



DOUGLAS COUNTY
Transportation
Plan

2050 Douglas County Transportation Plan

Draft for Public Comment - October 10, 2025

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Douglas County Department of Public Works

Engineering Division
100 Third Street, Suite 220
Castle Rock, CO 80104

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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DOUGLAS COUNTY PROJECT TEAM

Nick Giauque
Art Griffith
Caroline Frizell
Katherine Haire
Janet Herman
Zeke Lynch
Jason Oldham
Benjamin Pierce
Dan Roberts
Dina Rogers
Curt Weitkunat
Maisie Wingerter

CONSULTANT TEAM

Olsson
Karen Aspelin
Lauren Ellens
Jenna Friesen
Lauren Hildreth
Kyle McLaughlin
Alex O'Connell
Adam Rankin
Ben Rehm
Ted Ritschard
Stacey Roach
Chris Rolling
Troy Russ

Michelle Schefflin
Hannah Sievers

olsson

ATG
Tim Smith
Mike Chaney

ATG | **DCCM**

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Dave Aden – Town of Parker
Victoria Byler – Colorado Department of Transportation
Derek Castellano – Douglas County Sheriff's Office
Rand Clark – Douglas County Community Development
Rich Cosgrove – Douglas County School District
Forrest Dykstra – Highlands Ranch Metro District
Ryan Edwards – Highlands Ranch Metro District
Bob Epstein – Douglas County Senior Foundation
Dole Grebenik – City of Castle Pines
Debb Haynie – Castle Rock Senior Center
Daniel Hutton – South Denver Transportation Management Association
Chris Hudson – Town of Parker
Jim Katzer – Arapahoe County
Heather Kelly – Douglas County Conservation District
Sasha Larson – Arapahoe/Douglas Works! Workforce Center
Kiernan Malefsky – Regional Transportation District
Kevin McHugh – Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce
Cal McNutt – Colorado Department of Transportation
Chris Meehan – Douglas County School District
Cole Neder – Denver Regional Council of Governments
Larry Nimmo – City of Castle Pines
Mark O'Harold – Douglas County Sheriff's Office
Tom Reiff – Town of Castle Rock
Shane Roberts – City of Littleton
Alvan-Bidal Sanchez – Denver Regional Council of Governments
Justin Schmitz – City of Lone Tree
Quinn Schulz – South Denver Transportation Management Association
Bill Sirois – Regional Transportation District
Kelsey Thiessen – Aging Resources of Douglas County
Teri Vogel – Bicycle Colorado
Tom Williams – Town of Parker

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Section 1 Purpose & Overview

The 2050 Douglas County Transportation Plan (2050 DCTP) serves as a strategic guide for shaping Douglas County's transportation system over the next 25 years, ensuring it aligns with community priorities while addressing transportation needs. It envisions a safe, efficient, and sustainable network that enhances quality of life and economic vitality. Designed as a living document, the plan will support future decisions to prioritize and program capital investments and other actions to address evolving challenges.

What will this plan do?

The 2050 DCTP outlines Douglas County's strategy for building a future-ready transportation system that reflects community values like resilience, equity, safety, efficiency, and sustainability. It sets ambitious goals, evaluates current and future needs, and translates them into strategic investments and a prioritized list of projects. This comprehensive approach ensures the plan remains flexible and responsive to growth, change, and stakeholder input.

Big picture challenges facing Douglas County

Douglas County faces several key challenges in planning its transportation future, including rapid internal and regional growth, limited funding, and evolving travel behaviors driven by technology and remote work. The county must also balance infrastructure development with sustainability concerns and the need to coordinate regionally to ensure seamless mobility. These factors require strategic prioritization, innovative funding, and adaptive planning to meet current and future needs. This plan evaluates current needs, forecasts anticipated changes, and considers these big picture challenges in an integrated approach driven by public process and informed by data driven analysis.

The 2050 DCTP is more than an update to the county's previous 2040 plan; it is designed to respond to a rapidly changing environment. Douglas County and the region continue to experience significant population growth, driving increased demand on the transportation system. At the same time, advancements in technology are reshaping how vehicles operate and how transportation systems connect. Expectations for personal mobility are evolving, with growing interest in diverse travel options and changing workplace dynamics. The 2050 DCTP offers a timely opportunity to reassess the county's transportation system and develop a forward-looking strategy that addresses emerging needs and priorities.

The 2050 DCTP included a robust technical analysis of the transportation system while tempering these analytics with a deliberate assessment of how the system serves people, and their goals for community, economic opportunity, and quality of life. The following discussion describes the key foundational elements of the planning process and their importance.

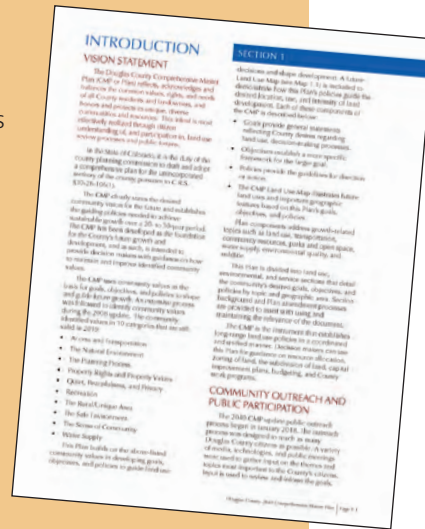


FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

Integrated Planning

The development of a multimodal transportation plan builds upon previous planning efforts. Reviewing relevant plans from Douglas County, local jurisdictions, and regional agencies ensures that their analyses and recommendations inform the creation of the 2050 DCTP. Transportation plans developed by other jurisdictions provide critical insights into local priorities, infrastructure needs, and planned investments. By integrating these local plans, the 2050 DCTP aligns regional strategies with community-level goals, fostering a more cohesive and effective transportation network.

One of the most significant prior planning efforts that informed the development of this 2050 DCTP is the Douglas County 2040 Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP). The CMP was also driven by an extensive public process that developed a countywide vision, goals, and objectives for topics of land use, the natural and built environment, and quality of life. This 2050 DCTP is designed to be mutually supportive of the CMP, aligning transportation investments more effectively with the desired outcomes.



Public and Stakeholder Engagement

The development of the plan was guided by a collaborative and inclusive planning process designed to reflect the needs and aspirations of Douglas County's diverse communities. The plan engaged with three distinct audiences to ensure a well-rounded and inclusive planning process. The Douglas County leadership team, which consisted of the county staff provided critical insights from operational, policy, and county perspectives. The Stakeholder Engagement Team (SET) served as a recurring advisory group composed of municipal representatives, advocacy organizations, cultural groups, and residents, meeting regularly to shape the plan's direction. Finally, the public, including Douglas County residents and others who live, work, or travel through the county, were invited to share their experiences and priorities to help guide the future of transportation in the county. Public outreach included multiple virtual surveys and in-person events.



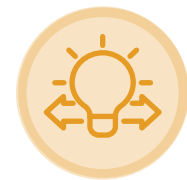
Shared Vision and Goals

Both plans are built around a shared vision for the county's future. The CMP outlines broad goals for land use, growth management, environmental stewardship, and community services. The 2050 DCTP supports these goals by ensuring the transportation system can accommodate projected growth, development patterns, and how people can move throughout the county.



Land Use and Transportation Integration

The 2050 DCTP uses land use projections from the CMP to forecast travel demand and determine where transportation infrastructure is needed. For example, areas identified in the CMP for higher-density development or employment centers are prioritized in the 2050 DCTP for road expansions, transit services, and multimodal facilities.



Coordinated Planning Process

Douglas County emphasizes an integrated planning effort, where transportation planning is not done in isolation. The 2050 DCTP incorporates data and direction from the CMP, including population forecasts, employment trends, and land use maps, to ensure consistency across planning documents.



Policy Alignment

The CMP provides the policy framework that guides zoning, subdivision regulations, and development approvals. The 2050 DCTP translates these policies into actionable transportation projects and capital improvement programs. This ensures that transportation investments align with land use decisions and community priorities.

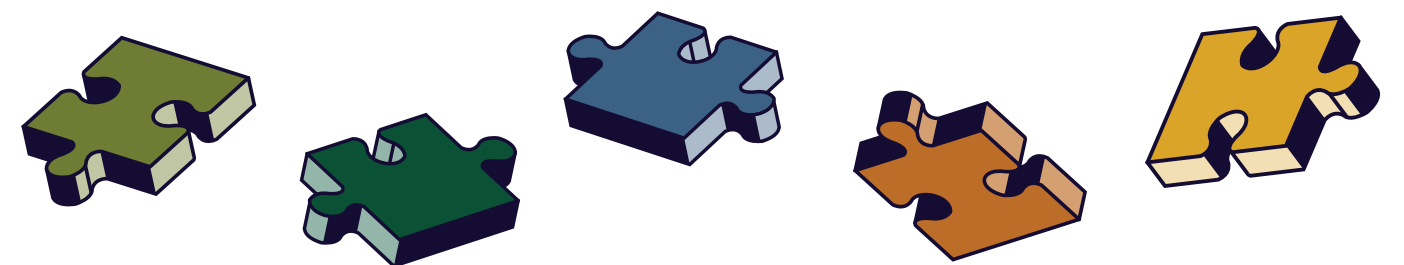


Implementation and Decision-Making

Both plans are used by county officials when making decisions about land use applications, infrastructure funding, and development approvals. The CMP sets the criteria, and the 2050 DCTP provides the technical and logistical roadmap to meet those criteria.

Goal Framework

The Goal Framework was shaped through early stakeholder engagement and serves as the foundation for key analytical metrics, guiding the identification of potential projects and actions to enhance system performance. Centered around five core goals: resilience, equity, safety, reliability, and sustainability, the framework provides a lens through which the existing transportation system is evaluated. Assessing how well the current system aligns with these goals helps uncover areas of unmet needs or opportunities for significant improvement. Identifying gaps both in performance and geography through data-driven analysis and robust stakeholder and public input has been essential in defining system shortcomings. These identified needs directly inform the development of strategies and projects that will shape the future transportation network.



Performance-Based Needs Analysis and Need-Driven Projects

The 2050 DCTP applies a performance-based planning process to assess the transportation system, identify shortfalls in current or future performance, and identify corrective actions to align performance with expectations. This process provides a more comprehensive evaluation of how the system serves people and communities using a Goal Framework developed through a public process.

- The Goal Framework establishes what is essential and is used to measure how the system performs
- System needs are identified as deficiencies in performance (rather than an assumed project)
- A wide range of strategies to address each need is considered to serve the entire Goal Framework best

This process better aligns transportation investments to serve mobility and community goals.

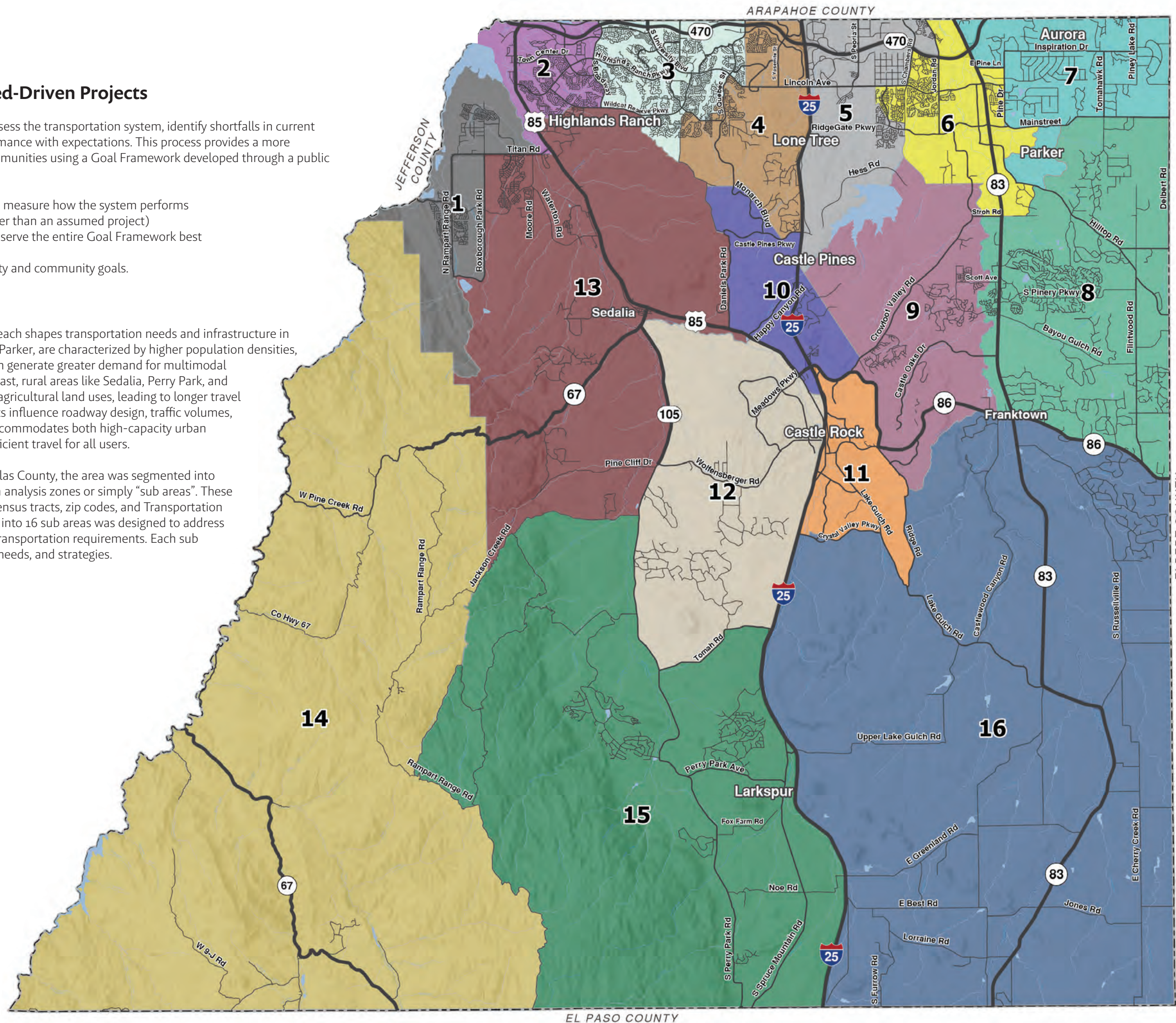
Context Aware Process

Douglas County features a diverse mix of urban and rural land uses, each shapes transportation needs and infrastructure in distinct ways. Urban areas, such as Highlands Ranch, Lone Tree, and Parker, are characterized by higher population densities, commercial centers, and more compact development patterns, which generate greater demand for multimodal transportation options, including transit, walking, and biking. In contrast, rural areas like Sedalia, Perry Park, and the southern zones are characterized by low-density residential and agricultural land uses, leading to longer travel distances and a reliance on personal vehicles. These differing contexts influence roadway design, traffic volumes, and safety considerations, requiring a transportation network that accommodates both high-capacity urban corridors and flexible rural connections while supporting safe and efficient travel for all users.

To address the varied land uses and population distributions in Douglas County, the area was segmented into 16 distinct zones for transportation analysis, known as transportation analysis zones or simply “sub areas”. These sub areas were developed using a combination of datasets such as census tracts, zip codes, and Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs), which were provided by DRCOG. The division into 16 sub areas was designed to address areas with high population densities, diverse land uses, and varying transportation requirements. Each sub area will be examined to identify specific transportation constraints, needs, and strategies.

Figure 1.1 - Douglas County Sub Areas

- Sub Area #1
- Sub Area #2
- Sub Area #3
- Sub Area #4
- Sub Area #5
- Sub Area #6
- Sub Area #7
- Sub Area #8
- Sub Area #9
- Sub Area #10
- Sub Area #11
- Sub Area #12
- Sub Area #13
- Sub Area #14
- Sub Area #15
- Sub Area #16




PLANNING PROCESS

The 2050 DCTP process is built on a series of deliberate, interconnected steps that transform data and community input into effective, actionable outcomes.


This stepwise, data-driven approach ensures that transportation investments are aligned with community values, responsive to current and future demands, and strategically targeted to produce lasting benefits for all who live and work in, or travel through Douglas County.

1 Data Collection




The process began with data collection, gathering information on transportation infrastructure, traffic volumes, population trends, land use, safety records, and community demographics. This critical first step creates the foundational database necessary for evidence-based planning.

2 System Conditions Analysis & Travel Demand Forecasting

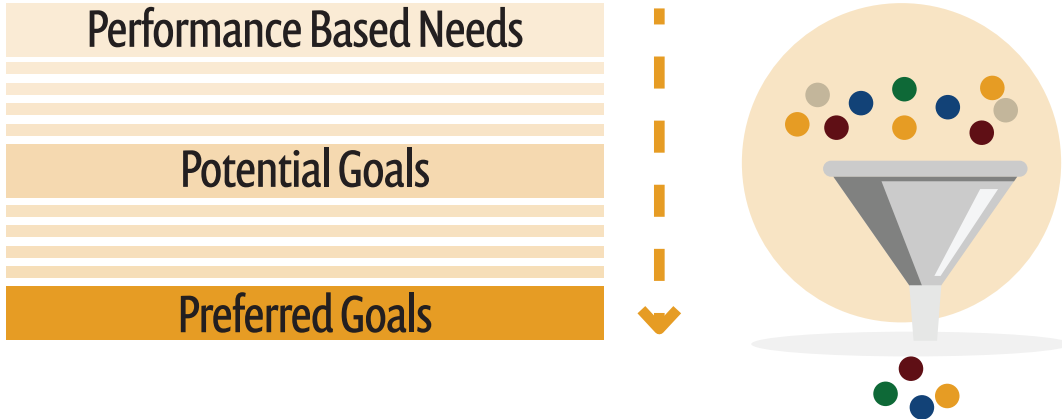


Collected data was analyzed to assess current system performance and travel demand patterns. This includes evaluating existing infrastructure conditions, network reliability, congestion points, safety hotspots, and projected growth trends. The result is a detailed “state of the system” that highlights both strengths and areas of concern.


3 Defining Goals and Ambitions



Grounded in stakeholder and public engagement, the plan established core goals for the future transportation system. These goals serve as the touchstone for subsequent decision-making. The plan also considered the relative ambition for each goal in varying contexts to understand if the desired increase in performance could be characterized on a scale from incremental to transformational.



4 Performance-Based Needs




With a clear Goal Framework in place, each sub area was examined to identify specific gaps and needs. This geographic and performance-based screening ensures that unique challenges and opportunities in each community are surfaced and prioritized according to countywide objectives.

5 Identification of Strategies



For the identified needs, the plan explored a range of strategies, including multimodal enhancements, safety improvements, technology integration, or infrastructure upgrades to determine the most effective approaches for addressing the established needs in pursuit of the desired performance or ambition.

6 Developing Actions, Projects, and Programs



The final step is translating preferred strategies into concrete actions, such as capital projects, operational programs, and policy initiatives. Each action is designed to directly address identified needs and to reinforce the county’s vision for a resilient, equitable, and future-ready transportation network.





Section 2 Public & Stakeholder Engagement

The 2050 DCTP was shaped through a collaborative process that reflects the needs of Douglas County's diverse communities. It engaged three key groups: county leadership, who offered operational and policy insights; a Stakeholder Engagement Team of planning and advocacy partners who regularly advised on the plan's direction; and the public, whose input helped guide priorities for the county's transportation future.

Engagement Activity

5 Stakeholder Engagement Team (SET) Meetings

4 Public Road Show Pop-Up Events

2 Douglas County Staff Work Sessions

Survey #1 **223** respondents

Survey #2 **779** respondents

140 contributions to a Public Comment Map

During development of the 2050 DCTP two other relevant surveys were conducted in Douglas County. The public survey conducted for the Integrated Transit and Multimodal Study and the Countywide Citizen (or Resident) Survey asked questions highly relevant to the 2050 DCTP planning process. The results of these surveys provided additional information in the development of plan recommendations.

Outreach Tools

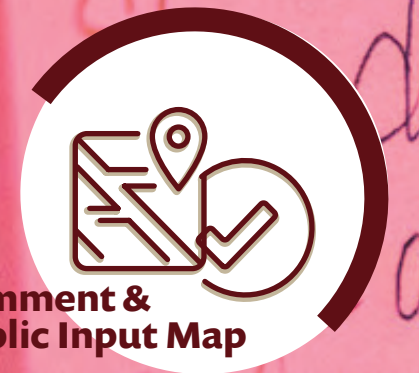
The 2050 Transportation Plan used many tools to reach as many individuals, communities, stakeholders and interest groups as possible during the planning process.



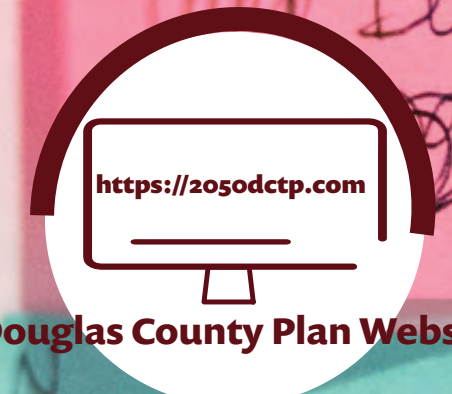
Printed Materials



Social Media Outreach & Coordination



Comment & Public Input Map



Douglas County Plan Website



Public Road Show Events

What We Heard & How We Used It

The Stakeholder Engagement Team provided guidance at key milestones.

