

APPENDIX C



Photo credit: Alana Miller (photo contest entry).

Public and stakeholder engagement

Overview

Public and stakeholder engagement was integral to the development of the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan. The plan is a collective vision that represents the input of the public and DRCOG's stakeholders and partners. Over the two-year process of developing the plan, engagement was divided into four distinct phases, which each served different purposes and built upon each other.

This appendix documents public and stakeholder engagement associated with the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan as adopted in April 2021. For engagement activities associated with the plan's 2022 update, please see Appendix B of the Greenhouse Gas Transportation Report (Appendix T).

The first phase, visioning and education, focused on the general transportation priorities of the general public and guided all later work in the plan.

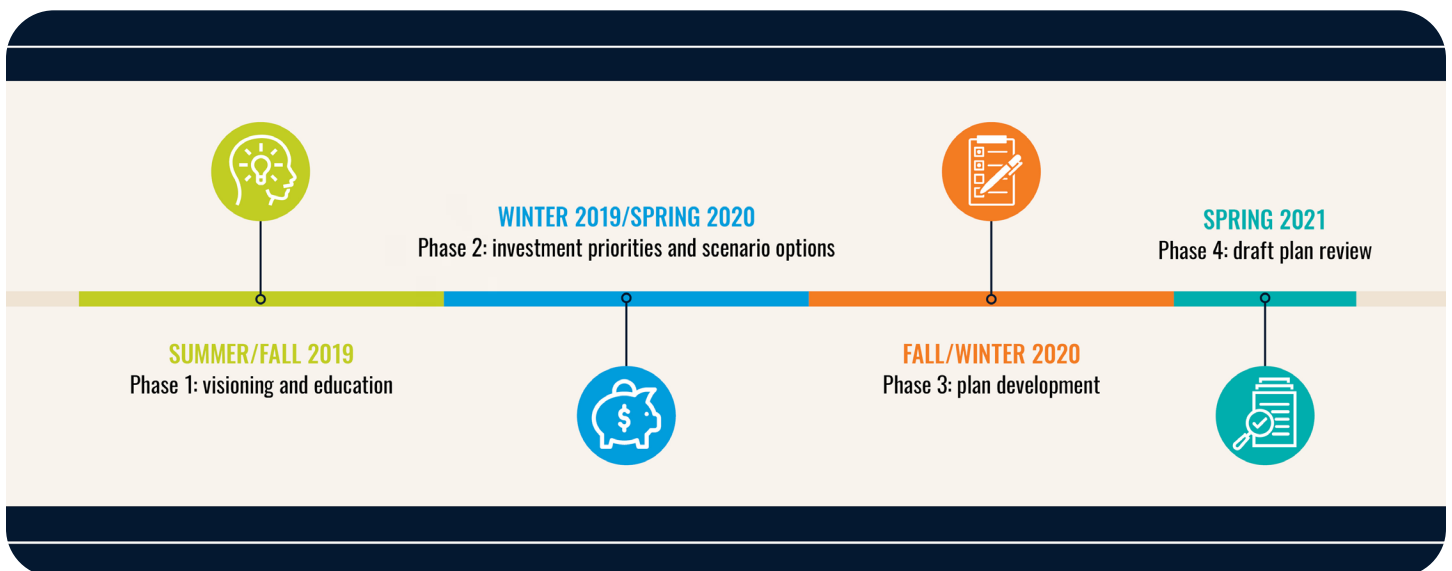
Phase two, investment priorities and scenario options, tested scenarios to study the regional mobility outcomes of investment types and learn more about the investment priorities of stakeholders and the public.

The third phase, plan development, was primarily focused on stakeholder engagement and the development of a shared strategy of projects and programs for the plan.

The fourth and final phase involved the public review of the draft plan to ensure that the draft is consistent with the input received throughout the process.

Engaging underrepresented populations

One of the guiding principles of DRCOG's overarching public engagement plan is the invitation and consideration of perspectives from those traditionally underrepresented in transportation planning processes. Some examples include individuals who speak



languages other than English, individuals representing diverse cultural backgrounds, low-income individuals, people with disabilities and young adults. Engagement for the 2050 RTP focused on reaching out to underrepresented communities early and often. A few highlighted approaches are described below.

During phase one, DRCOG staff attended multiple festivals and fairs around the region to meet people where they already were spending time. All materials were presented in both Spanish and English, and the initial visioning survey was provided and promoted in Spanish as well as English. At one event with a high number of Spanish speakers, DRCOG used a Spanish interpreter to ensure that attendees could engage in meaningful conversations and provide input in the language they were most comfortable conversing with.

In late 2019, two new advisory groups were formed to provide guidance and input throughout the 2050 RTP plan development process. The groups reviewed the components of the plan as they were developed, helped guide and develop public engagement activities, and provided comments and guidance to DRCOG's staff, committees, and Board of Directors. The intent of both advisory groups was to hear perspectives from people who have not been typically involved in the transportation planning process early on and have their guidance shape the plan.

The Youth Advisory Panel was convened to ensure that younger voices were heard during the plan process. The panel brought together high school age representatives from DRCOG's member government youth boards and commissions throughout the region. In tandem, a Civic Advisory Group was also convened to develop the plan with guidance from interested residents who represent

the diversity of communities and experiences in the Denver region and who may not have participated in transportation planning previously.

More details about engagement methods used in each phase can be found on the following pages.

Engaging stakeholders

In addition to guidance from the general public, stakeholder engagement significantly helped shape the 2050 RTP. DRCOG staff worked with the Colorado Department of Transportation, Regional Transportation District, local governments, and other transportation providers throughout the process. Engagement included workshops, meetings and weekly check-ins. DRCOG's federally-designated role as the leader of the region's multimodal transportation planning process included a process designed to respect the close collaboration with CDOT, RTD and local governments.

