City Of Boulder

Transportation Master Plan Update: Renewed Vision For Transit EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Draft

State Of The System Report

August 2013

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ecoliner
Zero Emissions Electric Vehicle
Foothill Transit

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Why transit, why now?
- What's included in the State of the System Report
- How is the community involved?
- What are the key findings?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Why Transit, Why Now?

Boulder's first Transportation Master Plan (TMP) was adopted in 1989, setting a new course for a community that relies less on the single-occupant vehicle (SOV). Over time, this vision, built on specific policies and goals to reduce SOV travel and manage congestion and mobile source emissions, has been implemented through a strategic program of capital projects and programs designed to change the way Boulder residents, employees, and visitors travel. The result has been the evolution of a complete transportation system that provides safe and healthy travel choices for the community. The TMP remains a strong and validly policy foundation. Over the years, the city continues to make good progress in achieving TMP goals.

However, the city is not on course to meet City TMP transportation goals. Declining transportation revenue, decreased transit service hours, and a growing number of workers commuting[1] to Boulder have heightened the need for a renewed TMP. While Boulder has made remarkable progress encouraging residents to walk, bike and ride transit, there is still work to be done to meet the City's transportation goals:

- Continued progress toward no growth in long-term vehicle traffic
- Reduce single-occupant-vehicle travel to 25 percent of trips
- Continued reduction in mobile source emissions of air pollutants
- No more than 20 percent of roadways congested (at Level of Service [LOS] F)
- Expand fiscally viable transportation alternatives for all Boulder residents and employees, including the elderly and those with disabilities
- Increase transportation alternatives commensurate with the rate of employee growth
- Improve safety
- Enhance neighborhood accessibility
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita for residents and in-commuters

The City's work to achieve these transportation and sustainability goals is met with numerous challenges and opportunities. Key among those identified through outreach to the Boulder community and stakeholders are:

- **Changing Demographics:** People are living longer and the Baby Boomers want to age in place; Gen Xers and Millenials tend to want to live in connected urban environments, yet in Boulder the high cost of housing causes many to choose to live outside of the city. The TMP must address the transportation and housing demands of these diverse generations and of Boulder's most vulnerable populations.
- **Emerging Technology and the New Live-Work City:** Technology such as smart phones and high speed mobile wireless internet are enabling people to work anywhere anytime at coffee shops and en route on transit. Providing a transit system that responds to the need for frequent travel (frequency), connectedness (on-board wi-fi), spontaneity (real-time information), and creativity and communication (bus and facility design) are improvements desired by Boulder's younger, working-age residents.
- **The Housing Challenge:** Boulder's high quality of life and natural beauty have affected housing prices. Some people who work or attend school in Boulder are living outside the city.

Why a Renewed Vision for Transit?

- The City is not on course to meet City TMP mode share goals.
- Transit ridership is stagnant.
- Transportation revenue and funding for local transit service in Boulder is declining.
- 80% of Boulder in-commuters drive alone to work; serving this market is essential.
- Over the last decade, RTD has cut service hours in Boulder by 20,500 service hours – the equivalent of the DASH route.
- Boulder continues to see redevelopment; this is anticipated to continue in areas east of 28th Street Street. Designing transit service to meet the impending needs of east Boulder and improving access and connections to transit is essential to meet community sustainability, climate, and mode share goals.

The HOP bus – the first Community Transit Network (CTN) route – is a community-focused bus with large windows, unique branding, and perimeter seating to encourage social interaction. A Renewed Vision for Transit will build upon the success of the CTN.
Image from the City of Boulder

1 City of Boulder.

The Importance of Place

In our attempts to quantify relationships between land use, transportation, and urban design we too often lose the simple message – it's all about the places we create.

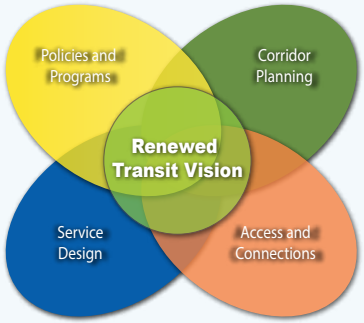
Improved transportation infrastructure and service increase access to land, which in turn increases travel demand. Since an inevitable amount of infill is important to the economic health of the city and region, the TMP Update must focus on a finer-grained integration of land use with sustainable transport. This integration will allow growth to occur in a way that reduces per capita travel demand while improving access to jobs and services, supporting housing affordability, and reducing the environmental impacts of growth on the region.

- **Emissions:** With transportation contributing over 20% of Boulder's greenhouse gas emissions, success in achieving the goals of the TMP are essential to keeping this contribution from growing. Given the large portion of vehicle fuel-related emissions, the TMP is intimately tied to broader sustainability initiatives, such as the Climate Commitment.
- **Declining Transportation Revenues and Purchasing Power:** Due to increasing costs, stagnating revenue, and decreased purchasing power, the City's ability to operate, maintain, and improve the community's transportation system is eroding. Since 2002, the City has seen a 40% decline in purchasing power, largely due to increasing costs of materials and labor.
- **Growing Public Health Concern:** Obesity and other sedentary-related diseases are plaguing generations – young and old. The research is clear: land use environments and roadway design impacts health. People who live in neighborhoods with a mixture of uses within comfortable walking distance are 7% less likely to be obese, lowering their relative risk of obesity by 35%.[2] On the other hand, every additional 30 minutes spent daily in a car correlates to a 3% greater chance of obesity.[3]

The Renewed Vision for Transit will focus on developing a complete transit system – a network of high-quality, frequent transit routes that connect local destinations and neighborhoods to regional destinations. More than just a service plan, the Renewed Vision for Transit will focus on transit supportive programs and policies, corridor planning, service design, and improved access and connections that make transit a first choice of travel for more Boulder residents, workers, and visitors.

The Renewed Vision for Transit will be integrated with the overall TMP Update, community sustainability goals, and the Climate Commitment. The final Renewed Vision for Transit report will provide a strategic action plan for wise investment in transit over time within financial constraints. Consistent with broader TMP goals and regional climate and sustainability objectives, the goal of the Renewed Vision for Transit is to:

- **Put the passenger first:** make transit easy and comfortable to use for people of all ages and all abilities
- **Make transit a convenient choice of travel:** focus on service quality by connecting local and regional destinations and improving bicycle and pedestrian access to transit
- **Use transit to build community:** improve access and connectivity to transit and build transit facilities to support central community gathering places
- **Improve transit service and ridership through regional partnerships:** work with neighboring jurisdictions to improve access to transit and increase regional transit ridership
- **Reduce the environmental impacts of travel:** use transit to support the Sustainability Framework and Climate Commitment goals



A renewed transit vision will help Boulder meet the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) mode share goal of 75% non-SOV travel by 2025.
Image from Nelson\Nygaard

The Renewed Vision for Transit is just one element of the five TMP Update focus areas:

- **Complete Streets:** Renewed vision for transit and bicycle and pedestrian innovations
- **Regional Travel:** Regional corridors, including bus rapid transit on US 36
- **Funding:** Sustainable and local funding sources, including a Transportation Maintenance Fee
- **Transportation Demand Management:** Community-wide Eco Pass and parking policy
- **Integration with Sustainability Initiatives:** Integrate TMP outcomes with the Climate Commitment , economic vitality, Sustainable Streets and Centers, parking management, Parks Master Plan and Boulder Civic Area Plan

2 "Driving, Walking, and Where You Live: Links to Obesity." McCann Consulting. (accessed June 15, 2013).

3 Ibid.

What's Included in The State of The System Report?

The State of the System report communicates key transportation issues and trends, while also serving as a foundational report to guide the Renewed Vision for Transit. While this Executive Summary provides key findings from the report, the complete report includes the following chapters:[4]

- **Chapter 1 Renewed Vision for Transit -** an overview of the TMP Update and its focus on a Renewed Vision for Transit.
- **Chapter 2 Our Challenge, Our Chance -** a summary of community feedback and direction on the issues and driving forces that will shape Boulder's transit future.
- **Ch 3 Land Use and Travel Demand -** a brief summary of land use patterns in Boulder, an assessment of Boulder's transit-oriented land use patterns, and an overview of current and future travel demand.
- **Ch 4 Transit Service -** an overview of existing transit service providers, funding, and performance in Boulder.
- **Ch 5 Peer Review -** an assessment of transit performance in Boulder compared to a number of peer communities in the U.S.
- **Ch 6 Transit Innovations and Leading Practices -** an overview of leading transit innovations in the U.S. and internationally.
- **Appendix A Community Outreach Summary -** a detailed community outreach summary.[5]
- **Appendix B Detailed Route Profiles -** detailed route profiles for Boulder's existing local and regional routes.

