

Transportation Legislative Review Committee:

A Path to Better Transportation: Efficient, Safe, Affordable, and Sustainable

September 8, 2025

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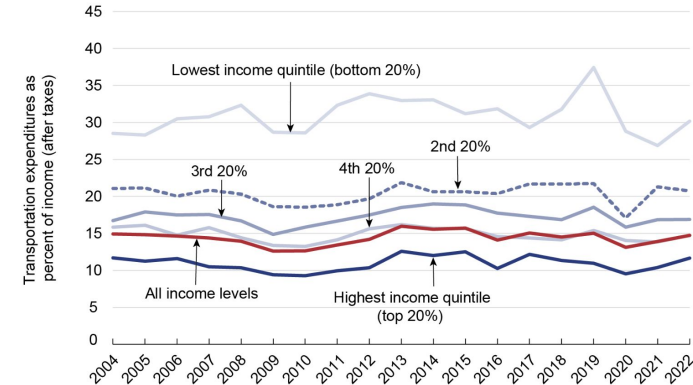
Major challenges facing our transportation system

Colorado's transportation system is:

- **Unaffordable.** Transportation is the 2nd largest household expense in Colorado. Average Denver metro household spends \$15,300 annually on transportation.
- **Unsafe.** 4,641 fatalities and serious injuries in 2024, 793 of which were vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists, etc.) Pedestrians make up 8% of total trips but account for 19% of traffic fatalities.
- **Inequitable for non-drivers.** 30% of Americans are non-drivers due to a mix of age, disability, economic, and choice factors yet many Coloradans lack access to safe and connected non-driving options.
- **Highly polluting**, both dangerous local pollutants and planet-warming GHG emissions (transportation is #1 for GHGs)
- **Falling apart.** Colorado ranks 28th in the nation for pavement condition on urban interstates and 47th for pavement condition along rural interstates.



Figure 1. Percent of After-tax Income Spent on Transportation by Income Quintile, 2004–2022



What are Colorado's transportation goals?

- **CDOT's 10-Year Plan Goals 2026-2037 (Policy Directive 14):**

- **“Fix Our Roads”:** Improve pavement and bridge-deck conditions on interstate and state highways.
- **Safety:** Reduce traffic fatalities & serious injuries – both for all road users and for Vulnerable Road Users – by 50%
- **Sustainably Increase Transportation Choice:**
 - Increase transit service by 66.7 million revenue miles (83%)
 - Reduce Vehicle-Miles Traveled (VMT) per capita by 1% per year
 - Reduce transportation GHG pollution by 60%

- **Governor's 2035 Transportation Vision**, an extension of the state's GHG Roadmap (November 2024):

- Double the share of trips taken by transit, biking, and walking from **10% of total trips in 2025 to 20% by 2035.**

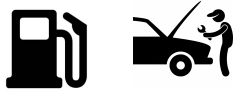


The Benefits of Reducing Vehicle-Miles Traveled

10% reduction in driving per capita would save Coloradans \$36.8 Billion by 2050



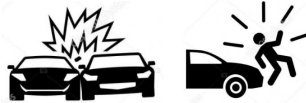
Vehicle Operating Costs



\$11 Billion Savings

Consumer savings from lower fuel & maintenance costs.

Safety (Crashes)



\$19 Billion Savings

Lower costs associated with traffic fatalities or injuries such as medical costs, insurance, vehicle property damage, lost workplace productivity.

Traffic Delay



\$9 Billion Savings

Decreased travel time for commuting, errands, personal travel & freight movement.

Air Pollution



\$270 Million Savings

Lower healthcare costs from less local air pollution.

Social Cost of Carbon



\$1.2 Billion Savings

Avoided financial losses and costs to pay for damages caused by climate change.

Physical Inactivity



\$618 Million Savings

Improved health from more physical activity such as walking and biking.

Is our spending aligned with our goals?



CDOT's 10 Year Plan 2019-2028: Statewide



Total Estimated Cost

\$11.3bn

Total Estimated Cost by Project Type

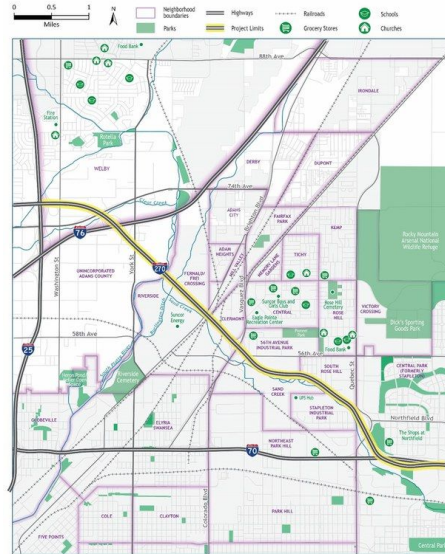
Project Type	Total Estimated Cost	%
Highway	\$7,365M	65%
Highway, Transit	\$2,049M	18%
Rural Paving	\$1,452M	13%
Transit	\$473M	4%
Total	\$11,339M	100%