DRCOG's stakeholders, and particularly its member governments, helped ensure that the plan supports Metro Vision. In addition, the stakeholders provided guidance on how investment decisions support Metro Vision and public feedback, and ensured that projects in the plan reflect the vision and priorities of the public. DRCOG's Transportation Advisory Committee, which is composed of member government and regional partner agency staff, served in a steering committee capacity throughout the plan's development. The elected officials and agency leaders on the Regional Transportation Committee and the elected officials on the Board of Directors provided additional guidance and made key decisions throughout the planning process.

Phase one, visioning and education: June 2019 – October 2019

Phase one engagement methods used:

- In-person pop-up events.
- Survey.
- Video.
- Website and social media posts.
- Regional partner presentations.
- County transportation forums.

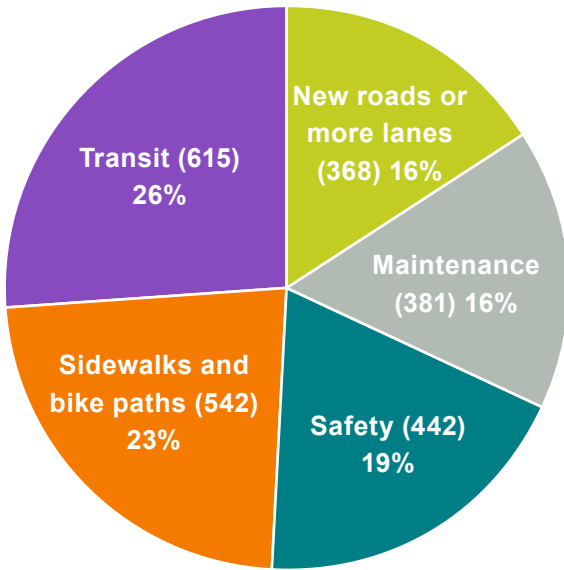
In-person pop-up events

In July and August 2019, DRCOG staff attended six festivals and fairs around the region: the Colorado Black Arts Festival, the Gilpin County Fair, the Westminster Latino Festival, the Boulder County Fair, the Aurora Global Fest and the Colorado Classic Open Streets event. At each event, DRCOG staff introduced event attendees to the regional transportation plan effort, distributed information about how to participate in the planning process and asked attendees to participate in a game at the DRCOG booth.

The game involved five buckets that each represented a different aspect of the transportation system:

- Maintenance.
- Sidewalks and bike paths.
- New roads or more lanes.
- Safety.
- Transit.





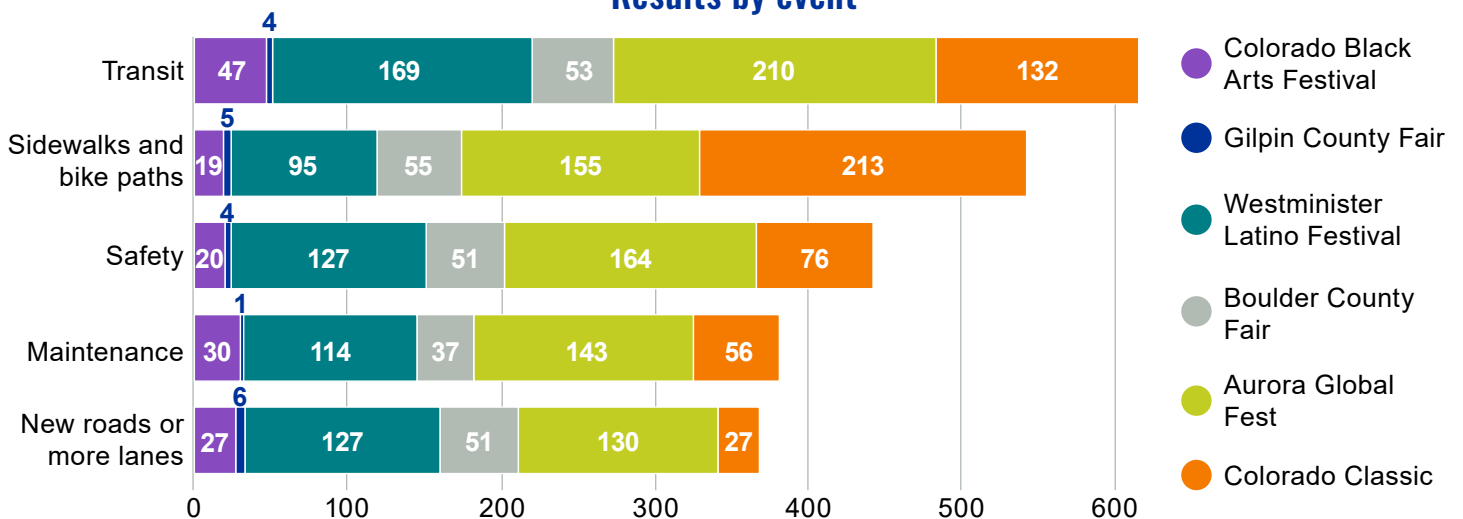
Approximately 470 people gave their input by playing the game, and dozens more interacted with staff at the booth. The compiled results of the activity are documented in the pie chart to the left. Results displayed by event are noted below.

Observations:

Transit, sidewalks and bike paths, and safety received the most coins. Transit was the highest priority of attendees at the Colorado Black Arts Festival, the Westminster Latino Festival and the Aurora Global Fest, and second-highest at the Colorado Classic and Boulder County Fair. Sidewalks and bike paths were rated highest at the Colorado Classic and Boulder County Fair, but received the least number of coins at the Colorado Black Arts Festival and the Westminster Latino Festival.

A card on the table included the main prompt for the game: “How would you use your money for transportation?” Each participant was given five gold-colored plastic coins and asked to distribute the coins among the buckets based on what was most important to them or what they would fix about the transportation system if they were in charge of funding decisions.

