



1. INTRODUCTION

A. Project Background

In 1991, Congress enacted the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), directing each state to prepare a multi-modal transportation plan. This directive was continued with the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), and most recently with the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has divided the state into 15 transportation planning regions (TPRs), including the North Front Range (NFR), each of which is required to prepare a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTPs are then used as the basis for the formulation of Colorado's Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan.

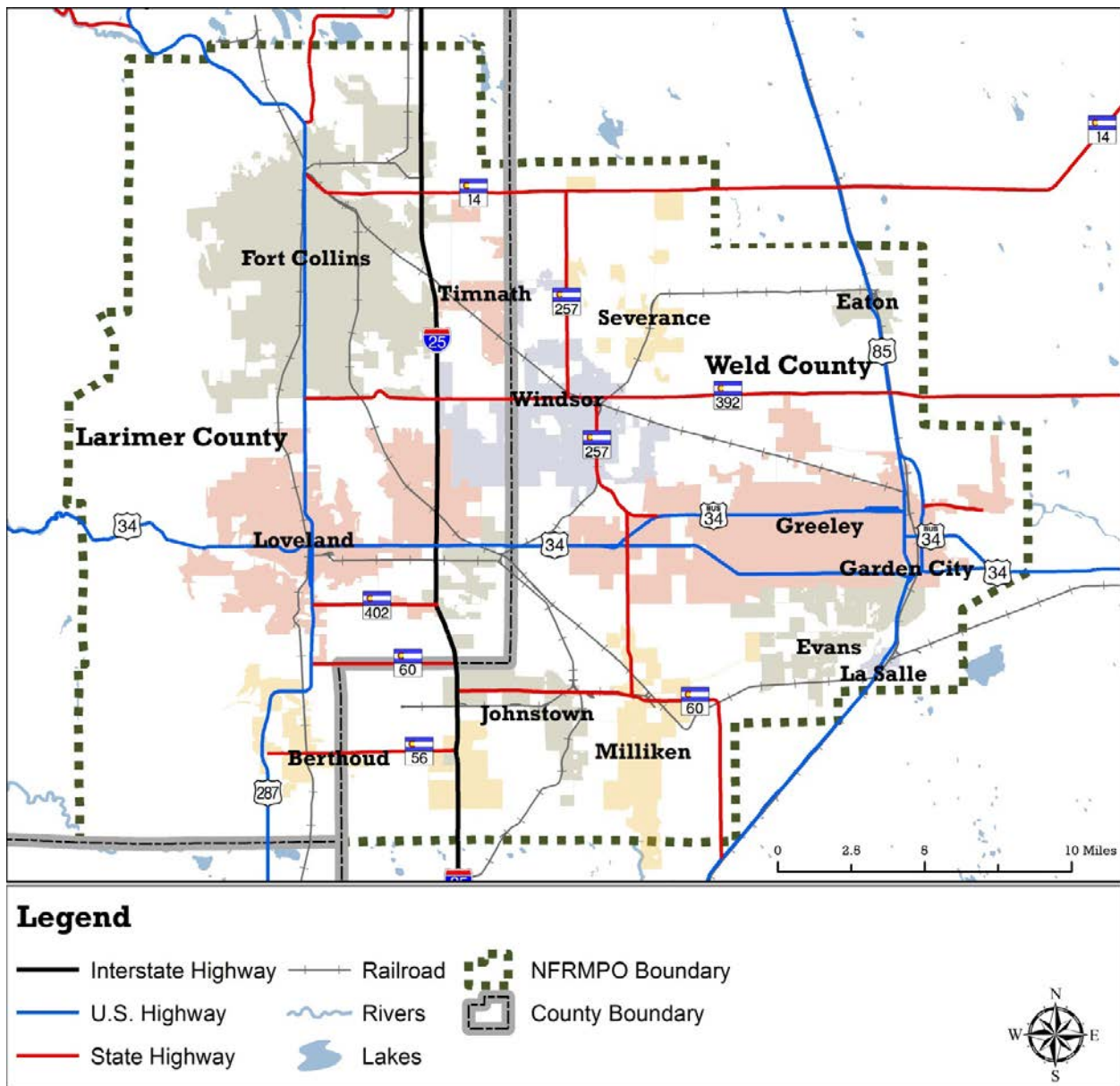
The NFR region, shown in **Figure 1-1**, is surrounded on three sides by the Upper Front Range TPR and Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) on the south. The NFR region includes the more populous portions of Larimer and Weld counties. Thirteen incorporated communities and two counties are within the NFR region: the cities of Fort Collins, Greeley, Evans, and Loveland; the towns of Berthoud, Eaton, Garden City, Johnstown, LaSalle, Milliken, Severance, Timnath, and Windsor; and Weld and Larimer counties.

The North Front Range Transportation and Air Quality Planning Council, also known as the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO), is responsible for long range regional transportation planning. In December 2007, the NFRMPO completed and adopted the North Front Range 2035 Regional Transportation Plan. The NFRMPO has undertaken this current effort as a minimal update to the 2035 RTP. The out-year time horizon for this plan remains set at 2035. This current plan is compliant with SAFETEA-LU, with no new federal authorization, and the guidelines remain the same. The NFRMPO has two air quality maintenance areas for carbon monoxide: Greeley and Fort Collins. The entire NFRMPO region is included in the nine county nonattainment area for ozone. Due to this air quality nonattainment status, the NFRMPO is required to update its long range transportation plan every four years.

This planning process was conducted under the direction of the NFRMPO Planning Council, which is composed of a representative from each of the two counties, each of the 13 communities, the Colorado Transportation Commission, and the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), made up of representatives from the jurisdictions within the region, CDOT, and the Colorado Air Pollution Control Division, makes recommendations to the Council, as does a Transit Advisory Group (TAG), made up of representatives from transit providers across the region. This 2035 Plan Update was developed by NFRMPO staff with technical input from the TAC and TAG.

Statewide, the MPOs, TPRs, and CDOT agreed to make this plan a minor update because there has been no new federal authorization, leaving funding and future guidance or direction uncertain. CDOT purchased new software and invested in creating a new resource allocation model, and the out year for the Plan is beyond the minimum 20 year time horizon. For these reasons, it was agreed to make this planning effort a minor update that focuses on updating the base year information.