Expensive highway widening projects



I-70 Floyd Hill Expansion:

Price tag increased from \$700 million in 2020 to **\$905 million in 2025.**



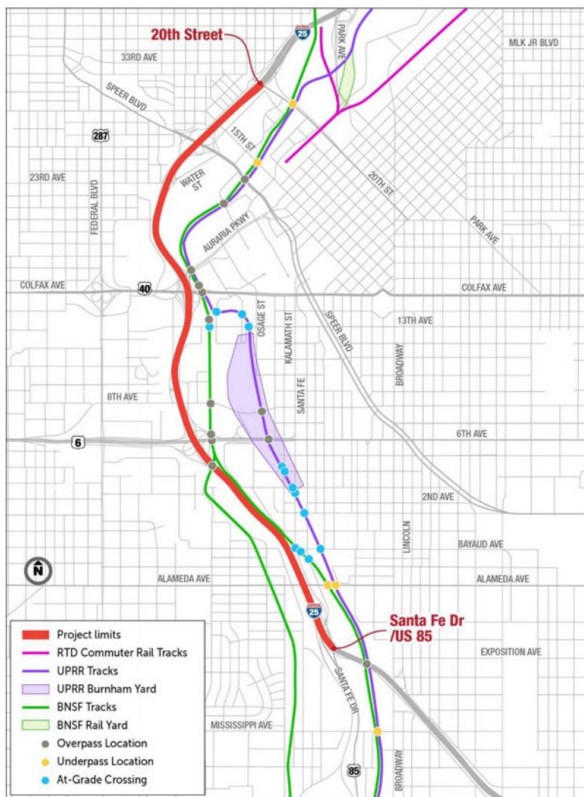
I-270 widening:
\$600 million



I-25 North Segment 5:
\$415 million

Every mile of new lane adds over \$24,000 in annual maintenance costs, so building more lane miles will increase our existing maintenance deficit.

Proposed I-25 Highway Expansion: GHG Impacts



Source: Denver, 2018

~70 million additional VMT/year

(Vehicle Miles Travelled)

Denver-Aurora currently has **769 lane miles** of Interstate highway on which **~6350 million** vehicle miles are travelled per year.

A project adding **9 lane miles** would induce an additional **~70 million** vehicle miles travelled per year. Under today's conditions, the annual emissions from this are the same as **~5600** passenger cars and light trucks or **~2.9 million** gallons of gas.

Cumulative emissions projections range from **0.3** MMT CO₂e to **0.9** MMT CO₂e and are shown in the following table:

Cumulative Emissions Added Through 2050

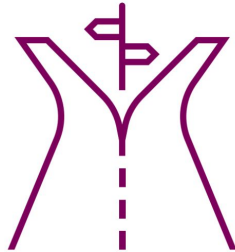
	'Climate Mitigation' Scenario	BAU Scenario
Direct Emissions	~0.3 MMT CO ₂ e	~0.5 MMT CO ₂ e
Lifecycle Emissions	~0.5 MMT CO ₂ e	~0.9 MMT CO ₂ e

This calculation is using an elasticity of **1.0**.

Key Findings from a Statewide Survey of Colorado Voters (March 2025)

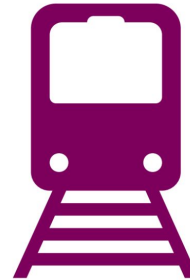
Question: *Thinking about transportation for a moment – Which ONE do you want the state of Colorado to focus more on?*

A majority of voters would prioritize expanding public transit over building more roads.