1 SET Meeting #1 | Perspectives & SWOC Analysis

The first SET meeting aimed to gather diverse perspectives on Douglas County's transportation system. SET members weighed in on existing conditions and started to establish future desires. Key themes of the "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges" exercises include improving connections, addressing the needs of an aging population, enhancing accessibility, supporting multimodal transportation, enhancing safety, securing funding, and focusing on county-specific needs. These themes were used to develop some general goal areas.

2 SET Meeting #2 | Development of Goal Framework

The second SET meeting focused on shaping and refining the goal areas of the transportation plan. SET members shared their ideas and perspectives for each goal, helping to identify key themes. Following this, participants engaged in an exercise to determine the desired level of ambition for each goal, choosing between incremental, significant, or transformational change and discussed what those levels would look like in the context of transportation in the county.

3 SET Meeting #3 | Needs Analysis & Strategies

The third SET meeting provided an overview of the transportation needs analysis and explored potential strategies to address those needs. Members had the opportunity to respond to identified sub area needs across the county, contribute additional insights, and suggest strategic ideas. Their feedback was especially valuable in highlighting overlooked areas and ensuring the plan reflects the knowledge of those most familiar with the county.

4 SET Meeting #4 | Summary of Candidate Projects & Refining Plan Actions

The fourth SET meeting allowed members to review and provide input on a preliminary list of potential transportation programs, policies, maintenance approaches and funding strategies. Programs are structured initiatives designed to achieve specific transportation outcomes, while policies guide decision-making and planning practices. Maintenance strategies focus on preserving and enhancing infrastructure over time, and funding strategies determine how projects and services will be financially supported. Members categorized their suggestions based on an urgent need, which would be the most impactful, and long-term implementation potential. Additionally, a list of potential projects was presented for review and input. By evaluating these candidate projects, members helped identify which initiatives should be prioritized in the near term and which could be scheduled for later implementation. Worksheets were provided to remind participants of the Goal Framework and their previously defined ambition levels, reinforcing how each project aligns with the county's goals and identified needs.

Key Public & Stakeholder Insights



Top Challenges

Congestion, growth management, maintenance, and transit options.



Environmental Priorities

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, encouraging active lifestyles, and protecting open space.



Multimodal Priorities

Investing in trails, bike infrastructure, and connections to parks and transit.



Movement Priorities

Intersection improvements, reliable travel times, and new connections.



Equity

Emphasis on serving those without personal vehicles, older adults, and people with disabilities.



Safety Priorities

Reducing fatal/severe crashes, addressing hotspots, and improving pedestrian crossings.



Infrastructure Priorities

Maintaining paved roads, snow removal, and bridge maintenance.

Surveys

The public surveys invited residents to share their transportation values. The first survey gathered input on system strengths and weaknesses, draft goal priorities, and included a comment map for identifying specific areas of concern.

Public Survey #1

Approximately **37%** of survey respondents agreed that providing a variety of transportation choices is of the highest importance.



The **Top 3 Greatest Challenges** facing the future of Douglas County's Transportation System:

- 1 Congested Corridors and Intersections - **52%**
- 2 Managing Growth and Development - **47%**
- 3 Maintenance of Existing Roads and Bridges - **31%**



Public Survey #2

The second survey asked residents to share input on focus areas and project priorities, helping the county better understand broad transportation needs and preferences.

Responses revealed strong public support for prioritizing critical infrastructure and maintenance over new capital projects. Key funding priorities included community benefits and long-term sustainability, while intersection improvements were the top-ranked road enhancement. Respondents favored trail connections and bike facilities to encourage walking and biking, though many preferred to maintain vehicle capacity over reallocating lanes. A majority supported widening roads over expanding public transit, and while opinions on roundabouts were mixed, most agreed on the need for emergency access route investments. System-wide efficiency was prioritized over equity-focused investments.

The **Top 3 Highest Priorities** for improving the Douglas County's Transportation System:

- 33%** Add regional roadway capacity and connectivity
- 21%** Expand public transit services
- 21%** Increase maintenance



Integrated Transit and Multimodal Study Survey

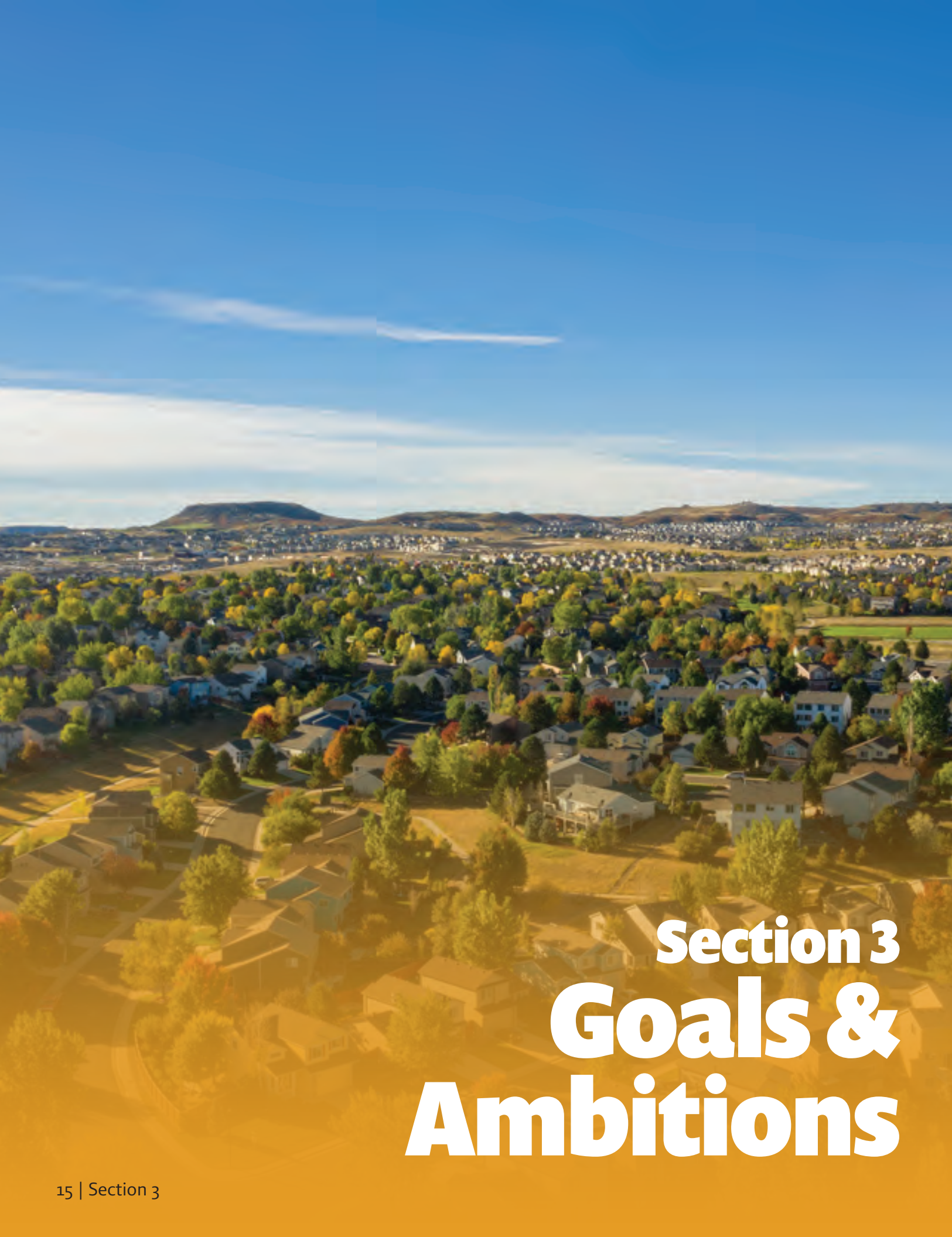
Douglas County conducted extensive public outreach for its 2025 Integrated Transit and Multimodal Study to understand community needs better and shape future transit options. As part of that effort, a public survey was conducted in early 2025 to provide feedback on transit needs, barriers, and preferences. This survey helped prioritize potential pilot projects. Highlights from the survey results used to inform the 2050 DCTP include:

- 17% currently use transit within northern Douglas County
- Favorable votes for a Lone Tree to Castle Rock via Castle Pines route
- Future transit use: would use transit at least monthly if it served their destinations
- Features that might encourage more transit use: frequent and reliable service, safety, and affordable fares

County-wide Resident Survey – April 2025

The Countywide Resident Survey (2025) was a comprehensive public opinion survey conducted to assess residents' satisfaction with county services and gather feedback on key community issues. Within that survey, there were Transportation-related questions that were used to help gain an understanding of the overall opinion of transportation in the county.

- Road Maintenance and resurfacing: 66% Satisfied, 33% Not satisfied, 1% unsure
- Traffic management: 64% Satisfied, 36% Not satisfied
- Has a transportation system that is effective & adequate: 43% Adequate, 32% Not very adequate, 23% Not at all adequate



Section 3 Goals & Ambitions

Core goal areas were established early in the planning process through input from the public and stakeholders. The goal areas represent consistently discussed topics of the desired qualities for a future transportation system in Douglas County. Using direct input from SET members and an evaluation of consistent themes from public input, relative levels of ambition for each of these core goals were evaluated. Ambitions are described as the desired level of positive outcomes and are characterized by an increasing scale of incremental, significant, or transformational change. This framework of goals and ambitions guided the entire planning process to evaluate needs, shape investment decisions, prioritize actions, and ensure that strategies align with the community's values and long-term vision for mobility.

Vision from Comprehensive Plan

Douglas County's Comprehensive Master Plan envisions a future that balances growth with the preservation of its unique communities and natural resources. Guided by ten core community values, with one including transportation access, the plan sets goals to support sustainable development, protect rural character, and enhance quality of life.

The transportation access values focus on goals that create a transportation network that supports the movement of people and goods while enhancing access, mobility, and quality of life. The plan envisions a diverse transportation system that improves travel choices, reduces vehicle miles traveled, and supports healthier, more active communities. It also emphasizes the importance of aligning transportation planning with land use policies to preserve community character and promote sustainable growth.



Comprehensive Plan Vision

The plan envisions a diverse transportation system that improves travel choices, reduces vehicle miles traveled, and supports healthier, more active communities. It also emphasizes the importance of aligning transportation planning with land use policies to preserve community character and promote sustainable growth.

GOAL FRAMEWORK


The 2050 DCTP is built around five key goal areas that characterize core elements of the county’s vision for a future-ready transportation system. The Goal Framework forms the backbone of the plan and guides every recommendation, project, and policy. The following goal areas were developed through public input and coordination with county staff and SET members as elements that described a desired transportation system:



Resilient Network

A resilient transportation network is one that can withstand, adapt to, and recover from disruptions whether caused by natural disasters, crashes, congestion, or infrastructure failures while continuing to provide reliable mobility for people and goods. A resilient transportation network is proactive, not reactive, and designed to anticipate challenges and maintain service under stress, ensuring safety, accessibility, and continuity for all users.

Key Characteristics: Redundancy and Alternative Routes; Emergency Access and Eliminating Bottlenecks, Risk Mitigation (Emergency or Hazard Planning)



Service to All Users

This goal emphasizes that all people, whether they walk, bike, drive, or use transit, should have safe, convenient, and reliable options to reach their destinations. It includes ensuring that infrastructure supports people with disabilities, older adults, and those without access to a personal vehicle. By prioritizing equity in design, investment, and policy, the transportation system can better reflect the diverse needs of the entire population and promote fair access to opportunity.


Key Characteristics: Accessibility to Destinations (Educational, Recreational, Commercial, etc.), Accessibility for All, Multimodal options



Safety

This plan should invest in a system that protects all users from harm, with a focus on eliminating severe and fatal crashes. A safe transportation network prioritizes the needs of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists who face higher risks in traffic environments.

Key Characteristics: Crash prevention, focus on Safety Hot spots, severity reduction, and Vulnerable Road User crash prevention



Efficient Movement

This plan should prioritize investments in projects that enhance the movement of more people and support reliable travel for all users, regardless of mode. The transportation network should feature well-connected corridors, coordinated signal timing, and infrastructure designed to minimize disruptions. It must also ensure that multimodal options—such as transit, biking, and walking—are readily available, and that the system can maintain consistent performance during peak periods or unexpected events.

Key Characteristics: System capacity for future demand (Volume/Capacity). Reliable travel times; Reducing Long Trips



Sustainable

This plan should encourage a sustainable transportation network that supports long-term vitality while reducing environmental impacts. Sustainability includes ongoing maintenance and preservation of existing infrastructure, ensuring roads, bridges, and other facilities remain safe, functional, and cost-effective over time. By investing in durable materials, efficient operations, and proactive asset management, a sustainable network avoids costly replacements and disruptions, while supporting a resilient and adaptable system.

Key Characteristics: Infrastructure Condition, Environmental Stewardship (greenhouse gas, minimizing impacts on natural habitats, efficient land use); Efficient Maintenance and Preservation

AMBITIONS




Setting the tone for strategic decision making/investments

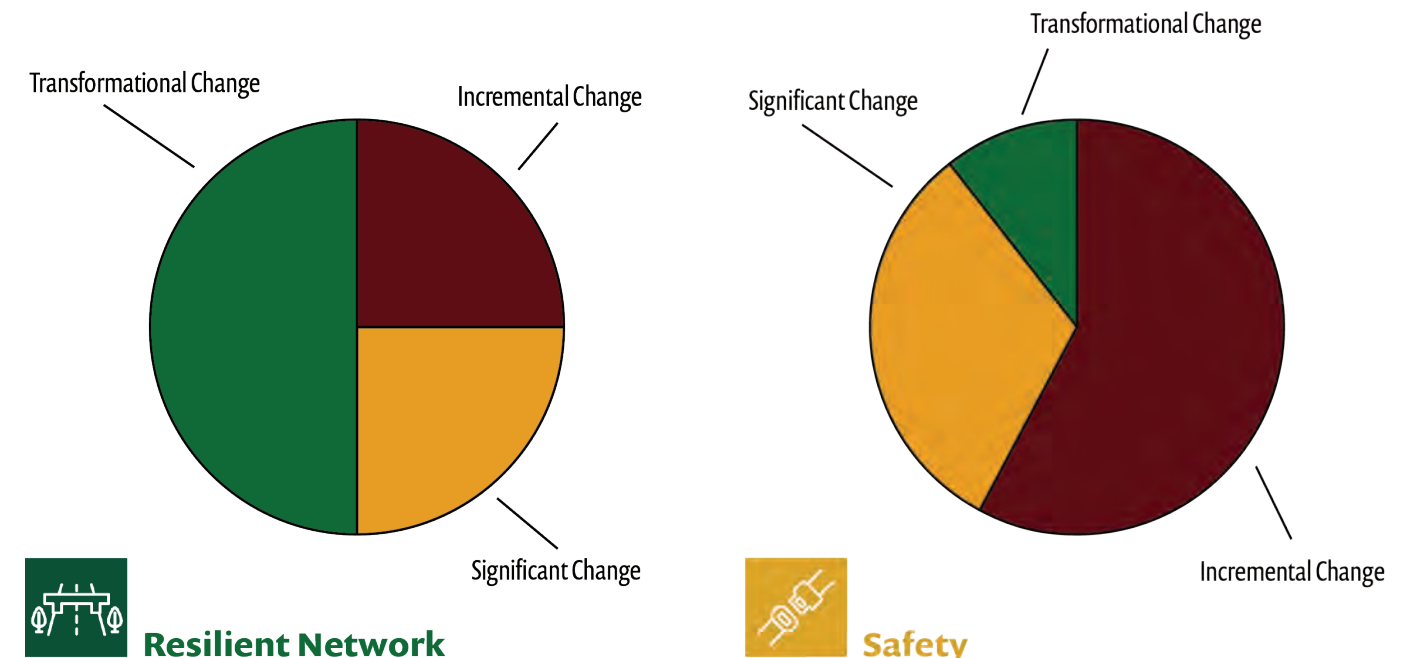
This long-range transportation plan envisions a future where the county’s transportation system is shaped by a bold yet balanced level of ambition; advancing toward a network that is resilient, flexible, safe, efficient, and sustainable. Building on a framework of five core goals areas, the plan considers pathways for transformational change where needed, such as adapting infrastructure that is resilient and accessible for all travelers. At the same time, it identifies significant and incremental changes that strengthen the system’s foundation, like modernizing maintenance practices to support sustainability, enhancing multimodal safety, and improving operational efficiency. By aligning ambition levels with strategic priorities, this plan ensures that every investment contributes to a transportation system that is prepared for future challenges, responsive to community needs, and committed to long-term stewardship.

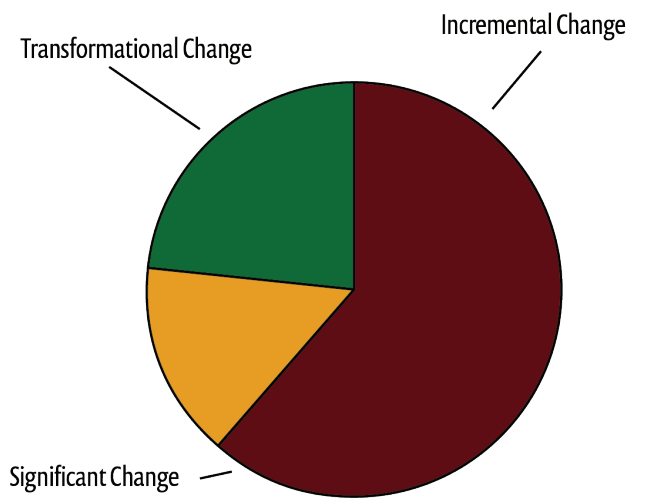
As part of the plan development, relative levels of ambition for each of the five core goal areas were evaluated from direct stakeholder input and evaluation of public input. The plan also considers how the level of ambition may vary by the diverse contexts of Douglas County, from rural agricultural to suburban neighborhood, to a variety of activity centers. The ambition evaluation was not intended to result in a consensus direction but rather inform the development of potential strategies and future decisions.

Levels of Ambition

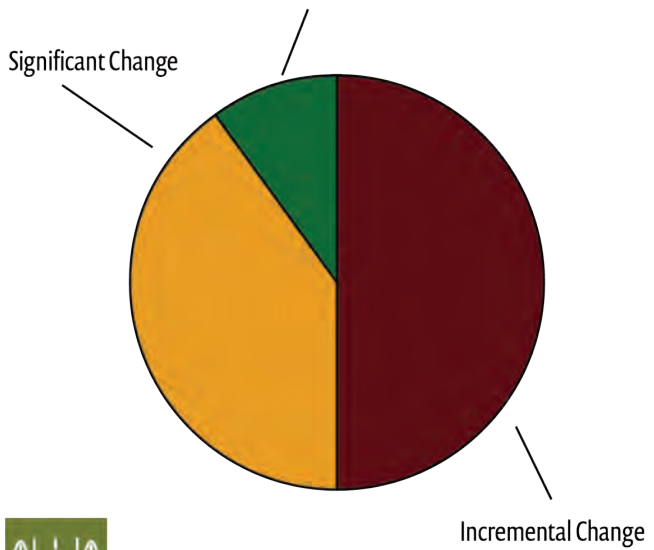
Recognizing different levels of ambition —incremental, significant, and transformational —helps shape the scale and direction of strategies.

-  **Incremental Changes** involve small, gradual adjustments to existing transportation systems and policies. These changes are typically easier to implement and are less disruptive.
-  **Significant Changes** are more substantial than incremental changes and often involve major policy shifts or large scale projects. These changes can have a considerable impact on the transportation system and may require significant resources and planning.
-  **Transformational Changes** are fundamental shifts that completely overhaul the transportation system. These changes are driven by new technologies, societal needs, or environmental challenges and aim to create a modern, efficient, and sustainable transportation network.

