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• How is the community involved?
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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 valid 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 its TMP transportation goals. Declining transportation revenue, decreased transit service hours, and a growing number of workers commuting 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 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 Millennials 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. 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 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 some amount of infill may be desired and 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 help reduce per capita travel demand while improving access to jobs and services, supporting housing affordability, and advancing environmental goals.

- **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 impact 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%. On the other hand, every additional 30 minutes spent daily in a car correlates to a 3% greater chance of obesity.

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


3 Ibid.

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

City of Boulder  STATE OF THE SYSTEM REPORT
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:

- **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.
- **Chapter 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.
- **Chapter 4 Transit Service** – an overview of existing transit service providers, funding, and performance in Boulder.
- **Chapter 5 Peer Review** – an assessment of transit performance in Boulder compared to a number of peer communities in the U.S.
- **Chapter 6 Transit Innovations and Leading Practices** – an overview of leading Transit innovations in the U.S. and internationally.
- **Appendix A: Detailed Route Profiles** – detailed route profiles for Boulder’s existing local and regional routes.
- **Appendix B: Community Outreach Summary** – a detailed community outreach summary.4

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.
- **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 feedback 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.

4 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.

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 system

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

Current SOV mode share is 36%

2025 SOV mode share goal is 25%

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 Boulder 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 Boulder route at $5.90. By comparison, the systemwide RTD average cost per boarding for local routes not including Boulder is $4.81; the systemwide RTD average for regional routes not including Boulder is $12.25.

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

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

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

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**

In 2013, Boulder is doing more with less. Ridership is driving up toward the City’s 10-year high, while service hours are 9% lower on local routes than they were in 2003.

**Figure ES-6  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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Has Eco Pass</th>
<th>No Eco Pass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Boulder Modal Shift in the Boulder Valley, 1990 – 2012
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. Although still only a small percentage of overall travel in Boulder, the in-commute is growing. Approximately 59% of Boulder workers are estimated to travel into 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 on page ES-15).

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.

Between 2006 and 2012, the number of in-commuters increased by 7,444, or 13%.
**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 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-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-11 City Transit Buy-Up History, 2001–2011**

City buy-up funding peaked in 2008 at $1.5 million.

Source: City of Boulder

**Figure ES-13 City of Boulder Adopted Transportation Budget**

The City of Boulder estimates a 40% 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 development 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.

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

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.

On Arapahoe Avenue in East Boulder, the sidewalk ends abruptly in a commercial shopping area.

Pearl Street Mall in downtown Boulder provides a mixed-use walkable environment.

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
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.

Trips between the University of Colorado and downtown are projected to be among the highest in the city in 2035.

Source: Nelson\Nygaard
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. 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. 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).
- As the older population grows, the need for paratransit service will also grow. 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.

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

Source: 2011 RTD Customer Satisfaction Survey

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7 U.S. Census 2010.
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.
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

Strategy 1: Develop a Multimodal Transportation System
Strategy 2: Create the Complete Trip
Strategy 3: Invest in Key Transportation Corridors
Strategy 4: Increase Accessibility
Strategy 5: Enhance Mountain Area Connections

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

This section provides a brief overview of the conclusions and next steps from each chapter in the State of the System report.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of Boulder’s challenge to develop a Renewed Vision for Transit, including key issues and opportunities identified by the community outreach process and trends that influence transit design. Based on the findings in Chapter 2, the Transit Plan will focus on the following:

- **Mode split**: Identify strategies to continue improvement in transit mode share, helping Boulder reach its TMP mode share target.
- **Build on the CTN model**: Explore opportunities to expand the Community Transit Network (CTN), increase the number of regional transit connections, and integrate Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on key corridors.
- **Information and education**: Explore opportunities to improve customer information, travel training, and peer-to-peer transit use mentoring.
- **Respond to changing demographics**: Design transit for changing demographics, including the elderly, the disabled, families, young professionals, and students.
- **Focus on the in-commute**: Explore opportunities to decrease the drive-alone rate of in-commuters.
- **Focus on potential redevelopment and infill areas**: Identify strategies to serve areas with transit, manage parking, and ensure development is pedestrian, bicycle, and transit friendly.
- **Focus on funding opportunities**: Explore opportunities to increase local funding for transit.
- **Integrate with climate work**: Integrate the Renewed Vision for Transit with Climate Commitment and Sustainability Framework.
- **Work with Partners**: Identify opportunities for Boulder to work with regional partners to enhance transit service levels and quality.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of land use and travel demand in Boulder – key factors that will influence the future of transit use in the city and region. Based on the findings in Chapter 3, the Renewed Vision for Transit will focus on the following:

- **Transit Supportive Land Use**: Identify opportunities to create well connected, compact urban form on blocks closest to the community core or transit network to support high frequency transit service.
- **Increase Transit Mode Share**: Although Boulder has been successful increasing walk and bicycle mode share, while transit has remained stagnant. A key desired outcome of this plan is to increase transit mode share in the short-term and over the plan period.
- **Regional Partnerships**: Explore opportunities to continue to build effective regional partnerships to address the growing in-commute.
- **Focus on Areas of Opportunity**: Identify integrated transportation and land use strategies to accommodate the growing population and employment that is projected at Boulder Junction, CU east campus, around the Boulder Community Hospital on Arapahoe, and in Gunbarrel.
- **Anticipate Projected Demand**: Population and employment are projected to grow considerably over the next 20+ years (12% and 19% respectively). When developing transit alternatives consider projected trip patterns resulting from growth, and transit needs – both fixed route and demand responsive – resulting from areas with increased concentrations of youth, elderly populations, low-income residents, and carless households.
- **Housing Affordability**: In partnership with the Comprehensive Housing Strategy, explore opportunities for transit to improve overall affordability for Boulder residents and workers.
**Chapter 4 provides an overview of transit service in Boulder.** As the update to the TMP moves ahead, there are areas of need that should be considered further during the development of the Renewed Vision for Transit and short-term service recommendations:

- **Focus on land use:** Land use activity in east Boulder is reaching a point that justifies attention in how the CTN is structured and how it embraces that activity. Some of the issues related to this are a factor of the route network, while others address the need for access to new or growing destinations.

- **Fill in missing connections:** In the northwest part of Boulder, there is a lack of east/west connectivity. For example, to get from a location on north Broadway to a grocery store on 28th Street, passengers have to travel downtown first, then back north. In the northeast part of Boulder, the IBM plant and the employment in Gunbarrel is underserved. Buses may be only part of the solution for such campus settings, as employees likely travel from many parts of Boulder County.

- **Transit System Branding:** The named routes and service buy-up has been a successful model for Boulder. But the local network includes some numbered routes and some routes that are “officially” part of the CTN, based on being named (and meeting CTN service levels). The mix and match nature of the network, how residents perceive the various routes, and how that impacts ridership response needs further investigation.

- **Focus on Boulder County:** Factors for success in increasing transit ridership between adjacent communities should be investigated further, assessing how the same root motivators used to increase transit ridership in Boulder can apply to regional routes. This assessment should evaluate the need to provide expanded or new park-and-ride facilities in some of these communities. While these facilities currently exist, the long-term potential is greater than current park-and-ride capacity in several locations.

- **Regional Service is Key:** A robust regional BRT service is a great opportunity for increased transit market share in the corridor. Presently, there are a number of regional services that target people departing Boulder in the morning. Some are well utilized, others, are not. The TMP update should evaluate the possibility for routes to operate two-way service, encouraging both “in” and “out” transit commuting in Boulder. An increasing number of commuters to Boulder come from areas outside of RTD’s boundaries – Fort Collins, for example. These markets should be examined for the possibility of developing intercity commuter services. Other non-single occupant options such as carpooling or vanpooling should be explored where the market for a transit route does not yet exist.

**Chapter 5 provides a peer evaluation of seven peer transit systems.** Key findings include:

- **Focus on investments that have led to peer ridership growth:** Peer cities and agencies show the greatest bump in transit ridership where significant investments in speed and reliability (i.e., BRT services) have been made. This is an important consideration for Boulder moving forward.

- **Efficiency:** Boulder’s efficiency metrics (i.e., cost per passenger, cost per revenue hour) don’t compare well to peer cities that are not part of broader regional transit systems. While this is expected, it does present a key tradeoff question for Boulder in defining a renewed vision for transit. Focus on transit improvements and coordinated land use improvements inside City boundaries or broaden the City’s preview to deal with regional travel patterns?

- **Integrate university transit services:** Many peers have intercampus transportation services integrated with local/regional transit, simplifying system offerings and creating a more cohesive, transparent transit product. There could be substantial cost tradeoffs associated with integration; this is worth exploring in the next phase of the project.

- **Build on fare program successes:** Eco Pass programs combined with strong ridership help Boulder transit routes to operate with less subsidy than peer systems. The transit plan will look at opportunities to further reduce public subsidies for transit. Coordination with the Boulder County’s Eco Pass study will be critical.
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