45%

Building more roads and
expanding existing
roads



55%

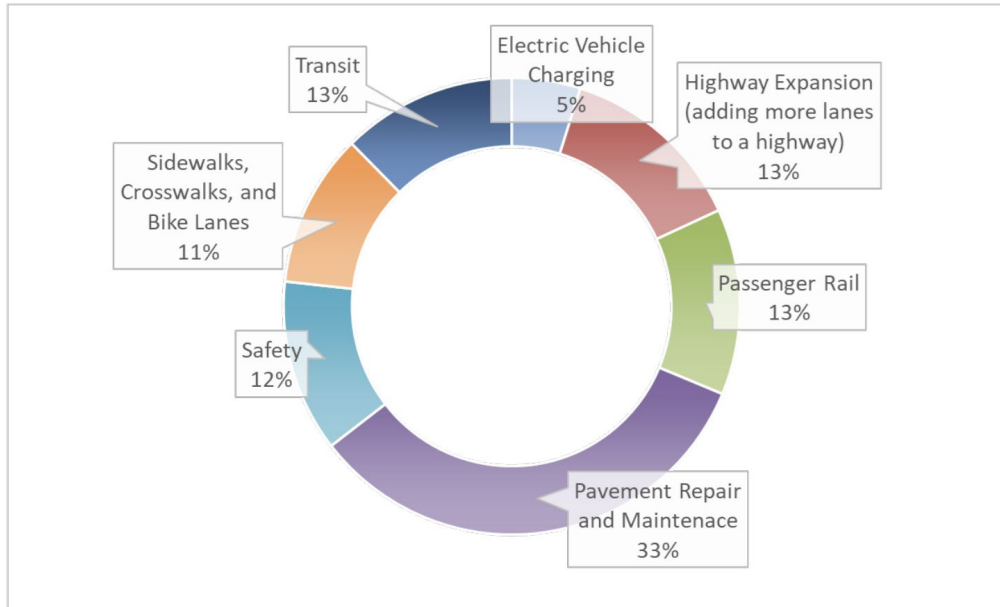
Expanding public
transit options like
train, light rail, and
bus options

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CDOT 10-Year Plan Survey Results – August 2025

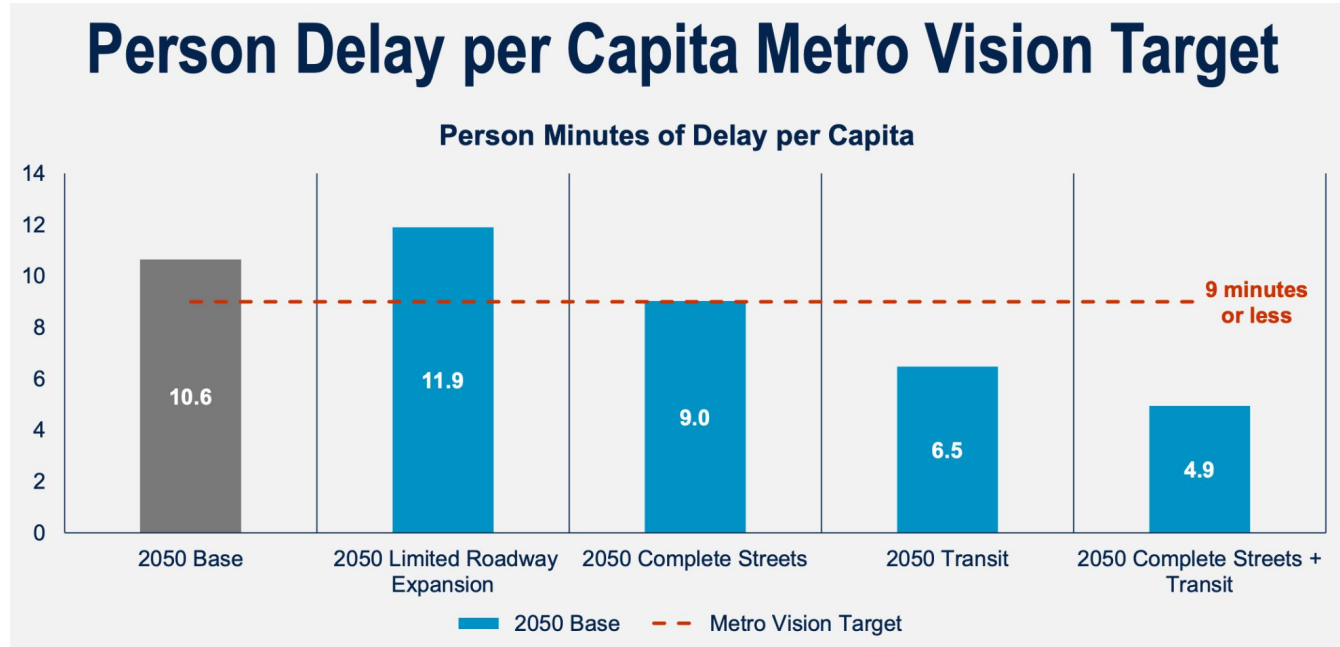


How much of CDOT's budget you would designate to these transportation categories



- **37% for transit, rail, sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes**
- **33% for Pavement Repair and Maintenance**
- **13% for Highway Expansions**
- **12% for Safety**