4 The final version of the Executive Summary will have live links to each chapter.

5 The Community Outreach Summary includes outreach completed to date. The final version of the Outreach Summary will be completed at the end of the planning process.

How is the Community Involved?

The Renewed Vision for Transit is guided by a robust community outreach process, including a Technical Advisory Committee, a Community Feedback Panel, online and social media tools, open houses, and storefront workshops.

- **Transit Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):** The TAC is comprised primarily of technical staff from local and regional policy, agency, and key community stakeholders, such as transportation staff from City of Boulder and Boulder County, Regional Transportation District, the Director of the Chamber of Commerce, University of Colorado representatives, and local Transportation Management Organizations (TMOs).
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** Interviews are being held with key stakeholders throughout Boulder County, including the University of Colorado, the Center for People with Disabilities, the Regional Transit District, among others.
- **Community Storefront Workshops:** Storefront workshops provide feedback on transit and other mobility issues, especially from transit users. The workshops are held in different geographic locations to ensure participation from a range of people, and on the principle that it is important to bring outreach opportunities to people as they go about their daily lives.
- **Design Your Transit System Online Tool and Questionnaire:** The project team developed a "Design Your Transit System" online decision-making simulation tool. This new outreach strategy walks participants through a series of visually oriented exercises to better understand which elements of system design are most likely to attract new riders and improve the quality of experience for existing and new users. View the online tool at www.bouldertransitdesign.com.
- **Inspire Boulder:** Questions are posted to Inspire Boulder, the City's online community forum, to get feedback on key transit service issues and opportunities.Visit Inspire Boulder at www.inspireboulder.com.

The Design Your Transit System online tool allows the community to prioritize transit investments.

Image from Nelson\Nygaard

- **Community Feedback Panel:** The Community Feedback Panel is a group of interested members of the public who have volunteered to be queried on TMP-related issues. Approximately 400 people have signed up for the Panel. The Panel is called upon throughout the process to provide input on the Design Your Transit System Tool and the long-term transit scenarios.
- **Transportation Advisory Board (TAB):** The TAB is the host of the Transportation Master Plan Update and has been engaged throughout the process with monthly updates.

Key findings from the community outreach process, in addition to the technical analysis of the State of the System Report, are summarized below.

What's our challenge?

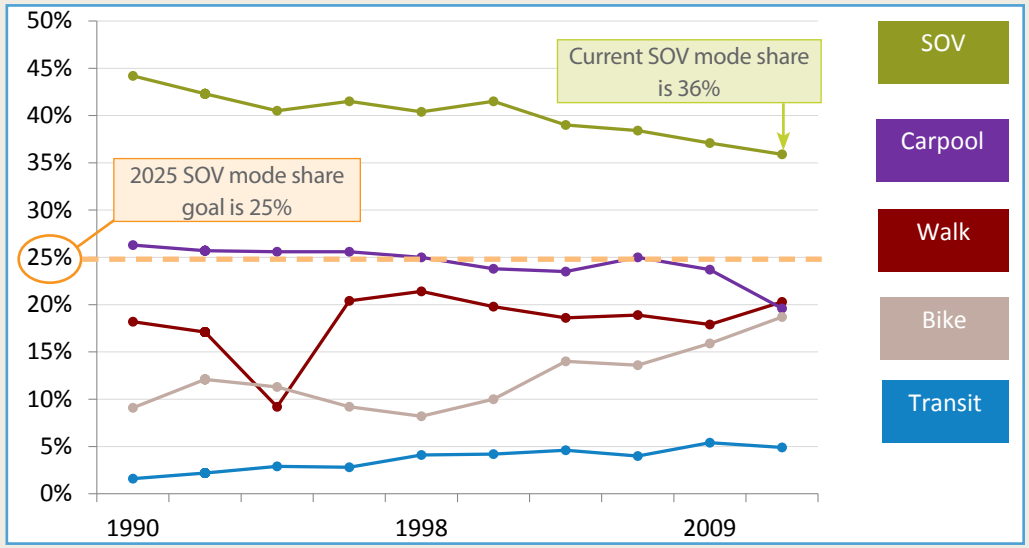
The City has aggressive mode share goals…

The 2008 TMP includes a goal of 25% single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) use by the year 2025 for all trips. As shown in Figure ES-1, Boulder is not on course to meet this goal. Since 1990, the SOV rate has declined from 44.2% to 35.9% in 2012 for all trips. Bicycle use has more than doubled during this time from 9.1% to 18.7% in 2012. While transit use has more than tripled in the 12-year period, growing from 1.6% in 1990 to 4.9% in 2012, transit has the lowest share of all modes and has stagnated in recent years. To meet the SOV goal by 2025, SOV trips between 2013 and 2025 would have to be reduced at an average rate of 2.5% per year.

Average daily weekday transit ridership peaked in Boulder in 2008 at 33,919 rides (local and regional routes) (Figure ES-2). Between 2008 and 2010, ridership declined, dropping to 30,428 total rides in 2010. Since 2010, bus ridership is driving back toward the City's 10-year high at 32,636 rides in 2012. One of the key outcomes of the renewed vision for transit will be to:

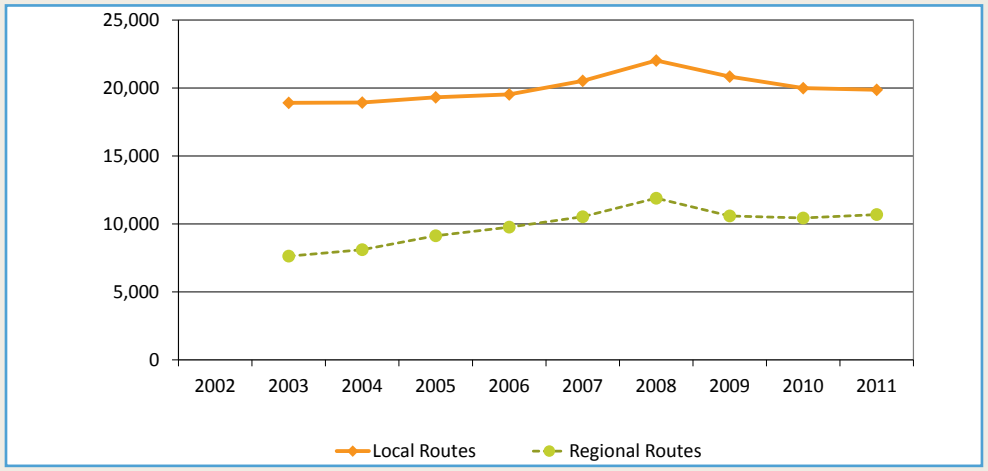
- Increase transit ridership for both local and regional trips (particularly commute trips)
- Continue to build a convenient, attractive and effective transit network that enhances the multimodal transportation syystem

Figure ES-1 City of Boulder Mode Split for All Trips, 1990 - 2012



Source: City of Boulder Modal Shift in the Boulder Valley, 1990 – 2012

Figure ES-2 City of Boulder Average Weekday Daily Transit Ridership, 2003 - 2012



Source: Data is from 2012 RTD Annual Ridership Data; HOP data was provided by the City of Boulder; Climb data was provided by Via; YL data was provided by Boulder County