Figure 1-1 North Front Range Planning Area



B. Planning Process

The long range planning process is guided by the federal transportation legislation, SAFETEA-LU. The authorization act first expired in September 2009 and has been extended since then. This document contains eight planning factors that are part of a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) process:

1. "Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;



2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for all motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the ability of the transportation system to support homeland security and to safeguard the personal security of all motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation; and
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.”



Snow covered mountains above City Park Lake in Fort Collins

This plan is corridor-based; no specific projects are listed, except those analyzed during the determination of conformity with air quality regulations. The vision plan and the fiscally constrained plan are at the corridor-level giving greater flexibility in project selection that now occurs at the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) level. The TIP is the project programming list that must be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that CDOT compiles.

C. Values, Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The following value statement, visions, goals, and objectives were developed by the NFRMPO Planning Council, in conjunction with the 2035 Plan adopted in 2007, to guide the regional transportation planning process.

VALUE STATEMENT

Recognizing the unique character of the region, we will provide an environmentally, socially, and economically sensitive multi-modal transportation system for all users that protects and enhances the region's quality of life.

Visions

Vision A: Assure that residents have adequate access to the process of transportation and air quality planning and project selection.

Vision B: Foster a transportation system that will effectively address the current and future needs of the region within fiscal constraints.

Vision C: Encourage local governments to work together as a council to develop a balanced approach to meeting transportation needs.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1:

Ensure residents are given the opportunity to participate in the transportation planning process, their issues and concerns are considered during funding decisions, and no population is disproportionately burdened by adverse impacts of transportation investments.

- ▶ **Objective 1-1:** Include a public involvement component based on the current NFRMPO Public Involvement Plan (PIP).
 - **Measurement:** A full public involvement process is carried out and documented in this plan.
- ▶ **Objective 1-2:** Show the benefits to and burdens on the Environmental Justice community.
 - **Measurement:** Environmental Justice communities are identified (low income, minority populations, etc.) and analysis is performed and documented in this plan on the benefits and burdens to such populations.

Goal 2:

Provide a safe, balanced, and environmentally-sensitive transportation system that can move people, goods, and information quickly and efficiently.

- ▶ **Objective 2-1:** Fully integrate the Regional Transit Element (RTE), 2011, into this plan update.
 - **Measurement:** Transit is included in this Plan with short and long term elements and all necessary requirements.
- ▶ **Objective 2-2:** Use the Congestion Management Process (CMP) to reduce congestion.
 - **Measurement:** The CMP was completed and approved by the NFRMPO Council in October 2010 and will be implemented per Council direction and reported on annually.
- ▶ **Objective 2-3:** Consider safety in the development of corridor visions.
 - **Measurement:** Crash history will be reviewed on all Regionally Significant Corridors and safety is specifically discussed in the Corridor Visions.
- ▶ **Objective 2-4:** Run an air quality conformity test on each RTP and TIP.



- **Measurement:** A completed positive conformity determination and attendant documentation are in this plan.

Goal 3:

Provide a well-connected multi-modal system.

- ▶ **Objective 3-1:** Develop a plan that shows all modes of transportation and identifies the gaps and connections.
 - **Measurement:** All modes of travel are considered and analyzed for continuity with a full discussion recorded in this plan.
- ▶ **Objective 3-2:** Identify implementation strategies in this plan that will assist member agencies, the NFRMPO, and CDOT move toward the visions and goal 3.
 - **Measurement:** Listing of strategies for member governments, NFRMPO, and CDOT.

Goal 4:

Identify funding needs and to explore and support all potential approaches to fulfill those needs.

- ▶ **Objective 4-1:** Include a funding implementation plan in this plan.
 - **Measurement:** An implementation section of this Plan describes how projects move from this plan to the TIP and potential funding options for the various transportation solutions.
- ▶ **Objective 4-2:** Produce an impact fee report every plan cycle to identify funding.
 - **Measurement:** An impact fee report is completed and presented to Council.

Goal 5:

Foster regional coordination, cooperation, and transportation system continuity.

- ▶ **Objective 5-1:** Inform and educate special interest groups, general citizens, media, elected officials, staff, and any other stakeholders about the benefits of regional cooperation and system continuity.
 - **Measurement:** The public involvement process for this plan will be inclusive enough to cover the groups identified. The public involvement section of this plan documents the process, attendance, issues, and benefits.
- ▶ **Objective 5-2:** Develop a vision for every corridor identified in the *Regionally Significant Corridors Report*, which describes the desired future of transportation within the corridor.
 - **Measurement:** Top-tiered corridors will have a corridor vision that has enough detail and information to be consistent with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. All other corridors will have a vision, but not to this level of detail.
- ▶ **Objective 5-3:** Review and integrate local Comprehensive Land Use Plan information into regional transportation plans.

- **Measurement:** The Land Use Allocation Model developed by the NFRMPO will work with land use planners from across the region and the State Demographer's office to incorporate the comprehensive land use plans into the modeling effort.

These objectives are specific to the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update; each objective has been incorporated into the planning process as documented herein.

D. Other Plans and Studies

Subsequent to the adoption of the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan in 2007, a number of regional transportation planning efforts have had an influence on the development of this plan update. Likewise, numerous transportation studies have been, or are being, prepared by individual counties, cities, and towns within the NFRMPO, all of which serve as input for this plan. Brief descriptions of some of the regional plans and studies follow; this is not an exhaustive list.

Economic and Demographic Forecast for the North Front Range Modeling Area & its Sub-Regions

The report projected economic and demographic data to the year 2035. The information developed in the report provides control totals for use in the Land Use Allocation Model which then distributes the data geographically. The allocation model supplies the Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) level information to the Travel Demand Model. The forecast was brought down to a sub-regional level consisting generally of Fort Collins, Greeley, Loveland, and the areas outside of the sub-regions but within the North Front Range modeling boundary (see **Figure 3-1** in Chapter 3). Data by employment code was also developed to assist in the analysis of freight movement in the region.

Regionally Significant Corridors Study

The *Regionally Significant Corridors Report* was completed and approved in September, 2006 and will continue to be used in this plan update. The study process included defining regional significance using specified criteria, corridor grouping, and corridor tier ranking. The top tiered corridors (I-25, US 34, and US 287) are the focus of the Congestion Management Process (CMP) and receive more in-depth discussion in the Corridor Visions section of this plan.

