



Denver Regional Council of Governments

# Transportation Demand Management Strategic Plan

October 2023 – Draft for public comment



# Acknowledgments

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# 01

## Introduction

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Denver Regional Council of Governments staff worked closely and extensively with stakeholders and partner agencies from across the region to develop the Transportation Demand Management Strategic Plan. The strategic plan addresses major transportation issues while also considering the evolving transportation needs of people throughout the Denver region. This

strategic plan will serve as a regional roadmap to guide the council's transportation demand management work through 2029. This plan, and associated components, will serve as a resource for member governments, partner agencies and transportation demand management service providers in the Denver region.



The mission of the Transportation Demand Management Strategic Plan is to provide transportation partners in the Denver region with a framework to improve efficiency, mobility and safety for travelers of all ages, incomes and abilities by identifying actions that expand multimodal travel choices, reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.





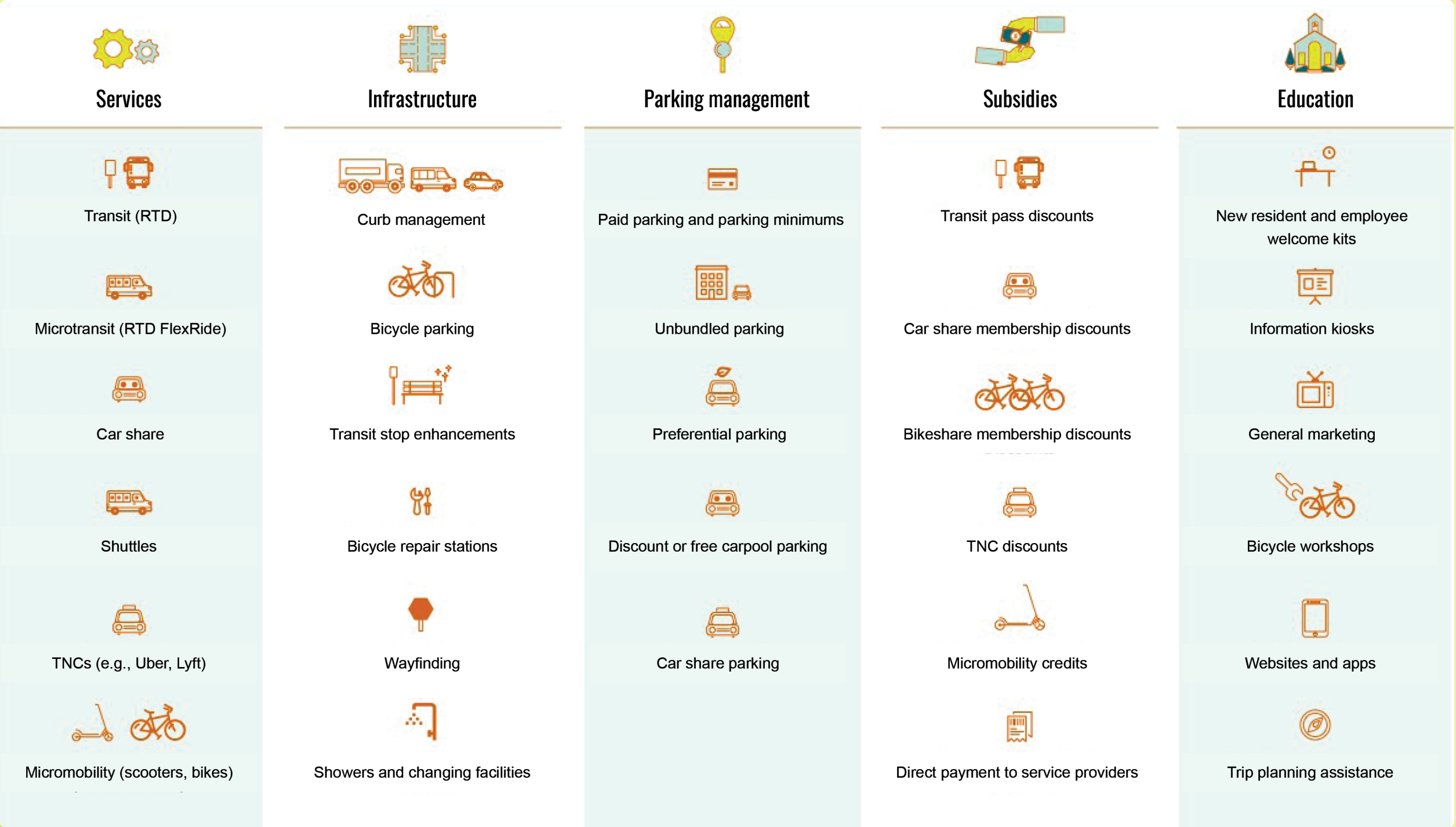
# What is transportation demand management?

Transportation demand management refers to a suite of strategies, including transportation services, infrastructure, policies, programs, and educational and marketing campaigns, that help people use the transportation system more efficiently. Transportation demand management implementation often includes engaging with decision-makers to support civic goals around mode shift, congestion reduction and access to transportation options.

The primary purpose of transportation demand management is to reduce traffic congestion and vehicle emissions, while increasing transportation options for all travelers.

Transportation demand management-related activities help get the most out of transportation infrastructure and services by making lower-cost, higher-efficiency transportation options accessible, comfortable and easy to use.

Figure 1 What is transportation demand management?





# 02

## Regional planning context

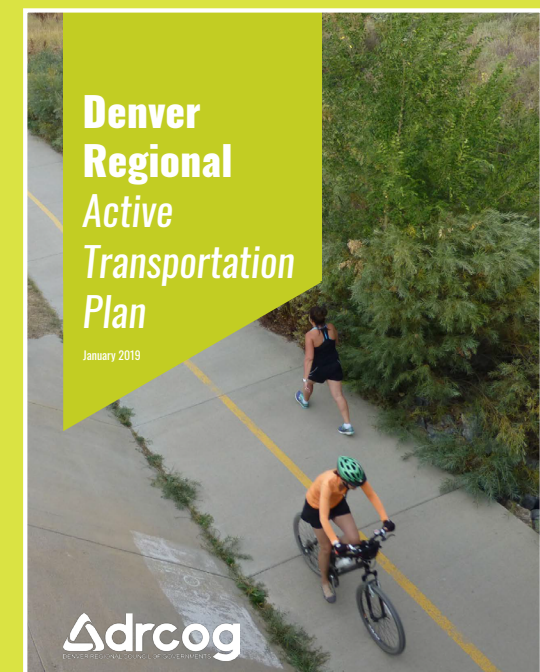
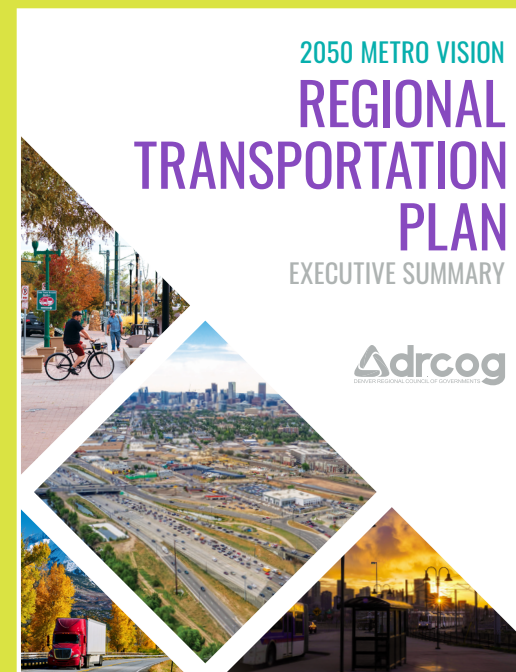
- Strategic Plan purpose
- Transportation demand management partners in the Denver region

The Denver Regional Council of Governments is a quasi-governmental organization that was established to help public agencies work together in the areas of transportation and mobility, growth and development, and aging and disability resources. As the metropolitan planning organization for the Denver region, the council is responsible for major transportation planning products and services.

The guiding vision for the council is described in Metro Vision, a plan for the region's continued growth and development. Metro Vision is a long range, aspirational plan to protect and enhance the quality of life in the region. The five themes of Metro Vision include place, mobility, environment, livability and vitality. Metro Vision was developed to address current and future regional challenges related to transportation and development, encourage collaboration amongst local communities, and is dynamic and flexible.

The 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan is a transportation-specific plan that sets the vision for the Denver region's multimodal transportation system and guides investment in the projects and programs to achieve that vision. The 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan was adopted in 2021 and helps the council and its partners implement the shared, aspirational vision outlined in the plan.

In addition to the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan, the council prepares and adopts several thematic plans. One of those plans, closely related to transportation demand management goals, is the Active Transportation Plan. The Active Transportation Plan envisions a safe, comfortable and connected network, and highlights opportunities and implementation strategies to improve active transportation across the Denver region. The Board of Directors unanimously adopted the plan in 2019.



Cover pages of the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan (left) and 2019 Denver Regional Active Transportation Plan (right).