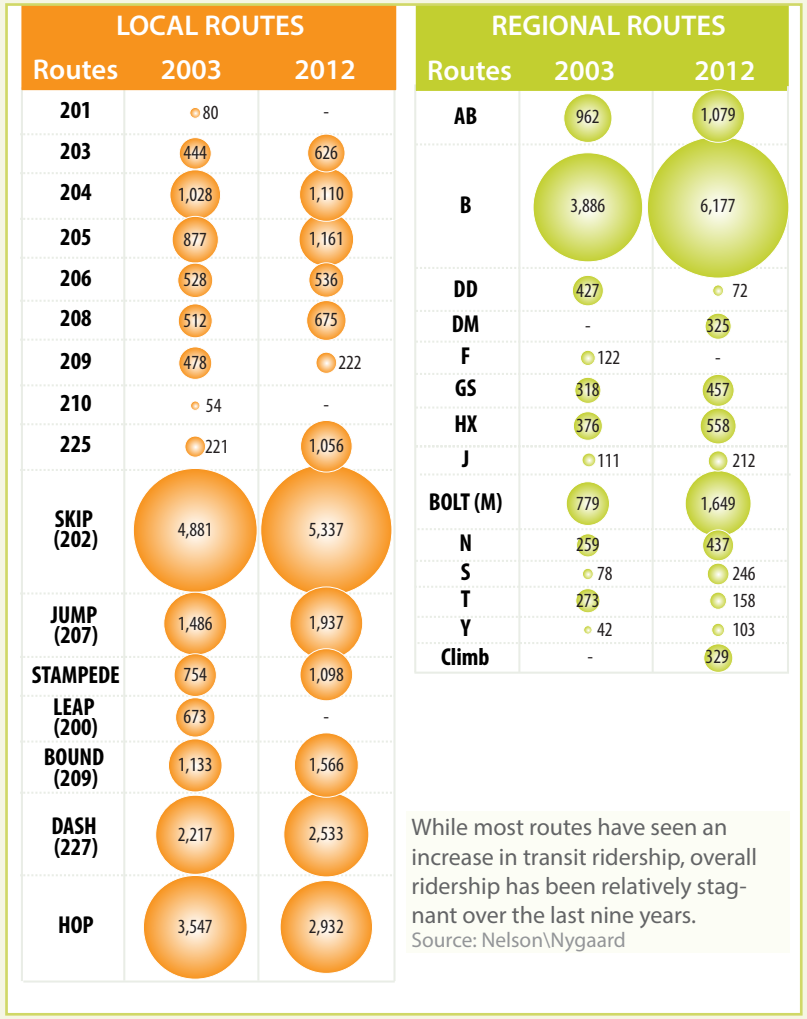
What's working well?

The CTN model works…

The Community Transit Network (CTN) routes, particularly those operating largely in Boulder, are both the most cost effective and productive routes in the transit system serving Boulder County. On Boulder local routes, ridership is highest on the SKIP, HOP, and DASH, while the B to Denver has the highest regional boardings (Figure ES-3).

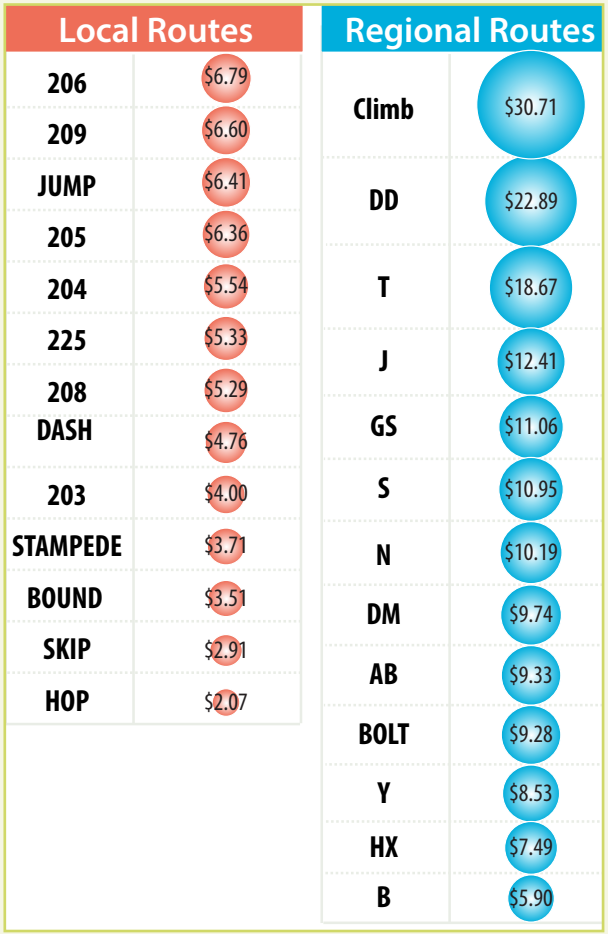
The HOP is the most cost effective local route at only $2.07 per passenger trip carried, followed by the SKIP and BOUND (Figure ES-4). The B is the most cost effective regional route at $5.90. By comparison, the systemwide RTD local average cost per boarding is $4.81; the systemwide RTD regional average is $12.25.

Figure ES-3 Average Weekday Ridership by Route, 2003 and 2012



While most routes have seen an increase in transit ridership, overall ridership has been relatively stagnant over the last nine years.
Source: Nelson\Nygaard

Figure ES-4 Cost Effectiveness (Cost per Boarding) of Local and Regional Routes



Note: RTD systemwide average is $4.43 per boarding .

Cost per boarding is a common metric used to measure the efficiency of transit service. The local CTN routes (namely the HOP, BOUND, SKIP) provide the most cost-effective service (cost per boarding).
Source: Nelson\Nygaard

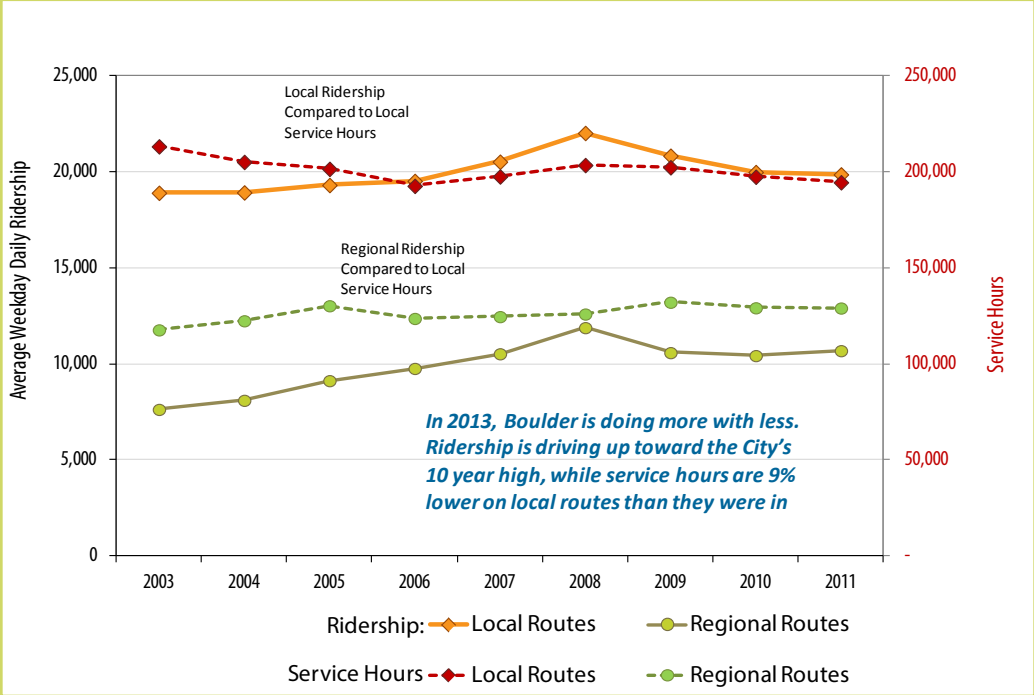
What's working well?

Boulder is doing more with less…

Although ridership has experienced a slight decline since 2008, the productivity of the transit system has improved. In 2012, Boulder is doing more with less. ***Ridership is driving back toward a 10-year high, while service hours are 9% lower on local routes than they were in 2003.*** While these trends indicate a more efficient transit system, in some cases, higher ridership with lower service hours results in very crowded buses.

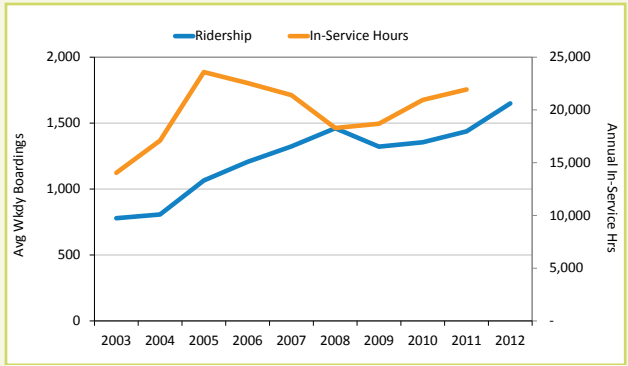
Some regional routes that only have Boulder and one other community as end points, such as the BOLT (Figure ES-6), have shown great resiliency to the recession and have a promising ridership projection.