North I-25 Environmental Impact Statement

The North I-25 Environmental Impact Statement is a planning study that began in the fall of 2003. The study analyzes potential environmental impacts, identifies mitigation measures, and prepares the environmental decision document required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The study addresses roadway widening, roadway upgrades, new roadway alignments, interchange modifications, and transit alternatives between the Denver Metropolitan Area and Northern Colorado. A Record of Decision is due in the fall of 2011.



Long Range Transportation Demand Management Plan

The NFRMPO Planning Council approved the *Long Range Transportation Demand Management Plan* (TDM Plan) in December of 2010. The purpose of the TDM Plan is to recommend TDM strategies for implementation through 2035. Supporting these recommendations is an outline for a clear process to select, fund, and evaluate these strategies. The TDM evaluation techniques developed for the plan were coordinated with the enhancement of the NFRMPO Congestion Management Process (CMP), which was updated concurrently with the TDM Plan.

2035 Regional Transit Element

The NFRMPO Planning Council approved the *2035 Regional Transit Element* (RTE) in April 2011. The 2035 RTE updates the 2030 document and is part of this plan. The purpose of the RTE is to guide development of regional transit development.

Other NFRMPO Plans and Studies

NFRMPO staff and CDOT Region 4 developed an Access Control Plan for SH 56 and a Sub-Regional Study in the northeast quadrant of the NFRMPO.

High Speed Rail Feasibility Study

The Rocky Mountain Rail Authority (RMRA) recently completed an intercity *High Speed Rail Feasibility Study* for the I-25 and I-70 corridors. The 18-month feasibility study, conducted with significant financial and technical support from the CDOT, focused on determining whether options exist that are capable of meeting Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) technical, financial and economic criteria for high-speed rail feasibility. The study identified a handful of options between Fort Collins and Pueblo in the I-25 corridor and Denver International Airport and Eagle County Airport in the I-70 corridor that exceed the FRA's threshold for high speed rail feasibility. For more information on the study process and conclusions, please visit the RMRA website at: <http://www.rockymountainrail.org/>

Freight Policy

The 2035 RTP (2007 version) established three strategies to integrate freight management into the transportation planning process, as described below.

1. Coordinate freight plans with other transportation and land use plans to encourage desirable mobility patterns.
2. Promote the safe and efficient movement of goods while facilitating freight operations.
3. Engage the private sector to explore options that will benefit the freight system and the regional economy.

In addition, in 2006 the NFRMPO conducted a survey of private sector freight companies. The survey showed that the predominant mode of freight movement in the NFRMPO is trucking. Freight coming

into the region uses a fair amount of rail as well as truck, while freight leaving the region is predominantly by truck.

E. Summary of Public Participation Process

The planning process for the North Front Range 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update was conducted during the 2011 NFRMPO calendar year by staff under the direction of the NFRMPO Planning Council. The public involvement process was integral to the plan update process, consistent with the requirements of U.S. Department of Transportation legislation at the time (SAFETEA-LU).

The public involvement process for the 2035 RTP Update was truncated and used targeted messaging due to the limited changes in the plan. CDOT and previous NFRMPO Planning Councils directed the 2035 RTP Update process and kept the process efficient and focused. This direction reflects the constraint on local and state resources in 2011. The process engaged local governments, transportation stakeholders, and the general public on focused outreach from January through August 2011.

This plan, which is an update to the previous RTP that was adopted in 2007, now defines NFRMPO Planning Council policy direction. The public involvement shifted from evaluating the policy direction to capturing participant perceptions of how transportation influences them—today and in the future. The findings provide guidance for the NFRMPO Planning Council as they prepare to craft a new RTP with a planning horizon of 2040 over the next four years (starting in Fiscal Year 2013). Further, the effort sought to foretell the challenges of how limited federal and state funding sources for transportation improvements and maintenance will influence our region.

Targeted Messaging for the of the Public Involvement Effort

The targeted messaging for the RTP Update is as follows:

Targeted Message 1 –Region’s Commuters Rely on State and Federal Transportation Corridors

- ▶ Corridor Maps Developed for 2035 RTP through rigorous Public Outreach Process (show Maps of Corridors)
- ▶ Population Travels Between Cities for Employment, Leisure, Education
- ▶ Connections Outside the Region (e.g., to work, VanGo, FLEX)

Targeted Message 2 – Our Transportation System Affects the Success of the Region

- ▶ Jobs/Housing Balance
- ▶ Ability to Keep and Develop Jobs
- ▶ A Congesting Transportation System will Affect the Quality of Life in Northern Colorado

Targeted Message 3 – Proposed Transportation Improvements Outnumber Available Funds

- ▶ TIP Process
- ▶ Increasing Deficit Between Funded Projects and Unfunded Transportation Needs/Improvements



- ▶ Dwindling Federal and State Funds (e.g., gas tax, lack of congressional support for federal legislation)

Preparations for Public Outreach

In preparation for the public involvement for the 2035 RTP Update, the NFRMPO completed the following task to support the entire planning effort:

Project Webpage

The NFRMPO crafted a project webpage, **Figure 1-2**, in January 2011 to serve as the public interface throughout the plan update. The project homepage received a primary designation on the homepage of our website, www.nfrmpo.org, to facilitate simple access to the page by new visitors. The webpage also provided a link to project resources from event calendar listings (radio, newspaper, etc.), local government websites, press releases, and other correspondence.

Figure 1-2 Screen Capture of 2035 RTP Update Project Webpage

The screenshot shows the NFRMPO website's project page for the 2035 RTP Update. At the top left is the NFRMPO logo. A navigation bar includes links for Home, About, Projects, Air Quality, Resources & Documents, Geographic Info, News, Calendar, and Archives. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for 2035 RTP Update, TIP Database, Sub-Regional, and Project Archive. The main content area features a header for 'The North Front Range 2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update' with the tagline 'Envisioning Transportation Solutions for Colorado's North Front Range'. The main heading is '2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update'. The text below explains the update process and provides a link to the 2007 RTP. A 'Public Comment for Draft Plan - OPEN' section is highlighted, indicating the comment period is open until July 22, 2011. A list of links for downloading plan chapters is provided. The sidebar on the right contains sections for 'My Account' (Sign Up), 'Search', and 'Events'.