Results by event



Survey

During phase one, DRCOG also hosted an online survey to solicit input from the public on several high-level questions to help inform the development of the plan. The first five questions were designed to understand the public's opinions about the current status of the regional transportation system, as well as their values and priorities for the future of transportation in the region. The final seven questions were optional and served to document the demographics of respondents to better understand who participated in the survey. The survey was available in both Spanish and English.

The survey was an engagement tool for collecting feedback from the public; it was not intended to express a scientific, statistically-valid representation of all of the region's residents. Understanding the demographics of respondents through the optional questions helps DRCOG determine whether it needs to use additional methods in the future to hear from a wider range of people in the region.

The survey was promoted through an eblast sent to over 2,700 people on existing DRCOG mailing lists as well as through multiple Spanish and English social media posts on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. The eblast requested additional distribution of the survey through each recipient's own organizations or networks.

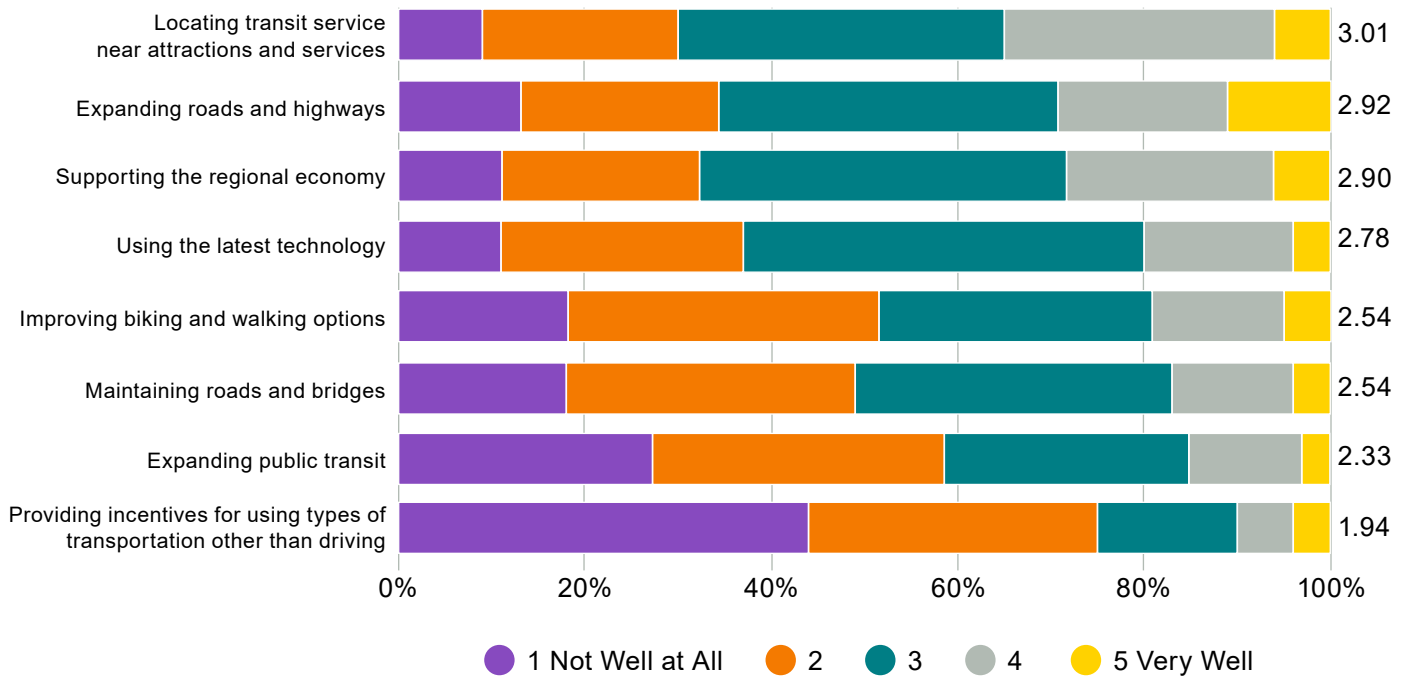
Between Sept. 4 and Oct. 6, 2019, 594 people submitted responses to the survey. The majority of responses came from City and County of Denver residents (45%), followed by Arapahoe County (15%), and Jefferson County (14%). One percent of responses came from people living outside the DRCOG region. A comparison of demographic characteristics of respondents to the regional population is available at the end of this section.

The remainder of this section documents the results of the survey and provides some observations about the responses, highlighting some of the variations in responses by residents of various counties. The results and responses from both this survey and the in-person outreach events were used to inform the further development of the plan.

Question 1: How well do you think the regional transportation system is doing in each of the areas listed below? Rate each of them on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “not well at all” and 5 being “very well”.

Observations:

- Residents rated the regional transportation system as average in most areas. Locating transit service near attractions and services received the highest average rating, while providing incentives for using types of transportation other than driving received the lowest rating.
- Adams, Arapahoe, Douglas and Jefferson counties gave lower ratings than the City and County of Denver and Boulder County to how well the region performs in expanding roads and highways and maintaining roads and highways.
- The City and County of Denver and Boulder County gave lower ratings to locating transit service near attractions and services, using the latest technology, improving biking and walking options, and expanding public transit.



Question 2: In your daily life, what is your most critical transportation challenge? Select the one challenge that is most critical to you.