Figure ES-5 Average Weekday Ridership Compared to In-Service Hours, 2003 - 2012



Source: Data is from 2012 RTD Annual Ridership Data; HOP data was provided by the City of Boulder; Climb data was provided by Via.

Figure ES-6 Route BOLT Ridership History, 2003 - 2012



The BOLT provides service between the Boulder Transit Center and Longmont. Regional routes that only have Boulder and one other community as end points have shown great resiliency to the recession and better ridership history than other regional routes.

Source: Nelson\Nygaard

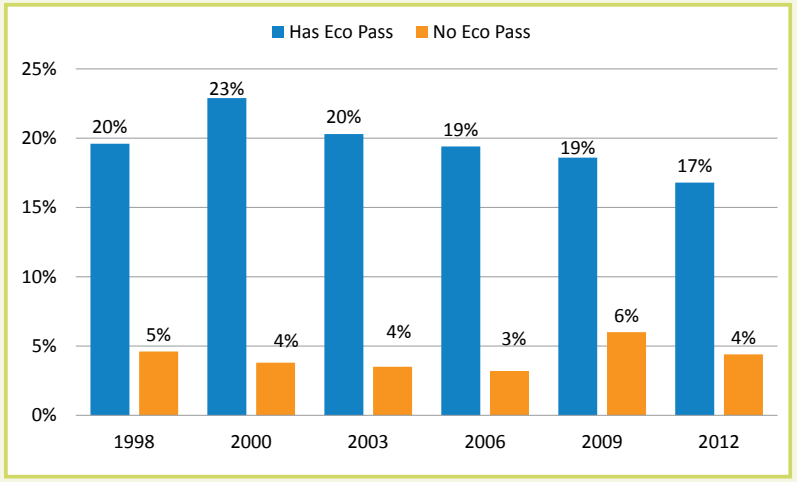
What's working well?

The City's transportation demand management programs work…

The City of Boulder has a long and successful history of managing parking and transportation in downtown Boulder, the University of Colorado, and surrounding neighborhoods. In 2012, $773,750 in downtown parking revenue was used to fund Eco Passes for 6,190 downtown employees. ***Surveys show that people with an Eco Pass are 4 to 7 times more likely to ride transit*** (Figure ES-7). Areas with paid parking districts – downtown and the University – have also proven to have higher transit ridership than other areas of the city (due to paid parking, among other reasons) (Figure ES-8).

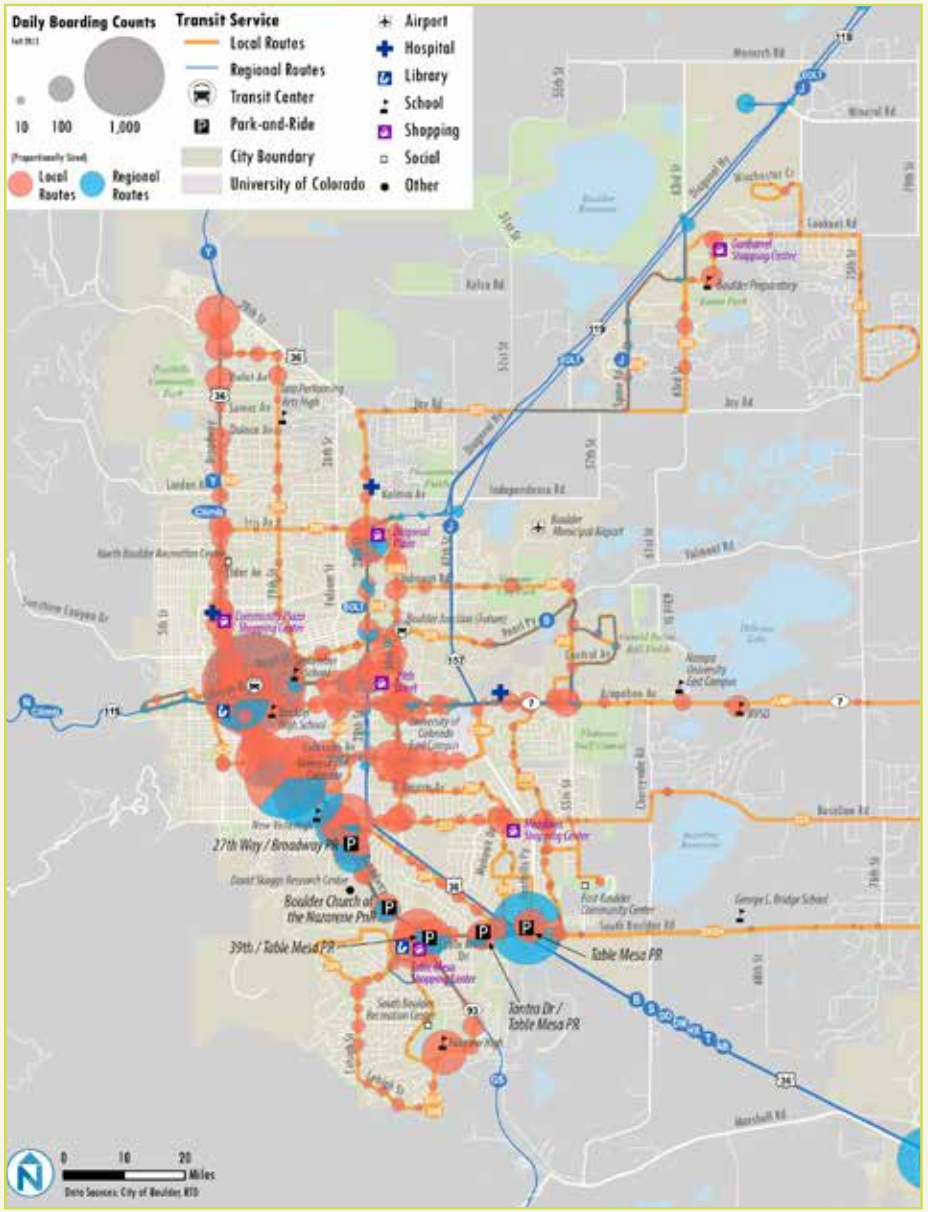
Community-wide parking management strategies and expanded parking districts will be examined to help the City meet TMP mode split goals and reduce single occupant commuting to new job centers in east Boulder. An expanded Eco Pass program is also being examined to meet mode split goals, particularly in areas of opportunity (e.g. east Boulder).

Figure ES-7 Bus Ridership by Eco Pass Status: Percent of Respondents Who Made at Least One Trip per Week on the Bus, 1998-2012



Source: City of Boulder Modal Shift in the Boulder Valley, 1990 – 2012

Figure ES-8 Average Daily Ridership in Boulder and Boulder County



What are the barriers?

The in-commute is growing…

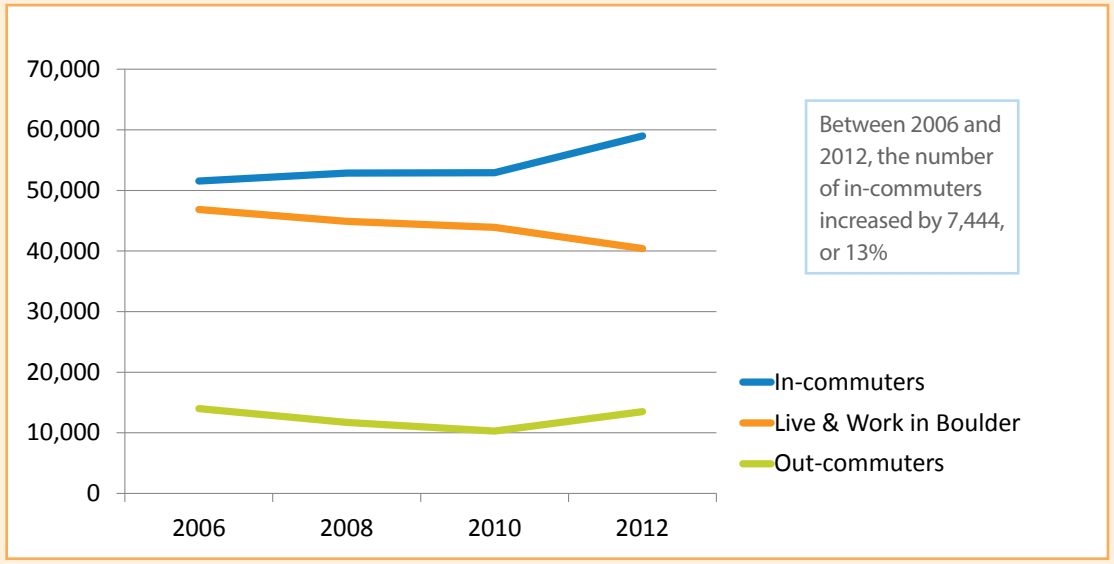
High housing costs and limited availability of housing in Boulder combined with a strong and growing job base have increased the level of in-commuting in recent years. While still only a small percentage of overall travel in Boulder, the in-commute is growing. Approximately 59% of Boulder workers are estimated to travel in to Boulder for work. While Boulder has achieved a remarkably low SOV mode share for local travel (48.5% for commute trips), in-commute travel remains primarily SOV at nearly 80% (Figure ES-10). Between 2006 and 2012 the number of Boulder workers commuting from outside of Boulder increased by 7,444 commuters, or 13%. This trend is expected to increase (Figure ES-9).