The 2035 RTP Update project webpage included the following sections:

1. The latest draft updates of the plan, chapters, maps, and related-research
2. Project manager contact information
3. A schedule of upcoming public involvement meetings
4. Link to online public involvement survey
5. Online comment submittal form
6. Links to published articles about the planning effort
7. Photographs from the various public involvement meetings and events

Outreach Phases

The NFRMPO conducted the 2035 RTP Update public involvement in three phases to include an array of strategies from conducting an electronic survey to holding public meetings and focus groups. The phases below reflect the milestones in the creation of the draft and final plan:

- 1) Focused public involvement during plan development (February through May 2011)
- 2) Public review and comment on the DRAFT 2035 RTP update document (June and July 2011)
- 3) RTP Update adoption and conformity determination (August through October 2011)

Phase 1: Focused Public Involvement during the Development of the 2035 RTP Update

This section outlines the public involvement that took place during the first phase of the 2035 RTP update – from early February through May 2011.

“Topic of Focus” White Papers

The NFRMPO staff wrote three white papers for the purpose of explaining relevant topics and updates in the RTP Update. The white papers were in the monthly deliverable, “Topic of Focus,” published prior to the NFRMPO Planning Council meetings. The Topic of Focus was mailed to all recipients of the Planning Council meeting packet and posted to the website for the public.

The white paper topics were as follows:

- ▶ **2035 Regional Transportation Plan Update** – February 2011 – This initial paper described the plan for developing the 2035 RTP Update along with the rationale for updating the 2035 plan.
- ▶ **Results of FY12-15 Call for Projects** – April 2011 – This white paper summarized the selected projects for inclusion in the FY '12 –'17 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) as in compliance with the 2035 RTP. The paper discussed the dwindling federal and state transportation resources for transportation compared with the growing number of projects submitted during the 2012-2015 Call for Projects.
- ▶ **Potential Changes in Re-authorization** – June 2011 – In 2011, Congress continued to debate the authorization of a transportation bill while they continued to extend SAFETEA-LU. The white paper discussed how the lack of a transportation bill has limited resources for transportation



system improvements while causing MPOs across the country to scramble to remain solvent while upholding the needs of the Regional Transportation Plans.

Focus Groups

The NFRMPO held seven focus groups that represented four underserved populations to uphold the Environmental Justice requirement of this plan update (**See Chapter 3 – B. Environmental Justice**). A focus group is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes about a specific topic. The focus groups provided the opportunity to isolate specific issues and concerns of the targeted population. Further, the focus groups permitted the NFRMPO to ask open-ended questions which the participants could expound upon in a comfortable setting with their peers.

The public participation program focused on the following “underserved populations” that met the diversity required for Environmental Justice and Title VI. The “underserved populations” targeted in this plan update included:

- ▶ Hispanic
- ▶ Low Income
- ▶ Seniors
- ▶ Students (three separate focus groups required to accommodate special needs to participants)



Focus Group led by NFRMPO Staff.

The NFRMPO recruited representative individuals for each focus group while identifying a meeting time and location to accommodate the specific needs of each underserved population. **Table 3-7** (in Chapter 3) shows the time, date, location(s), and recruiter(s) for each focus group.

Each group of participants was asked the same questions about the influence of the current transportation system on their daily lives along with questions about their desired improvements for the system in the future. NFRMPO staff recorded the proceedings by typing into blank PowerPoint slides projected on a screen for the participants to confirm the accurate recording of their statements. The unabridged proceedings for each focus group can be found in Appendix B.

Phone Survey

The NFRMPO contracted the ETC Institute (Olathe, KS) to conduct a phone survey for the 2035 RTP Update. ETC contacted a statistically-valid, random sample of 200 households geographically proportional to the three large NFRMPO cities’ (Greeley, Loveland, and Fort Collins) population along with a set of responses from the smaller communities. Respondents were contacted during the months of April and May 2011.

The NFRMPO updated the previous survey from the 2035 RTP to identify any differences between the 2007 and 2011 efforts. The questions explored the respondents' perceptions of the transportation system, future infrastructure investment, and where transportation ranks amongst other regional issues.

A summarized review of the findings, along with the survey tool and the tabular responses to each question can be found in Appendix B.

Community Dialogues and Joint Meetings

The NFRMPO Planning Council identified an implementation strategy for their 2010-2015 Strategic Action Plan to focus on transportation projects that are important to individual jurisdictions and the region. The strategy is referred to as "Community Dialogues" and their mission is defined below.

Use community dialogues to identify those projects member jurisdictions want to see accomplished. Include relevant state agencies. Use Planning Council guidance to identify specific issues and gaps in the transportation system, possibly escalating to higher levels including partnerships.

The NFRMPO offered a one-hour Community Dialogue with the Town Board or City Council of each small community member of the NFRMPO. The NFRMPO invited Senators Bennet and Udall and Congressman Gardner as well as staff from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to attend and answer relevant questions during the meetings.

The following communities accepted the NFRMPO invitation to participate:

- ▶ **LaSalle** – May 10 – 7pm - 128 N. 2nd Street, LaSalle, CO
- ▶ **Berthoud** – May 17- 6pm - Berthoud Town Hall - 328 Massachusetts Ave, Berthoud, CO
- ▶ **Evans** - May 17th – 6pm - 1100 37th Street, Evans, CO
- ▶ **Eaton** – May 19 – 7pm -223 1st Street, Eaton, CO
- ▶ **Milliken** – June 8 – 5:45pm -1101 Broad Street, Milliken, Colorado
- ▶ **Timnath** – July 5 – 6pm - 4800 Goodman Street, Timnath CO, 80547

The NFRMPO scheduled the dialogues to coincide or precede a Board/Council meeting or work session. The meetings were published on the community's municipal website as well as in relevant newspapers. A press release and formal invitations to each Board/Council member were issued a week prior to each meeting. All related news coverage and photographs from the dialogues have been posted on the project website:

<http://nfrmpo.org/Projects/2035RTPUpdate.aspx>.



Community Dialogue in Milliken, CO



The results of the Community Dialogues, along with the recorded proceedings from the dialogues have been placed in Appendix B.