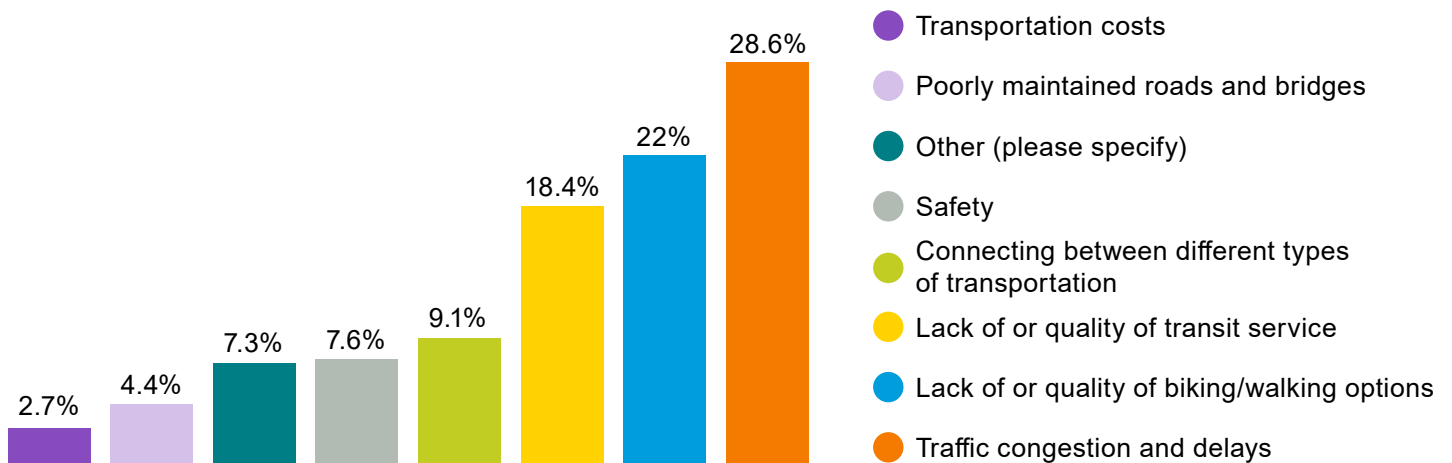
Observations:

- “Traffic congestion and delays” was the most critical transportation challenge cited in every county except Denver, where lack of quality biking and walking options was the most critical challenge. Lack of quality transit service was also more often selected than traffic congestion and delays as the most critical challenge in the City and County of Denver.
- Adams County differed from other counties in that poorly maintained roads and bridges was the second most frequently selected transportation challenge, instead of lack of quality transit service or lack of quality biking and walking options.

“Other” written responses:

- Air pollution.
- Ride hailing for older adults, people in wheelchairs.
- Inefficient use of tax money.

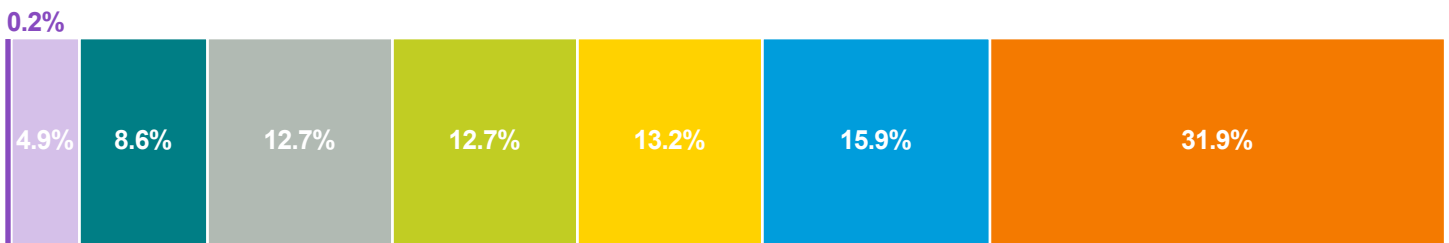
- Construction disrupting sidewalks and bus routes.
- Roadway space for too many modes.
- At-grade train crossings.
- Poor traffic engineering and signal timing.
- No restrooms at transit stops.
- Dangerous scooters.
- Access to the mountains for recreation.
- High-occupancy vehicle requirement of three people.
- Global warming and climate change.
- Lack of first- and last-mile solutions.
- No transportation challenges.
- More than one option or all of the above.



Question 3: The success of a transportation system involves many different factors. In your opinion, which factor is most important to a successful regional transportation system?

Observations:

- Transit was rated the most important overall, followed by people spending less time in traffic.
- Transit was rated most important in four of the six largest counties.
- People time was most important in Arapahoe and Douglas counties, and second most important in Adams and Jefferson counties.
- In contrast to other counties, health was the second most frequently selected factor in Boulder County.
- Equity was more frequently selected as most important in Adams County compared to other counties.