# Strategic Plan purpose

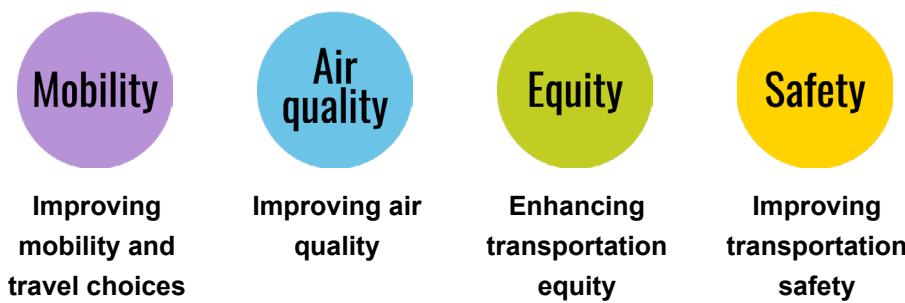
The Transportation Demand Management Strategic Plan seeks to provide the Denver region with a framework to improve efficiency, mobility and safety for travelers of all ages, incomes and abilities by identifying actions that expand sustainable, multimodal travel choices, reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality. The strategic planning process resulted in two distinct outputs:

- **Strategic Plan Recommendations:** These actions are intended for regional implementation led by the Denver Regional Council of Governments to expand and improve the transportation demand management landscape.
- **Transportation Demand Management Toolkit:** The toolkit is a standalone resource and is intended to be a guide for transportation and planning practitioners to understand the full range of potential transportation demand management strategies that can be implemented in various contexts throughout the region.

The goals for transportation demand management in the Denver region have been carefully identified to address the evolving transportation challenges within the region, building upon the existing conditions and planning frameworks established by the Denver Regional Council of Governments, including Metro Vision and the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan.

The goals were developed through a robust stakeholder engagement process. This collaborative approach included engagement with member governments, transportation stakeholders, transportation management associations, the Colorado Department of Transportation, the Regional Transportation District, and included seven focus groups. This planning process involved extensive stakeholder workshops, interviews and data analysis, resulting in a set of goals which guided the development of the strategic plan recommendations.

The four regional strategic plan goals include:



# Transportation demand management partners in the Denver region

The Denver region has a long history of transportation demand management-supportive programs, policies and partnerships. As the region’s metropolitan planning organization, the Denver Regional Council of Governments coordinates large-scale transportation demand management funding and efforts in the Denver region alongside partners at the federal, state, regional and local levels.

Historically, transportation demand management work at the regional level has been focused on peak commute trips and championed marketing, education and outreach techniques, and an innovative transportation management association partnership program. Much of this work is done through employer outreach and partner coordination. The Denver Regional Council of Governments currently has several programs dedicated to transportation demand management planning and services, including the Way to Go program and Active and Emerging Mobility program.

In addition to managing a partnership of the Denver Regional Council of Governments and eight transportation management associations, the Way to Go program provides a comprehensive suite of transportation demand management services such as: annual marketing campaigns, assistance to employers to identify trip reduction strategies, trip planning, Vanpool/carpool matching, the Schoolpool ride-matching program and Guaranteed Ride Home. Way to Go also hosts a variety of events supporting transportation demand management, such as one of the nation’s largest Bike to Work Day celebrations, Winter Bike to Work Day, and the Go-Tober Company and Commuter Challenge.

The council’s Active and Emerging Mobility program provides transportation demand management-supportive transportation planning, products, technical assistance and activities such as regional working groups and collaboratives including the Micromobility Work Group, Advanced Mobility Partnership and the regional shared mobility data collaborative. The Denver Regional Council of Governments provides funding for transportation demand management projects regionwide through the Transportation Improvement Program and its associated set-asides.



## Colorado Department of Transportation

The Colorado Department of Transportation has a dedicated transportation demand management program in its Office of Innovative Mobility and provides various grant opportunities for transportation demand management-related programs and projects throughout the state. The Colorado Department of Transportation published the Statewide Transportation Demand Management Plan Phase 1 Report in 2019, which outlines core transportation demand management strategies and Colorado transportation options. Furthermore, Colorado Department of Transportation's Procedural Directive 1601 requires a transportation demand management plan for new interchanges or modifications to existing interchanges.



## Regional Transportation District

The Regional Transportation District provides public transit services and facilities related to transit, paratransit, and park and rides. The Regional Transportation District's planning services also include transit-oriented development to encourage transit-supportive land use near station areas. Additionally, the Regional Transportation District published the First and Last Mile Strategic Plan in 2019, which includes transportation demand management strategies among its tools to improve access and connections to transit.



## Regional Air Quality Council

The Regional Air Quality Council provides support and resources for air quality programs throughout the region. The Regional Air Quality Council provides education and outreach to employers and the public through their Simple Steps, Better Air program and other community-based marketing initiatives. The Regional Air Quality Council also coordinates emissions source data tracking that is then provided to state agencies.

## Transportation demand management-related nonprofits

Many transportation demand management-supportive nonprofits either support or implement transportation demand strategies, including:



Via Mobility Services



Bicycle Colorado /  
Denver Streets Partnership



Boulder B-Cycle



Community Cycles



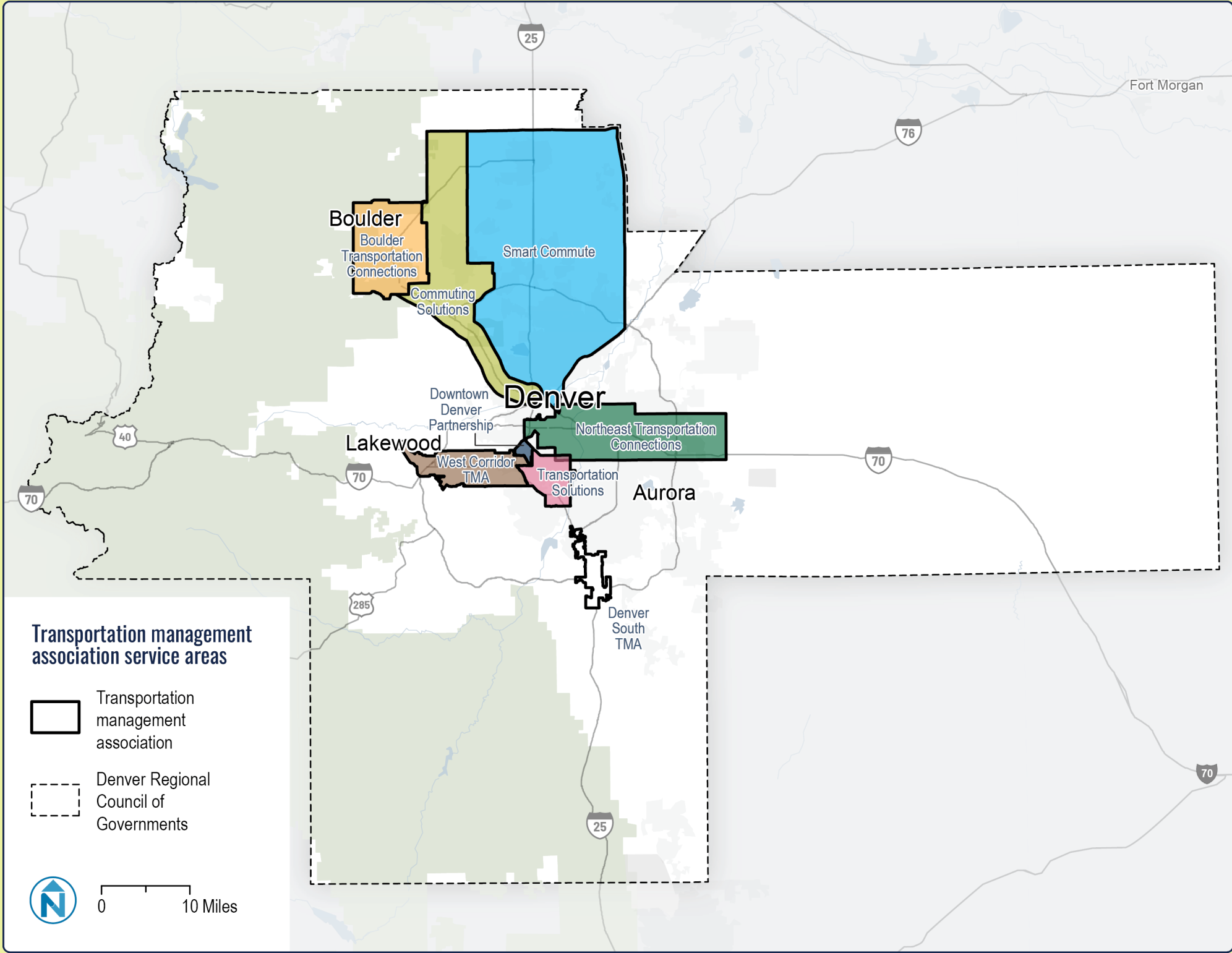
Colorado CarShare



Denver Regional Mobility  
and Access Council



**Figure 2** Transportation management association service areas



## Transportation management associations

Transportation management associations are responsible for implementing transportation demand management strategies, programs and services within their sub-regional service areas of the Denver region. Transportation management associations are often established in areas where certain criteria are met, such as density of population/employment, traffic congestion or poor air quality and when there is support from local leaders and funding availability. In the Denver region, transportation management associations have emerged organically, over time. Figure 2 shows the transportation management association service areas in the Denver region.