As Boulder adds more jobs, an increasing percentage of the population is expected to live in east Boulder County, Weld County, and along the US 36 Corridor. In addition to making sure that more existing and future workers have the housing options to live and work in Boulder, success in reducing SOV travel among "in-commuters" will require key partnerships between Boulder, Boulder County, RTD, CDOT, and neighboring communities (see the *Regional Partnerships are Key* section below).

Addressing the needs of long-distance commuters in the Boulder Valley will also be expensive compared to addressing local travel needs. The TMP Update will explore the most appropriate balance of investments in local and regional service enhancements.

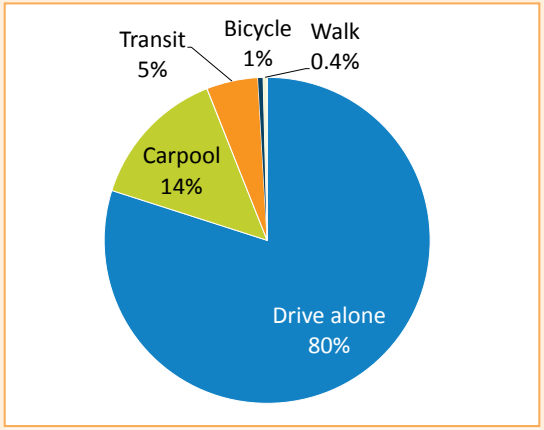
Commute traffic on US 36 is already an issue. With projected increases in population and employment along the US 36 corridor between Boulder and Denver, traffic volumes are projected to increase dramatically over the next two decades (see page ES-14 for more details).
Image from Nelson\Nygaard

Figure ES-9 Growth in Boulder In-Commute, 2006 - 2012



Between 2006 and 2012, the percent of Boulder workers living outside of Boulder increased from 52% to 59% of total workers. It should be noted that this data includes commute trips only; it does not account for students traveling to school. Between 1993 and 2009, the percent of University of Colorado students living outside of Boulder also increased from 15% of undergraduates in 1993 to 41% in 2009 (not including students living on campus. .
Source: City of Boulder

Figure ES-10 Boulder In-Commute Mode Share



Source: Census Transportation Planning Products (CTPP). 2006 – 2008 American Community Survey "Journey to Work," University of Colorado.

Note: In-commute data is not available for communities with fewer than 20,000 residents. For example, employees from the following communities in Boulder County traveling to Boulder for work were not counted: Jamestown, Louisville, Lyons, Nederland, Ward, Superior, and Erie.

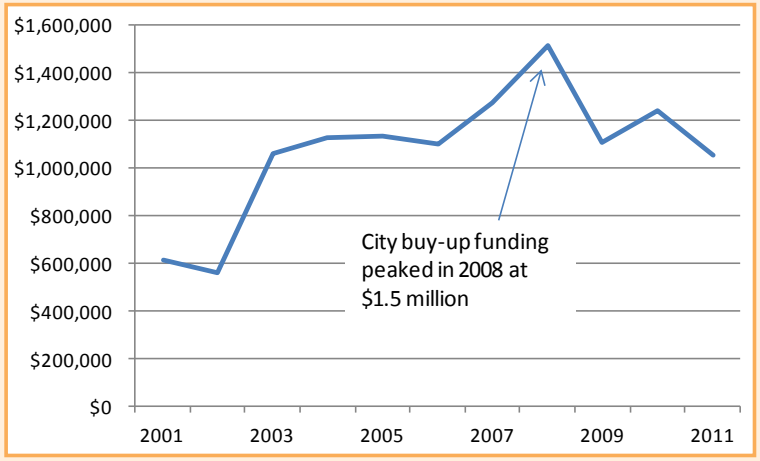
What are the barriers?

Transportation revenue and purchase power are declining…

Like many jurisdictions nationwide, Boulder is faced with the challenge of stagnant revenue, cost escalation, and decreasing purchase power to invest in its transportation system. The City has identified a 40% decline in purchase power since 2002 coupled with stagnant sales tax revenue that has resulted in a growing funding gap (Figure ES-13). In 2013, the City identified a total annual funding gap range of $3.2 million to $5.6 million for three key areas of transportation operations and maintenance: (1) pavement maintenance, (2) routine maintenance, and (3) transit/Eco Pass service support. Transit service and Eco Pass support are estimated to experience a funding gap of $700,000 annually.

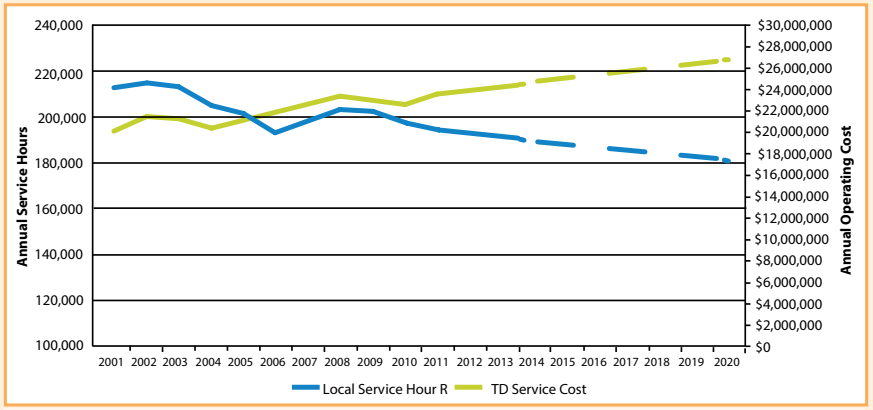
In addition to the City's funding gap, RTD has not provided 10-minute frequencies on all Community Transit Network (CTN) routes; its capacity to do so continues to diminish as RTD service costs increase (Figure ES-12). While the City has historically funded the HOP route (together with RTD and CU) and "buy-up" service on the JUMP and BOUND, its capacity to continue to buy-up service is also diminishing (Figure ES-11). City buy-ups in transit service peaked in 2008 at $1.5 million; in 2011, the City's investment had declined to $1.1 million. This decline is expected to continue given the funding gap noted above. To meet TMP mode split goals, increased and sustainable funding sources are needed.

Figure ES-11 City Transit Buy-Up History, 2001-2011



Source: City of Boulder

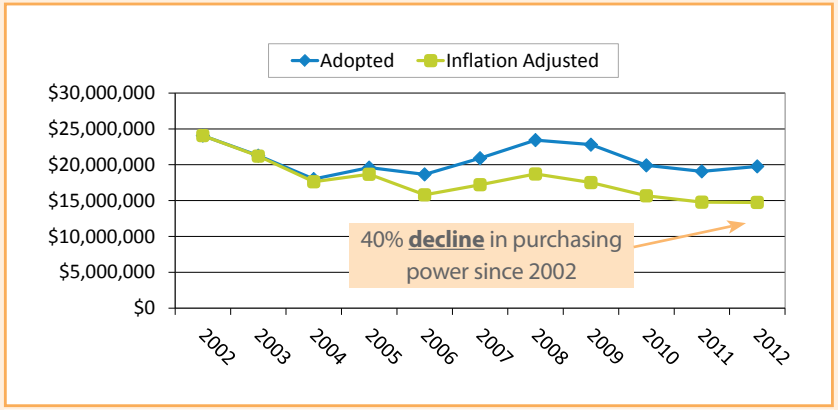
Figure ES-12 Projected RTD Service Costs vs. Hours (2001 – 2020)



RTD service hours are declining, while costs to maintain or increase service are increasing. This trend is expected to worsen.