Building the transportation system of the future: DRCOG Regional Transportation Plan – Scenario Modeling (2025)

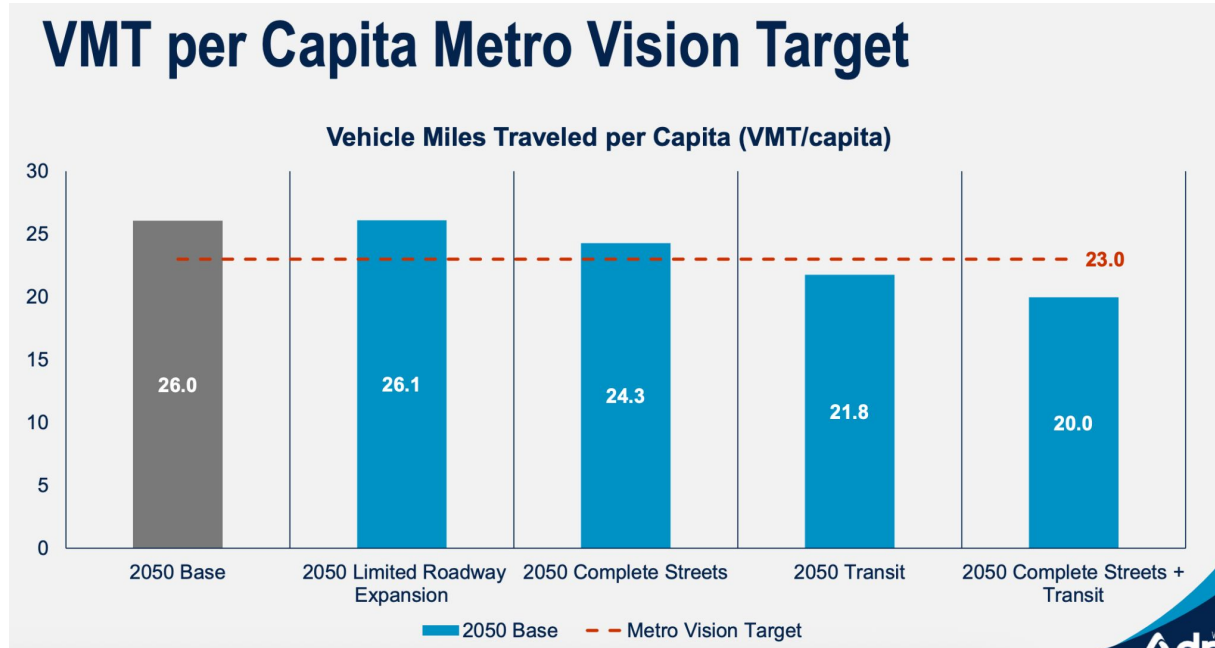


Limited Roadway Expansion: Limit new roadway capacity projects, limited locally-funded widenings to 4 lanes.

Complete Streets Scenario: bike/ped infrastructure, e-bikes, e-scooters, telework.

Transit Scenario: Complete rail, expand BRT, more high-frequency transit corridors, microtransit, etc