Three transportation management associations in the Denver region—Denver South Transportation Management Association, Downtown Denver Partnership and Boulder Transportation Connections—are part of local economic development partnerships or chambers of commerce. All transportation management associations belong to the council’s Way to Go partnership and meet regularly to share information and collaborate. Partner transportation management associations receive funding through the Transportation Improvement Program Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside for use in localized outreach and marketing.

These agencies often work closely with local governments to implement transportation demand management strategies and advocate for mobility improvement projects, such as bike and pedestrian facilities, microtransit and transportation equity considerations.



# Local governments

Local governments throughout the Denver region play a critical role when it comes to implementing and supporting transportation demand management strategies. Local governments are responsible for working on various initiatives from land use and zoning to transportation services and infrastructure. In many cases, transportation demand management strategies are identified in local transportation master plans, comprehensive plans and active transportation plans.



## Transportation demand management and land use

Many local governments have begun implementing transportation demand management strategies related to land use and zoning outlined in their transportation plans.

For example, the City of Boulder established the Boulder Junction Transportation Demand Management District, a mixed-use, transit-oriented development area guided by Boulder’s Transit Area Village Plan and two overlaying general improvement districts. Not only is the development right next to the Regional Transportation District’s Boulder Junction at Depot Square Station, but each resident and employee of Boulder Junction receives benefits such as a Regional Transportation District EcoPass, B-Cycle membership and car share membership. Other communities, including Boulder, Broomfield, Denver and Longmont, have begun managing local parking ordinances with the specific intention of encouraging mode shift by eliminating parking minimums and/or setting maximums.



## Transportation demand management services

Local governments also play a role in providing transportation demand management services. Several communities, including Boulder, Denver, Lafayette, Lone Tree and Golden have established microtransit services to connect travelers to community destinations, transit stations and recreational opportunities. These services increase mobility for residents and visitors while decreasing traffic congestion.



## Transportation demand management policies

Additionally, local governments are responsible for implementing policies, and many have begun implementing transportation demand management related policies and ordinances. For example, the City and County of Denver has established transportation demand management requirements for new developments that meet certain criteria. Developers can choose from a suite of transportation demand management strategies and must implement a certain number of strategies depending on the size, type and location of the development.

Additional case studies of locally led transportation demand management projects in the Denver region are highlighted in Denver Regional Council of Government’s Transportation Demand Management Toolkit.



# 03 Transportation planning factors

- Population and employment growth
- Traffic congestion
- Safety and regional Vision Zero
- Transit access
- Effects of COVID-19 pandemic
- Innovation and transportation technology

During the planning process, the project team and stakeholders identified major transportation and development factors in the Denver region where the implementation of transportation demand management strategies can effect change. In no particular order, these factors are:



**Growth in the Denver region:** Anticipated growth in population and employment through 2050 will affect land use patterns and transportation options.



**Traffic congestion:** With more people traveling in and around the region, the resulting traffic congestion will lead to increased air pollution, more time spent in traffic and decreased quality of life.



**Safety and Vision Zero:** Transportation safety is a major consideration in mode choice decisions, especially as a considerable number of serious injury and fatal crashes involve pedestrians and bicyclists.



**Transit access:** Transportation demand management strategies can support awareness and use of public transit, making it a more accessible and convenient choice for all residents and visitors of the Denver region.



**Ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic:** The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way people travel and led to an increased number of people working from home.



**Innovation and transportation technology:** Technology has enabled transportation services like mobility on demand, including services such as ride-hailing, microtransit, ride-sharing and shared micromobility, all of which may improve access to transportation options if deployed strategically.



# Population and employment growth

Population and employment growth, coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic, have contributed to changes in how residents and visitors alike travel throughout the Denver region. The Colorado State Demography Office projects that the Denver region will add more than a million new people between the years 2020 and 2050. During that time, population, households and employment are projected to increase between 31 to 38 percent, as shown in Figure 3. This growth will affect future travel time, choices and patterns across all travel modes.

By 2050, the council's staff estimates that drive alone trips are projected to increase 37%, while transit trips are projected to increase 58%. Bicycling and pedestrian trips are expected to increase 27% and 39% respectively. Moreover, total person trips, which also include other travel measures such as shared ride passenger and school bus trips, are expected to increase 37%.

With an increase in total person trips and drive alone trips, transportation demand management strategies will become even more important to reduce congestion, improve air quality and increase mobility, efficiency and safety for all travelers in the region.

Figure 3 Changes in regionwide travel measures 2020-2050

Modeled system measures: Demographics – weekday for the Denver region			
	2020 estimate	2050 forecast	Percent change
Population	3,376,700	4,428,000	31%
Households	1,358,200	1,870,800	38%
Employment	2,160,400	2,964,700	37%

Modeled system measures: Person trips – weekday for the Denver region			
	2020 estimate	2050 forecast	Percent change
Total drive alone trips	7,392,200	10,120,200	37%
Total transit trips	264,000	417,600	58%
Bicycling trips	207,400	264,300	27%
Pedestrian trips	1,242,200	1,723,800	39%
Total person trips Includes other person trip types not listed above, see source for more information	15,323,700	20,949,500	37%

Source: 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan, Appendix E; Denver Regional Council of Governments' travel model: base year = 2020; model year = 2050; trips rounded to nearest hundred.





## Traffic congestion

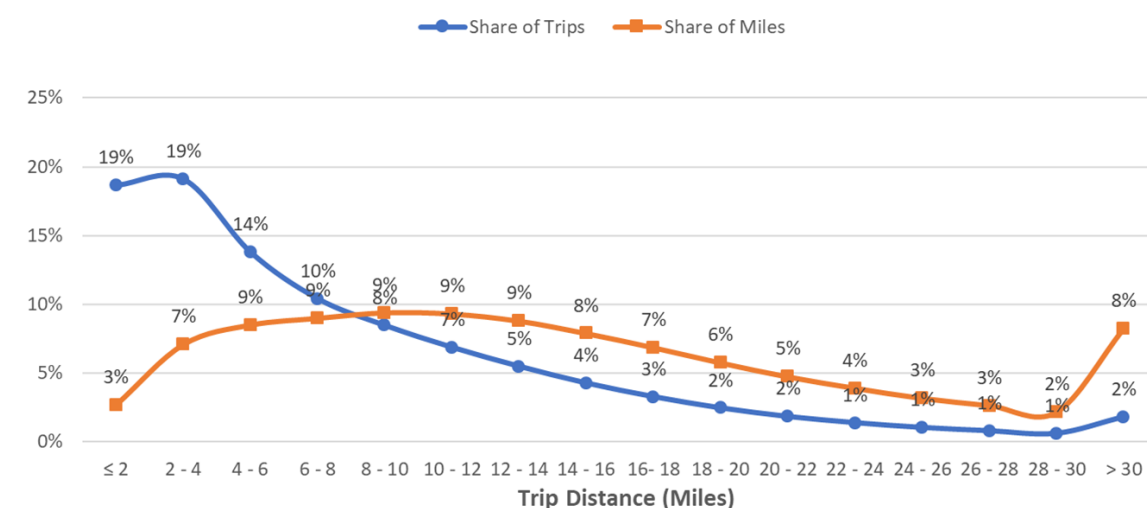
The regional transportation system requires extensive planning, operations and maintenance to keep people and goods moving in and around the region. Each year, the council's staff estimates changes to vehicle miles traveled in the Denver region in their Annual Report on Traffic Congestion, and in 2021 there were an estimated 82.5 million average daily vehicles miles traveled, which is approximately 3% less than in 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Traffic volumes on most of the roadways in the Denver region increased over 2021, as compared to 2020, but only returned to 2019 levels at some locations.

Among the over 15 million person trips each day in the Denver region, the council's staff estimates that 45% of trips are fewer than 3 miles and 19% are less than 1 mile. When looking only at drive alone trips in the region, a staggering 42% of all trips, 28% of drive alone trips are fewer than 3 miles and 7% are less than 1 mile. Over 1 million drive-alone trips of two miles or less are made each day in the Denver region. Figure 4 shows drive alone trips by number and length.

These short trips present a unique opportunity to focus transportation demand management strategies and encourage people to consider alternatives to driving alone. In addition to short trips, the council's staff estimates that approximately 7% of all trips account for 25% of all vehicle miles traveled; each of these trips is estimated to be 20 miles or more. This presents an opportunity to convert longer distance drive alone trips to transit, carpool or Vanpool options.

There are a variety of transportation demand management strategies which directly address traffic congestion. Traditional marketing, education and outreach campaigns can encourage people to consider alternatives to driving alone; these efforts typically focus on peak period commuters to relieve traffic congestion during morning and afternoon peak travel times. Other strategies that address congestion can include increasing investment in active transportation infrastructure, implementing local transportation demand management policies and ordinances, and improving roadway management and operations. Reduced travel demand, especially on congested roadways at peak periods, will result in fewer greenhouse gas emissions and improved air quality. Reduced congestion also has benefits related to Metro Vision outcomes associated with public health and quality of life, by promoting healthier communities and a cleaner natural environment.