Source: City of Boulder

Figure ES-13 City of Boulder Adopted Transportation Budget



The City of Boulder estimates a 39% decline in purchasing power from 2002 forward.

Source: City of Boulder

What are the opportunities?

Focus on areas of opportunity…

Given that west Boulder is largely built out, most planned growth will occur in Boulder Junction, Boulder Community Hospital Foothills Campus, the University of Colorado East Campus, and in Gunbarrel. By 2035, population is estimated to increase by only 2,000 residents west of 28th Street while it is estimated to increase by more than 8,000 residents east of 28th Street. Similarly, only 1,000 dwelling units are anticipated west of 28th Street by 2035, while over 4,000 new units are anticipated to the east. Employment is also projected to increase more east of 28th Street (7,500 employees will be added west of 28th Street compared to 8,700 employees east of 28th Street).[6]

The TMP Update, is focused on these transitioning areas as primary opportunities to create great places that are walkable, sustainable, and economically vital. Focus will also be given to areas where transit investment can be maximized by supporting efficient land use.

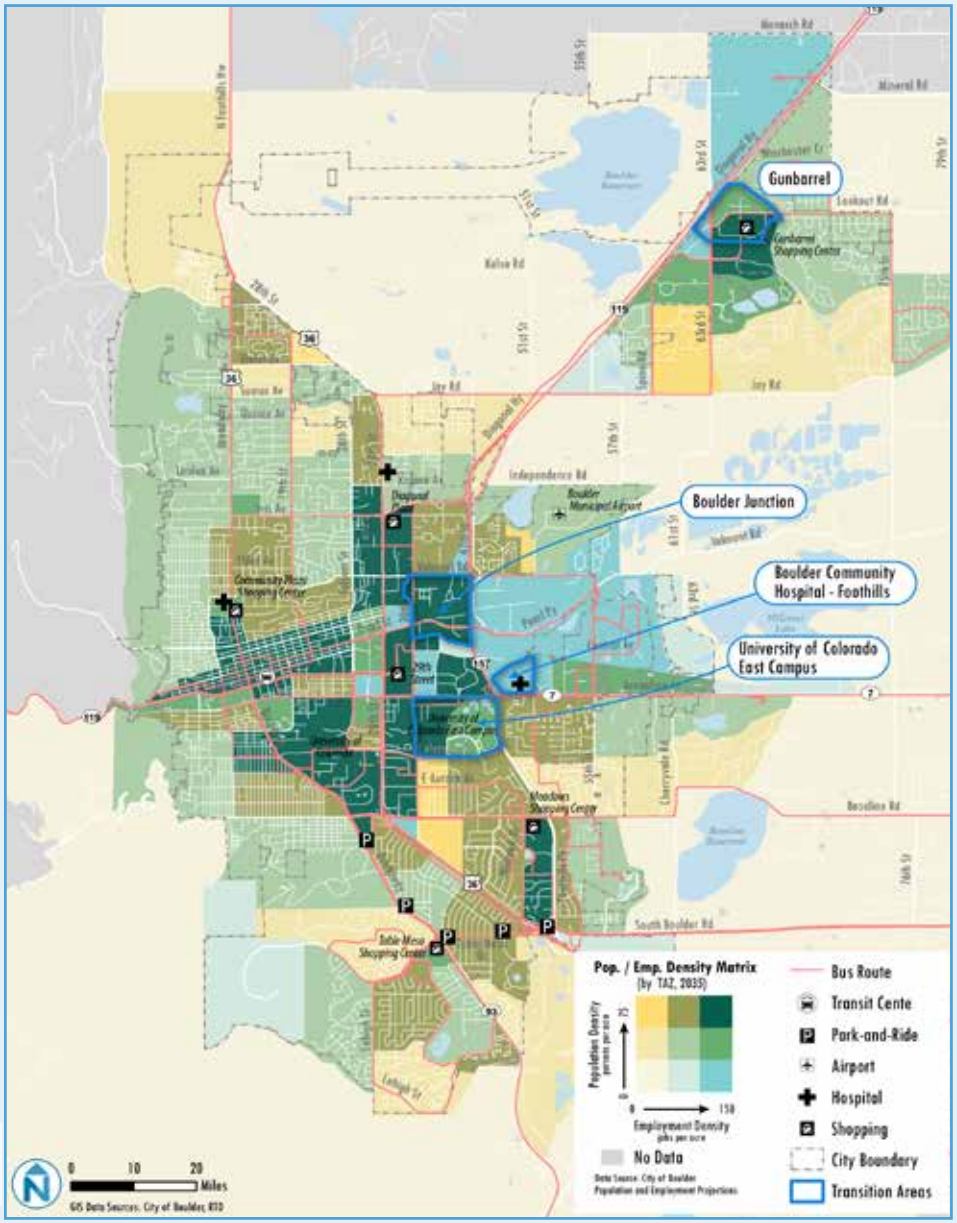
The Renewed Vision for Transit will also explore opportunities to make cost effective transit enhancements to the entire existing system, including downtown, at the University of Colorado, and in other areas.

Image from Nelson\Nygaard

The Boulder Community Hospital is in the process of consolidating the majority of its inpatient acute care services at the Foothills campus on the corner of Foothills Parkway and Arapahoe Avenue. This new development will add a significant number of employee and visitor trips to the area.

Population and employment growth is expected to be concentrated around the University, in east Boulder, and in Gunbarrel.
Source: Nelson\Nygaard

Figure ES-14 Future Land Use and Key Development Areas in 2035



6 City of Boulder Population and Employment Projections.

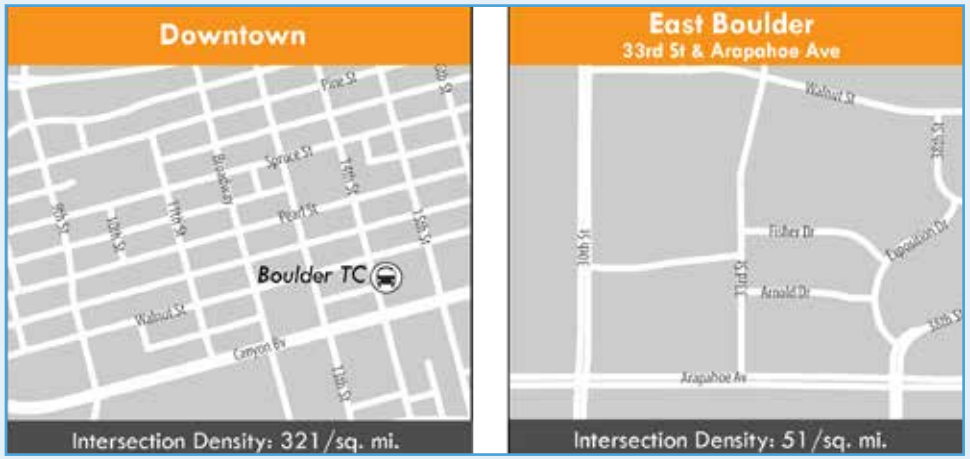
What are the opportunities?

Boulder is a 'Tale of Two Cities'…

Boulder's evolution is often described as a "tale of two cities." The west side of Boulder developed in a more traditional highly connected grid and development pattern of smaller, walkable blocks. East Boulder is characterized more by its "super blocks," with an orientation towards the automobile, large blocks, and a less walkable grid development pattern.

For all modes to succeed in east Boulder, significant investments will be needed to develop an interconnected street network with bicycle and pedestrian access to key transit corridors, mix of land uses, and strong anchors with all-day transit demand. As shown in Figure ES-15, street connectivity is much lower in east Boulder. While downtown has a connected street system with high intersection density (number of intersections per square mile), blocks are long and scattered in east Boulder making walking, biking, and accessing transit more difficult.