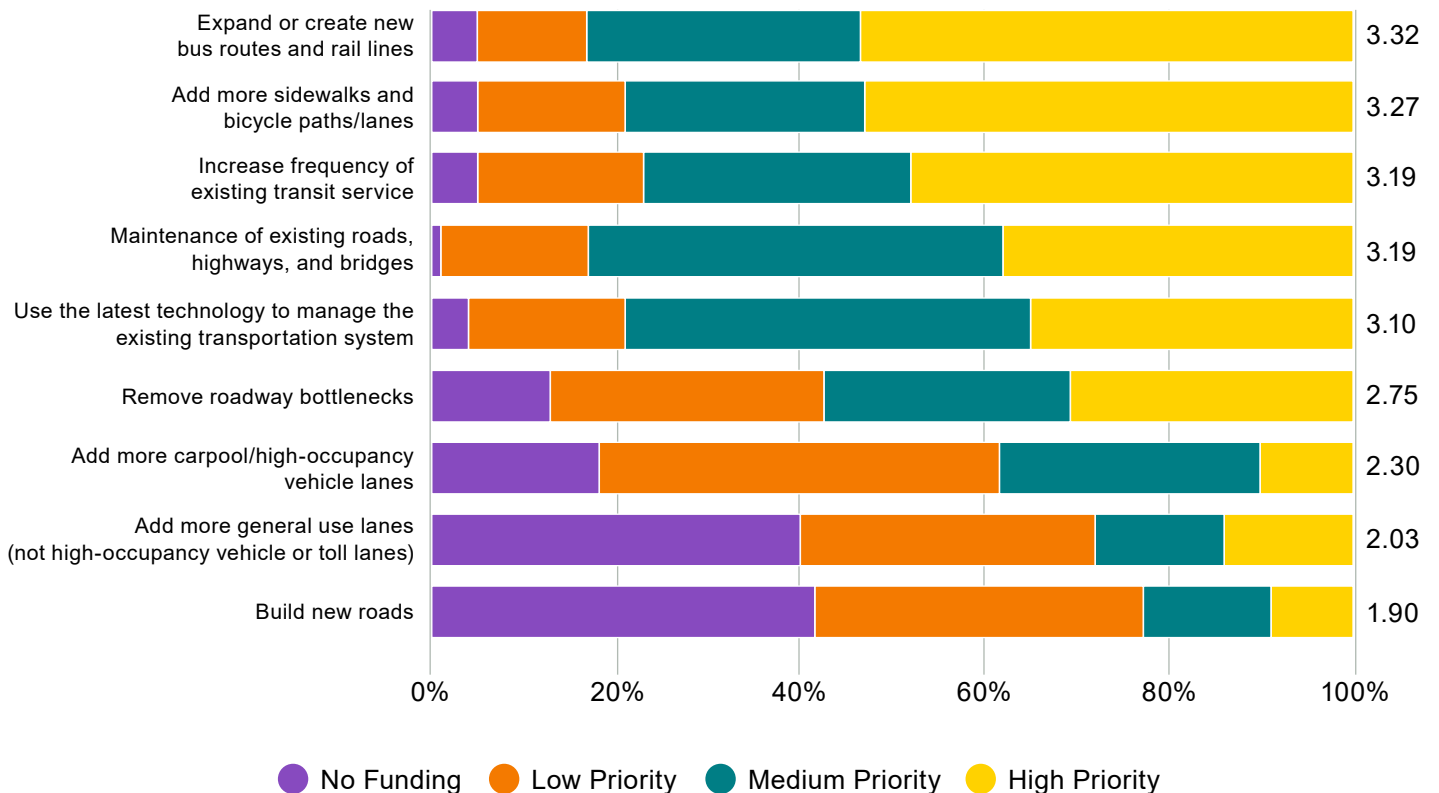


- **Freight time:** Delivery trucks spend less time in traffic.
- **Equity:** It's easier for older people, people of color, people with low incomes, or people living with disabilities to access places they need to go.
- **Other** (please specify)
- **Cost:** Housing and transportation costs are manageable for households of all incomes.
- **People time:** People spend less time in traffic.
- **Safety:** Fewer people are seriously injured or die from crashes.
- **Transit:** Transit is more frequent, convenient, and goes to more places.
- **Health:** Community health is improved, because of less pollution from transportation and more people are able to walk and bike to get places.

Question 4: Funding is limited for transportation projects, so improvements must be prioritized. Please indicate whether you think each of the following transportation projects should be given a high, medium, or low priority for funding, or if no funding should be spent.

Observations:

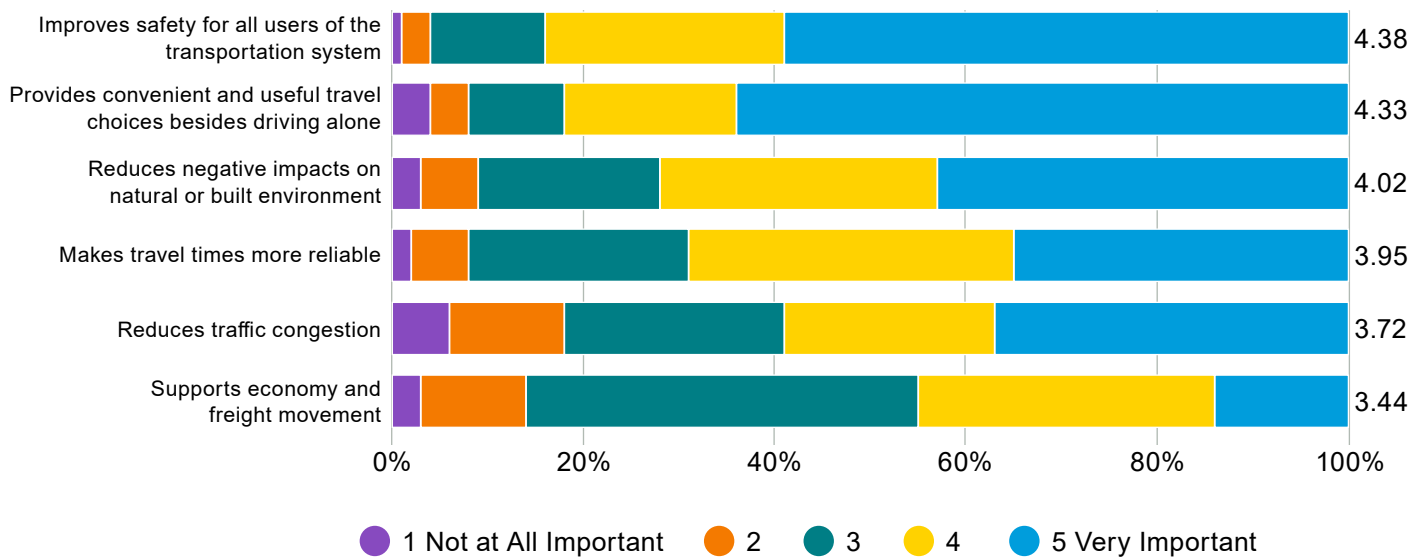
- Overall, respondents gave the highest priority to expanding or creating new bus routes and rail lines; adding more sidewalks and bicycle paths and lanes; maintenance of existing roads, highways and bridges; and increasing frequency of existing transit service.
- Boulder County and the City and County of Denver did not prioritize maintenance of existing roads, highways and bridges as much as other counties.
- Boulder County and the City and County of Denver were very similar in that residents gave the highest priority to expanding or creating new bus routes, adding more sidewalks and bicycle paths and lanes, and increasing the frequency of existing transit service.
- Douglas County residents placed the highest priority on maintenance of existing roads, highways and bridges, removing roadway bottlenecks, and using the latest technology to manage the existing transportation system.