**Figure 4** Drive alone trips by number and length

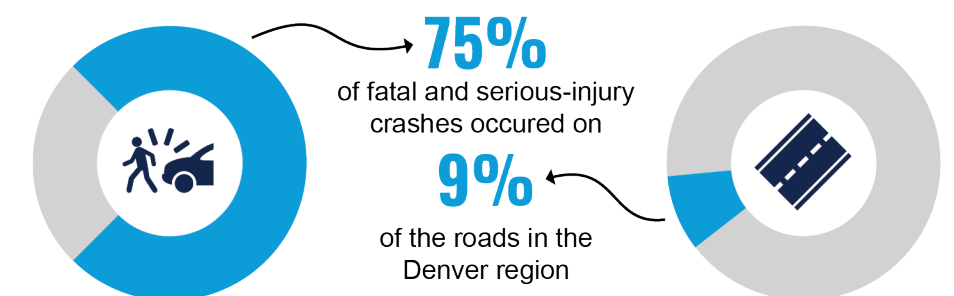


Source: Denver Regional Council of Governments' Activity Based Model Trip Table



## Safety and regional Vision Zero

In 2020, the Denver Regional Council of Governments adopted the regional Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero plan, which aims to eliminate transportation-related deaths and serious injuries in the Denver region's transportation system. The council's staff analyzed crash data as part of the plan development process and identified a high injury network made up of 9% of all roads in the Denver region where 75% of fatal and serious-injury crashes have occurred.



Traffic deaths and serious injuries are preventable. By establishing a safe systems approach when designing and building infrastructure, the Denver region can have improved safety for all travelers. Infrastructure investments, coupled with mode-shift, education and outreach campaigns, can both decrease the number of vehicles on the road and educate drivers on the road around safety. Transportation demand management strategies that support transit and ensure safe, seamless first and last-mile connections contribute to reducing the reliance on personal vehicles, which also minimizes exposure to the high injury network. Riding transit is significantly safer than driving alone, so increasing transit ridership supports both transportation demand management and regional Vision Zero.

Reaching Vision Zero is critical for the safety of travelers and it is important to consider when identifying appropriate transportation demand management strategies because safety can also serve as a major decision factor when people are considering mode shift from driving alone. According to a survey conducted as part of the region's Active Transportation Plan development process, 59% of the Denver region's residents have expressed interest in biking but have reservations due to safety concerns. These "interested but concerned" individuals represent an opportunity for potential mode shift that hinge upon increasing the safety and comfort of the transportation network. The region has invested in over 2,200 miles of off-street bicycle facilities, like shared-use paths and sidepaths, and will continue to invest in building out high-comfort active transportation infrastructure as prioritized in the region's Active Transportation Plan.



## Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic

The travel landscape has seen significant changes since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 and these effects continue to impact travel patterns today. During the pandemic, many transportation demand management strategies, albeit unintentional, became the norm. Most notably, the region saw a significant increase in telework and flexible work arrangements. According to the American Community Survey, work from home rates rose from around 10% in 2019 to 24% in 2022. Since 2020, employers around the region have continued to implement telework and flexible work policies, spurring a shift in travel behaviors.

Like teleworking and flexible work arrangements, micromobility modes such as biking and scootering became increasingly popular during the pandemic as travelers sought to avoid contact with others. In fact, the average daily trips on shared micromobility systems in the Denver region grew from an average of 4,300 trips per day in 2019 to 5,100 trips per day in 2020. In 2021, that number almost doubled, with an average of 10,700 trips per day as programs in different jurisdictions around the region launched and expanded. At the same time, bike shops around the region struggled to keep up with demand for personal micromobility vehicles. Since 2020, local governments around the region continue to prioritize the construction and improvement of active transportation infrastructure for micromobility modes.

During the pandemic, many cities and towns closed off streets to allow for social distancing, outdoor dining and other community development activities. As streets closed to motor vehicles, attitudes towards parking allowances and transportation began to shift to prioritize multimodal travel and place-making. Local governments have continued to implement shared streets, such as the City and County of Denver's Outdoor Places Program, which permanently closed select streets to motor vehicle traffic.

In contrast, transit ridership on the Regional Transportation District's fixed route services fell by 50% in 2020. Challenges such as driver shortages, service cuts, financial woes and safety concerns created an unreliable and underutilized transit system. Many of these challenges continue to impact the system today. As a result, ridership levels have only rebounded to approximately 58% of where they were prior to 2020. Furthermore, the downstream financial impacts of the pandemic continue to exacerbate an already strained system, causing transit providers to reassess operations. Through its System Optimization Plan, the Regional Transportation District developed strategies to increase ridership and enhance transit service performance within its operational budget.



## Transit access

Public transit in the Denver area consists mainly of bus, light rail, commuter rail and microtransit. The Regional Transportation District, Denver Regional Council of Governments, Colorado Department of Transportation and local governments identify, prioritize and plan for such services. Then, the Regional Transportation District, the Colorado Department of Transportation and local governments provide transit service, operations and maintenance. The Regional Transportation District provides local and regional connections via bus and rail, while local governments provide hyperlocal service, generally via microtransit. On the other hand, the Colorado Department of Transportation provides statewide connections from Denver Union Station via its Bustang services. Throughout the region, the Regional Transportation District provides more than 170 bus routes, 12 light rail lines and several specialty services such as Access-a-Ride, FlexRide, Free MallRide and SeniorRide. While these existing services serve as a foundation to the regional transit system, many residents still lack access to fast, frequent and reliable transit services. In an effort to increase public transit ridership the Regional Transportation District introduced several efforts including offering fare-free transit during select summer months and zero fares for youth under age 19 as well as the restructuring of transit fares.

There are several ongoing transit projects, programs and plans that seek to combat the challenge of transit access across the region. In 2022, the Regional Transportation District completed its System Optimization Plan, a comprehensive assessment of the agency's performance including an assessment of existing routes and services, ridership demographics and equity zone travel patterns. The plan proposes alignment and frequency alterations to several transit services to meet the immediate service needs of the region.

In addition, the Denver Regional Council of Governments identifies regionally significant project and program investment priorities in the 2050 Metro Vision

Regional Transportation Plan. Investment priorities for transit projects range from corridor planning and multimodal improvements to bus rapid transit network buildout. The 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan identifies 11 bus rapid transit corridors, which were based on corridors studied, evaluated and prioritized by the Regional Transportation District's Regional Bus Rapid Transit Feasibility Study. The study prioritized projects based on factors including safety, equity, projected ridership and cost. To collaboratively manage the implementation of these projects, the Denver Regional Council of Governments, Regional Transportation District, Colorado Department of Transportation and key local government stakeholders have formed a regional Bus Rapid Transit Partnership. As the region continues to improve and expand transit service, there is significant opportunity to develop adjacent housing and employment centers as envisioned in the region's Metro Vision plan. Metro Vision supports the development of healthy, inclusive and livable communities through efficient development patterns and a connected multimodal region. These transit-, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly places should contain a diverse mix of land uses and have density which supports mixed-use, transit-oriented development.

There are a wide variety of transportation demand management strategies that can encourage access to transit and increased transit ridership, including strategies ranging from land use and development to improving transit service frequency and reliability. Not only does transit service need to be reliable, affordable and frequent, transit routes also need to be accessible, including having first- and last-mile connections. Other transportation demand management strategies related to improving transit ridership include employer pass subsidies, discounted passes, fare-free service, integrated trip planning and payment, shared micromobility and microtransit connections, mobility hub development and active transportation infrastructure.



# Innovation and transportation technology

Over the past decade, transformative changes in transportation technology have changed the way people get around. From ride-hailing to shared mobility services and everything in between, technology has evolved to fill the gaps in the transit system and increase access and connectivity to transportation services. There are also emerging transportation technologies that enhance traditional transportation demand management strategies. By integrating trip planning and payment for services like transit and shared micromobility or ride-hailing, digital infrastructure can provide travelers with easy-to-use, multimodal solutions. These solutions not only decrease congestion, but also prioritize inclusivity, ensuring that a diverse range of users can access and benefit from the evolving transportation system. In contrast, there are a variety of emerging technologies that may pose new challenges for transportation demand management by way of their potential to increase traffic congestion.



## Microtransit

Microtransit shuttles, such as the Regional Transportation District's Flex Ride, the City of Lone Tree's Link on Demand, the City and County of Denver's Denver Connector, or the City of Golden's Ore Cart, are increasingly common ways that communities in the region are filling the gaps in transit services and connectivity. Microtransit routes may be on-demand or fixed. For example, the Denver Connector is an app-based, on demand shuttle that provides rides anywhere within the service areas. On the other hand, City of Golden's Ore Cart is a fixed route circulator. Both models of microtransit help connect travelers to their destinations and reduce the reliance on drive alone trips.



## Car share

Car sharing provides an alternative to owning a car by allowing travelers to “check out” a car when needed. Car share services are app-based or require an online application. Services in the region have ranged from free-floating operators such as Free2Move, round-trip operators such as ZipCar, community-based nonprofit operators like Colorado CarShare and peer-to-peer app-based platforms like Turo.