Figure ES-15 Intersection Density in West vs. East Boulder



Intersection density is a good measure for street connectivity and walkability. In downtown, there are 321 intersections per square mile, whereas east Arapahoe between 30th Street and Foothills Parkway only has 51 intersections per square mile.
Image from Nelson\Nygaard

On Arapahoe Avenue in east Boulder, the sidewalk ends abruptly in a commercial shopping area.
Image from Nelson\Nygaard

Pearl Street Mall in downtown Boulder provides a mixed-use walkable environment.
Image from Flickr beautifulcataya

What are the opportunities?

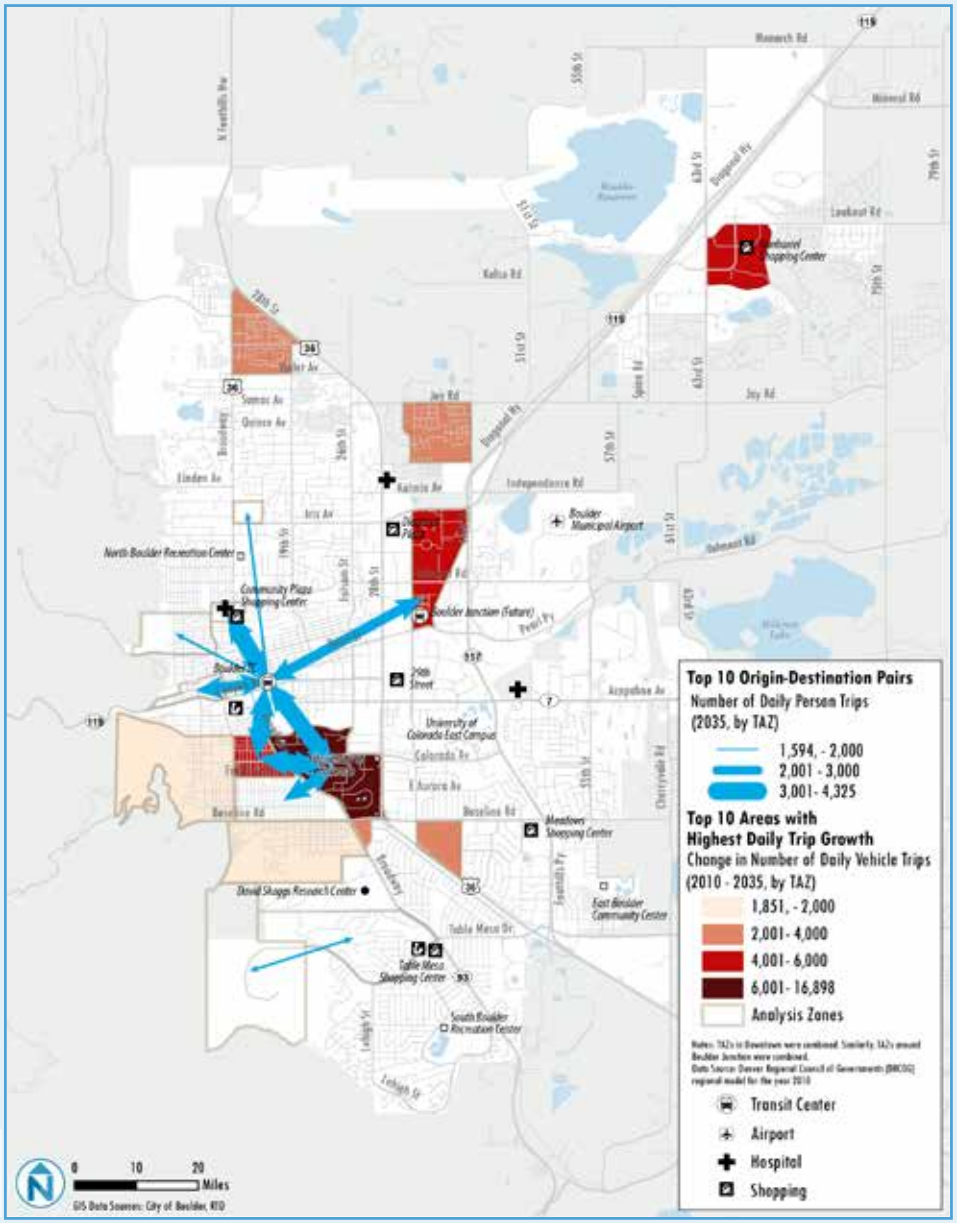
Boulder Junction and east Boulder redevelopment will affect demand…

Boulder Junction will be a new complete neighborhood and destination in Boulder and provide important regional and local transit connections. A new regional transit center will be located underground on the site, allowing a broad pedestrian plaza to be developed. Figure ES-16 shows the top ten projected origin-destination pairs in the city. Trip projections from the regional model estimate that the connection between Boulder Junction and downtown and the University of Colorado and downtown will be significant. Many of these projected trips will move through Boulder Junction en route to other areas via regional transit transfers. As a regional hub and the end of the future US 36 bus rapid transit (BRT) line scheduled to open in 2016, Boulder Junction and additional development in east Boulder will create significant new demand for transit. These changes in demand will need to be considered when early action items for transit service changes are developed, and also incorporated into the Renewed Vision for Transit. Completing missing bicycle network connections will be key to connecting this area to the rest of the city.

Boulder Junction will be the new transit center.
Image from Nelson\Nygaard

Trips between the University of Colorado and downtown are projected to be among the highest in the city in 2035.
Source: Nelson\Nygaard

Figure ES-16 Top 10 Origin-Destination Pairs and Areas of Trip Growth, 2035



What are the opportunities?

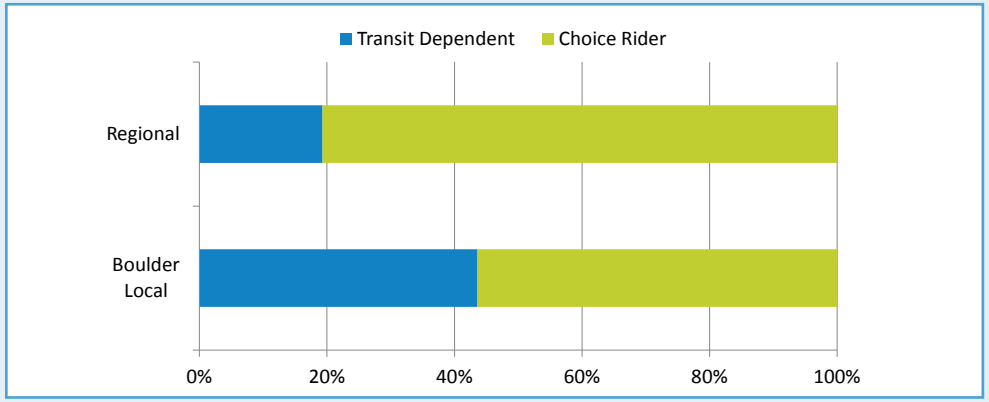
Changing demographics are shaping transit needs…

Three generations will be most influential in shaping Boulder's future transit demand. These include Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964), Generation X (1961-1984), and Millennials (1977-2003). Together, these generations represent over three-quarters of Boulder's total population.[7] There is also a continued need to design transit for people with disabilities who are living with significant mobility challenges and are unable to use fixed route transit. As Boulder develops its Renewed Vision for Transit, it will be critical to consider the following trends:

- Nationally, it is estimated that one out of five people aged 65 and older do not drive.[8] In Boulder, this translates to over 1,700 seniors who do not drive. Transitioning older adults to fixed route transit can reduce expensive paratransit costs.
- RTD estimates that over 40% of bus riders in Boulder are "transit dependent," meaning they do not have access to a vehicle, have a disability or impairment that prevents vehicle operation, or do not possess a valid driver's license (see Figure ES-17).[9]
- As the older population grows, the need for ADA paratransit service will also grow. Although there are disabled people of all ages who cannot use fixed route transit due to a disability, the largest concentration of ADA eligible people is in the 80 to 89 age group. The number of paratransit trips provided in Boulder in 2012 represents a 16% increase over 2011. According to the 2010 Census, the population of older adults and people with disabilities in Via's service area is expected to grow 95% between 2010 and 2025, from 12,463 to 24,365.[10]

An older woman crosses Arapahoe Avenue in east Boulder in front of the Boulder Community Hospital Foothills Campus.
Image from Nelson\Nygaard

Figure ES-17 Transit Dependent Riders and Choice Riders for Local and Regional Riders



Source: 2011 RTD Customer Satisfaction Survey

Via Mobility Services provides accessible transportation for seniors and people with disabilities residing in Boulder County.
Image from Nelson\Nygaard

7 US Census 2010.
8 Bailey, Linda. 2004. Aging Americans: stranded without options. Washington, DC: *Surface Transportation Policy Project.*
9 RTD. 2011. RTD Customer Satisfaction Survey.
10 Getting There Collaborative. 2005. Analysis of Colorado's Human Service and Public Transportation Needs.