Question 5: How important should each of the following factors be when policymakers are developing transportation policies and plans for the Denver region? Rate each of them on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “not at all important” and 5 being “very important”.

Observations:

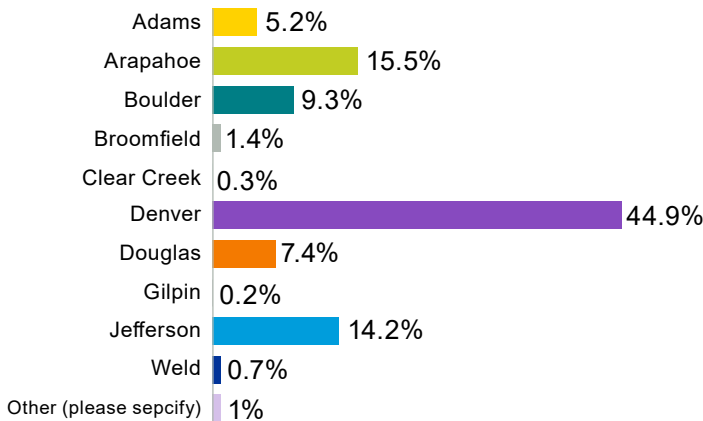
- Improving safety is important to all residents.
- Reducing traffic congestion is more important to residents of Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas counties.
- Making travel times more reliable is also more important to residents of Arapahoe, Douglas and Jefferson counties.
- Providing convenient and useful travel choices besides driving alone and reducing negative impacts on natural or built environment is more important to the City and County of Denver and Boulder County residents.



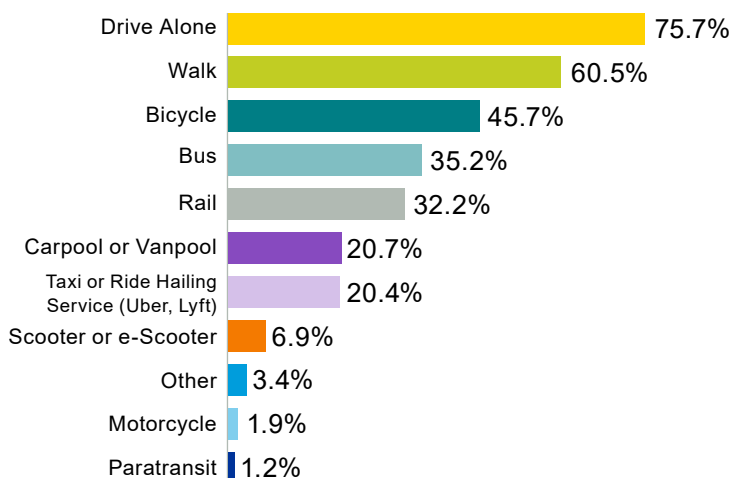
Online participant demographics

594 people participated in the survey. In addition to the questions above, participants were also asked to provide optional demographic information to help DRCOG understand whether the survey tool reached a representative group of people from the region. The results allow DRCOG to better tailor its future outreach and ensure the organization hears a wide range of perspectives.

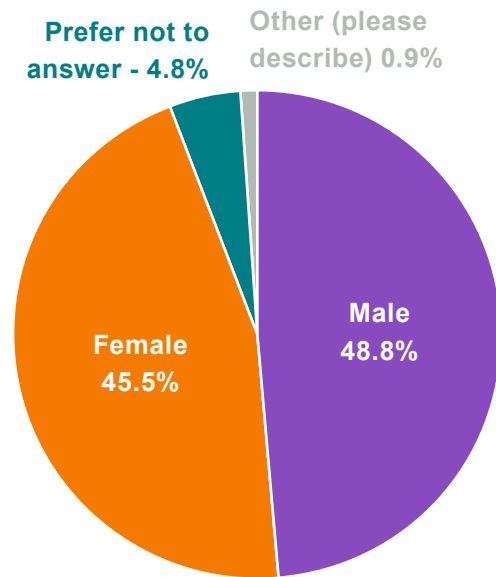
Question 6: In which county do you live?



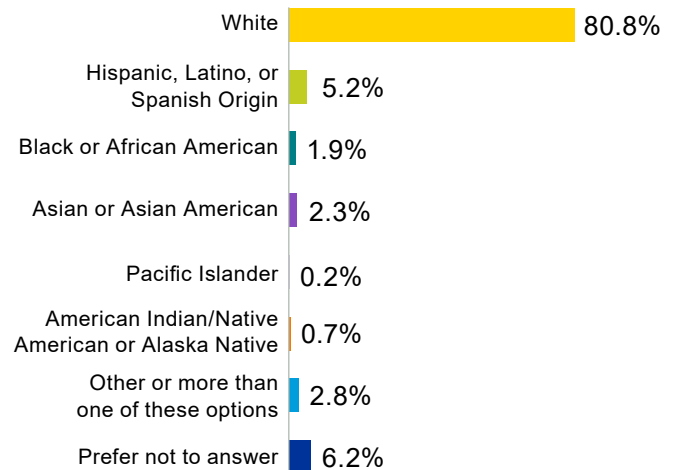
Question 7: During a typical week, which of these forms of transportation do you use to get around the region? Select all that you use.



