

CHAPTER 8: MOVING FORWARD

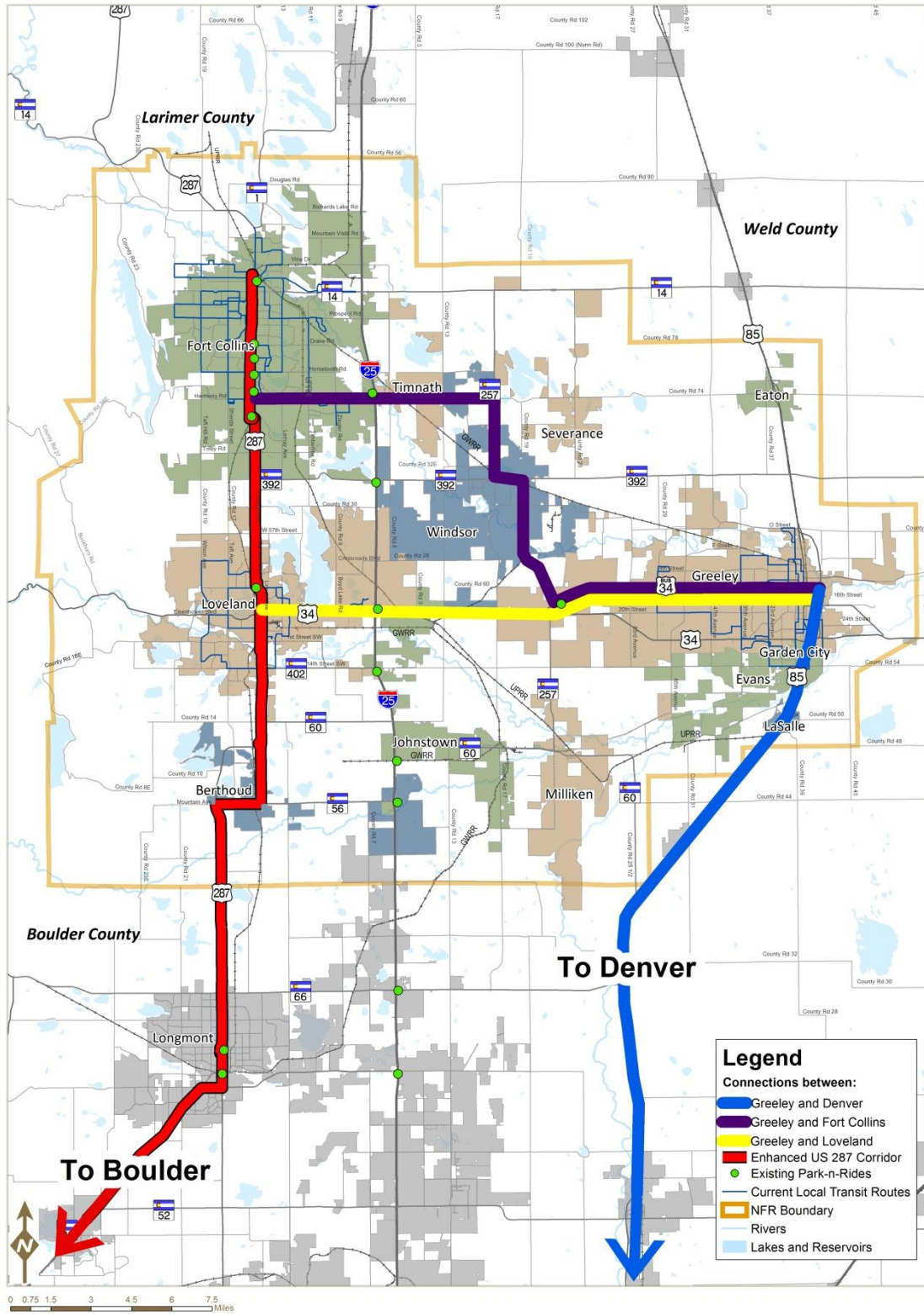
RECOMMENDATION

For the 2035 RTE, the NFRMPO Planning Council selected the Basic Alternative with the addition of service along US 85 (Corridor 2) as the preferred alternative (Basic+). However, for the 2040 RTE, the NFRMPO is moving forward with suggested actions based on the recommendations of the three local transit agencies, TAC, input received during the public outreach phase, and previously completed studies, specifically the 2013 **North Front Range Transit Vision Feasibility Study**. The recommendation includes:

- Further study into the transit connections between:
 - Fort Collins and Greeley/Evans area;
 - Greeley/Evans area and Loveland; and
 - Greeley/Evans area and Denver.
- Additional service and investment along the US 287 corridor.

Figure 8.1 shows the three city-to-city connections for further study and the two enhanced transit service corridors for further investment.