## Ride-hailing

Transportation network companies such as Uber and Lyft have operated in the Denver region for over a decade, offering app-based ride-hailing and ride-sharing options to connect travelers to their final destinations. Ride-hailing services can increase mobility for those unable to drive or use transit. However, there is a growing conversation about transportation network companies' impacts on affordability, reliability, congestion and curbside management, even as they can provide first and last mile solutions for transit users.



## Shared micromobility

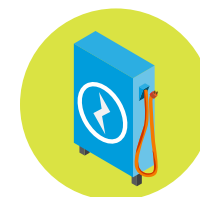
The rise of shared micromobility programs has expanded first and last mile connectivity and provides alternatives to short drive alone trips. Programs are app-based and offer vehicle choices such as bikes, e-bikes, e-scooters and many programs also include adaptive vehicles. Shared micromobility services can be station-based or free-floating and popular operators around the region include B-Cycle, Lyft, Spin, Lime and Bird.

The Denver region was home to one of the earliest bikeshare systems in the country, when Denver B-Cycle launched in the City and County of Denver in 2010. Since the launch of dockless shared micromobility systems in the Denver region in 2017, riders have taken over 12.8 million trips, covering over 15.6 million miles throughout the Denver region. This trend indicates a growing preference for more flexible and efficient travel options. Furthermore, both shared and personal e-bikes and e-scooters have a range of benefits, including allowing travelers to go farther in less time, making rigorous and uphill routes easier and increasing mobility options for older adults and people with limited physical abilities.



## Connected and automated vehicles

Connected and automated vehicles use technologies to communicate with nearby infrastructure and other vehicles. This technology has the potential to transform the future of shared mobility and increase access to transit through technologies such as automated microtransit shuttles, connected and automated rapid transit networks and automated first and last mile solutions. These vehicles also have the potential to provide important traveler data that can be used to implement more context specific transportation demand management strategies. However, there are certainly questions around how connected vehicles and automated vehicles will affect the transportation network, including concerns regarding increased traffic congestion due to circulation of vehicles, increase vehicle miles traveled and management of parking infrastructure.



## Electric vehicles

Electric vehicles are vehicles with an electric motor that runs on battery power rather than an internal combustion engine that runs on fossil fuels. Because these vehicles run on electricity, there are no tailpipe emissions. Electric vehicles are rapidly gaining popularity throughout the region as individuals and organizations seek to lower their carbon footprints and shift to electrified cars and buses. While electric vehicles are certainly an important piece of regional greenhouse gas emissions reductions, there are congestion and land use considerations, as they do not decrease the number of drive alone trips and still require parking and charging infrastructure.





## Curbside and parking management

Technology advancements in parking and curbside management, such as real time curb use and parking data, dynamic pricing and app-based or online permits have allowed local agencies to better manage demand at the curb and relieve congestion. With the development of the open-source Curb Data Specification, public agencies can dynamically understand activity at the curb and develop policies that prioritize curb use and access.



## Mobility as a service

Mobility as a service integrates multiple transportation services into one platform with a single payment option. Users can book services like transit, ride-hailing and shared mobility and pay for transportation services in a single transaction. This integration allows travelers to conveniently plan and pay for multimodal trips. While the future of what mobility as a service will look like in the Denver region is unknown, it certainly will have implications for transportation demand management.

# 04

## Existing transportation demand management program analysis

- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis
- Return on investment analysis
- Equity analysis
- Summary of results from analyses

Beyond the strategic plan recommendations identified later in this plan, the planning process also included analyses of the council's existing regional transportation demand management programs. Three distinct analyses were conducted on each program: a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis, a return on investment analysis and an equity analysis.

# Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis

In the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis, the existing conditions of regional transportation demand management programs were evaluated based on several criteria such as impact, program costs and staffing requirements. These criteria were scored on a scale from 1 to 4, representing varying levels of effectiveness and resource investment. This scoring mechanism was established to provide high-level feedback based on the knowledge or assumptions of current subject matter experts, covering various aspects of the transportation demand management programs, from funding to implementation and outreach.

The results yield some key takeaways:

- Projects like Vanpool and carpool may have an opportunity to increase impact with a slight increase in effort, especially since these programs are currently shown to be quite effective with few resources.
- Bike to Work Day is a popular, annual event and is one of the largest Bike to Work Days in the nation. However, planning falls to a small team and incentivizing participation each year is a challenge due to funding constraints.
- The opportunities highlighted for each program show that staff have creative ideas of how to optimize, expand and improve the council's programming to reach more people.

# Return on investment analysis

The project team developed a methodology to understand the relative return on investment of various transportation demand management programs provided by the Denver Regional Council of Governments. This analysis covered both services and outreach programs and was based on a range of criteria including program administration costs, user costs, target audiences, number of users, mode shift percentages, reduction in vehicle miles traveled, average commute distances, frequency of non-drive alone trips, user cost savings per trip and an equity evaluation score. These criteria were scored and used to calculate the return on investment, with potential maximum scores of 38 and 18 for service and outreach programs, respectively.

The results indicated that the Vanpool program scored the highest among transportation demand management services due to its impact on vehicle miles traveled reduction, high average usage frequency, moderate user cost and substantial user savings, along with its high equity score. On the other hand, the carpool program scored the lowest, due to its limited use, minor impact on mode shift, low vehicle miles traveled reduction and a lower equity score.

For outreach programs, programs with the highest return on investment were successful primarily due to low barriers to participation and extensive reach among employers and employees, albeit being resource intensive for staff to manage. However, some programs like Guaranteed Ride Home and Colorado Clean Commute, though cost-effective to administer present an opportunity to increase their reach.

# Equity analysis

The project team conducted an analysis to assess the equity implications of the council's transportation demand management services. The evaluation leveraged the council's regional Equity Index tool to prioritize investments that enhance travel options and modes, focusing on environmental justice and equity. This analysis considers various criteria including geographic focus, target populations and enhancement of transportation access and options.

The analysis identified programs actively promoting equitable transportation in the Denver region. Schoolpool emerged as the highest-scoring program due to its presence in equity priority areas and its focus on youth. In contrast, Go-Tober, Guaranteed Ride Home and employer outreach were the lowest scoring programs, primarily due to the limited or unknown impact on marginalized communities. The recommendations suggest targeted marketing strategies, partnerships with local community organizations and initiatives to reduce transportation costs for users.

# Summary of results from analyses

The results from these analyses resulted in the identification of key strengths and opportunities for each existing Denver Regional Council of Governments transportation demand management service.



## Schoolpool

**Key strengths:** This is an award-winning, well-known and successful program with positive community reception.

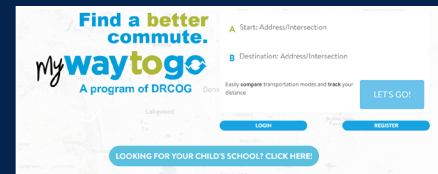
**Key opportunities:** There are opportunities to expand Schoolpool across the region, consider a focus on schools in equity priority zones and targeting families with longer commutes and/or families affected by school closures.



## Vanpool

**Key strengths:** This is a valuable program for regional commuters with a high return on investment score.

**Key opportunities:** There are opportunities to expand the Vanpool program and conduct targeted outreach to essential and shift workers and enhance multilingual outreach.



## MyWayToGo Platform

**Key strengths:** This is a user-friendly, multi-functional trip planning, tracking, ride-matching and campaign management platform that supports many Way to Go campaigns.

**Key opportunities:** There is an opportunity to improve and expand technology, including enhancing the mobile experience and utilizing data collection for better equity analyses.



## Way to Go Partnership

**Key strengths:** Partnership allows focused transportation demand management strategy implementation in specific subregions of the Denver region and regionwide marketing and outreach coordination; transportation management associations have in-depth community knowledge. The Denver Regional Council of Governments manages foundational resources to support regionwide efforts.

**Key opportunities:** There are opportunities for more collaboration with community-based organizations and to use memorandum of understandings between partners to identify equity and engagement goals.



## Carpool

**Key strengths:** Carpool program encourages easy behavior change and supports sustainable transportation mode shift goals.

**Key opportunities:** There are opportunities to target off-peak commuters, potentially could combine efforts with the Vanpool strategy to provide targeted outreach to essential and shift workers.



## Go-Tober

**Key strengths:** This is an employer and commuter challenge that offers prizes and public recognition for tracking non-solo driving trips.

**Key opportunities:** There is an opportunity to engage more with community-based organizations.



## Colorado Clean Commute

**Key strengths:** This program is an employer outreach and recognition campaign. Way to Go provides trip reduction recommendations, some of which are eligible for tax credit.

**Key opportunities:** There are opportunities to enhance outreach and mentorship programs for increased participation.



## Guaranteed Ride Home

**Key strengths:** A program with a low barrier for participation and available through employers who subscribe, typically in concert with transit passes.

**Key opportunities:** There is an opportunity to develop partnerships for promotion and expand eligibility to a broader range of workers.



## Bike to Work Day and Winter Bike to Work Day

**Key strengths:** This is a popular annual event with potential for expansion to increase participation and mode shift.

**Key opportunities:** There is an opportunity to focus on non-traditional commute hours and engage additional people.



## Employer Outreach

**Key strengths:** Employer outreach conducted by the council staff is a well-established program that provides full service to the region.