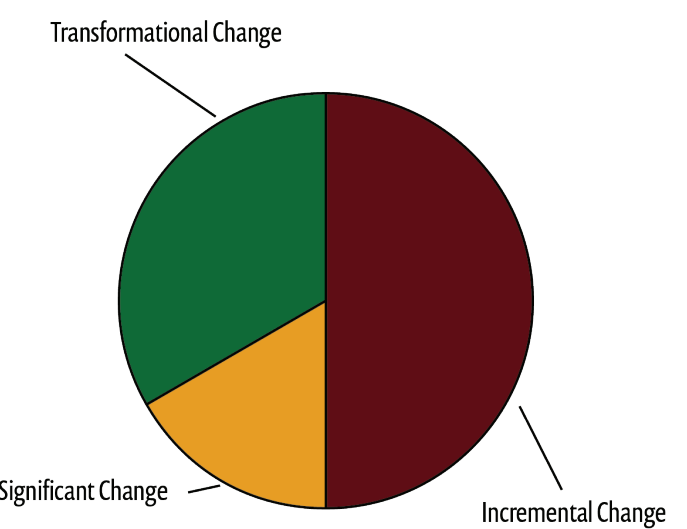




 **Service to All Users**



 **Sustainable**



 **Efficient Movement**



Section 4 Existing Conditions Assessment

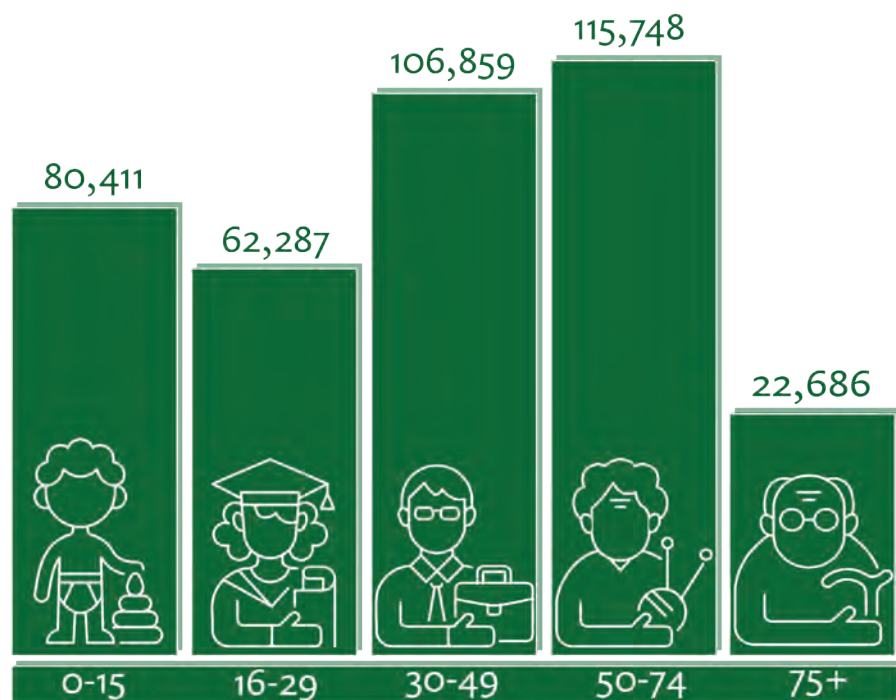
Who's Traveling?

Douglas County has an estimated population of 387,991, with approximately 292,054 residents of driving age, indicating a high level of potential roadway demand. Among this population, an estimated 55,208 individuals are aged 65 or older, representing a growing demographic with distinct mobility needs. The largest age cohort in 2024 is the 50–74 age group, comprising nearly 30% of the county's population. This indicates that a substantial portion of Douglas County residents will transition into the 75+ age group over the next 25 years.

By 2050, the county can expect a significant increase in its senior population, driven by aging Baby Boomers and Gen X residents. This demographic shift will have major implications for transportation planning. Older adults in the county will remain active and continue to rely on the transportation network for essential travel, including medical appointments, shopping, and social activities.


To support safe and equitable access, transportation planning should incorporate infrastructure improvements, including enhanced signage, high-visibility pedestrian crossings, and expanded transit services. These measures are critical to maintaining mobility, safety, and independence for older adults while improving overall system performance and inclusivity.


Figure 4.1 - 2024 Douglas County Population By Age Group




How Douglas County residents travel to work...

80% Drive Alone 

8% Carpool 

10% Use another mode such as bicycling, walking, or work from home 

2% Use Public Transit 

Douglas County maintains over **1,284 miles** of roadways*



153 miles of arterial roadways
276 miles of collector roadways
855 miles of local roadways

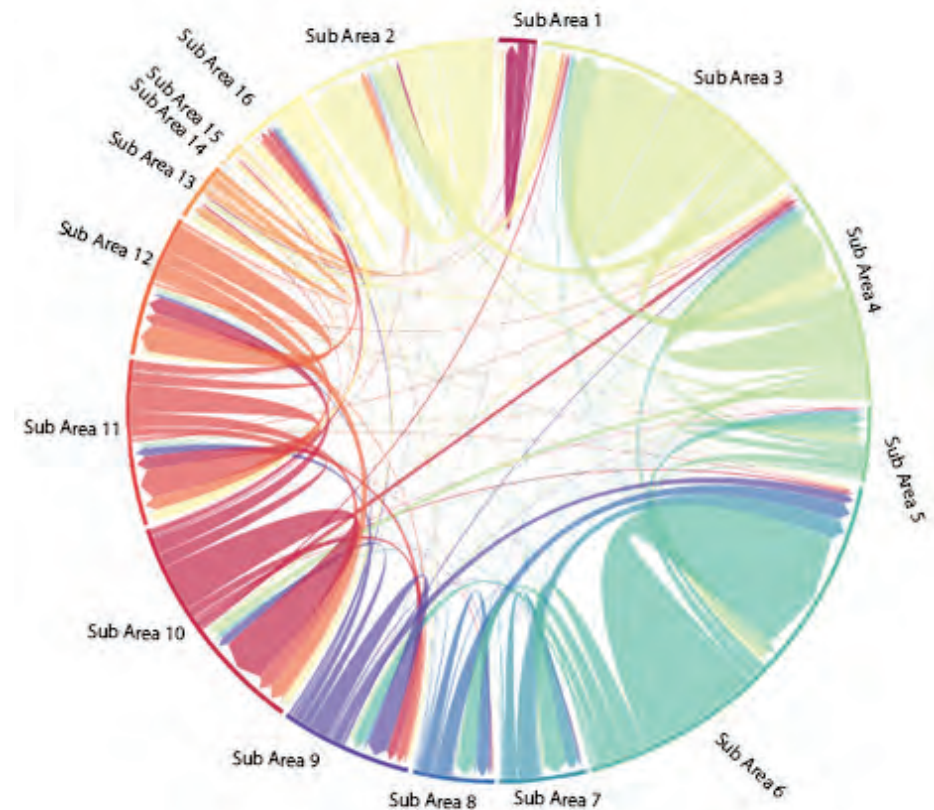
*Note: these statistics include only those roads under county jurisdiction, and do not include Colorado highways, toll roads, or municipal roads.

Where are People Going?

Understanding where people travel within and beyond Douglas County is essential for planning a transportation system that meets current and future needs. This analysis examined travel patterns within Douglas County sub areas. The travel origin-destination chord diagram visually represents the flow of trips between different sub areas. Each segment around the circle corresponds to a sub area, and the connecting arcs (or "chords") illustrate the volume and direction of travel between sub areas. Thicker chords indicate higher trip volumes, highlighting strong travel demand or connectivity between specific areas. The strongest connections were observed between sub areas 2 & 3, 3 & 4, 6 & 7, and 6 & 8.

These relationships are visually represented in the chord diagram in **Figure 4.2 - Douglas County Chord Chart**. Douglas County experiences significant travel activity both within its borders and across regional boundaries, particularly with El Paso and Elbert Counties. The DRCOG Focus model shows strong origin-destination patterns along major corridors like I-25, CO-83, and CO-86, reflecting commuting, recreational, and freight movements. External trips entering Douglas County are forecasted to grow, especially from El Paso County, driven by regional expansion. Eastern routes may also face pressure from rural development.

Figure 4.2 - Douglas County Chord Chart



Origin & Destination



75.3% of all trips originating in Douglas County end somewhere else in Douglas County according to Origin-Destination analysis.

Roadway Network

Douglas County's network includes major north-south highways (I-25, US-85, CO-83, CO-105) to provide alternatives for incident management and emergency detours. The county has a variety of east-west roadways throughout the north half, with sparse options south of Castle Rock.

To better understand and address these challenges, it is important to examine the structure and function of the existing roadway network in Douglas County. The county's roads are organized into a functional hierarchy that supports a range of travel needs, from regional connectivity to local access. This network plays a critical role in shaping mobility, safety, and accessibility for all users.

Roadway Classification

Roadways in Douglas County can be classified functionally as arterials, collectors, and local roads, regardless of whether they are in urban or rural settings. This classification reflects the role each roadway plays in the transportation network. Arterials are designed to carry high volumes of traffic over longer distances and connect major destinations. Collectors serve as intermediate routes, gathering traffic from local roads and directing it to arterials, while balancing mobility and property access. Local roads provide direct access to individual properties and support low-speed, low-volume travel within neighborhoods or rural areas. While design standards may vary between urban and rural environments, the functional purpose of each classification remains consistent across the county.









Maintenance and Infrastructure Condition

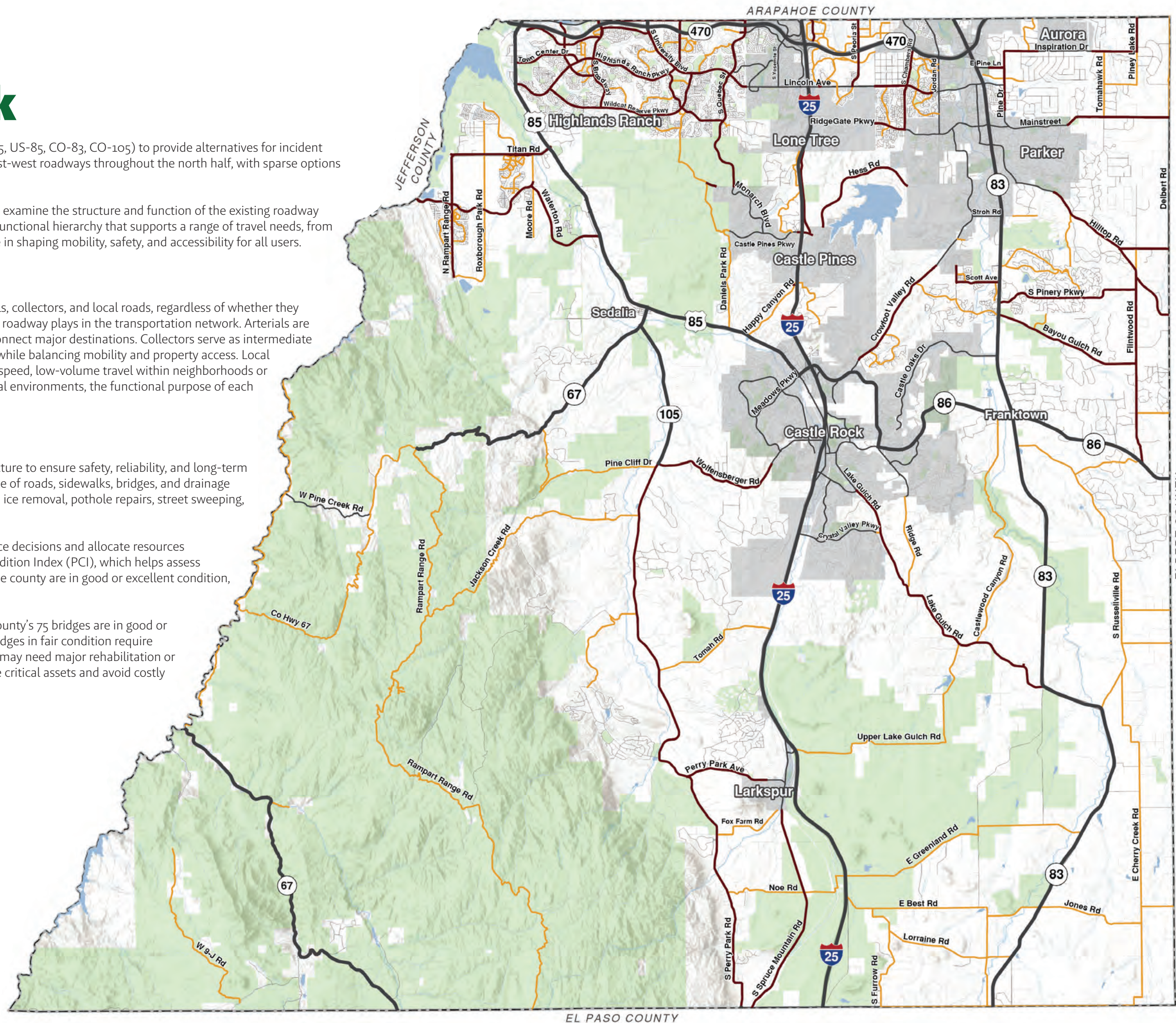
Douglas County prioritizes the upkeep of its transportation infrastructure to ensure safety, reliability, and long-term performance. The Department of Public Works oversees maintenance of roads, sidewalks, bridges, and drainage systems in unincorporated areas. Routine activities include snow and ice removal, pothole repairs, street sweeping, and maintenance of traffic signals, signage, and pavement markings.

The county uses an asset management program to guide maintenance decisions and allocate resources efficiently. Pavement conditions are tracked using the Pavement Condition Index (PCI), which helps assess roadway quality and prioritize improvements. Most paved roads in the county are in good or excellent condition, while unpaved roads are monitored separately.

Bridge infrastructure is also regularly assessed. The majority of the county's 75 bridges are in good or satisfactory condition, with many constructed in the last 50 years. Bridges in fair condition require ongoing monitoring and maintenance, while those in poor condition may need major rehabilitation or replacement. Proactive monitoring helps extend the lifespan of these critical assets and avoid costly emergency repairs.

Figure 4.3 - Douglas County Maintained Roads

-  Arterial Road
-  Collector Road
-  Local Road
-  CDOT Highway (not maintained by Douglas County)
-  Major Road (not maintained by Douglas County)
-  Other Roads (not maintained by Douglas County)
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Parks / Open Space



Roadway Performance & Future Demand

Analyzing traffic congestion is essential for identifying problem areas and informing transportation improvements. This plan used DRCOG's regional Travel Demand Model to evaluate roadway performance through Level of Service (LOS), which measures operational conditions from free flow (LOS A) to severe congestion (LOS F). Some roadway segments that are not yet included in the DRCOG model are not shown.

The analysis identified both congested corridors and critical intersections, locations where recurring delays significantly impact traffic flow. These intersections often act as chokepoints and are key candidates for operational or geometric improvements. Roadways experiencing the most severe congestion (LOS E or F) are primarily arterial routes leading into urban centers such as Parker, Castle Rock, and Lone Tree. These corridors also serve growing residential areas, contributing to increased traffic volumes and delay.

Sub Area Growth







Several Douglas County sub areas are experiencing varying levels of growth, with the most rapid occurring in the northern part of the county, specifically in Sub Areas 1, 5, and 13, as well as in central areas such as Sub Areas 9, 10, and 12, which include and surround Castle Pines and Castle Rock. Moderate growth is observed in Sub Areas 4, 6, 7, and 11, located in and around Lone Tree, Parker, and Castle Rock. In contrast, Sub Areas 2, 3, 8, 14, 15, and 16 are considered stable, with limited

Table 4.1 - Critical Intersections*	
US-85 & Highlands Ranch Pkwy	E Lincoln Ave & N Pine Dr
Highlands Ranch Pkwy & Wildcat Reserve Pkwy	Pine Ln & N Pine Dr
Kendrick Castillo Way & S Broadway	Inspiration Rd & Tomahawk Rd
County Line Rd & S Broadway	E Parker Rd & Delbert Rd
C470 & S Broadway	Russellville Rd & SH 83
Highlands Ranch Pkwy & Fairview Pkwy	SH 86 & Flintwood Rd
Highlands Ranch Pkwy & S University Blvd	SH 83 & S Russellville Rd
E Wildcat Reserve Pkwy & Fairview Pkwy	Lake Gulch Rd & SH 83
McArthur Ranch Rd & S Monarch Blvd	SH 86 & Flintwood
S University Blvd & S Quebec St	W Wolfensburger Rd & Perry Park Rd
County Line Rd & S Quebec St	US-85 & Happy Canyon Rd
E Lincoln Ave & S Peoria St	US-85 & Daniels Park Rd
Mainstreet & S Chambers Rd	McArthur Ranch Rd & S Monarch Blvd
S University Blvd & S Quebec St	

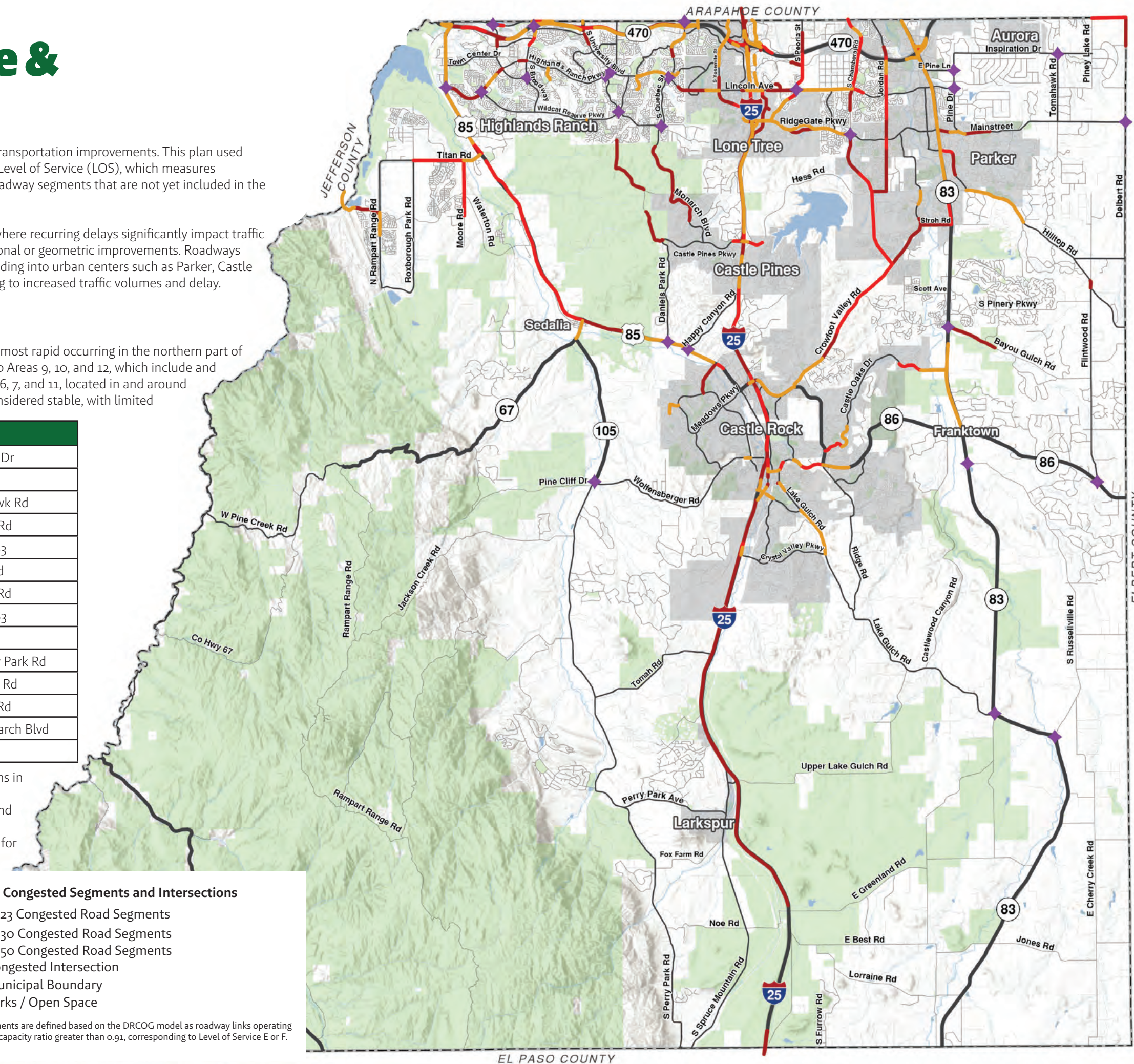
new development. These areas include Highlands Ranch, the Pinery, and rural portions in the southern portion of the County. These growth patterns help identify where future transportation investments may be most needed to support shifting travel demand and development pressures. Areas experiencing high or moderate growth are likely to see increased traffic volumes, greater strain on existing infrastructure, and rising demand for multimodal options. By aligning transportation improvements with these growth trends, Douglas County can proactively address congestion, enhance connectivity, and ensure that the transportation network continues to serve residents and businesses efficiently as the region evolves.

* The critical intersections identified are limited to those under the jurisdiction of Douglas County. Intersections within local jurisdictions such as Parker, Castle Rock, Castle Pines, and Lone Tree are excluded from this list.

Figure 4.4 - Congested Segments and Intersections

-  2023 Congested Road Segments
-  2030 Congested Road Segments
-  2050 Congested Road Segments
-  Congested Intersection
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Parks / Open Space

Congested segments are defined based on the DRCOG model as roadway links operating at a volume-to-capacity ratio greater than 0.91, corresponding to Level of Service E or F.



Safety

Crash data from recent years in Douglas County shows clear shifts in roadway safety patterns*. Crashes initially declined during the early 2020s, likely due to reduced travel activity during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, despite the overall drop in crash frequency during that period, the number of fatal collisions increased. In the years following the pandemic, crash volumes began to rise again, accompanied by a noticeable increase in crashes resulting in injuries.

High-frequency crash corridors were concentrated in more densely populated areas like Highlands Ranch and Lone Tree. However, the number of fatal crashes does not always align with high crash volumes, rural areas such as Sub Area 8 (Hilltop Road) and Sub Area 15 (Perry Park Road) experienced disproportionately high fatal crash rates. These locations warrant further analysis to assess contributing factors such as roadway design, speed limits, and environmental conditions.


Vulnerable Road User (VRU) crashes, such as those involving bicyclists and pedestrians, are more prominent in northern, suburban areas of the county. Although there has been a slight decrease in bicycle-related crashes, pedestrian crashes show a slight upward trend. Despite the relatively low number of VRU fatalities, the presence of consistent crash activity involving VRUs highlights the need for targeted safety improvements. Creating a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists is essential to reducing crash risk and encouraging active transportation. Improving safety for pedestrians and bicyclists is critical to reducing crash risk and promoting active transportation. Further analysis is needed to better understand contributing factors, including fault and crash circumstances.