Figure 8.1 2040 RTE Recommendation



Focusing on the broad connections between cities rather than on the corridors themselves allows for a more comprehensive transit analysis. There are a variety of reasons to operate and fund regional transit services, which should be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. Special considerations for transit trips include access to medical facilities and employment centers, and connectivity for transit-dependent groups. In-depth analysis provides the greatest flexibility and allows for unique considerations for each connection. For example, studying connections between Greeley and Fort Collins may lead to the study of routes through Timnath and Windsor and/or a route through Loveland.

Rather than focusing on the specifics of each corridor in this document, the 2040 RTE recommends transit in the region expand upon existing services, existing relationships, and previous studies. Further studies of the recommended connections will also refine the planning process and result in changes as services are implemented.

As identified in **Chapter 6**, there are significant questions to resolve regarding governance, funding, and service delivery. Previous studies, like the 2013 **North Front Range Transit Vision Feasibility Study**, presented recommendations for further studies, actions for implementation, and potential partnerships. As the region moves forward with regional transit, a consideration of previously completed work should guide future actions. The North Front Range region has a successful regional funding and governance model in the FLEX service.

The region should build on its successes in transit, such as the IGA model used for the FLEX service and the partnership funding GET. Through a mixture of town, city, and county subsidies, Transfort operates the FLEX service through partnership each member jurisdiction. Transfort continues to operate as the transit operator with input from each member community. Transfort has an existing governing structure, and the ability to operate and maintain the vehicles. This is not to say all future regional transit should be operated by Transfort, but rather the process for governance and funding could be replicated. Similar to Transfort operating FLEX, GET operates service in Evans and Garden City through IGAs. Using this mechanism, GET provides routes through the two communities without having to introduce a new governance structure or provide funding for these services itself.

It is anticipated it will take at least three years to establish service in a new corridor once the financial and institutional issues are addressed. The three year estimate allows time for project programming, budgeting funds, acquiring equipment, and implementing service.

The expansion of FLEX and MAX services should continue based on the respective strategic plans that exist. The FLEX service will be expanded to the City of Boulder in 2016, which opens the door for additional service hours and further connections. Transfort's 2009 **Strategic Operating Plan** discussed possible investment in the MAX service including the expansion of service along West Elizabeth Street through the CSU

campus. Between the extended FLEX and MAX services, a continuous transit corridor will run from downtown Fort Collins to downtown Boulder. This will provide connections to local COLT, RTD, and Transfort routes, five transit centers, and two major universities.

Table 8.1 summarizes the actions completed in the region since 2011, when the 2035 RTE was adopted and the North I-25 FEIS was completed.

Table 8.1 Summary of Actions Since 2011

Action	Date	Result
Examination of Regional Transit	April 2013	<u>North Front Range Transit Vision Feasibility Study</u> (did not include GET)
MAX BRT Service Began	May 2014	Increased use of transit in the Mason Corridor and Fort Collins
3 years of Funding for FLEX route extension to Boulder service in 2016	2014	DRCOG CMAQ funding to extend FLEX service to Boulder.
Extension of Transfort service to Bustang	February 2015	Link between local transit route and interregional route.
Establish Bustang service	July 2015	Service between Fort Collins/Loveland and Denver

Table 8.2 lists recommendations to help move the North Front Range region towards regional transit connections.

Table 8.2 Summary of Recommendations

Action	Timeframe	Responsibility
Establish multimodal actions and strategies as part of 2015 CMP update	2015	MPO staff
Establish corridor priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program funding for corridor studies • Align resources for regional transit service development and TDM activities 	2016	Planning Council
Establish MPO process for involving stakeholders in development of regional transit connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As needed committees with staff support • Representation in regional discussions • Communication channels 	2016	Planning Council
COLT extension to Bustang	2016	COLT
FLEX extension to connect CSU and University of Colorado (CU) in Boulder	2016	Transfort
Adopt policy positions which support local, state, and federal initiatives that build funding options for regional transit services.	2016-2017	Planning Council
Park-n-Ride to accommodate Bustang	2016-2017	Fort Collins/CDOT
Support local finance options that recognize and allow for the funding of regional services.	Ongoing	Local Communities/Planning Council
Include development of regional transit connections as a priority in project evaluation and selection criteria	Ongoing	Planning Council with TAC support
Monitor progress towards completing these actions	Ongoing	TAC with MPO staff support
Work with local providers to develop a regional fare structure to provide distance-based fares and seamless transfers between systems	Ongoing	Transit agencies with MPO staff support
Extend MAX hours of service	Ongoing	Transfort

SUMMARY

This 2040 RTE provides a long-range vision for regional transit services, but the focus of the recommended actions is short term because the plan will be updated again in four years. Further action should be taken as the connection analyses are completed. The region has had success in working together on transit, as shown by the FLEX route and the partnerships funding GET. It is through cooperative action and many small steps that a regional transit vision will become a reality.

The 2040 RTE recommendation includes:

- Further study into the transit connections between:
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 - Greeley/Evans area and Loveland; and
 - Greeley/Evans area and Denver.
- Additional service and investment along the US 287 corridor.