**Key opportunities:** There is an opportunity to establish annual equity goals for employer recruitment and expand to focus on a broader range of businesses, including those in areas more likely to see mode shift, like those in close proximity to transit, areas with priced parking or in pedestrian focus areas.



# Lessons from the community: equity focus group and engagement

Lessons gathered from an equity-focused group discussion held in the Spring of 2023 and the robust engagement with stakeholders underscore the importance of listening and understanding diverse perspectives when it comes to transportation demand management planning.

Highlights from the equity outreach include:

Existing transportation issues affecting vulnerable groups include unreliable, inaccessible and unaffordable public transportation, inadequate infrastructure for seniors and disabled individuals, and insufficient resources for caregivers.

Support for community-operated, affordable transportation services that connect all areas of the region, enhancing reliability and creating local job opportunities.

Development of outreach and educational programs in multiple languages to help residents navigate the transit system, ensuring accessibility for people without internet or literacy skills.

Emphasis on large-scale community engagement to gather unique insights into the travel experiences and needs of diverse groups, fostering a collaborative relationship between planners, decision-makers and the community.

Highlighting the necessity to make programming and messaging accessible to groups less familiar with technology, like seniors and students, and designing communication strategies with all users' needs in mind.

Acknowledgement of the cost-effectiveness of incorporating community feedback during the planning stage, advocating for proactive rather than reactive solutions.

A call for a collaborative effort to build an inclusive, sustainable and equitable transportation system that serves the needs of the entire community, emphasizing the importance of listening to diverse voices.

Transportation demand management can be a powerful tool in the pursuit of equity. By enhancing public transit options, supporting ride sharing, improving active transportation infrastructure and adopting flexible work arrangements, transportation demand management can break down barriers that restrict transportation access to opportunity. Transportation demand management does not just make commuting more efficient; it opens doors to opportunity for everyone.



# Leading the way: equity focused case studies from transportation organizations in the Denver region

Northeast Transportation Connections, West Corridor Transportation Management Association and Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council are examples of local organizations that are promoting transportation equity in the Denver region. Through dedicated efforts, these organizations are breaking down barriers and creating pathways to accessible and inclusive mobility solutions.

## Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council

The cornerstone of the Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council's mission is to empower individuals dealing with mobility challenges to access community resources by enhancing accessibility and addressing barriers to use regional transportation services and amenities. The organization's initiatives predominantly cater to older adults, low-income groups and individuals with disabilities, who frequently depend on public transit systems. The organization brings together diverse community stakeholders, establishes forums where transportation providers, users and advocates can converge to identify and address gaps and prospects in transportation.

The Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council's flagship Getting There Travel Training initiative aims to improve air quality and reduce congestion by providing information to bridge the gap between local and regional transportation services. The program has four free online travel training courses which offer guidance on navigating various facets of public transportation options.

Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council's  
Getting There Guide



▲  
Northeast Transportation Connections' website (netransportation.org)

## Northeast Transportation Connections

Northeast Transportation Connections is dedicated to fostering equitable, sustainable and active multimodal travel choices for historically underserved communities. One of the organization's projects included a white paper titled "Bringing TDM Solutions to Communities of Diversity" which provides information and recommendations on how transportation demand management can be equitably implemented in the region.

In October 2021, Northeast Transportation Connections worked with the City and County of Denver to launch the Denver Connector Pilot, an on-demand microtransit service. The pilot program offered Montbello residents free ride-share services for traveling to nearby destinations and transit hubs. After a year of successful

operation and growing demand, the pilot program was extended for two more years and the service area was extended to encompass the Gateway, Globeville and Elyria Swansea neighborhoods. The service prioritizes hiring Montbello and Gateway, Globeville and Elyria Swansea neighborhood residents as operators to further support residents in the neighborhoods.

Additionally, Northeast Transportation Connections works with the Globeville and Elyria Swansea neighborhoods as a part of the Tolling Equity Program. This initiative ensures that low-income residents of these areas have access to complimentary transponders and toll credits for Express Lanes on I-70, along with free transit passes to foster a more inclusive and equitable transportation network.

## Looking for a ride?

-  **Do you prefer public bus and rail services?**  
Fixed route options stop at consistent locations and operate on a frequent regular schedule. **Fixed Route and Airport, pages 6-7.**
-  **Heading out of town?**  
You'll find airport transport options to help get you on your way. **Fixed Route and Airport, pages 6-7.**
-  **Need to schedule a low-cost ride from your home?**  
Human Service organizations provide rides to appointments necessary for healthy living. Fares are subsidized. **By Appointment, pages 8-11.**
-  **Still looking for the ride that's right for you?**  
Private providers can often schedule transportation on short notice or tailor services to meet your needs. **Other Options, pages 12-15.**  
Seeking Ridesharing options? Look for the 

## Fare Assistance


RTD, DRMAC and Denver Human Services invite Denver Metro residents to visit Colorado PEAK to apply for LiVE: RTD's new income-based fare discount program. LiVE provides a 40% fare discount for RTD's fixed route bus/rail services to individuals and families (ages 20-64) with limited incomes living in the RTD service area.

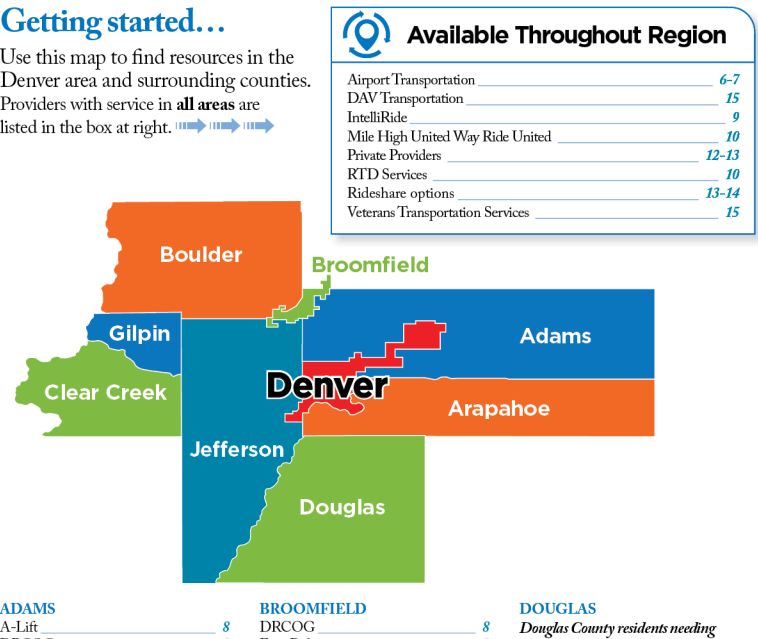
For example, a local RTD fare valued at \$3.00 would be discounted to \$1.80. For more information visit [Colorado Peak](#) or [RTD LiVE](#) or call 720-944-4347.

RTD also offers other discounts for older adults, youth, and people with disabilities. Older adults (age 65+), people with disabilities, and Medicare recipients receive a 50% fare discount. Youth (ages 6-19) receive a 70% fare discount. Children ages 5 and younger ride free with a paying adult. See [RTD Fares](#) website for more info.



## Getting started...

Use this map to find resources in the Denver area and surrounding counties. Providers with service in **all areas** are listed in the box at right. 





## West Corridor Transportation Management Association

The West Corridor Transportation Management Association recently initiated measures to implement transportation equity in their service area. Collaborating with the Denver Housing Authority and the City and County of Denver’s Climate, Sustainability and Resiliency office, the West Corridor Transportation Management Association established several e-bike libraries at low-income housing facilities. Although the program is no longer active, residents of the housing facilities were able to keep some of the e-bikes for personal use.

Recently, the West Corridor Transportation Management Association was awarded regional Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside funds to implement culturally sensitive marketing campaigns available in Spanish and Vietnamese, to engage diverse community groups, particularly along Federal Boulevard. The organization was also awarded regional Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside funds to create transportation-focused welcome kits for new residents in the City and County of Denver’s Sun Valley neighborhood.

West Corridor Transportation Management Association engagement activity



# 05

## Strategic plan recommendations

- Summary of recommendations
- Recommendations and next steps



# Summary of recommendations

Guided by the strategic plan goals and robust stakeholder engagement, these strategic plan recommendations offer a comprehensive and forward-thinking approach to enhancing transportation demand management efforts in the region. These recommendations highlight specific actions that the Denver Regional Council of Governments' staff can take to improve transportation options, equity and effectiveness.