Phase 2: Public Release of Draft 2035 RTP

The NFRMPO released the draft plan of the 2035 RTP Update in July 2011. The second phase involved the various methods to review the plan and provide feedback with multiple media. Public open houses were held in the three largest NFRMPO communities (Greeley, Loveland, and Fort Collins).

Plan Availability

The NFRMPO posted the draft plan (complete document and by chapter) on the project website: <http://nfrmpo.org/Projects/2035RTPUpdate.aspx>. The NFRMPO hired a firm to translate the first chapter of the plan into Spanish for download. Printed copies of the plan were made available at the front desk of the NFRMPO offices at 419 Canyon, Suite 300, Fort Collins, CO 80521.

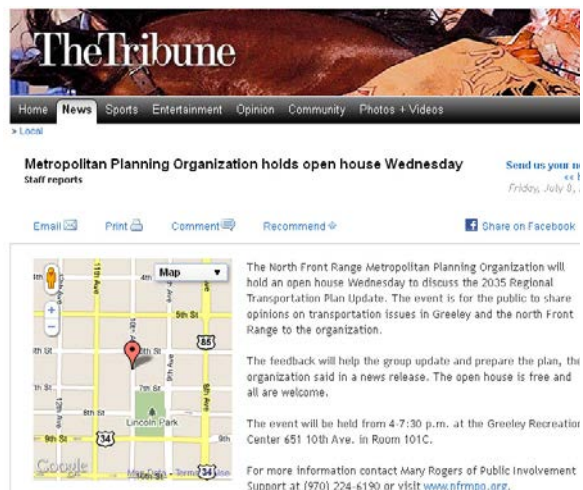
Feedback Opportunities

The following mechanisms were used to receive feedback:

1. Online feedback form created in Zoomerang to obtain feedback in English and Spanish located at <http://nfrmpo.org/Projects/2035RTPUpdate.aspx>
2. A dedicated email to receive comments: rtp@nfrmpo.org
3. A dedicated voicemail box on the NFRMPO 1-800 number
4. Mail/fax feedback forms (English and Spanish) available at the open houses and online
5. Postage-paid postcards for submitting comments after participating in the open houses

Press Release Announcing Release of Draft Plan (Copy in Appendix B)

NFRMPO staff issued a press release to announce the availability of the preliminary draft 2035 RTP Update. The press release directed stakeholders to obtain a copy of the draft document on the project website along with instructions for providing feedback by phone, email, and via the online survey tool.



Open Houses with Directions to Location in the Greeley Tribune.

Email to Transportation Stakeholders

The NFRMPO emailed over 800 previously identified transportation stakeholders regarding the plan availability at the open houses. Further, the NFRMPO requested that the local Chambers of Commerce email their constituents about the plan availability and the open houses.

Regional Websites

The availability of the plan and the dates for the open house were submitted to the following websites:

1. Municipal government websites
2. Calendars for local newspapers
3. Calendars for regional radio stations

Regional Presentations

The NFRMPO responded to regional requests for presentations about the 2035 RTP Update in the following locations:

1. City of Loveland Council - April 26, 2011
2. Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce Legislative Affairs Committee - July 29, 2011

Open Houses

The NFRMPO conducted a total of three public open houses in Greeley, Fort Collins, and Loveland.

<p>7/13/11 - Greeley Recreation Center 651 10th Avenue - Room 101C 4pm – 7:00pm Attendees: 9</p>	<p>7/14/11 - Fort Collins Community Room 215 N. Mason 4pm – 7:00pm Attendees: 26</p>	<p>7/21/11 - Loveland Pulliam Community Room 545 N. Cleveland Avenue 4pm – 7:00pm Attendees: 17</p>
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The visitors went through five stations of 12 placards that covered the following:

1 - NFRMPO Station

- ▶ Board 1 – Map of the NFRMPO Region
- ▶ Board 2 – Over 300 MPOs Across Country

#2 – RTP Document Station

- ▶ Board 1 – Purpose of the RTP
- ▶ Board 2 – List of Chapters in Document
- ▶ Board 3 – Updates to RTP
 - TDM Plan
 - RTE
 - Congestion Management Process
 - Modeling Data
- ▶ Board 4 – 2012 – 2017 Funded Projects

#3 – Existing Transportation Conditions Station

- ▶ Board 1 – Trip Time between cities (Fort Collins, Loveland, Greeley)



- ▶ Board 2 – Level of Service in Region
- ▶ Board 3 – Transit System Maps

#4 - Funding Station

- ▶ Board 1 – History of Transportation Legislation and Gas Tax
- ▶ Board 2 – Potential Federal Funding Sources “On the Table” (re-authorization)
- ▶ Board 3 – Local / State Sources of Funding

#5 – Funding Activity Station

- ▶ Participants were provided with \$100 million in “MPO Bucks” in \$10 million increments to deposit in five separate buckets labeled with the following transportation improvement areas:

- Transit
- Bike / Pedestrian
- Roadway Maintenance
- New/ Expanded Roadways
- Transportation Technology

The visitors concluded their visit to the open house by providing their feedback to the 2035 RTP Update using laptop computers displaying an online submission form (visitors could type or be assisted by NFRMPO staff). Visitors could also complete a paper form that could be turned in at the open house or taken home and submitted by mail, fax, or email.



Buckets for collecting “MPO Bucks” at the Public Open Houses.

Phase 3: 30-day Public Comment Period and Conformity Determination

The 30-day comment period began on August 1, 2011 to meet the 30-day noticing requirement for the scheduled September 1, 2011 Council hearing and adoption. The conformity determination hearing was also held at the September 2011 meeting with the NFRMPO Council making a positive conformity determination. The Air Quality Control Commission hearing on the conformity determination was held on October 2011 for a concurrence with the finding. The objective of this phase was to fine-tune the draft plan and prepare for the adoption process.

Public Hearing Notice

On Monday, August 1, 2011, the NFRMPO issued a public hearing notice in regional newspapers for the 2035 RTP Update, 2012-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Air Quality Conformity. It should be noted that the 2012-2017 TIP and Air Quality Conformity documents are under a separate cover.

F. Summary of Public Input

The narrative below summarizes the major themes uncovered during the public involvement process for the 2035 RTP Update. The raw data collected during each public involvement stage is published in the Appendix B of this document.