Congestion and Critical Intersections

Analyzing traffic congestion is essential for identifying problem areas and informing transportation improvements. This plan used regional modeling tools to evaluate roadway performance through Level of Service (LOS), which measures operational conditions from free flow (LOS A) to severe congestion (LOS F).


The analysis identified both congested corridors and critical intersections, locations where recurring delays significantly impact traffic flow. These intersections often act as chokepoints and are key candidates for operational or geometric improvements. Roadways experiencing the most severe congestion (LOS E or F) are primarily arterial routes leading into urban centers such as Parker, Castle Rock, and Lone Tree. These corridors also serve growing residential areas, contributing to increased traffic volumes and delay.

From 2019 - 2023...



78% of crashes were on **Urban Roads**

22% of crashes were on **Rural Roads**



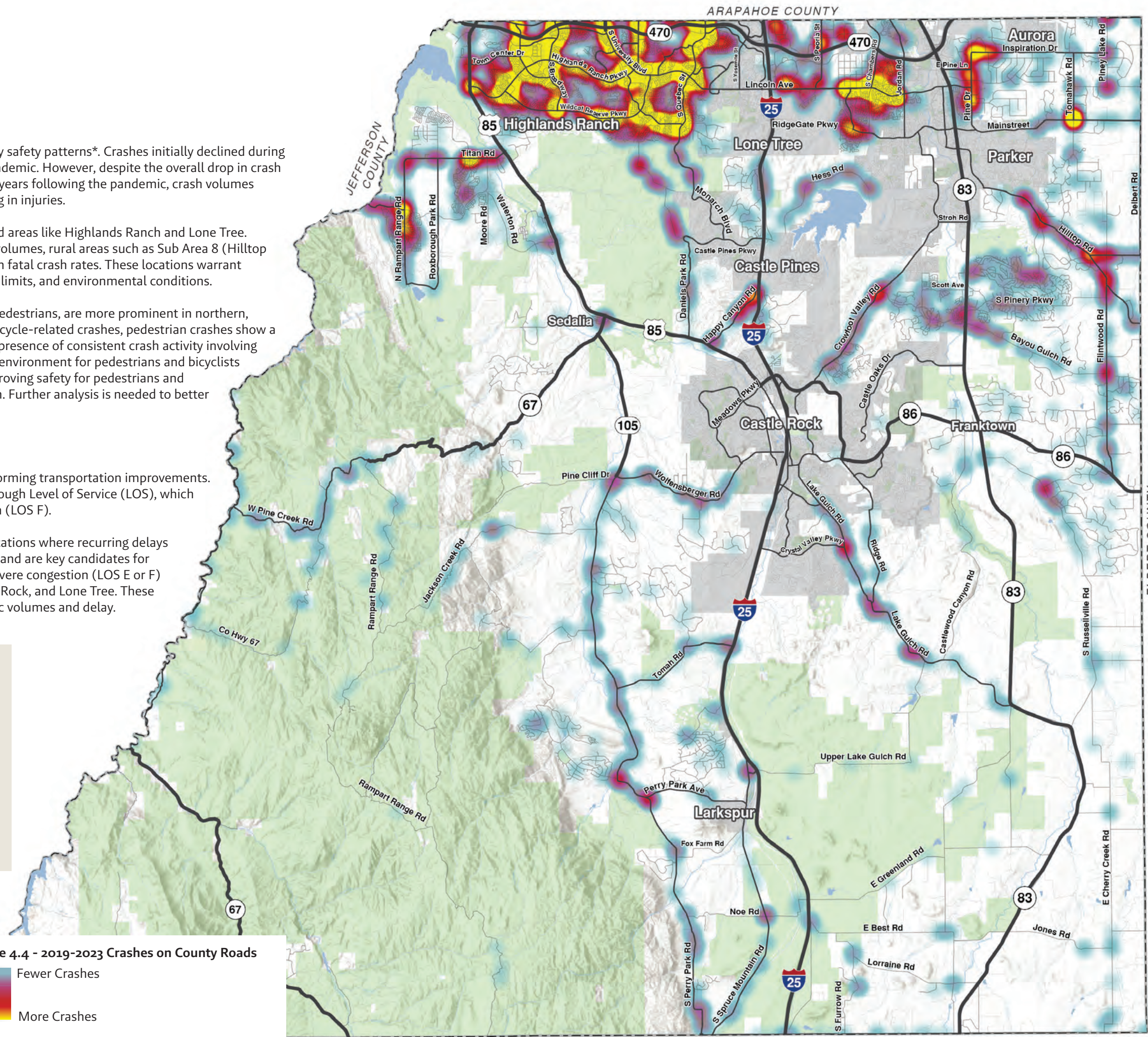
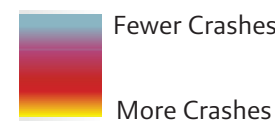
64% of Fatal crashes were on **Rural Roads**

36% of Fatal crashes were on **Urban Roads**

Unincorporated Douglas County, CO Crash Data (2019-2023). Provided by Douglas County

*Crash data presented here includes only incidents that occurred on roads within unincorporated Douglas County. Crashes within municipal boundaries and on CDOT roadways - including Interstate 25, U.S. Highway 85, and State Highways 83, 86, and 470 are excluded from these counts.

Figure 4.4 - 2019-2023 Crashes on County Roads



Active Transportation Network

Bicycle Network

Douglas County features a robust system of bike and pedestrian infrastructure, highlighted in its 2025 Bicycling Map. While most rural roads are designated as Bike Routes with “Share the Road” signage, they typically lack dedicated bike lanes. In contrast, the northern part of the county, particularly areas like Highlands Ranch and key corridors such as Havana Street, Hess Road, and Crowfoot Valley Road, offer designated bike facilities. Highlands Ranch also includes a network of multi-use paths designed for non-motorized travel, accommodating bicyclists, pedestrians, and other recreational users.

Trail System

The county offers a rich and varied trail system that spans scenic open spaces, regional parks, and wilderness areas. Key regional trails include the East-West Regional Trail, Cherry Creek Regional Trail, and High Line Canal Trail which provide long distance connectivity for hikers, bikers, and equestrians. While several open space areas have designated trails, they are generally not interconnected, meaning that traveling between them often requires the use of a vehicle.








Bicycle and Trail Network Challenges

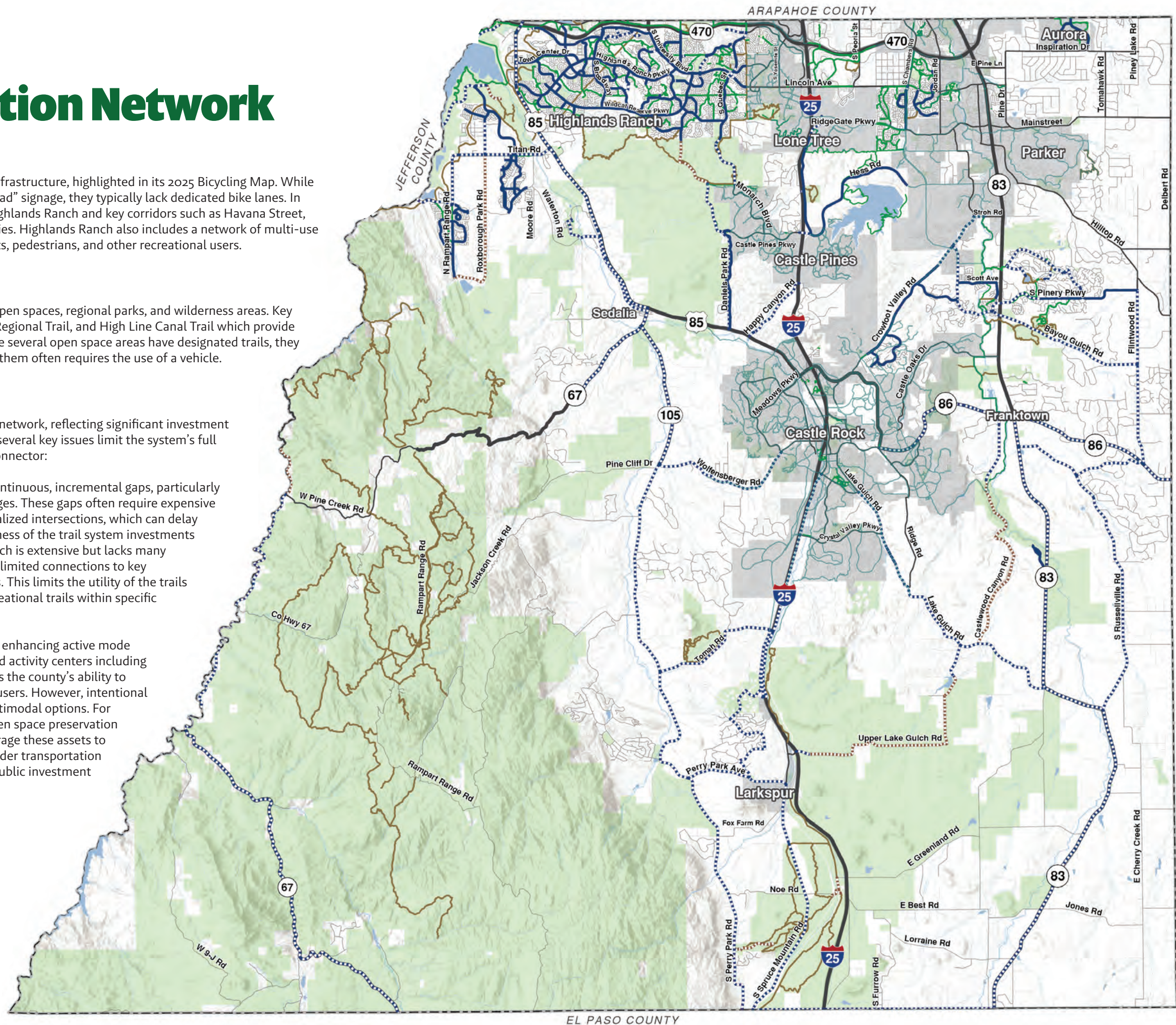
Douglas County boasts a robust and well-utilized bicycle and trail network, reflecting significant investment in active transportation and recreational infrastructure. However, several key issues limit the system’s full potential to serve as a viable transportation option and regional connector:

Costly Gaps at Arterial Crossings: While the network is largely continuous, incremental gaps, particularly at arterial roadway crossings, pose safety and accessibility challenges. These gaps often require expensive infrastructure solutions such as grade-separated crossings or signalized intersections, which can delay connectivity improvements. However, they also limit the effectiveness of the trail system investments already made. For example, the trail system within Highlands Ranch is extensive but lacks many improvements to facilitate safe crossings of arterial roadways and limited connections to key destinations such as commercial centers, schools, and transit hubs. This limits the utility of the trails for everyday travel and reduces their role in to being localized recreational trails within specific neighborhoods.

Insufficient Regional Integration: There are significant hurdles to enhancing active mode connections countywide to connect open spaces, communities, and activity centers including fiscal and physical constraints. The resulting fragmentation hinders the county’s ability to support long-distance active travel and regional recreation for all users. However, intentional investments in existing roadway corridors could provide more multimodal options. For example, Douglas County has made substantial investments in open space preservation and access. However, the existing trail network does not fully leverage these assets to create meaningful connections between open spaces and the broader transportation system. Enhancing these linkages would maximize the return on public investment and expand access for all users.

Figure 4.5 - Douglas County Maintained Roads

-  Bike Lanes (On-Street)
-  Bike Route (Gravel)
-  Bike Route (Paved)
-  Municipal Bike Facilities
- Multi-Use Trails**
-  Paved Path
-  Unpaved Path
-  County Trail



Transit System

Douglas County's current transit network is limited but evolving, with services concentrated in more suburban areas and targeted programs supporting specific populations. The Regional Transportation District (RTD) services are available in more densely populated communities like Highlands Ranch, Lone Tree, and Parker. These urbanized areas benefit from higher demand and better infrastructure to support transit. However, in the southern, more rural portion of the county transit becomes increasingly scarce, often requiring residents to rely on personal vehicles for mobility.

Transit Challenges and Opportunities

Transit in Douglas County remains limited, with few options available to meet the growing and diversifying needs of residents. Despite this, there is a strong and consistent public demand for expanded transit services, particularly as the county prepares for a more regional approach to mobility and addresses the needs of an aging population.








Limited Existing Transit Options: The county currently lacks a comprehensive transit system, leaving many residents, especially those without access to a personal vehicle, without viable alternatives for travel. This gap disproportionately affects individuals with disabilities, lower-income households, and the growing populations of older adults.

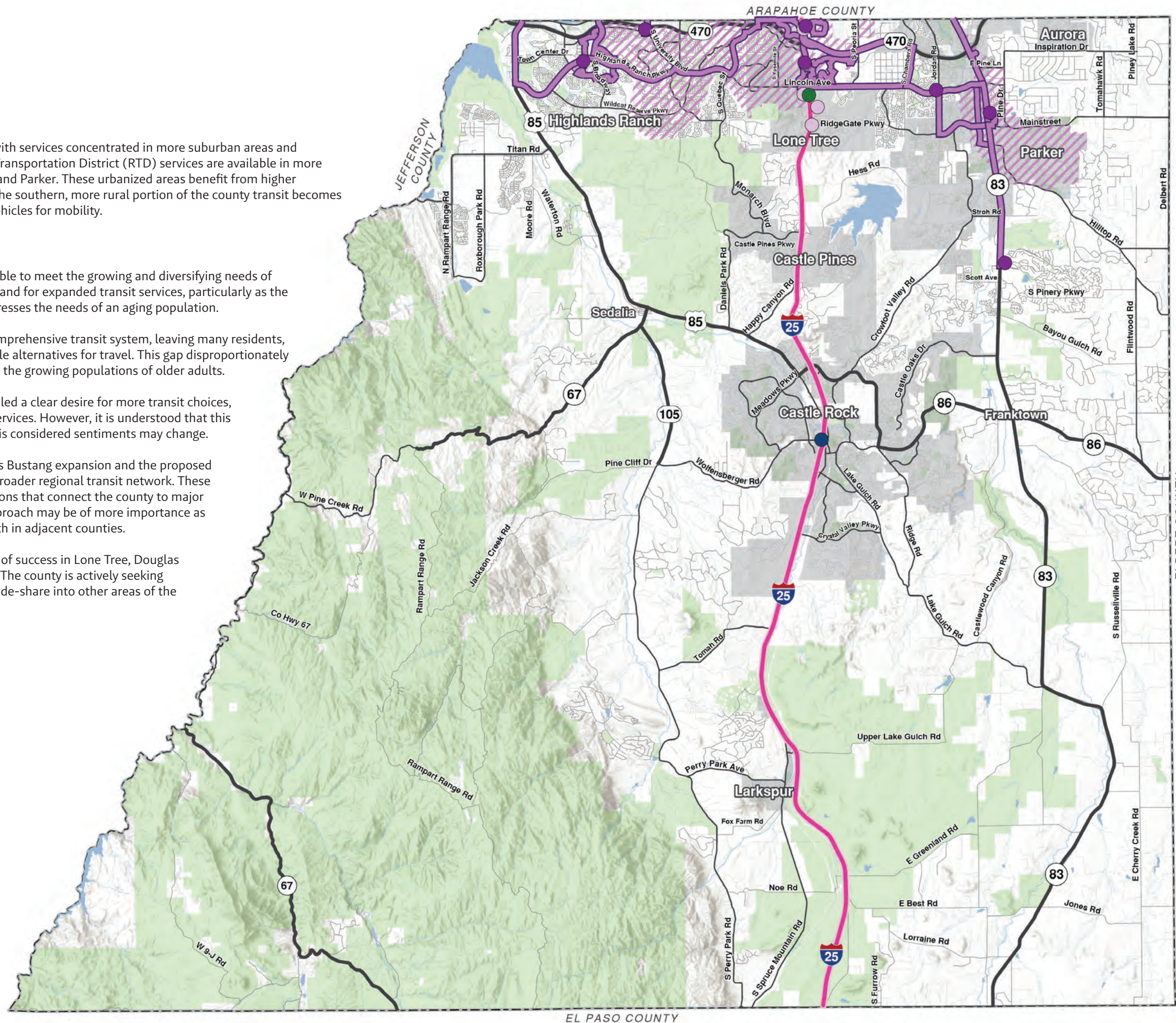
Public Support for Expansion: Community engagement has revealed a clear desire for more transit choices, including regional connections, local circulators, and specialized services. However, it is understood that this sentiment is not universal and when the cost of such investments is considered sentiments may change.

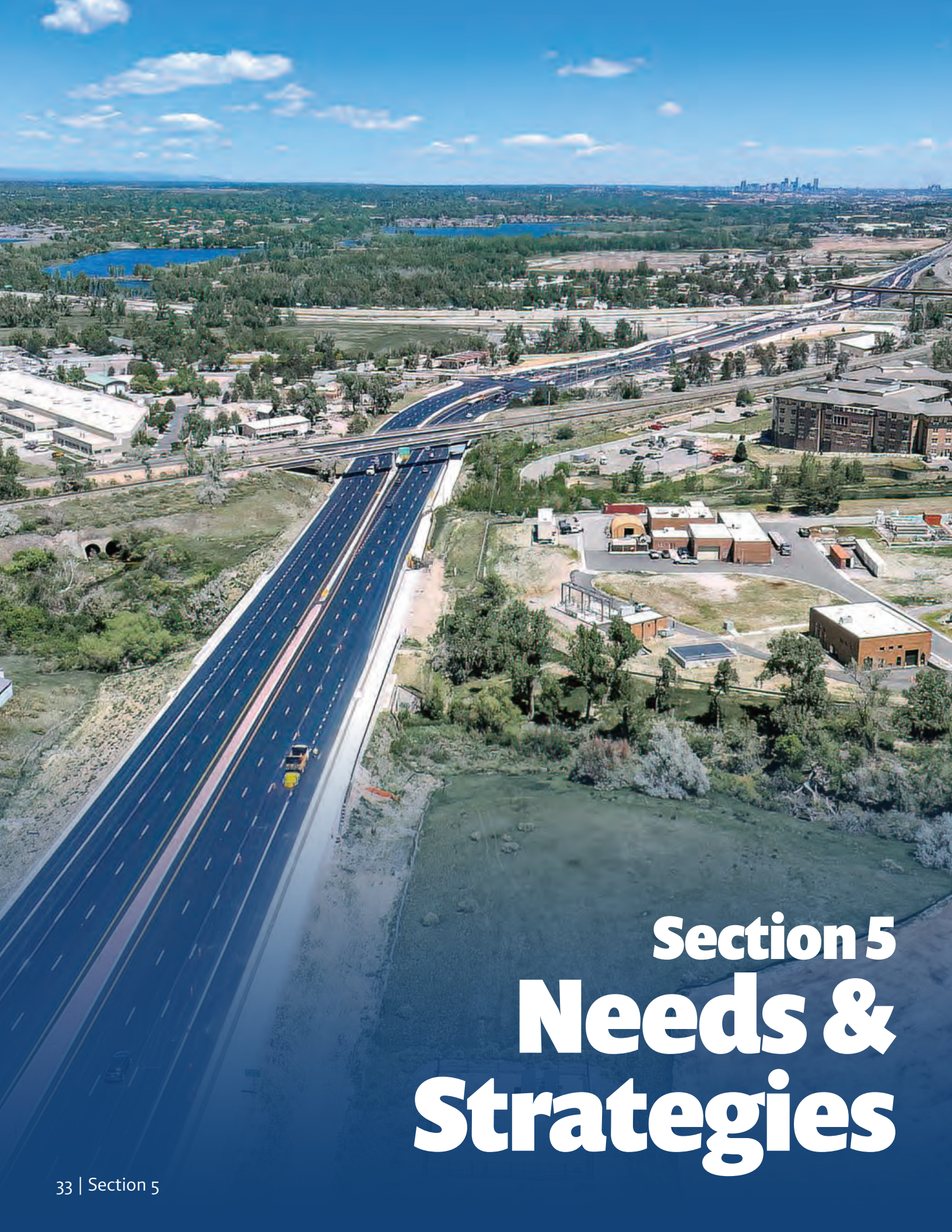
Emerging Regional Investments: State-led efforts such as CDOT's Bustang expansion and the proposed Front Range Passenger Rail may integrate Douglas County into a broader regional transit network. These investments could provide high-capacity, long-distance travel options that connect the county to major employment centers and neighboring communities. A regional approach may be of more importance as Douglas County is now being more significantly impacted by growth in adjacent counties.

Innovative and Inclusive Service Models: Building on the decade of success in Lone Tree, Douglas County expanded Link On Demand into Highlands Ranch in 2025. The county is actively seeking partnerships, identifying funding, and looking to expand regional ride-share into other areas of the county.

Figure 4.6 - County Existing Transit Network

-  RTD Routes
-  CDOT Bustang South Route
-  Park n Ride
-  RTD Light Rail Station
-  Lone Tree Mobility Hub
-  Future Castle Rock Mobility Hub
-  Call n Ride





Section 5 Needs & Strategies

As mentioned previously, this 2050 Transportation Plan divided Douglas County into 16 sub areas to better address the unique mobility improvements needs of the County’s diverse development pattern, population distribution, and travel expectations. Once established, detailed needs assessment evaluations were conducted for each sub area’s mobility infrastructure to better understand how each sub area and specifically their mobility infrastructure meets the characteristics of each of the Transportation Plan’s identified five mobility goals.