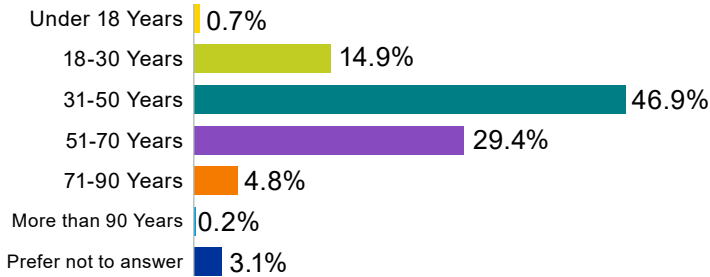
Question 8: To which gender do you most closely identify?



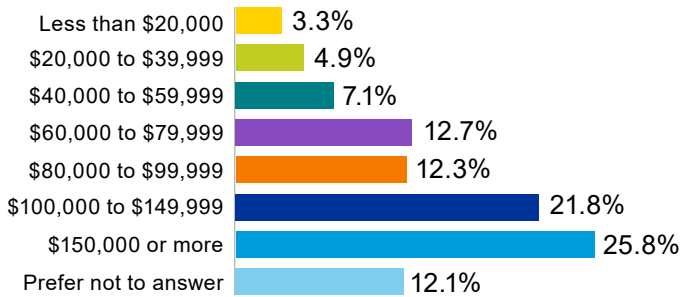
Question 9: Which of these options best describes your ethnicity?



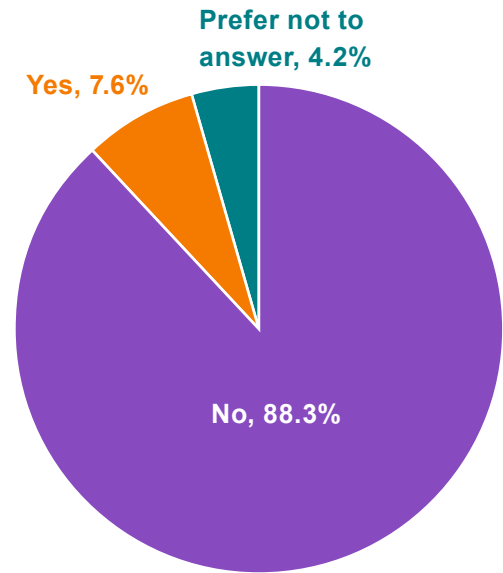
Question 10: What is your age?



Question 11: What is your annual household income, before taxes?



Question 12: Do you have any limitations or a disability that impacts your mobility?



Online participant comparison to regional population

The following tables helped DRCOG analyze whether participants in the online survey were a representative group reflective of the diverse communities and broad range of experiences in the region. Groups that were

underrepresented in respondent information by four percent or more are indicated **in purple**, and groups that were overrepresented by four percent or more are indicated **in blue**.

County	Percent of survey respondents	Percent of population of region
Adams	5.3%	15.7%
Arapahoe	15.7%	19.8%
Boulder	9.4%	9.9%
Broomfield	1.4%	2.1%
Clear Creek	0.3%	0.3%
Denver	45.3%	21.9%
Douglas	7.5%	10.5%
Gilpin	0.2%	0.2%
Jefferson	14.3%	17.6%
Southwest Weld	0.7%	2.0%

Respondents (593) minus those living outside DRCOG region (6)

Race	Percent of survey respondents	Percent of population of region*
White	86.2%	86.7%
Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin	5.5%	22.4%
Black or African American	2.0%	6.4%
American Indian/Native American/ Alaska Native	0.7%	1.7%
Asian or Asian American	2.4%	5.2%
Pacific Islander	0.2%	
Other or more than one of these options	2.9%	Not available

Respondents (579) minus “prefer not to answer” (36).

*Does not include data for the portion of Weld County located within the DRCOG region. In addition, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs data differentiates by race (White, Black, American Indian, Asian or Pacific Islander) and ethnicity (Hispanic origin or not of Hispanic origin), which allows for only a general comparison with the survey question. Data for Asian and Pacific Islander is combined.

Gender	Percent of survey respondents	Percent of population of region
Male	51.3%	49.8%
Female	47.8%	50.2%
Other (please describe)	0.9%	not available

Respondents (582) minus “prefer not to answer” (28)

Age	Percent of survey respondents	Percent of population of region*
Under 18	0.7%	21.6%
18-30 years	15.4%	18.8%
31-50 years	48.4%	29.0%
51-70 years	30.4%	22.9%
71-90 years	5.0%	7.4%
More than 90	0.2%	0.5%

Respondents (578) minus “prefer not to answer” (18)

*Does not include data for the portion of Weld County located within the DRCOG region.

Income	Percent of survey respondents	Percent of population of region*
Less than \$20,000	3.7%	11.2%
\$20,000 to \$39,999	5.5%	15.3%
\$40,000 to \$59,999	8.1%	15.4%
\$60,000 to \$79,999	14.4%	10.0%**
\$80,000 to \$99,999	14.0%	13.6%***
\$100,000 to \$149,999	24.9%	17.4%
\$150,000 or more	29.4%	17.1%

Respondents (577) minus “prefer not to answer” (70)

*Does not include data for the portion of Weld County located within the DRCOG region.

**Available data is for \$60,000-\$74,999.

***Available data is for \$74,999-\$99,999.

Video

During phase one, DRCOG staff developed an introductory video that was featured on the project website and promoted through DRCOG social media channels. The video was also shown at stakeholder meetings to introduce the project and the scope of the plan. The video was tailored to an audience who may not know anything about regional transportation planning and provided a brief high-level overview of what the plan is and how it affects people's lives. To watch the video, [visit this link](#).

Website and social media posts

During phase one, a [project website](#) was developed that introduced the public to the purpose of the plan, featured the video and announced opportunities for input like the online survey. Posts on social media promoted the pop-up events that DRCOG staff attended and announced the opportunity to take the online survey.



