



**COLORADO**  
Department of Transportation

Division of Transit and Rail  
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TO: Transit and Rail Advisory Committee

FROM: David Krutsinger, Director, Division of Transit & Rail  
Sharon Terranova, Planning Unit Manager, Division of Transit & Rail  
Nate Vander Broek, Transit Planner, Division of Transit & Rail

DATE: May 8, 2020

RE: Statewide Transit Plan

**Purpose**

This memorandum provides background on the Statewide Transit Plan (SWTP) and associated long-term policy implications.

**Action**

The Division of Transit and Rail requests a recommendation from the Transit and Rail Advisory Committee to the Transportation Commission for adoption of the Statewide Transit Plan.

TRAC received an email from Nate ([nathan.vanderbroek@state.co.us](mailto:nathan.vanderbroek@state.co.us)) on April 23, 2020 with a link to the plan document.

**Background**

The Statewide Transportation Plan, of which the SWTP is an appendix, has taken a new approach that looks at all of Colorado's transportation needs and includes all modes, including transit, in the development of projects to address Colorado's needs and gaps.

TRAC has received updates on the Plan since January, 2019. Specific topics included outreach activities, funding scenarios, project lists, and the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans. The Plan is now complete; this memo provides details below about high-level funding conditions and future policy implications learned as a result of the Plan.

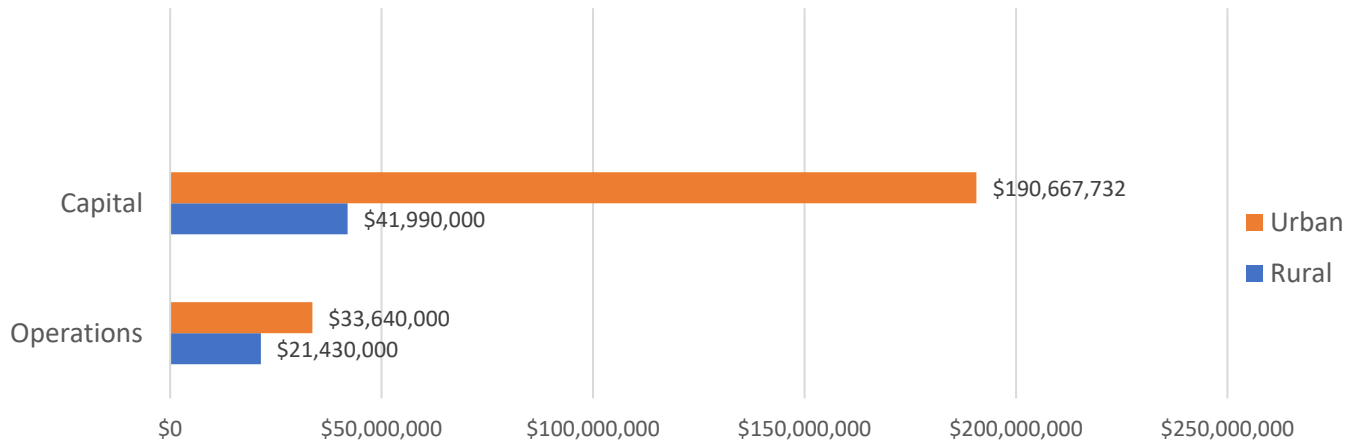
A key element of the larger Statewide Transportation Plan effort was the creation of a comprehensive 10-year vision for transportation in Colorado, which resulted in the 10-Year Strategic Pipeline of Projects. The Strategic Pipeline of Projects includes roadway, bridge, multimodal, and transit projects identified throughout the planning process based on data analysis, public engagement, and input from stakeholders in each planning region across the State. The Strategic Pipeline of Projects includes projects that are funded and/or planned for years 1-4 (Senate Bill 267) and unfunded projects that have been identified for years 5-10.