This evaluation process included reviewing previous relevant planning efforts, compiling key sub area mobility data, evaluating future demands and travel patterns, assessing/scoring mobility needs, and brainstorming solutions.

Needs Analysis

To align future project recommendations within each county sub area with the overarching Transportation Plan’s mobility goals, needs were evaluated using a methodology that directly linked them to the plan’s five mobility goals and their associated three characteristics. For instance, the goal of “Safety” includes characteristics such as crash hot spots, severe collisions, and the safety of vulnerable road users, which clarify the specific issues the goal aims to address and improve.

Process and Scoring System

Each sub area was assessed against the Goal Framework characteristics to determine deficiencies in the sub area, and the severity of the mobility goal deficiency (low, medium, high, critical) are highlighted below.

The overall assessment of all 16 sub areas is presented in **Table 5.1 - Needs Analysis**. Douglas County staff and SET members played key roles in assisting in identifying sub area needs and determining their relative urgency. It’s important to note that some of each sub area’s characteristics as having a “Low” level of need still face challenges; these needs are simply less critical when compared to others across the county. While the plan aims to identify and address as many needs as possible with specific projects and programs, this assessment places particular emphasis on the most critical needs and potential solutions expected to deliver the greatest positive impact on the county’s transportation network in alignment with the 2050 Transportation Plan five mobility goals.



From Needs to Solutions: Strategy and Project Development

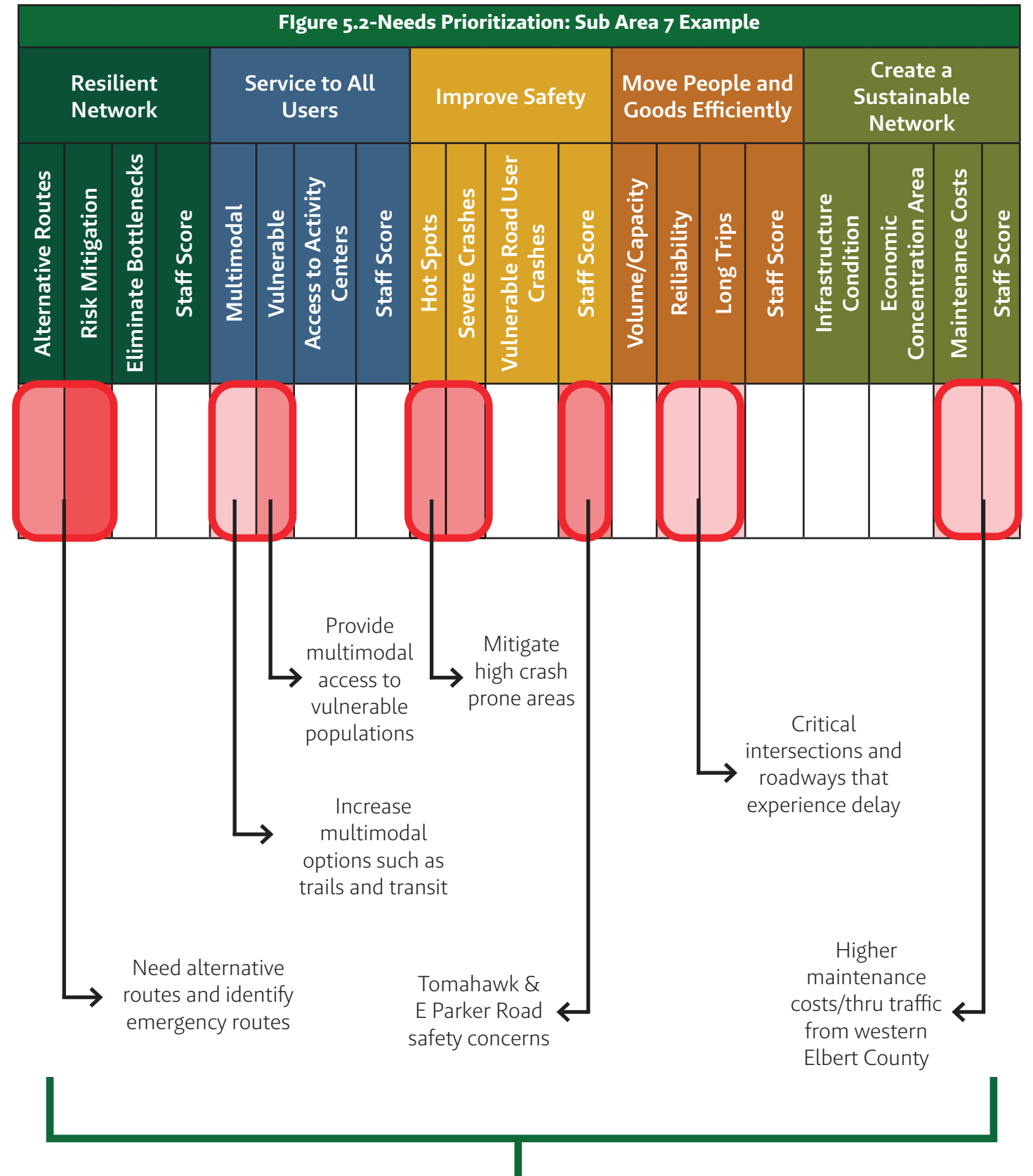
After identifying the needs within each sub area, the team applied a multi-faceted approach to brainstorm potential strategies tailored to those needs. Each sub area was evaluated to generate ideas that directly addressed its specific challenges. This brainstorming process incorporated insights from county staff, feedback collected through the initial public survey and comment map, and input from SET group members. An annotated example of how this need analysis leads to recommendations are shown in **Figure 5.2-Needs Prioritization: Sub Area 7 Example**.

The strategy brainstorming process generated a wide range of targeted, potential solutions to address identified needs. Understanding the transportation needs and strategies in Douglas County requires recognizing the distinct challenges faced by urban and rural areas. The county’s needs analysis identified key priorities, including congested corridors, managing growth and development, improving safety, expanding transit options, and maintaining roads and bridges. Issues like congestion and growth are primarily concentrated in the urbanized northern part of the county, while rural areas are more affected by roadway safety and infrastructure maintenance. Developing a range of solutions tailored to the unique urban and rural contexts is essential for effectively translating these needs into actionable projects.

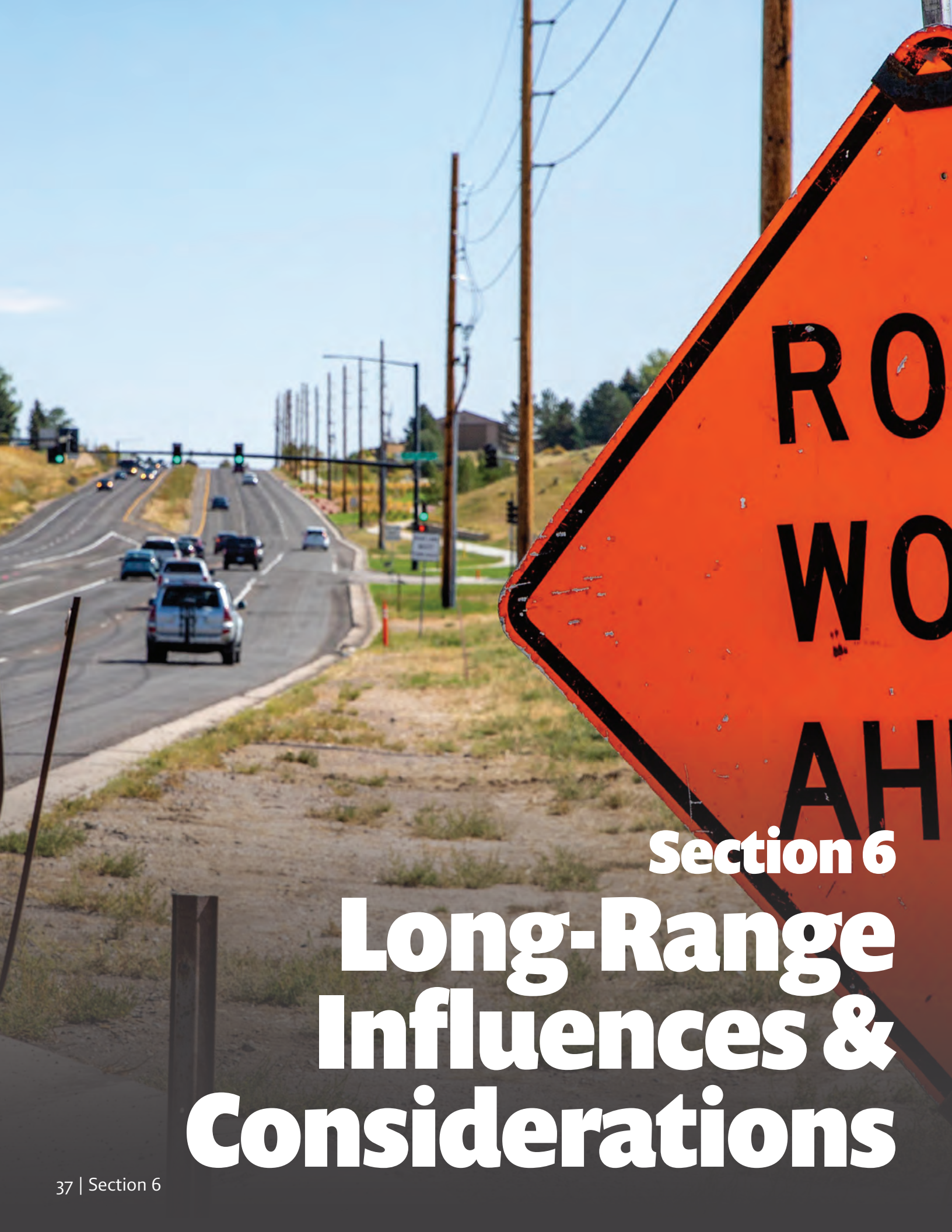
The team reviewed individual strategies to find patterns and logical groupings, ultimately combining them into more comprehensive project concepts. Project development aimed to create coherent, actionable projects that the county could eventually scope and implement. These projects are designed to address multiple related needs within each sub area while contributing to broader improvements across the county’s transportation system in alignment with the 2050 DCTP goals.

Figure 5.1- Needs Analysis

Sub Areas	Resilient Network			Service to All Users			Improve Safety			Move People and Goods Efficiently			Create a Sustainable Network		
	Alternative Routes	Risk Mitigation	Eliminate Bottlenecks	Multimodal	Vulnerable	Access to Activity Centers	Hot Spots	Severe Crashes	Vulnerable Road User Crashes	Volume/Capacity	Reiliability	Long Trips	Infrastructure Condition	Economic Concentration Area	Maintenance Costs
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															
6															
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Identified Growth (People) Capacity & Alternative Routes as the Primary Need



Section 6 Long-Range Influences & Considerations

The previous section of the Transportation Plan highlighted the transportation improvement needs assessment conducted by the sub area to ensure each of the county's sub areas' mobility infrastructure meets the objectives of the county's five mobility goals. While those transportation needs were identified using both existing conditions and projected demands, the analysis leaned the evaluation more toward current conditions to ensure the Transportation Plan's recommended project list is weighed to address the immediate mobility needs of each sub area.

However, as a 25-year transportation plan, it is important to position county resources toward the long-term mobility needs of the county. Recommended projects for the later years of a 25-year plan are often difficult to predict and evolve due to unanticipated trends. This is why most long-range plans are updated every 10 years.

This section of the Douglas County 2050 Transportation Plan presents five emerging trends and strategic considerations Douglas County should consider to ensure future resources are adaptable and resilient and continue to achieve the county's mobility goals in the later years of this document's planning horizon.

Population Growth in Adjacent Counties

Douglas County's population increased by nearly 40% since 2000 according to the US Census. In comparison, neighboring El Paso and Elbert counties have grown by 20% and 30% respectively over the same period. Projections from the Colorado State Demographer predict that Douglas County's population will grow at a lower 16% through 2050. However, over the same 25 years, El Paso and Elbert counties are expected to grow by 40% and 63% respectively. This marks a shift in growth rates, as adjacent counties to the south and east may see higher population growth rates than that of Douglas County going forward.

There are three types of vehicle trips countywide that would be impacted by this emerging population growth trend: internal/external, and external trips. Internal trips are those trips that have an origin and destination within Douglas County. Internal/external trips are those trips that have either an origin, or a destination in Douglas County. External trips are those trips with neither a trip origin, nor a destination within Douglas County. These 'through' trips are simply passing through Douglas County without stopping.

This growth trend suggests there will be an increase in external trips passing through Douglas County, competing with trips that benefit the community for use on Douglas County's limited street network. Currently, external, or through trips account for upwards of 30% of all trips in Douglas County. That is expected to increase by 2050.



Aging Population

Douglas County's population is aging. The State Demographer shows the county's population today is distributed fairly evenly, with only 15% of the population being over the age of 65. By 2050, the State projects 26% of Douglas County residents will be 65-years of age, or older. The data also shows that Douglas County is expected to see decreases in the number of people between 0 and 55.

This aging trend will likely impact Douglas County's future land use patterns and its long-range transportation needs.

Older people and empty nesters tend to seek smaller-lot and higher-density housing near existing amenities. The anticipated growth that comes with older populations and empty nesters will likely occur in the established northern portions of the county and along the I-25 corridor south to Castle Rock.

Transportation needs associated with this aging population tend to suggest that continued investment in established areas will be needed to improve personal accessibility and mobility, and there will be a growing need to provide increased transit services for the mobility flexibility it provides for an aging population.

This need has been generally appreciated by the community through numerous surveys. According to approximately 37% of respondents of this mobility plan's survey, they agreed that providing a variety of transportation choices is of the highest importance.

The Douglas County Integrated Transit and Multimodal Study conducted a survey for the public with an opportunity to give input on the potential transit service in the county. The survey received 549 responses, where 17% of respondents said they currently use transit within northern Douglas County, and about half of respondents said they would use transit at least monthly if it served their destinations.

Table 6.1 - Population Age Change					
Age	2025	Percent	2050	Percent	Difference
Age 0-5	25,407	6.4%	25,485	5.4%	-1.0%
Age 6-15	55,714	14.0%	51,783	11.0%	-3.0%
Age 26-35	46,229	11.6%	43,722	9.3%	-2.4%
Age 36-45	55,459	13.9%	59,278	12.5%	-1.4%
Age 46-55	58,093	14.6%	62,855	13.3%	-1.3%
Age 56-64	44,491	11.3%	54,192	10.6%	0.3%
Age 65+	61,083	15.5%	122,920	26.3%	10.8%
Total	393,892	100%	466,822	100%	

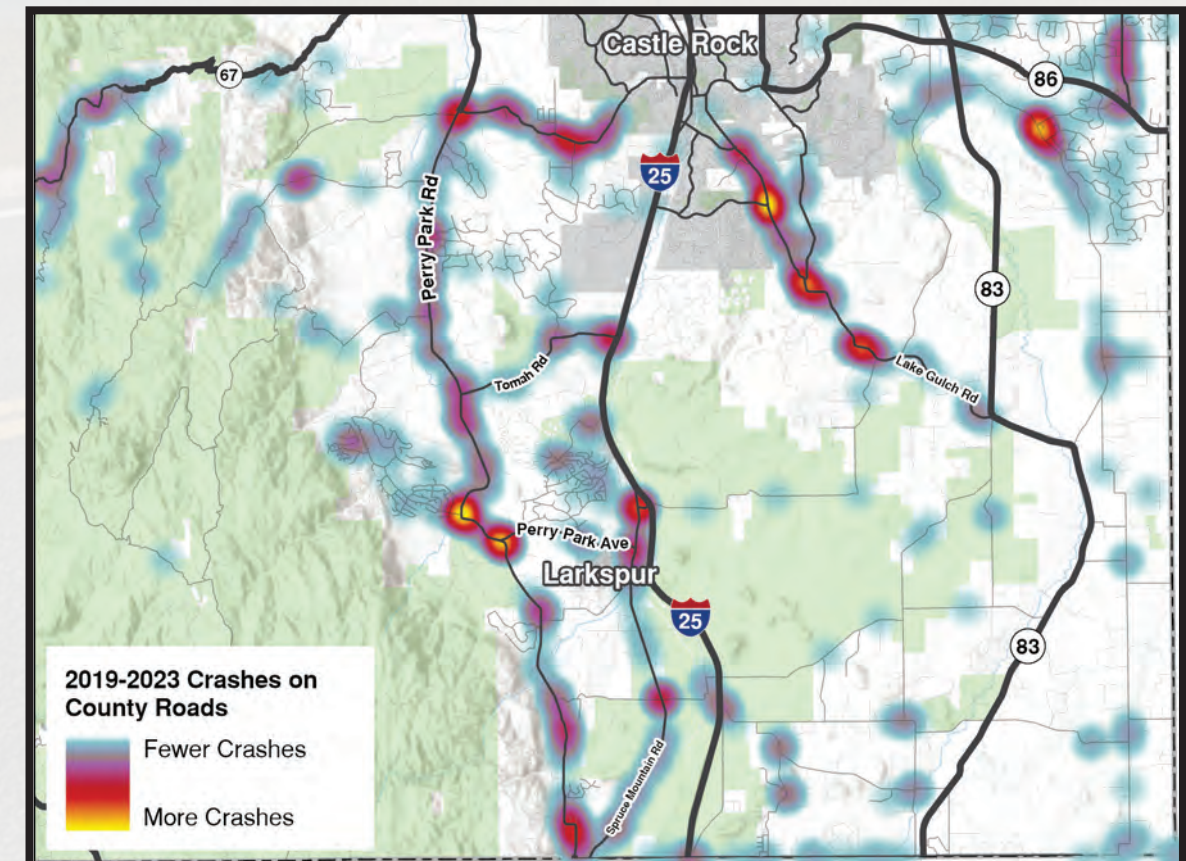
Increasing Use, Conflict, and Crashes on Rural Roadways

Douglas County's rural areas and recreational amenities are state-wide attractions. As the county and the entire Front Range continue to grow, there will be continual increases in people accessing these areas, hunting, camping, four-wheeling, hiking, cycling, and mountain biking, to name a few. Additionally, these rural roadways will experience continual increases in commuting use as congestion grows countywide, and motorists find alternative routes to avoid it.

Countywide crash analysis indicates the more urban northern areas of the county are experiencing more frequent, often less severe, crash types, dominated by congestion-related and VRU (pedestrian/cyclists) collisions. The rural portions of the county are experiencing less frequent, but more severe crashes, that are dominated by higher-speed incidents and lane and roadway departures.

Population growth combined with the county's recreational attractiveness will increase the use of the county's rural roadways and will result in increases in the number and type of conflicts and crashes that occur. These conflicts and crashes will likely include both traditional rural categories (such as wildlife collisions, lane and roadway departures, and weather-related incidents) and more typical urban categories (such as the variety of vehicle and vulnerable user collisions) associated with congestion.

Figure 6.2 - 2019-2023 Crashes on County Roads



Increasing Frequency of Extreme Weather Events and Population Growth

Continued population growth in Douglas County and the Front Range is bringing expanded residential development into areas with limited roadway networks and constrained evacuation options. The rural areas of Douglas County consist of narrow two-lane roadways, gravel roads, or single access points that can quickly become overwhelmed in a large-scale evacuation.

The Front Range is experiencing a rising frequency of extreme weather events and natural disasters. The region has seen larger, faster-moving wildfires, more intense precipitation events leading to flash flooding, and winter storms that disrupt transportation for extended periods.

As more residents settle in Douglas County's rural areas and adjacent counties, particularly within the wildland-urban interface, the margin for error in managing evacuations shrinks for county Officials. Increasing bottlenecks, limited network, combined with long travel distances to safe zones, put lives at risk without clear long-range strategies for traffic flow, alternative routing, and resource deployment.

Growing Capabilities of Technology

The emerging and expanding capabilities of technology in the transportation industry presents Douglas County with growing opportunities to more efficiently manage its traffic operations. Three technologies are at the forefront of this emerging opportunity, offering evolving capabilities to monitor, predict, and respond to traffic conditions more efficiently and in real time.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) - ITS provides the foundation for modern traffic management. Through advanced sensors, traffic cameras, dynamic message signs, and adaptive signal control, Douglas County utilizes ITS to monitor its roadway conditions and adjust traffic operations dynamically. This is done now by utilizing adaptive signal timing systems to reduce congestion through real-time traffic volumes rather than relying on static signal plans.

Artificial intelligence (AI) – AI is advancing ITS capabilities by offering capabilities to analyze large volumes of traffic data to predict congestion patterns and optimize traffic signal networks rather than react to them. Soon, Douglas County could apply AI-driven models to improve its conventional ITS systems and refine signal operations, reducing inefficiencies and enabling more precise allocation of limited resources.

Connected Vehicle Technologies - Connected vehicles promise even greater system efficiency gains by facilitating direct communication between vehicles and infrastructure (V2I). As more of the private vehicle fleet becomes equipped with connected technology, Douglas County could receive anonymized, high-frequency data on vehicle speeds, locations, and braking patterns—providing a more complete and timelier picture of roadway conditions than fixed sensors alone. This real-time data provided by connected vehicles enables advanced warning systems for drivers, dynamic speed harmonization, and improved incident detection.

