLICIES SUPPORTING TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION-EFFICIENT LAND USE TO REDUCE VEHICLE TRIPS AND POLLUTION

**2030 Goals:** Integrated transportation and land use planning.

**2022 Action:**

1. Update FY 24-27 Calls 3 and 4 TIP scoring criteria with significantly weighted scoring for projects that support transit oriented development and incorporate location-efficient land use strategies.

**Impact:** Transportation and land use are inextricably linked. When communities encourage infill development and locate housing closer to jobs, transit, grocery stores, schools, and other destinations, they create more walkable, healthy, and transit-oriented communities, and in the process, reduce VMT and GHG pollution. When communities prevent infill development, they inadvertently promote sprawl, which damages the environment, locks people into car-dependent lifestyles, and is financially unsustainable for the state and local governments. In many cases, the revenue generated from sprawling development patterns does not meet the lifecycle costs of the infrastructure needed to serve it, making it both environmentally and financially unsustainable for our state and local governments.

Modeling for both the DRCOG Metro Vision and CDOT’s GHG Planning rule show that we need a combination of infill development and increased investment in transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure to meet our VMT and GHG reduction targets. These strategies work best when deployed in tandem. For example, the expansion of public transit is almost 10 times more effective in reducing VMT and GHG pollution when coupled with sustainable land use strategies that promote compact and walkable development near transit.

In addition to the climate and air quality impacts, local land use decisions influence housing affordability and access to opportunity. It’s no secret that we have a severe housing affordability crisis in Colorado and it’s at least partially caused by locally-imposed constraints on housing supply and infill development.

Sustainable land use principles align with DRCOG’s Metro Vision 2050 commitment to plan for more efficient and predictable development patterns in the region. In Metro Vision 2050, DRCOG commits to work toward a future where: *“Through a coordinated effort between DRCOG and local communities, new urban development occurs in an orderly and compact pattern within regionally designated growth areas. A process to identify local and regional urban growth priorities helps the region manage the growth of the region’s urban footprint. While locally adopted policies and market demand determine the location of urban development, local commitments to coordinate and collaborate on the expansion of urban growth lead to better use of regional resources for infrastructure, reduced regional vehicle travel and conservation of open land.”*

While these high-level goals are commendable, they are unlikely to translate into real progress unless they are reinforced at every stage of the policy and project selection process. Therefore, DRCOG must take steps



## FOSTER LIVABLE COMMUNITIES WITH POLICIES SUPPORTING TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION-EFFICIENT LAND USE TO REDUCE VEHICLE TRIPS AND POLLUTION

to follow through on these commitments by ensuring that land use efficiency is considered in every transportation planning and funding decision.

Land use is a locally-controlled issue in Colorado, but local decisions have impacts beyond their own borders because we live in an interconnected society of residential communities, job centers, universities, downtowns, parks, and other destinations. Solving our statewide climate and housing issues will require better balance and collaboration between state, regional, and local governments. Land use policies take time to mature and deliver results, so now is the time to update our land use and transportation policies to support our environmental, economic, and social goals – before we add another 3 million people to our state by 2050.

### Recommendations:

1. **Condition transportation funding on efficient and sustainable land use practices:** CDOT and MPOs should revise their project scoring criteria to reward local governments for adopting sustainable land use policies that improve efficiency and reduce VMT, GHG emissions, and household transportation costs. For example, applications that demonstrate how local zoning codes in the neighborhoods proposed for transportation investments will support the addition of new housing should be prioritized for funding. Local governments should be rewarded for supporting infill development in downtown areas and near transit as opposed to greenfield development on undeveloped land far from job centers and other activities.
2. **Local governments should apply for the House Bill 1271 Affordable Housing Infrastructure and Planning Grants.** CDOT and MPOs should work with DOLA and other state agencies to provide technical resources and education to local governments on sustainable land use.
3. State and regional planning agencies should explore ways to **combine affordable housing grants with transportation project applications** to create more affordable, walkable, and transit-accessible neighborhoods.
4. State, regional, and local governments should work together to **develop local and regional housing needs assessments** to quantify the amount, type, and location of housing required to keep pace with job growth and allow workers to live in the same communities in which they work.
5. CDOT and DRCOG should work with RTD and local governments to **identify major barriers to Transit-Oriented Development around high-frequency transit stations** and develop solutions to overcome these barriers to enable transit-supportive density.

### Examples of sustainable and efficient land use policies include efforts to:

- Allow for mixed-use density in downtown areas and near high-frequency transit stations with specific requirements for affordable housing,
- Lower or eliminate parking minimums and replace them with parking maximums, particularly for affordable housing and transit-oriented development,

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- Relax regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on single-family lots,
- Allow duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes to be constructed by-right in single-family zoned districts,
- Explore form-based codes to allow for a better mix of housing, jobs, retail, and other building types in our communities and create 15-minute walkable neighborhoods.

**Funding:** Apply for [Rebuilding American Infrastructure Sustainably and Equitably \(RAISE\)](#) grants and incorporate new land use criteria in Colorado’s transportation planning and programming processes.