1. Prepare a white paper that explores ways to fund transportation demand management incentive programs



2. Establish a transportation demand management technical assistance program



5. Revise Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside scoring criteria as they relate to equity and innovation



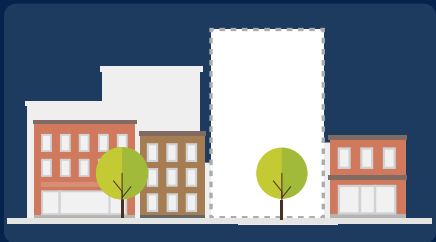
6. Explore opportunities to reduce or remove the local match requirements for Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside projects that benefit marginalized communities



7. Enhance mobility on demand assistance for member governments, transportation demand management partners and major employers



3. Support and expand Safe Routes to School programs across the region



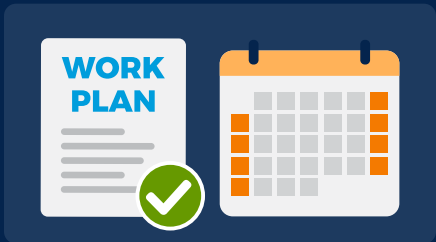
4. Consider integrating transportation demand management as a requirement for certain projects during the next update to the Transportation Improvement Program Policy document



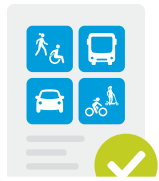
8. Expand ways Denver Regional Council of Governments can better understand results delivered by transportation demand management programs across the region



9. Expand the focus of Way to Go to include all trips



10. Collaboratively develop and share an annual work plan for the Way to Go partnership



# 1. Prepare a white paper that explores ways to fund transportation demand management incentive programs

To address the growing need for transportation choices amidst the challenge of implementing widespread behavior change, the council should explore potential funding mechanisms for transportation demand management incentive programs. Financial incentive programs have been shown to be effective in changing travel behavior, however, current funding sources utilized by the council prohibit the use of incentives.

## Next steps

- **Conduct case study research:** Examine existing incentive programs in other regions, identifying successful models and funding sources. Research the effectiveness of different types of incentive offerings including evaluation of mode shift over time.
- **Engage partners and stakeholders:** Collaborate with key entities including the Colorado Department of Transportation and transportation management association partners to ensure a coordinated approach.
- **Explore funding opportunities:** Explore potential funding sources, which may range from local, regional, state or federal funding streams and learn from other regions that have successfully implemented incentive programs.
- **Outline next steps:** Once information is gathered, work with partners and stakeholders to identify a range of funding strategies, which may range from traditional methods to innovative solutions. Based on this analysis, present clear recommendations for the next steps.
- **Publish white paper:** Consolidate findings and share with partners.

## Equity considerations

When considering incentive programs, it is important that all communities, especially historically marginalized communities, are centered in these programs. Actions could include identifying tailored funding opportunities for marginalized communities and barriers to accessing incentives, ensuring equitable distribution of incentive programs and emphasizing community engagement and partnerships with community-based organizations.



# 2. Establish a transportation demand management technical assistance program

To address the evolving needs of its member governments and partners, the council should establish a technical assistance program focused on supporting transportation demand management. While technical assistance associated with transportation demand management is currently provided on an ad-hoc basis, this program should be designed to help develop and implement transportation demand management plans, policies, ordinances and regulations. Other areas of focus could include supportive efforts such as transit-oriented development, zoning, subdivision regulations, parking regulations, developer transportation demand management support, Policy Directive 1601 assistance and curbside management. Elements supported by this action are also connected to the Denver Regional Council of Governments’ Metro Vision, 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan and Mitigation Action Plan.

## Next steps

- **Develop program scope:** Work with council staff, partner agencies and stakeholders to outline the components of a regional technical assistance program; identify where existing gaps are and where the council’s staff can play the most effective role in providing technical assistance.
- **Create resources:** Based on program scope, generate resources that offer case studies, templates and tools tailored to various land use contexts. Continue to provide timely updates to the Transportation Demand Management Toolkit and develop additional resources to support Toolkit use.
- **Collaborate with partners and provide technical assistance:** This could include training sessions, workshops and consistent support for transportation demand management strategy deployment. Adapt the technical assistance program and resources to align with the distinctive needs and objectives of member governments.

## Equity considerations

A technical assistance program can be curated to provide specialized support, resources and guidance in alignment with the distinct needs of partner organizations, including those partners serving marginalized communities. Tools and resources can be made accessible in multiple languages, ensuring broader reach.

Connection  
to strategic  
plan goals



Improving mobility  
and travel choices



Improving air  
quality



Enhancing  
transportation  
equity

Connection  
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Improving mobility  
and travel choices



Improving air  
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transportation  
equity



### 3. Support and expand Safe Routes to School programs across the region

Regional safe routes to school initiatives are positioned to address both equity and safety, aligning with multiple transportation demand management goals. Given the council’s staff’s existing involvement in safe routes to school-related activities, work on community-based transportation plans and the nationally renowned Schoolpool program, there is an opportunity to expand the role of the Denver Regional Council of Governments in the safe routes to school area.

#### Next steps

- **Document the state of safe routes to school in the Denver region and across the nation:** Examine current Safe Routes to School programs and understand program reach, efficacy and areas of operation. Identify gaps in existing safe routes to school programs, whether they are geographic or programmatic. Evaluate successful safe routes to school programs, like the Massachusetts Safe Routes to School initiative, potentially adapting Massachusetts Department of Transportation resources and strategies to the regional context.
- **Develop a regional safe routes to school blueprint:** Work with stakeholders to develop a regional framework, detailing objectives and methods to bolster and promote safe routes to school activities. The blueprint may emphasize equity, targeting high-need areas and fostering community-driven programs. This may include items such as a comprehensive set of region-specific safe routes to school tools, guidelines, toolkits, best practices and case studies.
- **Cultivate partnerships and resources:** Engage educational institutions, member governments, community organizations and transportation partners to build partnerships and identify dedicated funding for safe routes to school projects.

#### Equity considerations

Emphasizing equity in safe routes to school programs should consider program focus areas and the introduction of multilingual resources designed for parents and community-based organizations to encourage ride-sharing. Planning projects should ensure robust community engagement. With school closures occurring in the region, the connection between safe routes to school and transportation demand management is continuing to grow.

#### Connection to strategic plan goals



Improving mobility and travel choices



Improving air quality



Enhancing transportation equity



Improving transportation safety



### 4. Consider integrating transportation demand management as a requirement for certain projects during the next update to the Transportation Improvement Program Policy document

This recommendation was developed in recognition that the Transportation Improvement Program Policy development process is the place to further explore action associated with this recommendation. In the next Transportation Improvement Program Policy development process, staff propose considering transportation demand management requirements for certain Transportation Improvement Program projects.

#### Next steps

- **Consider transportation demand management strategies as a required component for certain project types:** Prior to and during the next update to the Transportation Improvement Program Policy document development, work with stakeholders to evaluate whether certain project types should incorporate transportation demand management strategies to mitigate travel demand or construction impacts through transportation demand management strategies or project elements. These factors may be based on factors such as project type, size, location and overall impact on travel demand during and after construction. This may be considered in relationship to other 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation goals around mode shift, congestion reduction, safety and air quality.
- **Engage with project sponsors and assess impacts:** Collaborate with project sponsors during the Transportation Improvement Program calls for projects. Provide guidance on how to incorporate transportation demand management strategies into projects and plans. Evaluate the potential impacts of transportation demand management requirements on individual project implementation, cost and schedule.
- **Provide technical assistance:** Explore the feasibility of offering technical assistance and provide resources, including the Denver Regional Council of Government’s Transportation Demand Management Toolkit that outlines a suite of transportation demand management strategies, to project sponsors to support local efforts in implementing transportation demand management strategies for Transportation Improvement Program projects.

#### Equity considerations

Examine the potential disproportionate impacts of construction activities for projects identified in the Transportation Improvement Program on marginalized communities, evaluate mitigation strategies where disparities are noted to prevent exacerbation of existing inequalities. This may include incorporating measures to minimize disruptions, such as guaranteeing accessible and affordable transportation alternatives are readily available.

#### Connection to strategic plan goals



Improving mobility and travel choices



Improving air quality



Enhancing transportation equity



Improving transportation safety



## 5. Revise Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside scoring criteria as they relate to equity and innovation

There are straightforward ways to improve the effectiveness and impact of the Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside project evaluation criteria for equity and innovation. These improvements are based on more holistic information about the project benefits. Action associated with this recommendation would be achieved through amending the Transportation Improvement Program Set-Aside Policy.

### Next steps

- **Update set-aside scoring criteria:**
  - **Equity:** Incorporate a multi-factor scoring system that emphasizes equity, using data and definitions from the regional equity index, developed by the Denver Regional Council of Governments. Align scoring with equity population targets and potential to mitigate transportation barriers. Clarify that the equity scoring captures both trip origins and destination, underlining the need to incorporate equity considerations throughout the journey.
  - **Innovation:** Update the criterion to reward projects that either introduce new strategies or mirror historically successful innovative projects.

### Equity considerations

It is essential to approach the Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside project evaluation process with a comprehensive understanding of equity. Equity should encompass age, gender, ability, race, ethnicity, income and other factors. Projects should be prioritized based not only on the target demographics but also on the tangible benefits to these groups. Considerations should also include transportation affordability, cultural sensitivities and flexibility to cater to diverse needs. While quantitative data such as the regional equity index can guide decisions, it is crucial to balance it with qualitative information from the project proposal.

Connection  
to strategic  
plan goals



Improving mobility  
and travel choices



Improving air  
quality



Enhancing  
transportation  
equity



## 6. Explore opportunities to reduce or remove the local match requirements for Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside projects that benefit marginalized communities

The Denver Regional Council of Governments, in collaboration with regional and state transportation partners, should assess the feasibility of reducing or removing the local match requirement for Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside projects that benefit marginalized communities. This recommendation is designed to encourage the development of equity-focused transportation demand management projects. This discussion may also be incorporated into the next Transportation Improvement Program Policy development.