MOBILITY GOALS & STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS



Resilient Network

One of the many meanings of a resilient network is that Douglas County's rural roadways are better equipped to accommodate and adapt to the increasing emergency access demand and able to serve as potential evacuation routes caused by the combination of increasing frequency of extreme weather events and continued population growth in Douglas and increasing growth in neighboring Counties.

Long-term Strategic Consideration - Douglas County should begin preparing for upgrading several of its rural roadways in the long-term, to become all-weather, and serving as a part of a more redundant roadway network that is more capable in serving the needs of emergency management officials in improving emergency access and egress of the more remote areas, rural areas, of the county. This will improve evacuation routes as population growth continues to occur and the frequency of extreme weather events continues to increase.

East Upper Lake Gulch Road / Garten Road

Upgrade East Upper Lake Gulch Road / Garten Road (Paving/All-Weather) between Interstate 25 and Garten Road (north of Lower Twin Creek Road). Upgrading East Upper Lake Road by paving it and maintaining it in the winter months. This improvement will provide a critical connection within east central Douglas County and provide a needed all-weather improvement connecting I-25 with Lake Gulch Road and CO-83.

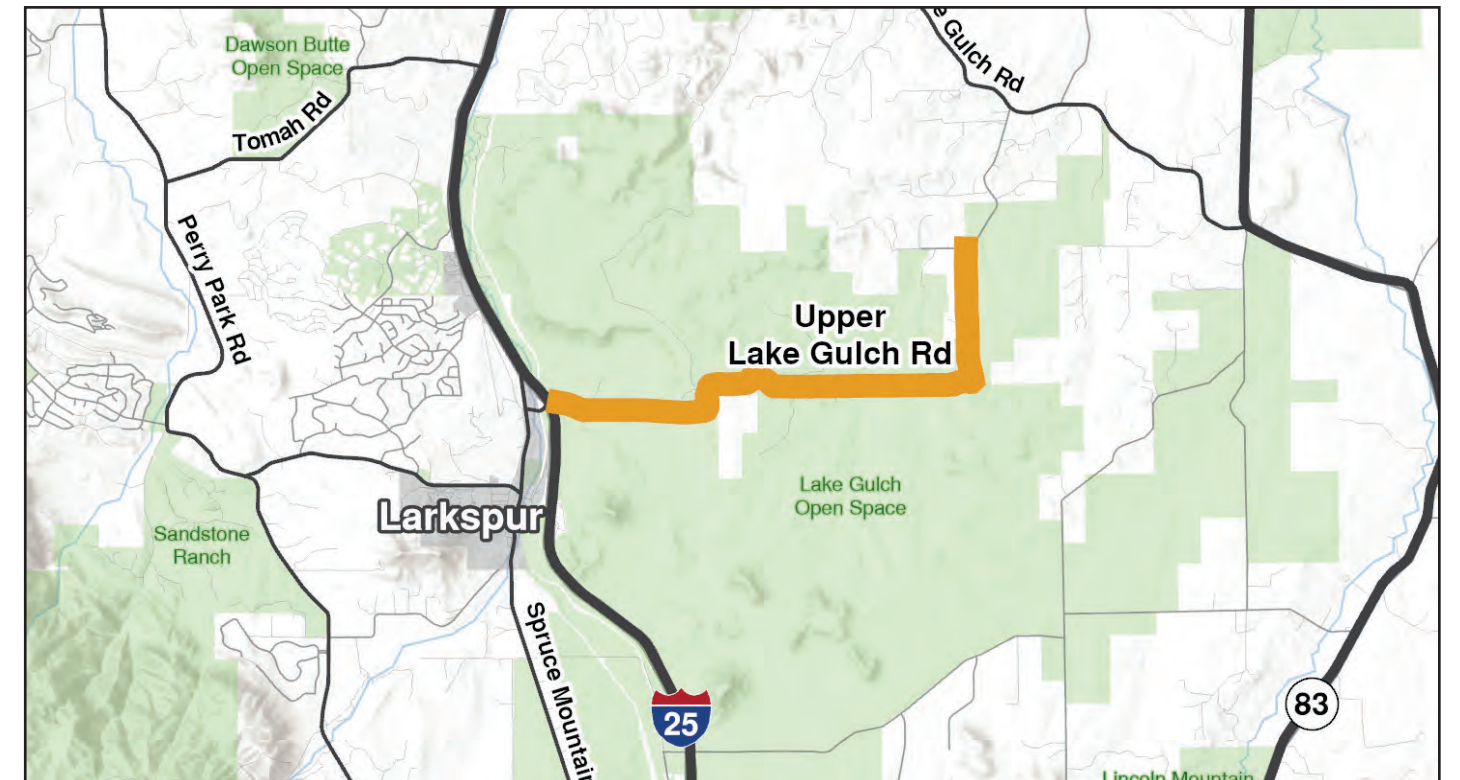


Figure 6.3 - East Upper Lake Gulch Road/Garten Road



Service to All Users

Service to all users means that all people, including the aging population, should have safe, convenient, and reliable mobility options to reach their destinations and the county's transportation system supports people with disabilities, older adults, and those without access to a personal vehicle.

Long-term Strategic Consideration - The county should continue to plan for and advance transit planning and investment to serve the aging populations in the urban areas and major transportation corridors within Douglas County long into the future. Douglas County's aging population and continually expanding urban areas suggest the county should continue preparing for premium transit as a more viable transportation option in the northern part of the county and the I-25 Corridor for the long term. As Douglas County's population continues to grow and its transportation system matures, transit will continue to become a more important mobility choice for the residents of Douglas County.

Transit Integration Plans

The three regional transit projects elevate Douglas County's role in the region's complete mobility network. Each position the county for further transit considerations and first and last mile improvement studies to ensure transit plays a successful role as part of Douglas County's future balanced transportation system, better serving all of Douglas County's residents.

Front Range

Interstate 25 is the backbone of north/south travel in the Front Range. Despite the recent expansion of I-25, Douglas County and the entire Front Range continue to be challenged by congestion and would benefit from diversifying the travel choices in the corridor. Douglas County should continue to support premium transit alternatives along the I-25 corridor to ensure more reliable travel times, better connections existing communities for all mobility users, and further promote economic and more resilient and sustainable growth in the county. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is working with the Front Range Passenger Rail District to develop the Front Range Passenger Rail Service Development Plan (SDP). The SDP is a comprehensive document that demonstrates a full-build vision for passenger rail, outlining the planning and implementation steps to realize passenger rail along the Front Range.

Ridge Gate Parkway & Castle Pines Transit Mobility Corridors

Long-range transit mobility corridors between Downtown Parker and Castle Pines and the Lone Tree City Center RTD light rail station have been included in the DRCOG financial constraints 2050 should continue to be endorsed by the Douglas County to be studied in the long term. These potential corridors, along with the Broadway / Lincoln BRT, will help interconnect Douglas County's established communities that will likely have the highest concentration of aging population and those needing more mobility choices.

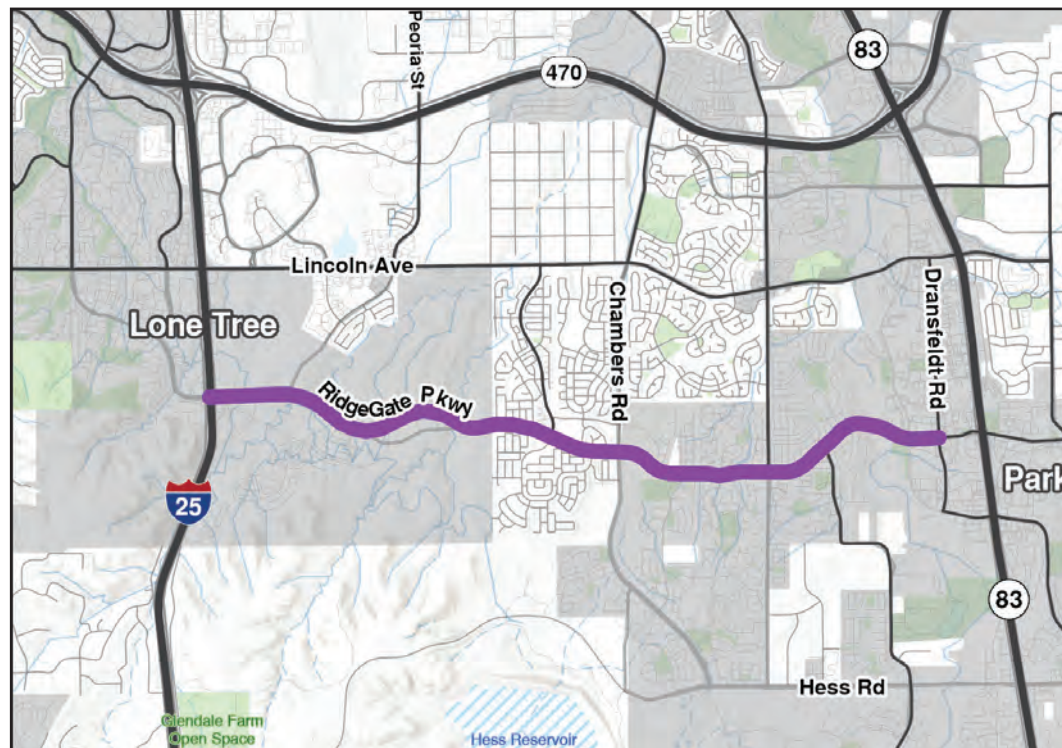


Figure 6.4 - Ridge Gate Parkway & Castle Pines Transit Mobility Corridors

Broadway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - Colfax to Highlands Ranch Parkway

BRT is an important component of the greater Denver region's current and Douglas County's future transportation and mobility network. There are 11 BRT corridors identified in the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG 2050) Regional Transportation Plan. The Regional Transportation Plan identified the need for BRT service to Douglas County along the Broadway corridor in the years 2030-2039. This project would provide regional connectivity for residents of Douglas County to travel in and out of Denver. The full implementation of improvements corridor-wide would also make north-south travel into Denver more efficient and safer for Douglas County residents. Douglas County should continue to support the development of this BRT corridor to help meet the County mobility five mobility goals and aging population trends.

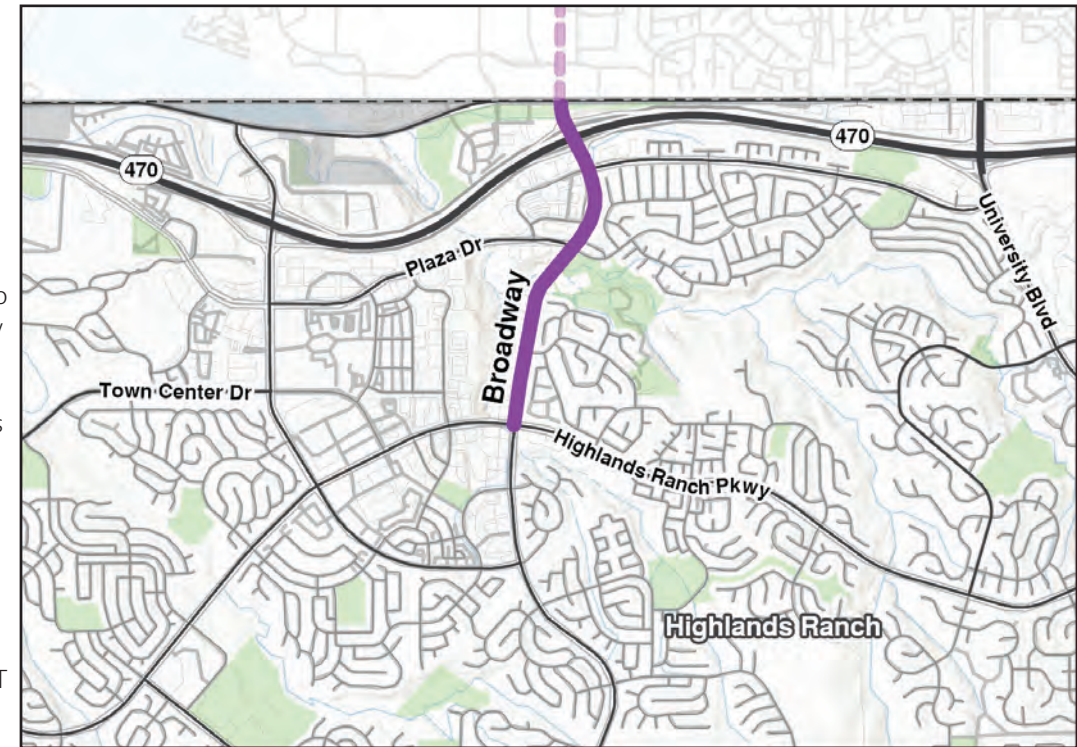


Figure 6.5 - Broadway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - Colfax to Highlands Ranch Parkway

Safety



Safety means the county is preparing for the continual increasing use, conflicts, and crashes which are occurring on rural roadways. Douglas County should consider establishing a Rural Roadway Safety Program in the long term that directly addresses two leading issues on rural roadways: travel lanes and roadway departures and collisions with vulnerable users, such as cyclists.

Long-term Strategic Consideration - The county should recognize many of Douglas County's rural roadways, like CR 105 between Palmer Lake and Sedalia, are experiencing rising traffic volumes from both daily commuting and recreational trips associated with population growth. Many of these rural roads are designed for lower volumes and slower speeds. Higher traffic volumes increase the risk of severe crashes, be it lane, or roadway departures, or collisions with vulnerable users.

The Rural Roadway Safety Program

A countywide rural roadway safety program could include a comprehensive shoulder improvement component that widens and paves roadway shoulders wherever feasible and install rumble strips. Wider shoulders create safer recovery zones for errant vehicles, while also providing space for cyclists and pedestrians. Complementing this, the installation of centerline and edge-line rumble strips can alert inattentive or drowsy drivers before a departure occurs. For curves or high-crash locations, enhanced delineation, guardrails, and high-friction surface treatments should be prioritized.

The program should rely on crash history, traffic counts, and growth forecasts to prioritize corridors most in need of shoulder widening, rumble strips, and multimodal improvements. Systematic evaluation will ensure investments provide the greatest safety benefit. By systematically investing in a rural roadway safety program, Douglas County can significantly reduce roadway departure crashes and protect vulnerable road users. This proactive program will save lives, enhance mobility, and ensure the county's rural roadways safely accommodate both growth and recreational use in the years ahead.

CR 105 between Palmer Lake and Sedalia

A leading candidate for roadway showcasing growing conflicts with recreational and commuting traffic trend is CR 105, between Palmer Lake and Sedalia. CR 105 is a scenic rural roadway that provides access to many of Douglas County's preserved open spaces. The roadway also is experiencing increases in both recreational activity because of the quality of open spaces and the quality of the ride for roadway cyclists. These increasing recreation activities correspond with increasing commuting traffic from rural areas and alternative routes by traditional I-25 motorists.

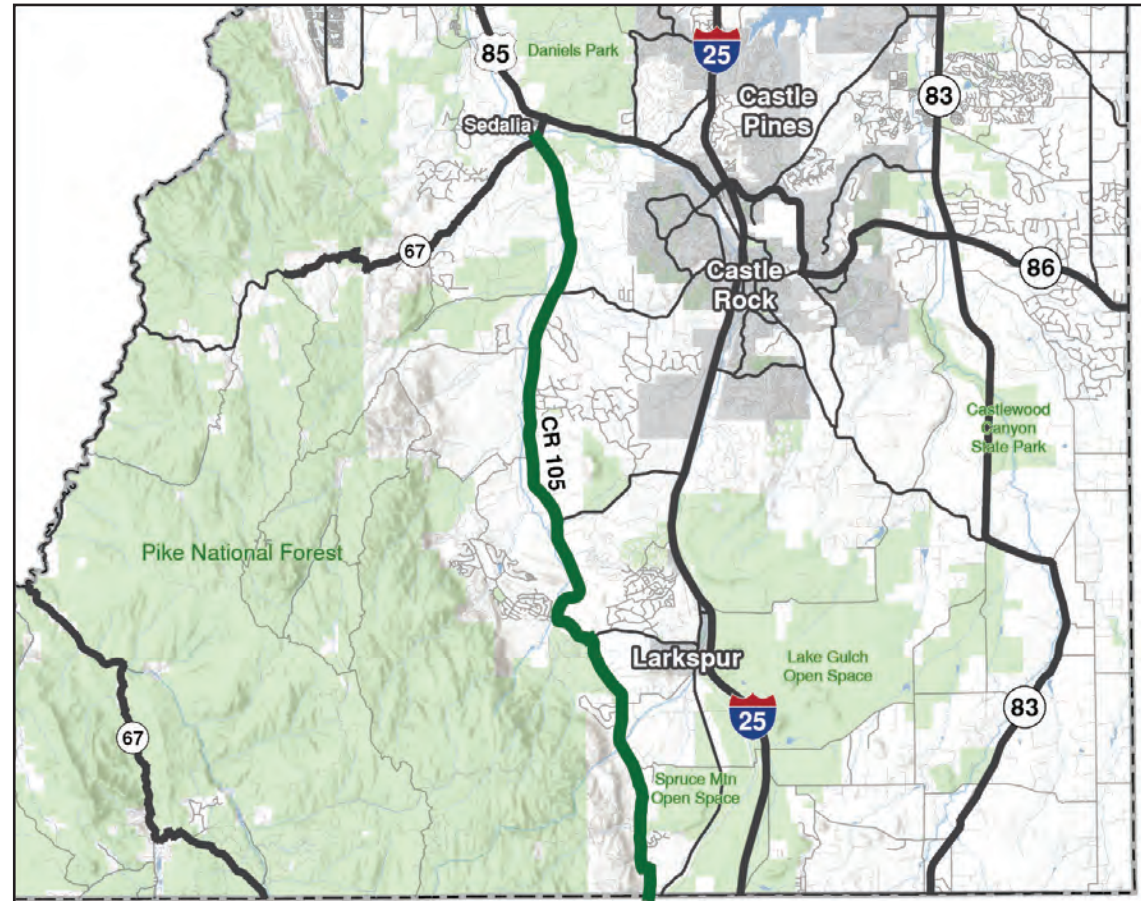


Figure 6.6 - CR 105 between Palmer Lake and Sedalia

Efficient Movement



Efficient Movement means Douglas County should prioritize investments in projects that enhance the movement of more people and support reliable travel for all users, regardless of mode by leveraging the growing capabilities of technology.

Long-term Strategic Consideration - As technologies, like AI, emerge and connected vehicle technologies scale, the importance of standardized and localized data collection and management cannot be overstated. Douglas County should first recognize all the emerging technologies - ITS, AI, and connected vehicles - rely on robust, accurate, and context-specific data.

Standardize and Localize Data Management Practices

Localized data, such as detailed traffic counts, turning movement patterns, weather impacts, land use changes, and even school schedules, ensures that technology solutions are tailored to the unique characteristics of Douglas County. Without high-quality local data, algorithms may misinterpret traffic conditions, adaptive systems may underperform, and decision-making may be less effective. By investing in strong data collection programs unique to Douglas County and ensuring that information is shared across agencies, Douglas County can maximize the return on technology investments and foster a more integrated, responsive transportation network.

Sustainable Networks



Sustainable Networks means Douglas County should preserve the capacity of existing commuting corridors and focus long-term investments on interconnecting established, but underutilized corridors. The county should consider leveraging its capacity to accommodate increasing population and commuting traffic growth while encouraging additional interconnectivity long-term projects and updated land development subdivision and zoning regulations which promote connectivity in the long-term.

Growth in eastern Douglas County and the expected long-term growth in El Paso and Elbert counties to the south and east will continue to place pressure on the I-25 and CO-83 corridors, challenging the financial resources of Douglas County, CDOT, the Town of Castle Rock, and the Town of Parker.

Interconnecting established corridors through public initiative, while also encouraging/requiring private development to be more interconnected through the county's subdivision and zoning regulations, will aid in both asset and emergency management, increasing system-wide capacity while also promoting fiscal responsibility in the long-term.

Long-term Strategic Consideration - Douglas County should begin preparing for and prioritizing better interconnecting existing corridors rather than continuing to widen, or grade-separate heavily used existing corridors.

Connect Flintwood/Delbert and SH 86 Corridors

Continued growth in Douglas County and increasing growth rates in both El Paso and Elbert counties will require mobility alternatives to both I-25 and CO-83 as continued widening of the corridors become financially and politically challenging, due to right-of-way constraints. Improving the interconnectivity between the Flintwood / Delbert and SH 86 corridors in eastern Douglas County would provide a third major north south corridor in Douglas County. This interconnection would provide the rapidly growing population of Elbert County with an alternative to traversing the already congested roadways with limited right-of-way in and around the City of Parker. Any future widening of Delbert Road on the border of Douglas and Elbert counties should be a shared investment as it provides a mutual benefit to address growth and its impacts.