Current Transportation System

Throughout the public involvement period, participants were questioned about the influence of the current transportation system on their daily lives. The following five themes arose:

- ▶ Challenges for commuters
- ▶ Lack of commuting options
- ▶ Challenges for travel dependent persons
- ▶ Economic downturn and increased cost of commuting
- ▶ Road maintenance and safety concerns

Tables 1-1 through 1-5 provide further descriptions of these themes along with related survey results.

Table 1-1 Challenges for Commuters

Theme 1																																				
Where Observed	Focus Groups, Community Dialogues, Open Houses																																			
Description	Participants demonstrated a keen awareness of their daily challenges commuting by automobile to and from work: traffic signals, parking spaces, car/bike interactions, freight rail crossings, missing sidewalks/bus stops. They quickly identified specific intersections and crossings (rail and bridge) in their community and the impact of the issue to them: commute time, safety risk, damage to vehicle. The open houses brought organized groups advocating for local projects.																																			
Related Survey Data	<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Q5. Rate the Aspects of Transportation by percentage of respondents who rated the item as a 1 to 5 on a 5-point scale</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Aspect</th> <th>Excellent (5)</th> <th>Good (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Below Average (2/1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Safety on HWY's where you live</td> <td>13%</td> <td>50%</td> <td>22%</td> <td>16%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Safety on HWY's in other parts</td> <td>8%</td> <td>48%</td> <td>25%</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Traffic flow on HWY's in other parts</td> <td>6%</td> <td>44%</td> <td>36%</td> <td>14%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Condition of HWY's where you live</td> <td>11%</td> <td>38%</td> <td>35%</td> <td>16%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Traffic flow on HWY's where you live</td> <td>7%</td> <td>42%</td> <td>36%</td> <td>15%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Condition of HWY's in other parts</td> <td>7%</td> <td>37%</td> <td>44%</td> <td>12%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><small>Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (May 2011 North Front Range Transportation Study)</small></p> </div>	Aspect	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Neutral (3)	Below Average (2/1)	Safety on HWY's where you live	13%	50%	22%	16%	Safety on HWY's in other parts	8%	48%	25%	18%	Traffic flow on HWY's in other parts	6%	44%	36%	14%	Condition of HWY's where you live	11%	38%	35%	16%	Traffic flow on HWY's where you live	7%	42%	36%	15%	Condition of HWY's in other parts	7%	37%	44%	12%
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Table 1-2 Lack of Commuting Options

Theme 2													
Where Observed	Community Dialogues, Survey, Focus Groups, Open Houses												
Description	This theme focused primarily on the lack of transit connecting the smaller communities in Northern Colorado to the employment centers inside the region and Metro-Denver. It was repeatedly stated about the challenges of those forced to work, shop, and recreate outside their home community. Further, a repeated desire for additional bicycle lanes and new trails connecting the communities for working, shopping, and entertainment was mentioned.												
Related Survey Data	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Q11. How do you think the current level of funding for public transportation improvements should change over the next 25 years?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">by percentage of respondents</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <caption>Survey Results for Q11</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Response</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Much greater than now</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Somewhat greater than</td> <td>33%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stay the same</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Be reduced</td> <td>3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don't know</td> <td>14%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (May 2011 North Front Range Transportation Study)</p> </div>	Response	Percentage	Much greater than now	30%	Somewhat greater than	33%	Stay the same	20%	Be reduced	3%	Don't know	14%
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Table 1-3 Challenges for Travel Dependent

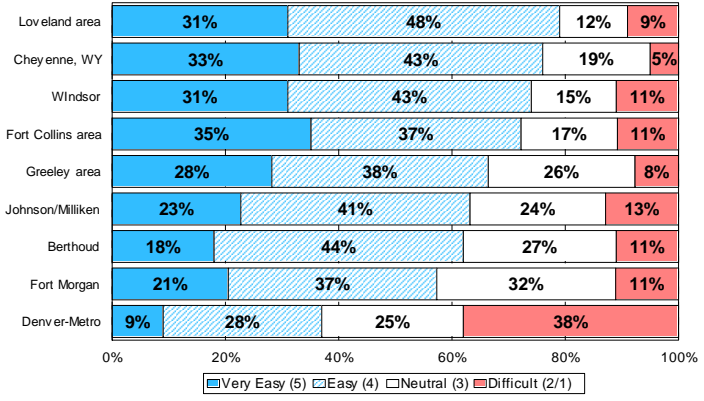
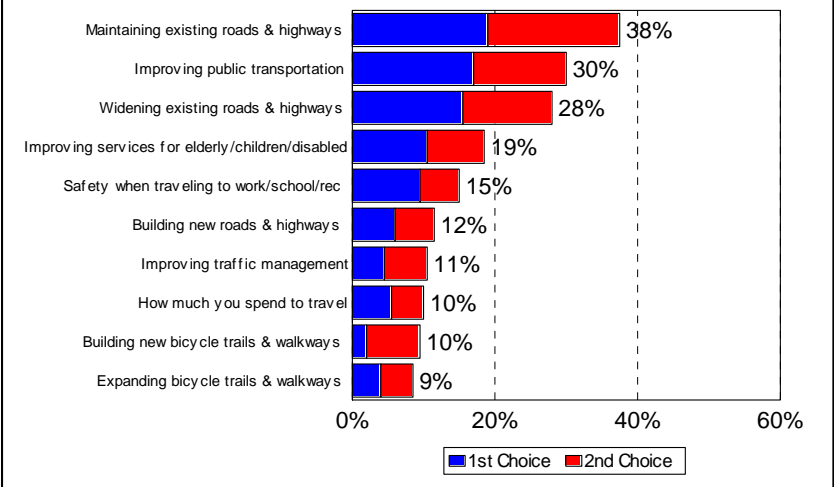
Theme 3																																																			
Where Observed	Focus Groups, Open Houses																																																		
Description	Travel for seniors and children resonated during the discussions. Seniors unable/lacking confidence to drive became reliant on other seniors/family for trips to the hospital, shopping, and entertainments. Parents expressed having to leave work early, transfer their child from school to daycare, and then return to work.																																																		
Related Survey Data	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Q6. Ease of Travel Between your Home and... by percentage of respondents who rated the item as a 1 to 5 on a 5-point scale</p>  <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Area</th> <th>Very Easy (5)</th> <th>Easy (4)</th> <th>Neutral (3)</th> <th>Difficult (2/1)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Loveland area</td> <td>31%</td> <td>48%</td> <td>12%</td> <td>9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cheyenne, WY</td> <td>33%</td> <td>43%</td> <td>19%</td> <td>5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Windsor</td> <td>31%</td> <td>43%</td> <td>15%</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fort Collins area</td> <td>35%</td> <td>37%</td> <td>17%</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Greeley area</td> <td>28%</td> <td>38%</td> <td>26%</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Johnson/Milliken</td> <td>23%</td> <td>41%</td> <td>24%</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Berthoud</td> <td>18%</td> <td>44%</td> <td>27%</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fort Morgan</td> <td>21%</td> <td>37%</td> <td>32%</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Denver-Metro</td> <td>9%</td> <td>28%</td> <td>25%</td> <td>38%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (May 2011 North Front Range Transportation Study)</p> </div>	Area	Very Easy (5)	Easy (4)	Neutral (3)	Difficult (2/1)	Loveland area	31%	48%	12%	9%	Cheyenne, WY	33%	43%	19%	5%	Windsor	31%	43%	15%	11%	Fort Collins area	35%	37%	17%	11%	Greeley area	28%	38%	26%	8%	Johnson/Milliken	23%	41%	24%	13%	Berthoud	18%	44%	27%	11%	Fort Morgan	21%	37%	32%	11%	Denver-Metro	9%	28%	25%	38%
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Table 1-4 Economic Downturn and Increased Cost of Commuting