### Next steps

- **Collaborate with partners to define desired outcome(s):** Work with stakeholders, including the Colorado Department of Transportation, to identify priorities of this work, including consultation of the regional Equity Index.
- **Explore potential funding mechanism(s):** Investigate innovative funding mechanisms to reduce or remove the local match requirement for projects funded through the Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside. Potential options to explore might include items such as: use of toll credits, swapping federal funds for state funds or combining federal and state funds to reduce match.
- **If feasible, develop proposal:** If funding mechanisms or sources are positively identified, draft a proposal explaining the rationale and strategies for reducing or removing the local match requirement for projects that benefit marginalized communities and amend relevant policy documents where match requirements are specified.

### Equity considerations

Reducing or removing the local match requirement for Transportation Demand Management Set-Aside projects will remove financial barriers to implementing projects that benefit marginalized communities.

Connection  
to strategic  
plan goals



Improving mobility  
and travel choices

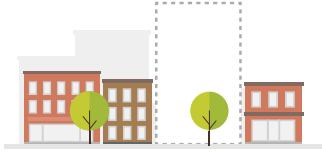


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quality



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transportation  
equity





# 7. Enhance mobility on demand assistance for member governments, transportation demand management partners and major employers

Local governments and major employers in the Denver region are increasingly interested in mobility on demand, specifically microtransit and micromobility, to provide additional transportation services for commuters and travelers. As the metropolitan planning organization for the region, the council's staff is equipped to help organizations looking to implement mobility on demand services. The Denver region's Ride Alliance is one example of a collaborative effort where agencies have come together to enhance mobility on demand for older adults, veterans and people with mobility challenges. Overall, this recommendation represents a collaborative effort with the Colorado Department of Transportation, Regional Transportation District, transportation management associations and member governments.

## Next steps

- **Understand needs and opportunities:** While there are many agencies providing mobility on demand support (policy, planning, capital, operations), there is no cohesive regional approach that outlines regional needs and identifies a strategy to deliver on demand service and associated technical assistance. Evaluating existing mobility on demand services, understanding the needs of partners with and without mobility on demand services and opportunities to develop resources, plans and service operations may all fall under this activity.
- **Assess feasibility and delivery:** Investigate potential partnerships between transportation partners, service operators, member governments and major employers for the collective provision of mobility on demand solutions. Identify roles and responsibilities to deliver the regional strategy.

## Equity considerations

To ensure equity in the development of mobility on demand services, agencies should implement mobility on demand services in locally identified equity areas. When seeking collaborations with major employers, a particular emphasis could be placed on partnering with companies that employ service and shift workers, as this demographic often faces unique transportation challenges. Exploring ways to make on demand services free or heavily discounted removes financial barriers on those already burdened with high housing and transportation costs.

Connection  
to strategic  
plan goals



Improving mobility  
and travel choices



Improving air  
quality



Enhancing  
transportation  
equity



# 8. Expand ways DRCOG can better understand results delivered by transportation demand management programs across the region

In partnership with the Colorado Department of Transportation and transportation demand management stakeholders, this recommendation is proposed to refine the transportation demand management project benefit evaluation process. The primary goal is to equip the Denver Regional Council of Governments, member governments and partner agencies in the Denver region with essential resources and tools to understand the effectiveness of transportation demand management projects. This refined approach will allow regional partners to amplify and replicate the most impactful transportation demand management strategies. An additional goal of improved evaluation is to support partners through better data collection and evaluation.

## Next steps

- **Identify needs:** Work with stakeholders to determine the desired goals and outcomes for improved data collection, analysis tools and methodologies that help staff and partners understand results delivered by program results.
- **Assess data availability and evaluation methods:** Examine the existing data availability, methodologies and tools used for transportation demand management program evaluation. Identify gaps or challenges that pose a challenge for understanding of program results.
- **Assess data and evaluation tools:** Evaluate the data collection methods and analysis tools available to the Denver Regional Council of Governments and transportation demand management stakeholders. Identify areas where improvements can be made to better capture program outcomes.
- **Enhance data collection:** Support program partners in improving data collection methods. Offer resources, training and technical support to enhance data collection and reporting capabilities.
- **Invest in tools:** Consider investing in the purchase or development of new evaluation tools tailored to the specific needs of the region's transportation demand management programs. These tools should facilitate data collection and provide insights without directly comparing different programs. This is potentially an area for cost-sharing among regional partner agencies interested in understanding project benefits.
- **Collaborate with stakeholders:** Engage with key stakeholders, including transportation management associations and transportation demand management program managers, to gather insights on program evaluations. Use stakeholder expertise to continue to refine investments in data and analysis tools that support program evaluation.

## Equity considerations

Improving data, methods and tools to understand the effectiveness of transportation demand management programs, the council's staff can incorporate return on investment and equity analysis tools into standardized program evaluations.

Connection  
to strategic  
plan goals



Improving mobility  
and travel choices



Improving air  
quality



Enhancing  
transportation  
equity



## 9. Expand the focus of Way to Go to include all trips

Recognizing that well over half of all vehicle miles traveled in the Denver region are not related to commute trips, this recommendation supports expanding the Way to Go program's focus to include a broad range of trip types. Trip types to be considered in future efforts may include non-traditional or off-peak commutes, daily household errands, parent and caregiver trips, visitor and recreational trips. This recommendation supports a significant stride towards providing equitable transportation demand management services in the Denver region while improving access to opportunity, which is an important objective of the regional Metro Vision plan.

### Next steps

- **Stakeholder involvement:** Collaborate with stakeholders, including transportation partners, employers, community organizations and shift/essential workers to identify gaps and opportunities. Seek stakeholder input regarding the specific transportation challenges and needs pertinent to transportation options.
- **Identify collaborative opportunities:** Identify potential partners, such as employers, healthcare facilities and community organizations, that can support marketing and education campaigns tailored to different trip types.
- **Develop and deploy outreach strategies:** Create innovative marketing and education campaigns.
- **Monitor impact:** Evaluate the impact of the expanded Way to Go program. Gather data on participation rates, mode shift and user feedback to assess the efficacy of new initiatives and campaigns.

### Equity considerations

Emphasizing more focused and accessible marketing efforts geared toward a variety of trip types will ensure outreach to better suit the needs of diverse travel patterns. By connecting effectively with distinct audience segments like shift workers or caregivers, this recommendation promotes a more inclusive approach to transportation demand management.

### Connection to strategic plan goals



Improving mobility and travel choices



Improving air quality



Enhancing transportation equity



## 10. Collaboratively develop and share an annual work plan for the Way to Go partnership

Building off the Denver Regional Council of Government's existing Way to Go program and partnership structure, this recommendation further expands the opportunity to collaborate in the development of an annual work plan.

### Next steps

- **Host a collaborative workshop:** This workshop will include partner discussions and help define the priorities and desired outcomes of the Way to Go partnership for the upcoming year.
- **Develop an annual work plan:** Way to Go program staff will develop a draft annual work plan based on partner input and provide review with transportation management association partners before finalizing the plan.
- **Support and ongoing collaboration:** The Way to Go program staff will continue to convene partners and collaborate throughout the year both through ad-hoc standalone meetings and standing meetings such as monthly outreach team meetings, quarterly partnership meetings and executive director calls.

### Equity considerations

The council's staff and partners should consider a clear delineation of equity goals in each annual plan. Equity goals may include community engagement targets, accessibility considerations and resource allocation strategies.

### Connection to strategic plan goals



Improving mobility and travel choices



Improving air quality



Enhancing transportation equity

# 06

## Conclusion

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As the Denver region continues to evolve, it is faced with several regional transportation challenges including population and employment growth, increasing traffic congestion and associated air quality issues, rising transportation safety concerns, a strained transit system and lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Denver Regional Council of Government's Metro Vision plan seeks to address many of these same challenges by planning for the region's present and future needs regarding place, mobility, environment, livability and vitality. Transportation demand management strategies, in combination with emerging technology, can further Metro Vision's goals and address these regional challenges by encouraging a connected, multimodal region and supporting efficient land use and development patterns.

While transportation demand management has historically focused on traditional 9-5 commuters with the primary goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled for congestion mitigation and air quality improvements, this strategic plan considers recent changes to travel behavior and transportation technology to envision a

more expansive suite of strategies and focus areas. The plan contains 10 strategic recommendations for the council to consider that fall under the categories of policy, planning and services. These recommendations include changes and enhancements to existing programs and policies to better serve the region's current and future needs.

In managing the implementation of this strategic plan, the council will play a leading role in engaging stakeholders, convening partners, providing planning and technical assistance, distributing funding and delivering transportation demand management services in the Denver region. In addition to implementation of the plan, the council's staff will proactively modify toolkit strategies to respond to evolving challenges and needs of the community. The council's staff intend to collaborate with regional transportation partners such as the Colorado Department of Transportation, Regional Transportation District, transportation management associations and other stakeholders to begin implementation of the strategic plan.