USDOT recently updated the [RAISE project scoring criteria](#) to better integrate transportation and land use planning by encouraging project sponsors to describe how their project supports efficient land use. Such land use-related categories and criteria include:

- **Environmental Sustainability:**
  - Reduce transportation related air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from uncoordinated land use decisions;
  - Support fiscally responsible land use and transportation efficient design.
- **Quality of Life:**
  - Reduce transportation and housing cost burdens, including through commercial and mixed-income residential development near public transportation, along rural main streets, or other walkable neighborhoods.
- **Mobility and Community Connectivity:**
  - Increase affordable transportation choices for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities;
  - Increase the accessibility for all users of a project, particularly non motorized travelers (those walking, cycling, rolling, or using transit);
  - Encourage thriving communities for individuals to work, live, and play by creating transportation choices for individuals to move freely with or without a car.
- **Economic Competitiveness and Opportunity:**
  - Increase transportation options and system connectivity to revitalize underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities, increase access to jobs and location-efficient affordable housing, or facilitate tourism opportunities.



<b>START HERE: 2022 ACTIONS</b>	<b>Projects</b> <i>Fully fund through the FY 24-27 TIP and First 4 Years of the 10 Year Plan</i>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Policy / Programming</b>
<b>Build out the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system and significantly expand transit service statewide</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colfax, Osage to I-225</li> <li>Federal, 120th to Santa Fe</li> <li>Colorado, A Line to I-25</li> <li>Alameda, Wadsworth to RTD R Line</li> <li>SH-119</li> <li>SH-7</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase existing Bustang service and Outrider service by 25% in the update to the 10 Year Plan.</li> <li>Use Surface Transportation Block Grant and National Highway Performance Program funding to build priority BRT corridors.</li> <li>Apply for a <a href="#">Fixed Guideways Capital Investments Grants (CIG)</a> federal grant to fully fund additional BRT corridors identified in <a href="#">RTD's 2019 BRT Feasibility Study</a>.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update FY 24-27 Calls 3 and 4 TIP scoring criteria with weighted scoring for transit infrastructure projects and transit service.</li> <li>Fully fund statewide transit operations off the top before dedicating 10% to transit through the 10 Year Plan.</li> </ol>
<b>Complete a safe and connected regional active transportation network</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SH 119 Bikeway</li> <li>SH 7 Multi Use Path</li> <li>US 85 / Plum Creek Trail (Section of the Front Range Trail)</li> <li>South Havana Bikeway</li> <li>32nd Avenue, Ford Street to Elderidge</li> <li>Smith Road multi-use path in Aurora</li> <li>Gunnison Valley Shoulder Improvements</li> <li>Trail link between Clear Creek Greenway to Peaks to Plains Trail</li> <li>SH 96 bike lanes, Pueblo</li> <li>Southern Mountain Loop Trail, Trinidad to Walsenburg</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply for a <a href="#">Rebuilding American Infrastructure Sustainably and Equitably (RAISE)</a> grant for system-wide investments in the regional active transportation network.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comply with <a href="#">CDOT PD 902</a> and include shoulders on resurfacing projects along High Demand Bicycle Corridors.</li> <li>Comply with FHWA's <a href="#">Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel</a> policy statement that "bicycling and walking facilities will be incorporated into all transportation projects unless exceptional circumstances exist". This includes federally-funded bridge projects.</li> </ol>
<b>Meet Vision Zero goals by protecting vulnerable users and investing in safety measures on high-injury networks</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fund Vision Zero safety improvements for Colfax, Federal and Peoria, the three most dangerous corridors in the DRCOG Region.</li> <li>Fully fund Regions 1 and 4 Bicycle and</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocate \$200M statewide for Vision Zero program funding for each of the first 4 years of the updated 10 Year Plan.</li> <li>Apply for a <i>Safe Streets for All</i> federal grant for</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate USDOT's Safe Systems Approach into all transportation planning and design including updating CDOT design manual and local design guidelines to place a greater emphasis</li> </ol>

<b>START HERE: 2022 ACTIONS</b>	<b>Projects</b> <i>Fully fund through the FY 24-27 TIP and First 4 Years of the 10 Year Plan</i>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Policy / Programming</b>
<p>Meet Vision Zero goals by protecting vulnerable users and investing in safety measures on high-injury networks (cont)</p>	<p>Pedestrian Safety Study top 10 ranked projects.</p>	<p>system-wide improvements.</p>	<p>on safety and consideration for vulnerable roadway users (e.g., adequate pedestrian crossings, bike lanes, micro transit, such as near transit stations.)</p> <p>2. Include Vulnerable Road Users safety training such as SHIFT Driving as part of CDOT's <i>Whole System, Whole Safety</i> Program.</p>
<p>Upgrade all Main Streets to be people-friendly Complete Streets</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. West Colfax</li> <li>2. Broadway</li> <li>3. Federal</li> <li>4. Longmont</li> <li>5. Lyons</li> <li>6. Franktown / Hwy 83</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fund Revitalizing Main Streets at \$300M for FY23</li> <li>2. Apply for a <i>Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program</i> federal grant.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Open rolling applications for both Revitalizing Main Streets grant programs: <i>Larger Safety Infrastructure</i> and <i>Small Multimodal and Economic Resiliency Projects</i>.</li> </ol>
<p>Foster livable communities with policies supporting equitable Transit-Oriented Development and location-efficient land use to reduce vehicle trips and pollution</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Condition transportation funding on efficient and sustainable land use practices</li> <li>2. Encourage local governments to apply for DOLA's Affordable Housing Infrastructure and Planning Grants.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply for <a href="#">Rebuilding American Infrastructure Sustainably and Equitably (RAISE)</a> grants and incorporate new land use criteria in Colorado's transportation planning and programming processes.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update FY 24-27 Calls 3 and 4 TIP scoring criteria with significantly weighted scoring for projects that support transit oriented development and incorporate location-efficient land use strategies.</li> </ol>