Theme 4																																									
Where Observed	Focus Groups, Community Dialogue, Survey																																								
Description	Participants shared how they have attempted to adapt during the economic downturn and the subsequent increase in fuel prices. The focus groups uncovered the following adaptations: consolidating trips, eliminating trips, carpooling, reducing entertainment expenditures, and searching for work closer to home. Respondents also identified the added vehicle maintenance cost associated with poor roadway conditions.																																								
Related Survey Data	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Q7. Destinations that Will be Most Difficult to Travel by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px; width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Area</th> <th>1st Choice (%)</th> <th>2nd Choice (%)</th> <th>Total (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Denver-Metro area</td> <td>60</td> <td>13</td> <td>73</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fort Collins area</td> <td>10</td> <td>17</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Greeley area</td> <td>5</td> <td>12</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Loveland area</td> <td>5</td> <td>8</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Windsor area</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cheyenne, WY area</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Berthoud area</td> <td>0</td> <td>7</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Johnstown/Milliken area</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fort Morgan area</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 5px;">Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (May 2011 North Front Range Transportation Study)</p> </div>	Area	1st Choice (%)	2nd Choice (%)	Total (%)	Denver-Metro area	60	13	73	Fort Collins area	10	17	27	Greeley area	5	12	17	Loveland area	5	8	13	Windsor area	3	6	9	Cheyenne, WY area	3	6	9	Berthoud area	0	7	7	Johnstown/Milliken area	3	3	6	Fort Morgan area	3	3	6
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Table 1-5 Road Maintenance and Safety Concerns

Theme 5																																													
Where Observed	Community Dialogue, Open Houses, Focus Groups, Survey																																												
Description	During the community dialogues, the elected officials shared their struggle to maintain local roadways with existing funds. Participants identified unsafe locations within their communities citing dangerous intersections, absence of sidewalks, auto/bicycle conflicts, and sections of roadway in disrepair.																																												
Related Survey Data	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Q9. Most Important Transportation Priorities by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices</p>  <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority</th> <th>1st Choice (%)</th> <th>2nd Choice (%)</th> <th>Total (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Maintaining existing roads & highways</td> <td>18</td> <td>20</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Improving public transportation</td> <td>15</td> <td>15</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Widening existing roads & highways</td> <td>15</td> <td>13</td> <td>28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Improving services for elderly/children/disabled</td> <td>10</td> <td>9</td> <td>19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Safety when traveling to work/school/rec</td> <td>8</td> <td>7</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Building new roads & highways</td> <td>5</td> <td>7</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Improving traffic management</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>How much you spend to travel</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Building new bicycle trails & walkways</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expanding bicycle trails & walkways</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (May 2011 North Front Range Transportation Study)</p> </div>	Priority	1st Choice (%)	2nd Choice (%)	Total (%)	Maintaining existing roads & highways	18	20	38	Improving public transportation	15	15	30	Widening existing roads & highways	15	13	28	Improving services for elderly/children/disabled	10	9	19	Safety when traveling to work/school/rec	8	7	15	Building new roads & highways	5	7	12	Improving traffic management	5	6	11	How much you spend to travel	5	5	10	Building new bicycle trails & walkways	5	5	10	Expanding bicycle trails & walkways	4	5	9
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Future Transportation Concerns

Throughout the public involvement process, feedback was actively sought regarding the future of the transportation system. Direct questions were asked to provide information to the NFRMPO Planning Council and their committees. The following four themes arose relative to the future transportation system:

- ▶ Rail connections to employment centers
- ▶ Diversification of public transit
- ▶ Funding for road maintenance and expansion projects
- ▶ Bike and pedestrian trail expansion

Tables 1-6 through 1-9 provide further descriptions of these themes along with related survey results.



Table 1-6 Rail Connections to Employment Centers

Theme 1																																									
Where Observed	Community Dialogue, Open Houses, Focus Groups, Survey																																								
Description	The most referenced future improvement for the transportation system was some form of rail to connect with employment centers primarily outside the region. Typically, the discussion did not revolve around the type of rail (light, commuter, high-speed), but the perception that rail should connect to the Denver-Metro area along a North-South Corridor.																																								
Related Survey Data	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Q7. Destinations that Will be Most Difficult to Travel by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices</p> <table border="1" style="margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Destination</th> <th>1st Choice</th> <th>2nd Choice</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Denver-Metro area</td> <td>60%</td> <td>13%</td> <td>73%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fort Collins area</td> <td>10%</td> <td>17%</td> <td>27%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Greeley area</td> <td>5%</td> <td>12%</td> <td>17%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Loveland area</td> <td>5%</td> <td>8%</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Windsor area</td> <td>3%</td> <td>6%</td> <td>9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cheyenne, WY area</td> <td>3%</td> <td>6%</td> <td>9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Berthoud area</td> <td>0%</td> <td>7%</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Johnstown/Milliken area</td> <td>3%</td> <td>3%</td> <td>6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fort Morgan area</td> <td>3%</td> <td>3%</td> <td>6%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (May 2011 North Front Range Transportation Study)</p> </div>	Destination	1st Choice	2nd Choice	Total	Denver-Metro area	60%	13%	73%	Fort Collins area	10%	17%	27%	Greeley area	5%	12%	17%	Loveland area	5%	8%	13%	Windsor area	3%	6%	9%	Cheyenne, WY area	3%	6%	9%	Berthoud area	0%	7%	7%	Johnstown/Milliken area	3%	3%	6%	Fort Morgan area	3%	3%	6%
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Table 1-7 Diversification of Public Transit