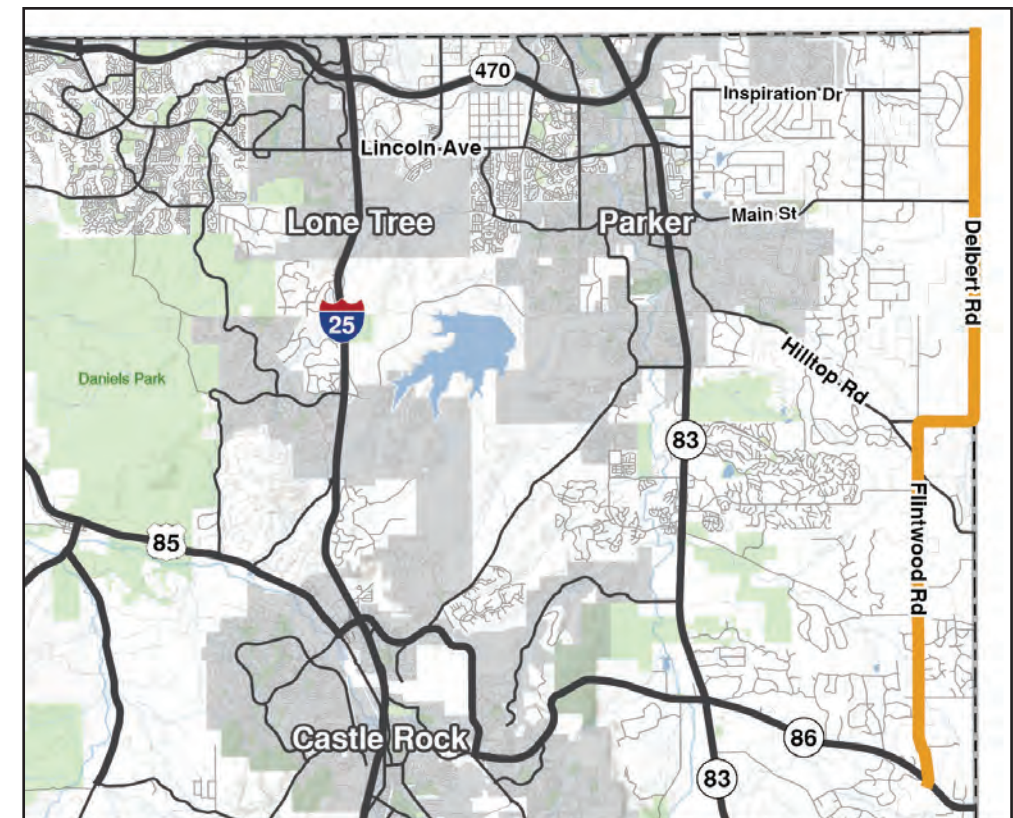


Figure 6.7 - Connect Flintwood/Delbert and SH 86 Corridors

Pine Drive Extension to the Future Aurora Parkway

This long-discussed extension of Pine Street to the planned Aurora Parkway would provide a needed north-south connection, parallel to CO-83 and its congested interchange with E-470 in the long-term.

The timing of this important connection is subject to the Aurora Parkway being constructed by private development and its bridge over E-470 being built by the City of Aurora and funded through the South Aurora Regional Improvement Authority (SARIA), a collection of metro-districts responsible for financing the bridge. The bridge is currently designed to 60% and is fully funded. However, the project is on hold pending the private development community constructing the Aurora Parkway Corridor. No construction date has been identified.

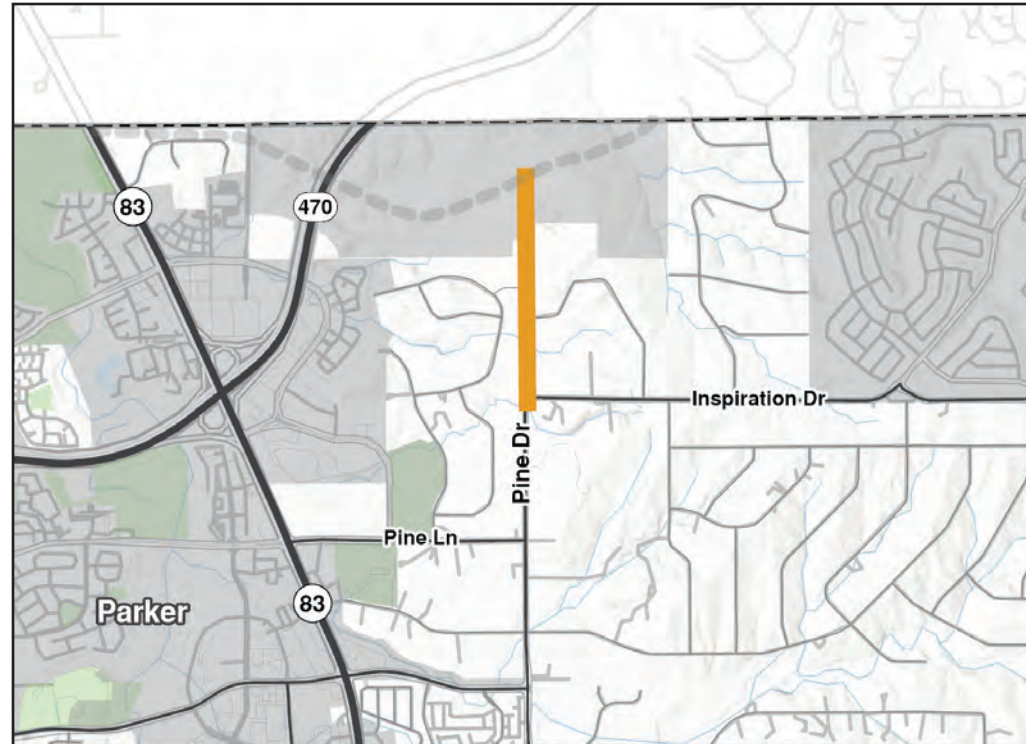


Figure 6.8 - Upgrade and Connect East Greenland from I-25 to CO-83

There are steps needed in the near-term to ensure this connection can be completed in the long-term. Douglas County should establish a formal Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Aurora and Arapahoe County to ensure the Arapahoe County portion of the Pine Street connection is committed to by all parties. Once the IGA is established, Douglas County, in partnership with the City of Aurora and Arapahoe County, should conduct a corridor study and develop a right-of-way acquisition plan to ensure the connection can be built. The funding and construction of the Pine Street connection should be programmed for the long term, recognizing the uncertainty of the timing of the Aurora Parkway construction.

The DRCOG model scenario was run to determine how traffic volumes would be impacted if the Pine Drive extension was constructed and how traffic would be impacted if it wasn't constructed. Based on the model output, if Pine Drive is constructed, it would significantly redistribute traffic from surrounding roads. Nearby routes experience reductions and there would be less traffic going further into Parker to access CO-83 to travel north. Without the extension, these roads handle higher volumes, concentrating traffic on existing connectors and main corridors. Overall, building Pine Drive improves network connectivity, reduces pressure on adjacent roads and disperses traffic more evenly across the system. The figures below illustrate forecast traffic volumes on the 2050 roadway network for two cases: Without the Pine Drive extension link (**Figure 6.9 - Existing Pine Drive**) and with the proposed Pine Drive extension link (**Figure 6.10 - Proposed Pine Drive Extension**).

Figure 6.9 - Existing Pine Drive

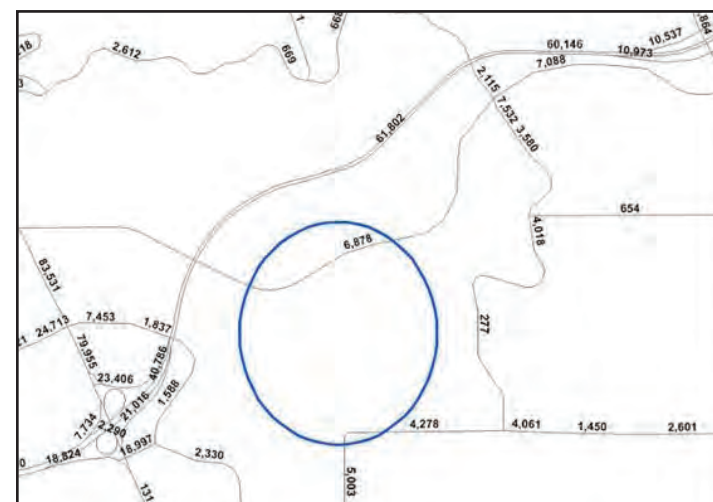
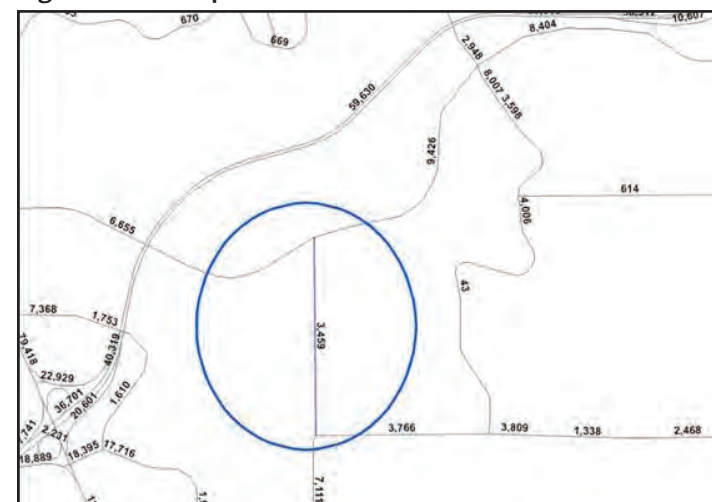


Figure 6.10 - Proposed Pine Drive Extension



Upgrade and Connect East Greenland from I-25 to CO-83

Continued growth in Douglas County and increasing growth rates in El Paso County would require continued improvements and interconnections of existing North-South transportation corridors. Upgrading and extending East Greenland from I-25 to CO-83 would provide residents of southern Douglas County and El Paso County mobility choices as congestion occurs on I-25, maximizing the capacity of both corridors.

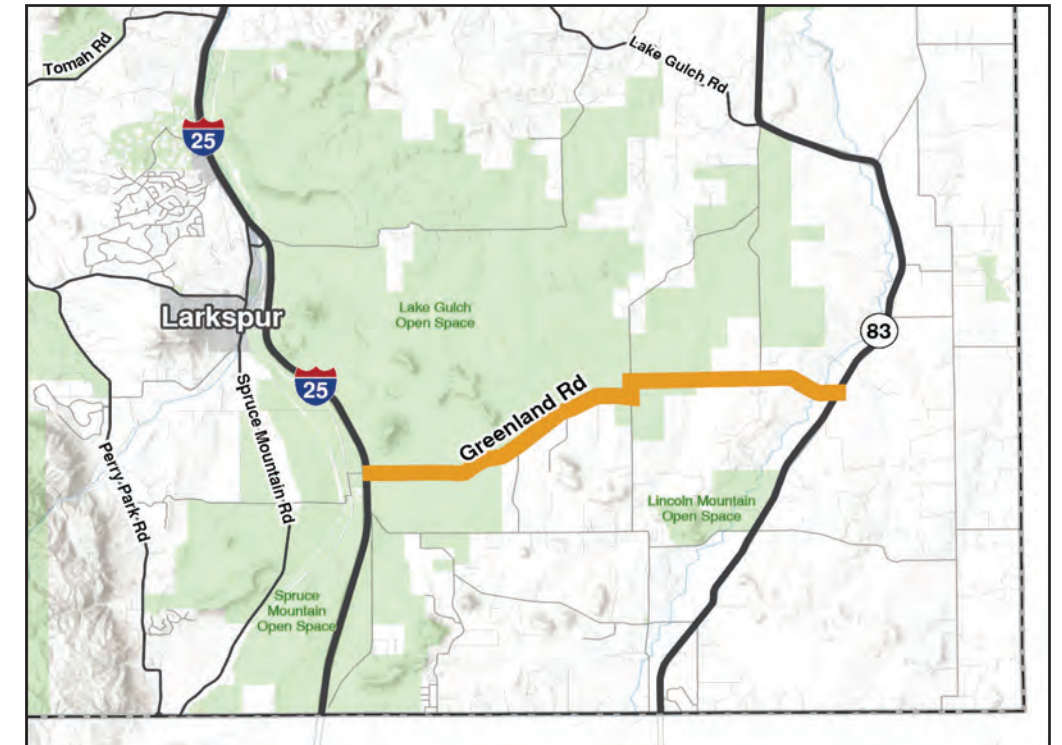


Figure 6.11 - Upgrade and Connect East Greenland from I-25 to CO-83

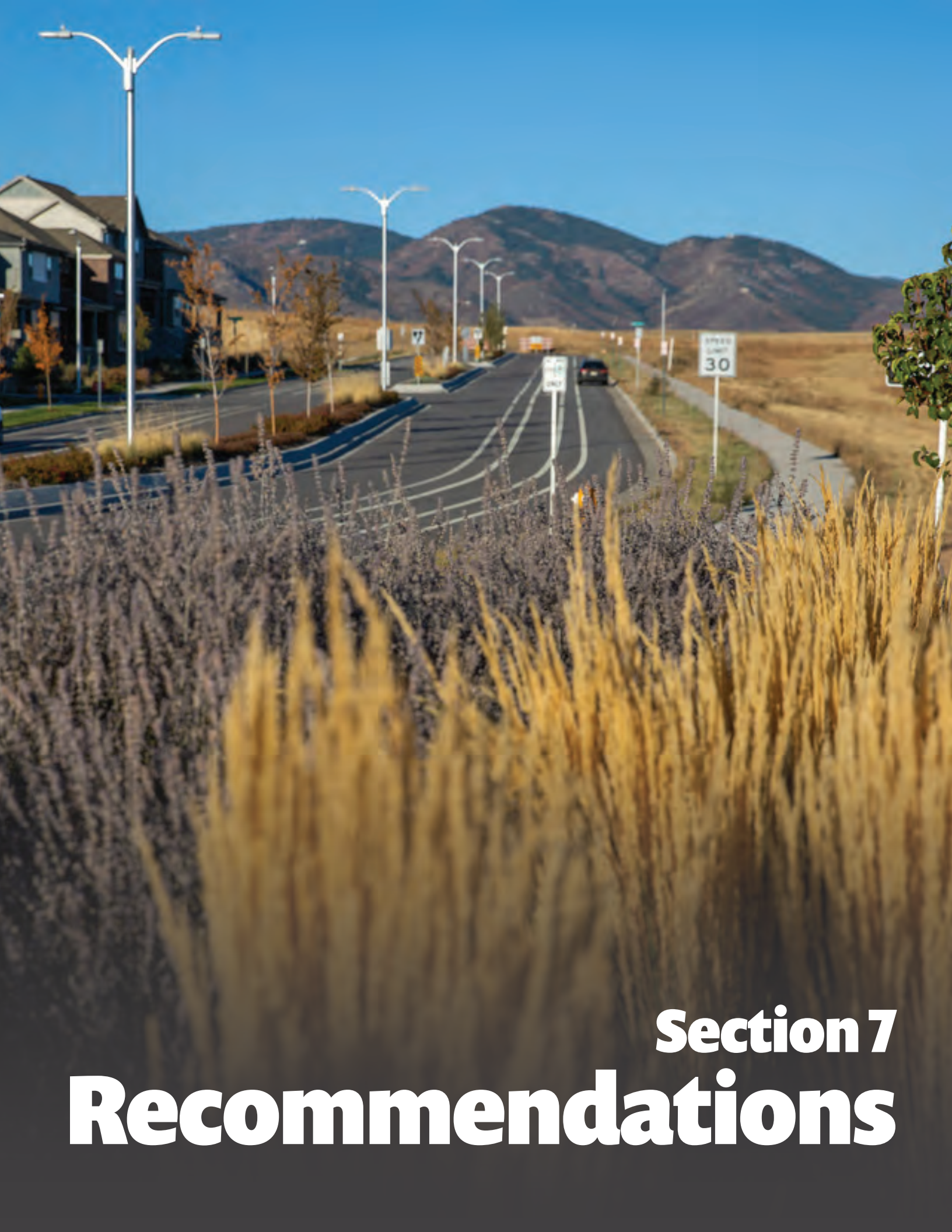
Mitigate Unintended Outcomes

Transportation investment impact land use. Both near-term and long-term project identified in this Transportation Plan will improve the mobility and safety of those traveling within and through Douglas County. However, these improvements will create unanticipated influences on the timing, location, and density of future land development in Douglas County, as well as El Paso and Elbert counties. The timing and location of future development is very speculative and influenced by several factors, including transportation investments.

Long-term Strategic Consideration - As Douglas County continues to grow, competition for county resources increases, and transportation funding becomes constrained, future land use and transportation planning in Douglas County should become more integrated to better mitigate unanticipated outcomes and better manage limited county transportation resources.

Create an Integrated Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Mobility Plan

Many rapidly developing municipalities and counties in Colorado and throughout the nation develop integrated land use and transportation mobility plans simultaneously. This integrated approach is recommended for Douglas County to consider during its 2060 Transportation Plan update. Through this integrated effort the county would be better able to mitigate unanticipated outcomes, engage the community more efficiently, and able to utilize transportation investments to guide growth to minimize their impact on county resources.



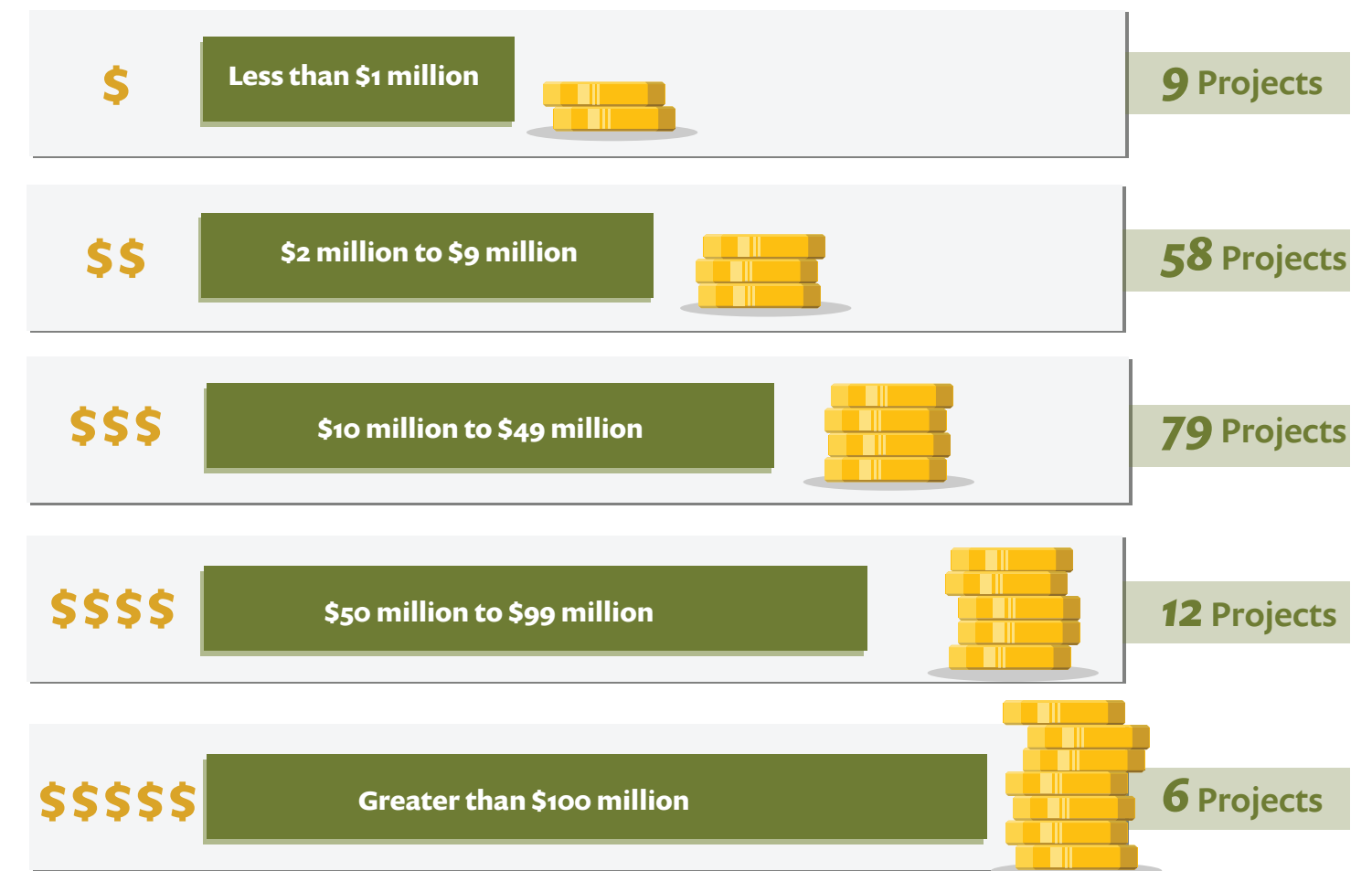
Section 7 Recommendations

The scale and range of recommended projects and programs presented in this section and **Appendix A** that address Douglas County’s immediate mobility needs by sub area and long-term trends that will likely impact countywide transportation infrastructure in the future. The projects and programs vary widely in scope and scale. The comprehensive list of projects and programs are intended to advance the county’s mobility goals including safety, service to all users, sustainability, resiliency, and system efficiency. They are presented in project horizon “bands” based on recommended timing, including: near-term (2026-2030), mid-term (2031-2040), and long-term (2041-2050). These three bands are also constrained by forecast funding using current funding strategies.

There are additional projects listed in a post-2050 horizon based on the total needs analysis of this planning project. These projects should be considered if additional funding becomes available within the 2050 DCTP planning horizon.