What are the opportunities?

US 36 BRT is an opportunity to improve regional mobility…

According to regional forecasts, the population along US 36 is expected to increase 28%, employment will expand 53%, and traffic volumes are projected to increase substantially over the next 15 years. Between 2010 and 2012, traffic along the corridor has increased 1.4%.[11]

As part of FasTracks – the region's multi-billion dollar transit expansion plan – 18 miles of bus rapid transit (BRT) service will be launched between downtown Denver and Boulder Junction along US 36 to help respond to this growing population and the increasing numbers of employees commuting into Boulder for work.

As seen in numerous case study examples, new BRT service typically leads to significant ridership increases due to improved amenities and faster service. To be effective, US 36 BRT will need to provide efficient, reliable, and comfortable service for travelers. For the service to work well for those traveling to and from Boulder, local routes will need to be restructured to get people to and from BRT stations. The introduction of "fully-featured" BRT service on US 36 will also be an opportunity to generate momentum for extending BRT and transit lane enhancements into the city (e.g. on Broadway) and along other important regional corridors.

11 US 36 Mobility Report.

Figure ES-17 US 36 BRT Corridor

US 36 BRT and commuter bikeway will provide 18 miles of service between downtown Denver and Boulder Junction along US 36.
Source: RTD

US 36 BRT could generate momentum for extending BRT and transit lane enhancements within the city.
Image from Nelson\Nygaard

What are the opportunities?

Regional partnerships are key…

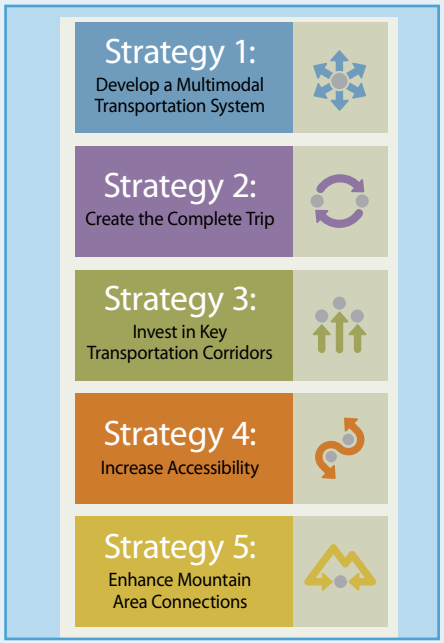
Boulder County and the City of Boulder have aligned their transportation and land use goals. The recent Boulder County Transportation Master Plan directs the region to focus access and mobility policies on non-single occupancy vehicle (SOV) modes of travel, with transit being a backbone to creating sustainable land use and transportation patterns countywide. Neighboring communities like Fort Collins are leading the way in transit innovations with the implementation of a bus rapid transit system (BRT) – the first BRT system in the Front Range. The US 36 First and Final Mile Study sponsored by US 36 Commuting Solutions also highlights opportunities to integrate regional bikeways and trails, transit routes, and open space to address first and final mile connectivity.

Regional partnerships will be critical to address the growing regional in-commute issues as a top priority for the TMP Update. Success in reducing SOV travel for in-commute trips will require an active stance from Boulder, new fare tools, strong partnerships with RTD and others, and new funding sources to grow service offerings.

Setting a mode share target for in-commuters could be an important step for the Colorado Department of Transportation, the City of Boulder, and Boulder County, but will need to be set in concert with regional partners and a regional mode share goal.

Fort Collins will launch the Front Range's first BRT system in Spring 2014.
Image from City of Fort Collins

Boulder County's Bus then Bike program is installing covered secure bike parking at key transit stops in Boulder County.
Image from 303 cycling



The Boulder County Transportation Master Plan prioritizes five key strategies to improve transportation in the region.
Source: Boulder County Transportation Master Plan (2012)

Renewed Vision For Transit Schedule

Based on the findings in the State of the System Report and feedback from the community, a Renewed Vision for Transit will be developed—a vision that responds to changing needs; capitalizes on unique local opportunities; supports housing, climate, and placemaking initiatives; strengthens regional partnerships; and stays true to Boulder's strong local values.

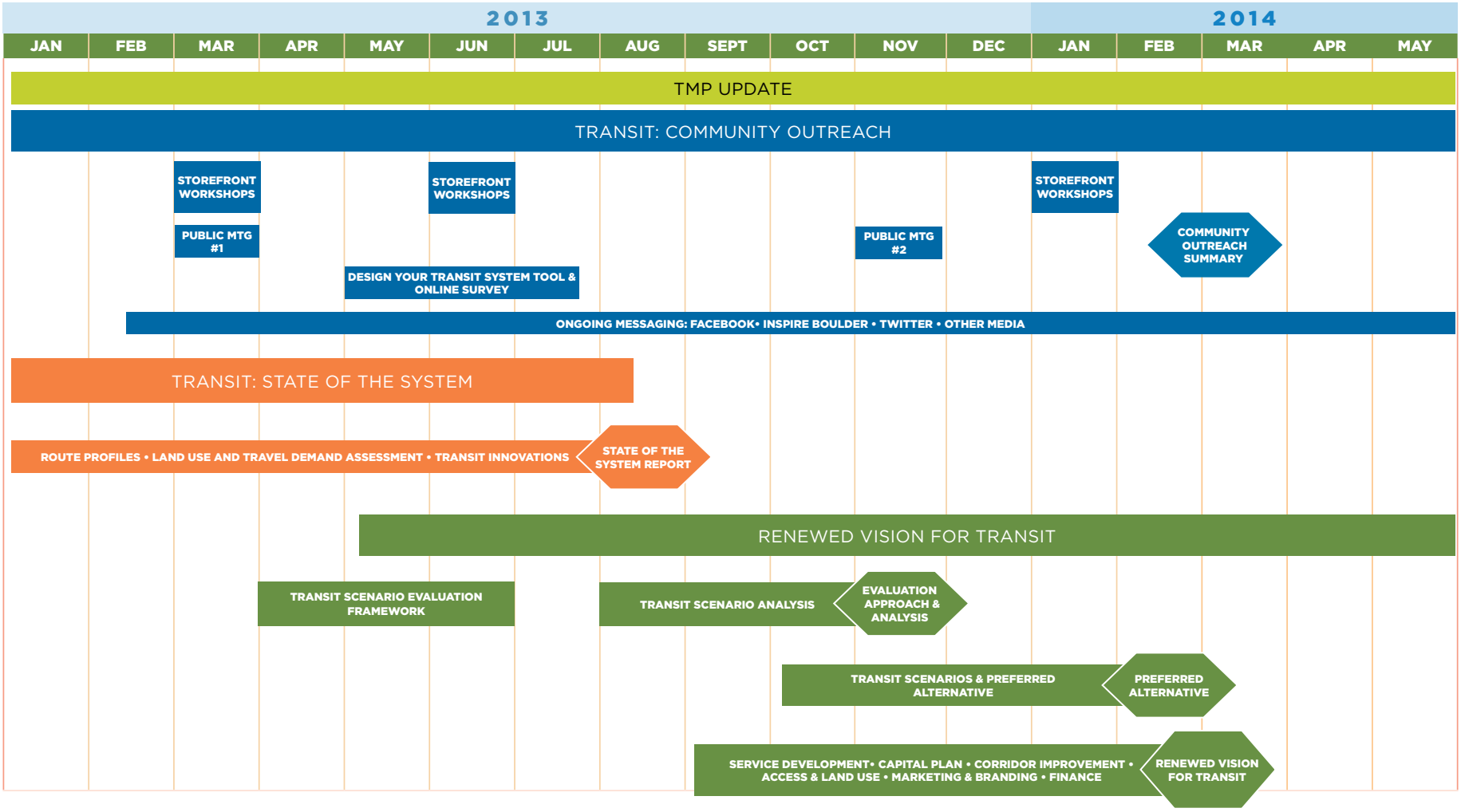



Figure ES-18 Renewed Vision for Transit Schedule