**Details**

As a part of the Statewide Transit Planning process, the Division of Transit & Rail and Division of Transportation Development project team developed a comprehensive list of capital, operating, and planning project needs for each rural TPR based on input from elected officials, stakeholders, TPR members, transit agencies, and the general public. After the full project list was developed, CDOT's Regional Transportation Directors and TPR Chairs (including urban TPRs) met to prioritize projects for years 5-10 to develop the Strategic Pipeline of Projects. Years 1-4 of the Strategic Pipeline of Projects were developed previously through the planning efforts related to SB 267. A breakdown of transit project types by urban and rural areas is shown below in Figure 1 and Table 1. It should be noted that these projects represent funding above, and beyond normal "base" funding at the local level, and base-level on-going state or federal programs.

The Pipeline of Projects includes \$192 million in funded projects for years 1-4 and \$288 million in unfunded projects for years 5-10, for a total of \$480 million in transit projects including new and expanded local, regional, and interregional services, maintenance facilities, mobility hubs, park-n-rides, and EV infrastructure.

**Figure 1: Transit Projects Included in the Strategic Pipeline of Projects, Years 5-10 Funding Allocation by Project Type**



**Table 1: 5-10 Year Strategic Project Pipeline and TPR Identified Project Needs Summary**

	Operating Projects	Capital Projects	Total
Total MPOs 5-10 Year Project Pipeline	\$33,640,000	\$190,667,732	\$224,307,732
Total Rural TPR 5-10 Year Project Pipeline	\$21,430,000	\$41,990,000	\$63,420,000
Total TPR Identified Project Needs	\$256,490,000	\$987,550,000	\$1,244,040,000

While the \$480 million in projects included in the 10-year vision would provide Colorado with much needed transit services and facilities, the overall transit need of \$1.2 billion remains mostly unfunded. Moreover, beyond the 2030 planning horizon, CDOT and transit agencies across the State still have considerable long-term transit investment needs, including the need for maintaining existing operations and vehicles operating in a state of good repair. While the current influx of transit funds from SB 267 is helpful in the near-term, financial projections through 2045 show substantial deficits for both operating and capital based on anticipated federal funding allocations, impacts of inflation, and limited state funding. Even under a scenario that includes an additional \$50 million per year going to transit, with that amount split evenly between operating and capital projects, the statewide transit system’s finances enter a persistent and growing deficit in 2036 due to the compounding effects of cost inflation assumptions for operations and capital. The \$50 million per year would need to be indexed by 8 percent per year on average after 2035 to keep up with inflationary cost pressures between 2035 and 2050.

Events such as the COVID-19 pandemic may also create unforeseen funding needs. The CARES Act has provided Colorado transit agencies with \$327 million in funding that will help provide some much-needed short-term relief due to the pandemic. However, long-term implications of COVID-19 on transit agencies is yet unknown and may require additional funding to keep agencies operating. The Statewide Transportation Plan team, in conjunction with DTR, will include a new appendix to be developed over the next year that looks at the long-term effects of unforeseen issues such as COVID-19 and ways to remain resilient with these new challenges.

In summary, strategies are needed that support transit over time. The SWTP has provided several scenarios that project the long-term impact of funding shortfalls over the next 25 years. Without additional funds, it is unlikely that Colorado transit agencies will make progress in addressing the \$1.2 billion in transit need, or even maintaining the State’s fleets or existing services. Funding strategies could include new state funds approved by the legislature that provide set asides for transit, a new statewide or regional/county sales tax (for those areas that don’t already have them), an increase in personal income tax, or an increase in property tax.

**Next Steps**

**May**

- Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) and Transportation Commission (TC) to review Statewide Transportation Plan and Statewide Transit Plan and provide comments
- STAC to recommend approval of Statewide Transportation Plan and Statewide Transit Plan to TC (anticipated)
- Statewide Transportation Plan and Statewide Transit Plan out for public review

**June**

- Adoption of Statewide Transportation Plan and Statewide Transit Plan by TC (anticipated)