Theme 2																																					
Where Observed	Open Houses, Focus Groups, Community Dialogue, Survey																																				
Description	The second resonant theme emphasized increasing connections between the communities of Northern Colorado with public transit (particularly bus with some references to rail). Respondents discussed access to the smaller (but growing) communities along with a more efficient (more routes, stops, and pickup times) and less circuitous routes within the three large cities (Loveland, Greeley, and Fort Collins).																																				
Related Survey Data	<p>Q4. Transportation Items Needing the Most Improvement by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Item</th> <th>1st Choice (%)</th> <th>2nd Choice (%)</th> <th>Total (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Availability of public transportation</td> <td>25</td> <td>13</td> <td>38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel by car on I-25, US 287, and US 34</td> <td>22</td> <td>12</td> <td>34</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel options other than by personal vehicle</td> <td>8</td> <td>14</td> <td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ease of north/south travel</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ease of east/west travel</td> <td>7</td> <td>11</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel by car on state highways</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel by car on 2-lane city roads</td> <td>7</td> <td>7</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel by bicycle</td> <td>7</td> <td>7</td> <td>14</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Source: ETC Institute DirectionFinder (May 2011 North Front Range Transportation Study)</p>	Item	1st Choice (%)	2nd Choice (%)	Total (%)	Availability of public transportation	25	13	38	Travel by car on I-25, US 287, and US 34	22	12	34	Travel options other than by personal vehicle	8	14	22	Ease of north/south travel	8	9	17	Ease of east/west travel	7	11	18	Travel by car on state highways	7	8	15	Travel by car on 2-lane city roads	7	7	14	Travel by bicycle	7	7	14
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Table 1-8 Funding for Road Maintenance and Expansion Projects

Theme 3																															
Where Observed	Community Dialogue, Open Houses, Survey																														
Description	On the maintenance side, communities have acknowledged the growing budget for street maintenance is preventing them from investing in other municipal infrastructure (parks, sidewalks, etc.). Funds for roadway expansion are sought to alleviate future congestion on I-25 and to fund the expansion of arterials connecting the region (Harmony in Timnath, Weld County Road 74 in Eaton, etc.).																														
Related Survey Data	<p>Participants at the July 2011 public meetings were asked to distribute \$100 million in \$10 million increments to five categories of transportation improvements. The resulting distribution of “MPO Bucks” for the three meetings and the combined total are shown below.</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto;"> <caption>Estimated Data from MPO Bucks Distribution Chart</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Meeting</th> <th>Transit</th> <th>Bike/Pedestrian</th> <th>New/Widened Roads</th> <th>Transportation Technology</th> <th>Road Maintenance</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Combined Total</td> <td>35%</td> <td>15%</td> <td>15%</td> <td>10%</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Loveland Meeting</td> <td>25%</td> <td>15%</td> <td>20%</td> <td>10%</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fort Collins Meeting</td> <td>45%</td> <td>15%</td> <td>10%</td> <td>10%</td> <td>15%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Greeley Meeting</td> <td>20%</td> <td>15%</td> <td>25%</td> <td>10%</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div>	Meeting	Transit	Bike/Pedestrian	New/Widened Roads	Transportation Technology	Road Maintenance	Combined Total	35%	15%	15%	10%	25%	Loveland Meeting	25%	15%	20%	10%	30%	Fort Collins Meeting	45%	15%	10%	10%	15%	Greeley Meeting	20%	15%	25%	10%	30%
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Table 1-9 Bike and Pedestrian Trail Expansion

Theme 4	
Where Observed	Community Dialogue, Focus Groups, Open Houses, Survey
Description	This theme reflects a broad collection of statements regarding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. First, small communities are seeking safe connections between neighboring communities and river corridors (Poudre, Platte, and Big Thompson) for recreation, commuting, and entertainment. Second, a desire for safe bike and pedestrian facilities for children to travel to school. Third, safe bike routes that provide more direct access to shopping and entertainment areas.

Importance of Regional Issues

The focus groups and open house attendees were asked to rank where transportation falls amongst other regional issues in the short-term (3-5 years). The respondents were allowed to select two (2) choices. **Table 1-10** below summarizes the respondent selections.

Table 1-10 Short-Term (3-5 Years) Importance of Regional Issues

	Student Group 1	Student Group 2	Student Group 3	Hispanic	Seniors*	Low Income	Open Houses	Total
Water	1	0	3	1	2	0	11	18
Personal Safety	1	0	1	0	1	0	4	7
Transportation	1	2	5	1	5	0	24	38
Air Quality	3	0	0	0	0.5	0	1	4.5
Healthcare	1	1	0	3	7	7	7	26
Housing	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	6
Jobs/ Employment	3	0	1	3	2	6	23	38
Education	0	0	0	2	0	3	8	13
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5

* Not defined in the notes as a short term or long term issue.

The focus groups and open house attendees were also asked to decide where transportation ranks amongst other regional issues in the long-term (5-25 years). The respondents were allowed to select two choices. **Table 1-11** below summarizes the respondent selections.

Table 1-11 Long-Term (5-25 Years) Importance of Regional Issues

	Student Group 1	Student Group 2	Student Group 3	Hispanic	Low Income	Total
Water	2	0	0	1	1	4
Personal Safety	0	0	0	1	0	1
Transportation	2	2	2	1	0	7
Air Quality	2	0	0	0	0	2
Healthcare	3	1	0	3	7	14
Housing	0	1	2	1	0	4
Jobs/ Employment	1	0	8	2	6	17
Other (Education)	0	0	4	1	3	8
Other (money)	0	0	1	0	0	1