Order of magnitude planning-level cost estimates are provided, with the more immediate needs being identified the first 5 years. These cost estimates were generated to inform future budgeting discussions and decisions. The Douglas County Staff and Board of County Commissioners should review the recommended project list and prioritize projects and program needs annually during its budgeting process to determine the timing of their implementation based on the county’s financial resources.

What Do The 2050 DCTP Projects Cost?



Project Development

This 2050 DCTP includes a total, unconstrained list of 164 recommended capital projects and programs of smaller projects. These programs include recommended funding for investments in ongoing needs, such as traffic signal replacement, bridge repair, and enhancements to the countywide trail system. Most programs are recommended to continue into each of the future project horizon bands and so are repeated.

These recommendations were identified through a combination of previously identified needs by county staff and CIP, relevant projects previously identified in the 2040 TMP, an independent assessment by sub area conducted during this planning effort, and input gathered from SET members and the community during outreach efforts.

The following charts provide a snapshot overview of the entire project list. The full descriptions of each recommended project and program is provided in **Appendix A** of this report. The full project list provides the project name, the county sub area(s) it is located in, the goal framework-based needs it was primarily targeted to address, the time frame it should be constructed, planning level costs, and whether a funding partnership is recommended. Additional information is also presented in **Appendix A**.

Figure 7.1 - Number of Projects by Project Type

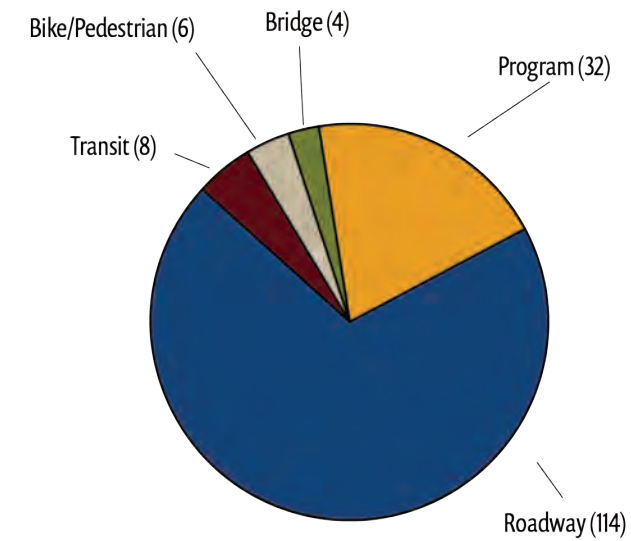
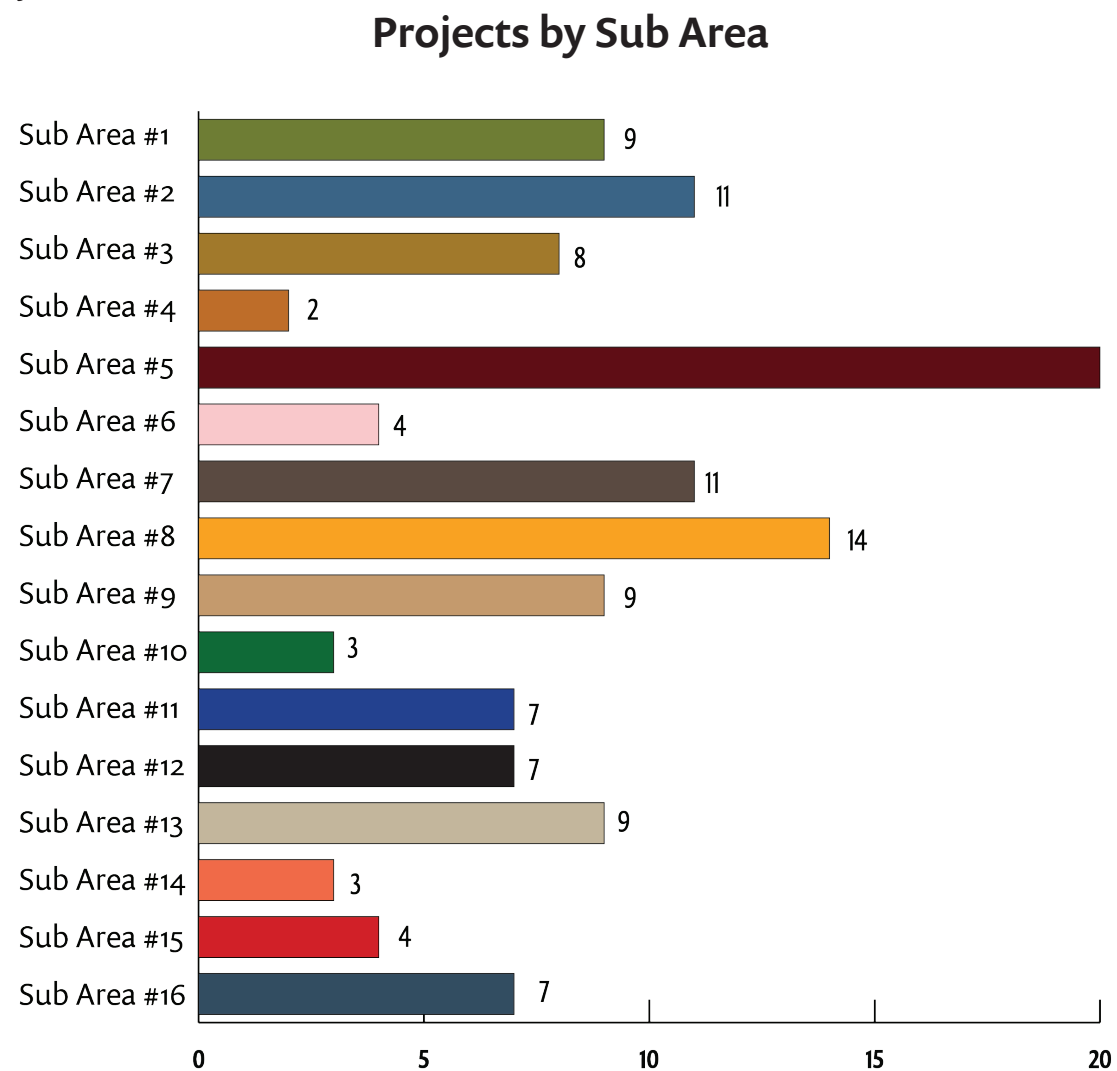


Figure 7.2 - Projects by Sub Area

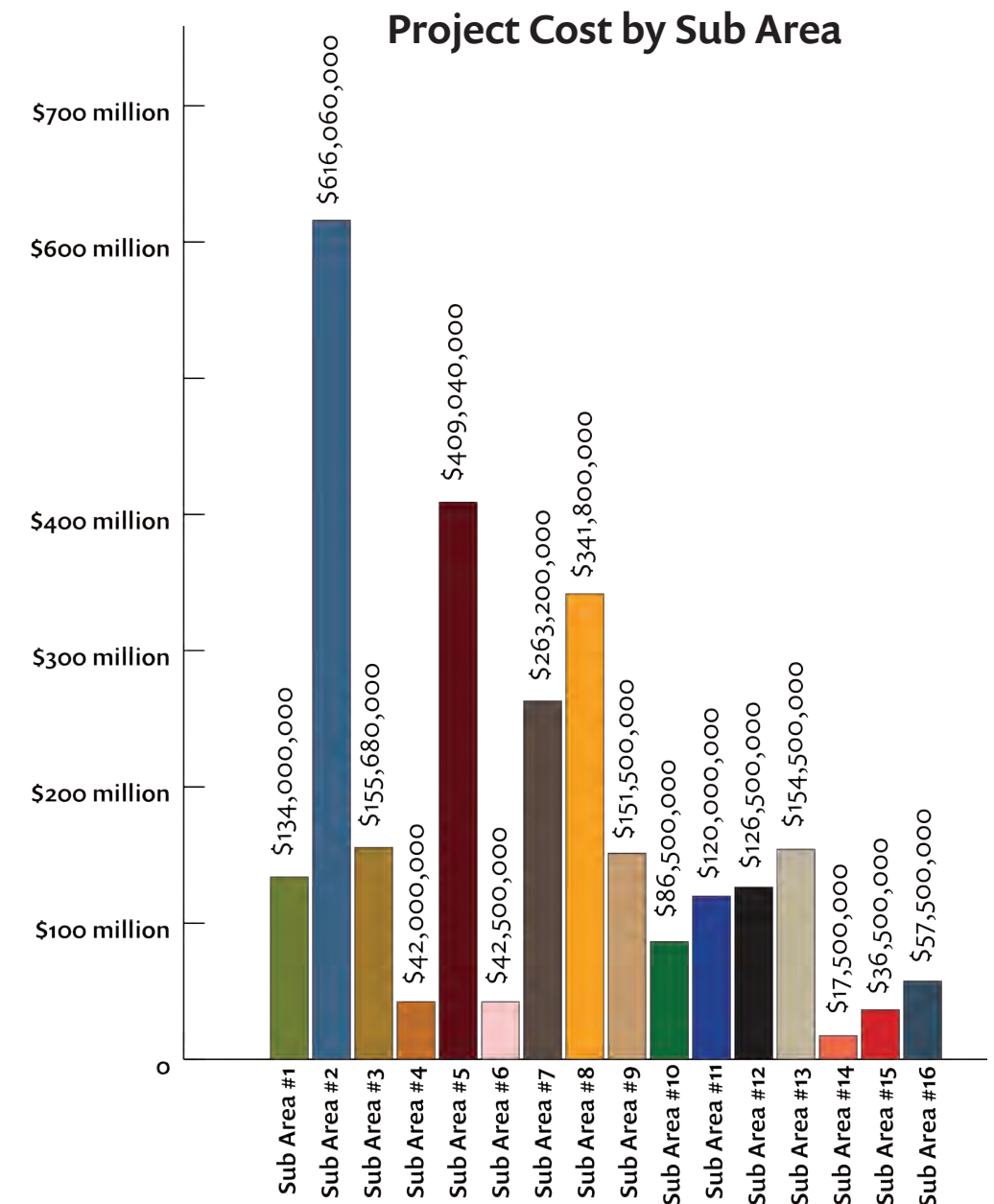


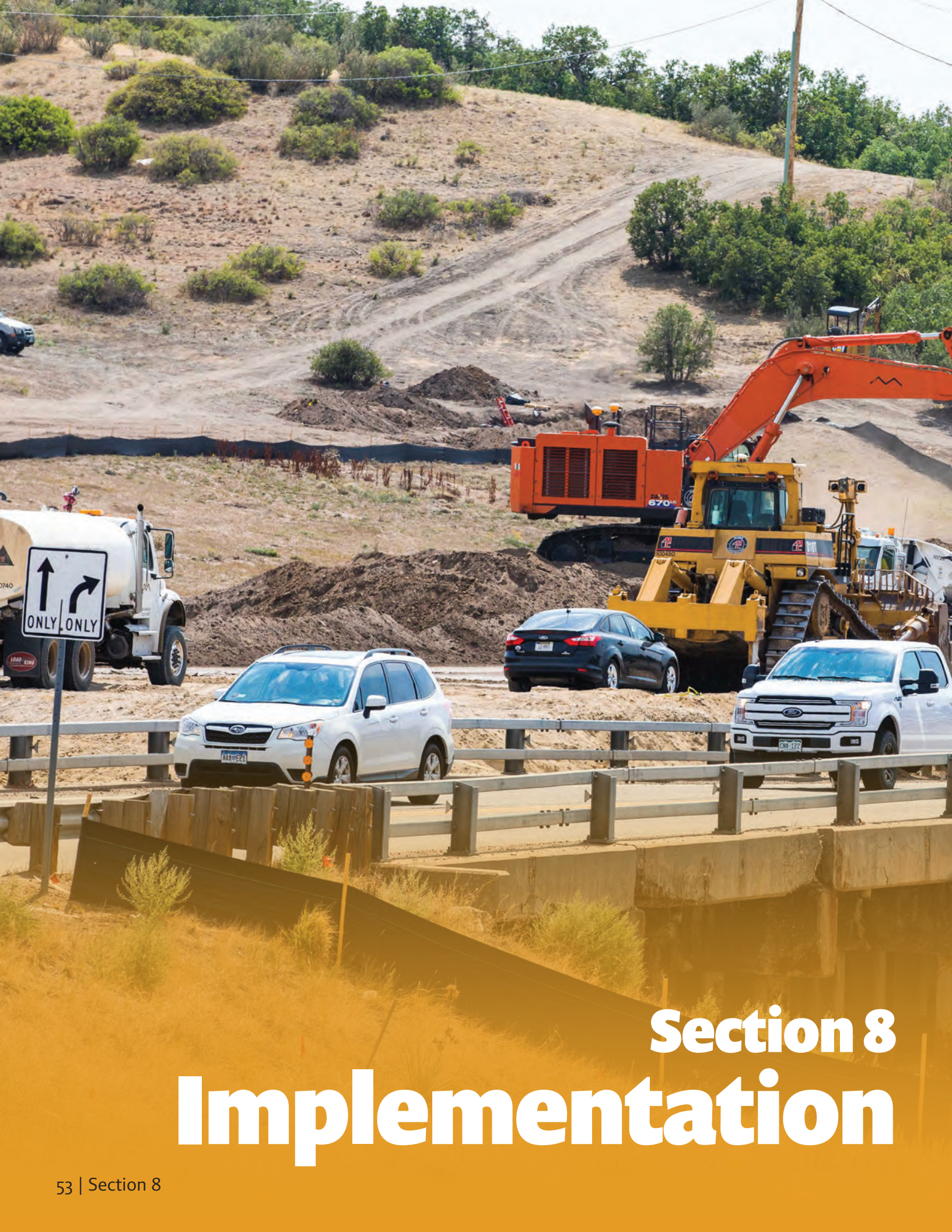
Although the transportation plan includes only three active transportation projects, two are large-scale, countywide programs focused on closing critical trail gaps to improve regional connectivity. These projects aim to create a more continuous and accessible trail network across the county. In addition, targeted improvements to trail crossings are planned specifically within the Highlands Ranch area, where complex intersections and high trail usage present key opportunities to enhance safety and multimodal access.

While no formal studies are described separately in the project recommendations, each listed project will undergo a preliminary analysis to refine its scope, assess feasibility, and identify specific needs prior to implementation. This early-stage evaluation will help determine appropriate design elements, potential constraints, and alignment with community goals and multimodal priorities. The approach ensures that projects are responsive to local context and can be effectively phased or scaled based on available resources and stakeholder input.

It is important to note that the entire list of projects and programs recommended on this list is not financially constrained to the financial resources of Douglas County, but rather they are based on the mobility needs of the community. The next section of this Transportation Plan describes the county's financial resources and transportation funding opportunities.

Figure 7.3 - Project Cost by Sub Area





Section 8 Implementation

The creation of this Transportation Plan offers the Board of County Commissioners the opportunity to serve broader development expectations and provide a clear nexus between the county's transportation investments meeting the community's mobility goals. The Plan identifies how recommended mobility projects, programs, and policies are translated into specific tangible improvements which improve the quality of life and economy of Douglas County.

This chapter of the Plan presents a framework for implementing the county's full list of needed mobility investments over the next 25 years. Specifically, this chapter presents an approach that recognizes:

- The scale of the mobility challenge facing the county
- The growing on-going maintenance responsibilities
- The county limited revenue structure and funding opportunities

This implementation chapter also highlights how Douglas County's strong private development market and its growing regional influence can be strategically leveraged to foster new partnerships and unlock currently untapped funding opportunities. Lastly, this chapter presents how a regular review of needed improvements can inform the annual budgeting process so that it can be more flexible and resilient in advancing the most needed transportation investments.

Scale of the Mobility Challenge: The Increasing Mobility Needs and Backlogged Action

More than 160 projects and programs are identified in this 2050 DCTP, totaling an order of magnitude cost estimate of over \$2 billion. Many of these needed improvements were previously identified and are backlogged from recommendations identified in the 2040 Transportation Plan and the county's CIP.

The backlog of actions indicates the county is at a crossroads where growing mobility needs are outpacing the county's ability to timely finance their improvements. While the existing three primary funding sources dedicated to transportation position the county well, the on-going backlog of projects and emerging trends suggest the county needs to renew existing revenue sources that are soon to sunset. But those will only accommodate the status quo. Are additional funding sources needed?

Growing Maintenance Responsibilities

Douglas County continually provides an exceptional roadway experience level of service to its traveling constituents. However, as growth continues and more transportation infrastructure is built, maintenance costs will continue to grow. The annual costs for traffic management, signal and maintenance light fixture, and concrete/pavement, and safe winter driving condition maintenance exceeded \$18 million in 2024. This has grown by nearly 24%, since 2020.

If new funding opportunities are prioritized to overcome the backlog of transportation improvements needed and the full list of recommended improvements are implemented by 2050, the funding for the maintenance of these improvements must also be considered.

Limited Funding Sources and Upcoming Revenue Sunsets

Currently, revenue for Douglas County transportation improvements and maintenance programs comes from three funds.

Road and Bridge Fund (Fund 200) - Funding for Fund 200 is generated from an allocation of 3,731 mills of the county's total 18,726 County Property Tax Mill Levy (20%). This fund included monies from auto ownership taxes, and state highway user taxes. These funds are primarily used for roadway maintenance projects but also support other transportation-related projects, including stormwater/drainage, traffic services, snow removal, and capital improvements within Douglas County. Colorado State Statutes require a share back of 50% of property taxes collected with Aurora, Castle Pines, Castle Rock, Larkspur, Littleton, Lone Tree, and Parker for their transportation projects. Total Fund 200 revenues in 2024 was over \$68 million. This has grown by 22.7% since 2020.

Road Sales & Use Tax Fund (Fund 230) - Funding for Fund 230 comes from a voter-approved countywide sales and use tax. This fund accounts for 0.40% of the county's 1% sales and use tax. The road sales and use tax is collected countywide, including within the incorporated boundaries of Castle Rock, Larkspur, Parker, Castle Pines, and Lone Tree. In Lone Tree, Douglas County retains 100% of the revenue collected inside the Park Meadows Mall ring-road. The municipal share back of Fund 230 revenues collected within the municipal boundaries is 75%. Douglas County retains 25% of Fund 230's revenue collected. Fund 230 revenues in 2024 was over \$50 million. This has grown by 35.1% since 2020.

It is important to note Fund 230 will 'sunset' at the end of 2030, within the Transportation Plan's planning horizon. Douglas County voter approval would be needed to extend or possibly increase these transportation revenues beyond 2030. If the Fund is not continued past 2030 County and local agency transportation budgets will be significantly impacted.

Transportation Infrastructure Fund (Fund 235) - Fund 235 utilizes 0.18% of the County's Justice Center's Sales and Use Tax approved by Voters in November 2019. The fund supports transportation projects within the county and is not subject to share backs with county municipalities. Approximately 28% of Fund 235's sales tax revenues will remain in perpetuity for transportation infrastructure investments.

However, it is important to note, the remaining 72% of the transportation sales tax revenues will sunset at the end of 2035. Fund 235 revenues in 2024 were \$25 million meaning approximately \$18 million dedicated to transportation funding will sunset in 2035, reducing the county's transportation budget. Douglas County voter approval would be needed to recreate these transportation revenues beyond 2035.

Continued Growth and Leveraging Private Investment

If additional revenue is prioritized to address the County's transportation investment backlog and have the full list of improvements recommended projects be implemented by 2050, a supplemental revenue source, or alternative to an extension or increase in countywide sales tax revenue dedicated to transportation could be the creation of a transportation impact fee. The Board of County Commissioners could consider leveraging the County's continued growth and private development and create a transportation impact fee to ensure new users on the system pay their proportionate share of the future transportation demands. A potential transportation impact fee could help Douglas County finance transportation improvements needed to maintain the County's desired transportation level of service and reduce the fiscal burden on existing residents.

Growing Regional Impacts and Needed Collaboration

Transportation impacts on Douglas County are increasing from continued regional growth in the Denver Metropolitan Region, Elbert County, and El Paso County. Douglas County has a strong history of proactive collaboration and partnerships with the municipalities within Douglas County and with DRCOG, and CDOT.

However, regional growth and transportation impacts are expanding and expected to increase from growth within Elbert and El Paso counties. Solutions to mitigate these increasing regional impacts, such as the Pine Street extension, where a regional partnership between Douglas County, the City of Aurora, and Arapahoe County, is needed to improve mobility conditions in Douglas County. Similarly, more improvements will be needed in the eastern portions of Douglas County, such as improvements to Delbert Road, to mitigate growth in Elbert County. More funding collaboration with regional partners would benefit Douglas County and reduce its transportation financing burden from impact caused by increasing growth in adjacent communities.

Annual Prioritization and Budgeting

The annual budget is the most powerful policy tool Douglas County has to realize its vision and implement its mobility priorities. This Transportation Plan offers a high-level strategic approach to identifying and implementing needed transportation improvements based on the County's mobility goals and objectives. It is important to conduct annual reviews of the County five-year transportation priorities to assess progress, re-evaluate priorities, and ensure improvements are needed, financially feasible, and meet the mobility priorities of the Board of County Commissioners. This annual review should include:

Evaluating the possibility to leverage maintenance opportunities by incorporating bike lanes or shoulder bikeways during roadway resurfacing or other scheduled improvements.

Focus on high-impact initiatives by actively seeking local, grant funding, or larger partnership to support priority projects and programs.

Advance projects gradually by aligning implementation with available resources, aiming for full completion over time.

Coordinate with new developments to implement transportation improvements as opportunities arise through land use changes.