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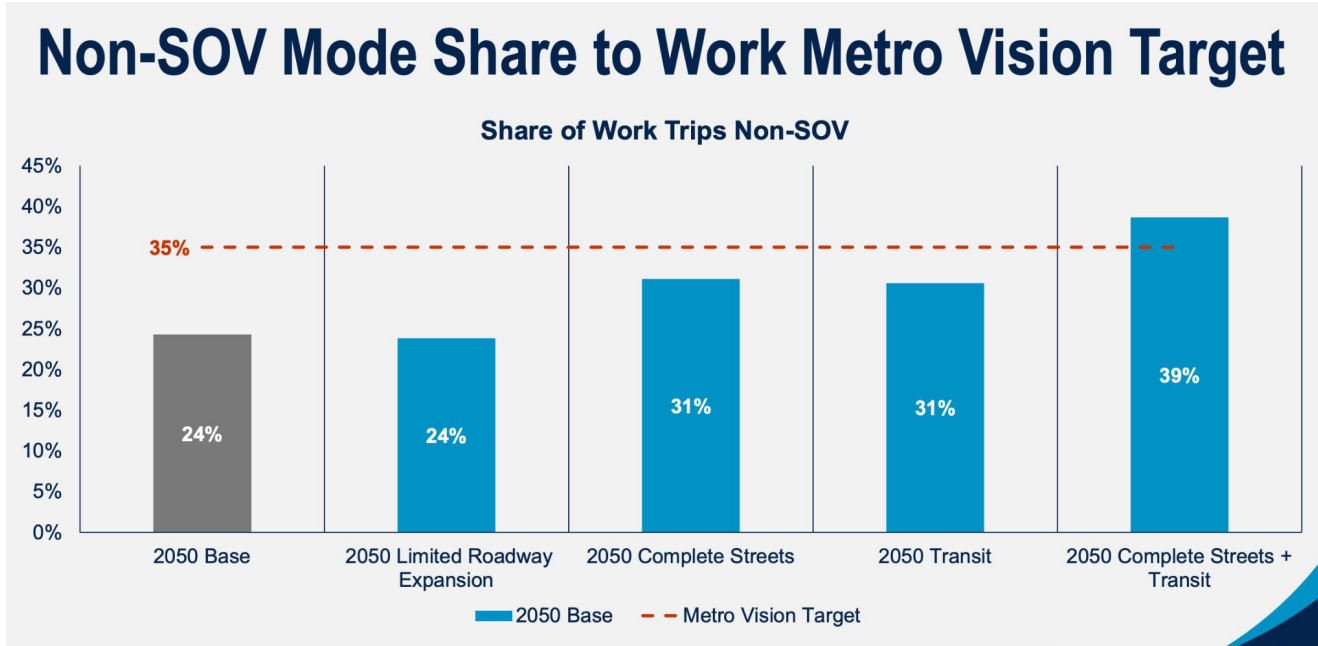


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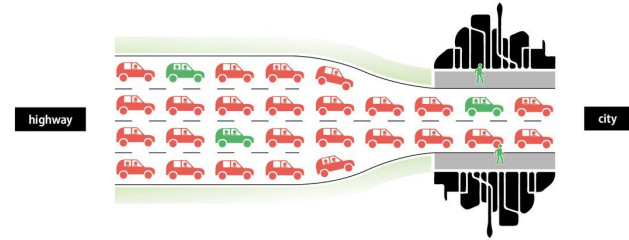
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Takeaways

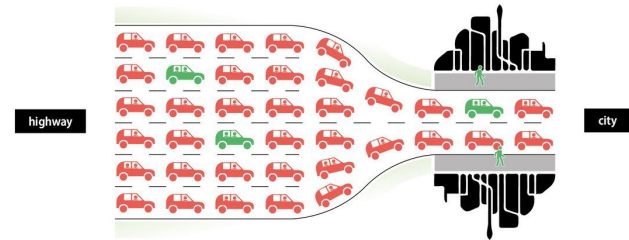
1. Colorado's transportation system faces major challenges
2. We have strong and data-driven goals at the state, regional, and local levels to improve the system
3. The public wants more options beyond driving.
4. Current funding does not match environmental, economic, or social goals.
5. Achieving our goals requires shifting more investment to transit and complete streets.

The Bottleneck

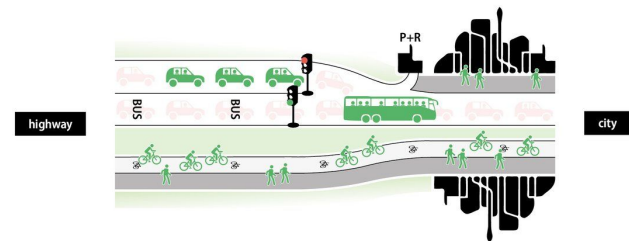
If this is your problem...



... then this isn't your solution...



... this is!



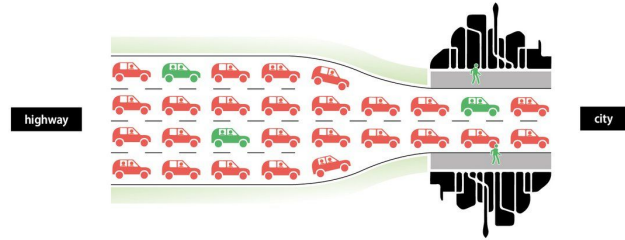
Questions?

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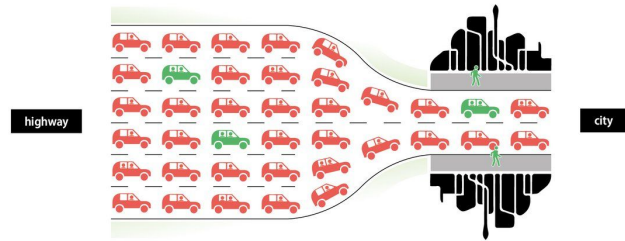
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