Regional partner presentations

Several presentations were made to regional partners during phase one to kick off the project and introduce partners to the timeline and goals of the plan. The presentations were made to CDOT Region 4 and the North Area Transportation Alliance board. DRCOG also had a booth at CDOT's 2019 Transportation Summit where staff invited transportation professionals and summit attendees to play the bucket and coin game described previously.

County transportation forums

DRCOG staff presented numerous times at the county transportation forums to introduce stakeholders to the plan and update them as work progressed.

Phase two, scenario options and investment priorities: November 2019 – July 2020

Phase two engagement methods used:

- Advisory groups.
- Online engagement site: budget game and survey.
- Regional partner presentations.
- County transportation forums.
- Website and social media posts.

This section summarizes the public input received during phase two of the plan process from November 2019 through July 2020, as the scenario planning analysis was developed, scenarios were tested and investment priorities began to be discussed.

How did input from phase one guide phase two?

The input received in phase one guided the development of regional transportation and land use scenarios. In terms of scenario content, high interest in **transit, sidewalks, bike paths** and **safety** in the phase one in-person outreach guided the development of scenarios that could test situations involving the topics.

In the phase one online survey, **traffic congestion or delays** and **lack of biking, walking and transit options** were also cited as main challenges in the region, so they were also focuses of the scenarios. Many respondents during the phase one online survey and in-person engagement thought the region needed to invest in **transit**. Specifically, top funding priorities from the online survey included **transit service**

expansion and increasing transit service frequency, creating more sidewalks and bike paths, and maintenance of the existing transportation system. **Safety** and **travel choices** were rated as the most important factors for guiding transportation plans and policies. As a result, the final transportation scenarios included one specifically focused on transit service and another scenario specifically focused on travel choices, especially from the perspective of multimodal arterial safety. The [scenario planning technical memo](#) documents the development, analysis and outcomes of the scenario analysis process for the 2050 RTP.

In the fall of 2019, staff gathered input from DRCOG's standing committees, the Transportation Advisory Committee and the Regional Transportation Committee, to help develop the scenarios. Additionally, input was collected from several county subregional transportation forums to help shape each scenario. In December 2019, the DRCOG Board of Directors endorsed the scenarios that would be tested.

Advisory groups

In late 2019, two new advisory groups were formed to provide guidance and input throughout the 2050 RTP plan development process. The groups reviewed the components of the plan as they were developed, helped guide and develop public engagement activities and provided comments and guidance to DRCOG staff, committees and the Board of Directors. The advisory groups were formed to facilitate engagement early in the process and throughout plan development.

Youth Advisory Panel

DRCOG staff convened a Youth Advisory Panel to ensure that younger voices were heard during the plan process. The panel brings together representatives from DRCOG's member government youth boards and commissions throughout the region. Recruitment for the panel involved outreach to the 18 local youth boards and commissions in DRCOG's member governments to secure representatives from each commission.

During the [first meeting](#) of the Youth Advisory Panel in November, participants were introduced to the plan and participated in a survey similar to the phase one online survey as well as a priority-setting exercise. In the survey, panel members listed **traffic congestion**, **transportation costs** and **transit service** as their most critical transportation challenges. **Transit** and the **amount of time spent in traffic** were considered most important to a successful transportation system. When asked what they would spend money on to fix regional transportation issues, **transit** received more support than any other option combined. The panel also highlighted the importance of **reducing effects on the natural environment** regularly throughout their responses.

Youth Advisory Panel priorities to achieve their vision for transportation in 2050:

- 1) Mass transit and environment.
- 2) Alternative transportation.
- 3) Safety.
- 4) Outward growth.
- 5) Technology.

The [second meeting](#) focused on scenario planning and initial scenario trends. The panel was divided into two groups, and each group was given a bracket exercise with 16 transportation measures. Panel members were asked to weigh each measure, similar to a tournament bracket, and determine what the most important measures were to assess the various scenarios. After both groups completed their brackets, the panel worked together to create a third bracket, debating the merits of the various measures to come to a consensus bracket.

The panel's four most important measures were: **more electric vehicles**, **fewer deaths on roads**, **fewer greenhouse gas emissions** and **more people have access to transit and jobs**. The group decided that the most important measure was that more people have access to transit and jobs, and specifically that transit should be electric to meet the goals of fewer greenhouse gas emissions and more electric vehicles.



Youth Advisory Panel's most important transportation measures to assess scenarios

- Fewer deaths on roads.
- More electric vehicles.
- Fewer greenhouse gas emissions.
- **More people have good access to electric transit and jobs.**

The [third meeting](#) focused on the final scenario results, with the panel providing input on how they thought the scenario results should inform investment priorities. Members also provided feedback on and helped to refine the budget tool that would be posted on the online engagement site.

The results of the budget game revealed that the scenarios that were the group's highest priorities for investment were **Travel Choices, Transit, Infill, and Centers**. In a survey, they also identified **reducing vehicle miles traveled, increasing transit trips** and **increasing walk and bike trips** as the most important transportation goals to achieve by 2050.

Civic Advisory Group

The Civic Advisory Group was formed to provide public input and guidance throughout the plan process from residents who represent the diversity of communities and experiences in the Denver region. The group provides perspectives from people who have not typically been involved in the transportation planning process. About half of the group members are associated with various community-based organizations and nonprofits around the region. Recruitment for the group involved outreach to many organizations and

individuals to identify community members or staff who would be interested in participating. The group consists of about 30 committed members and met approximately bimonthly starting December 2019.

In the [first meeting](#), members took the same survey that the Youth Advisory Panel had taken in their first meeting. Civic Advisory Group members identified **transit service** and **lack of biking and walking options** as their most critical transportation challenges. **Equity** was considered most important to a successful transportation system, as well as **safety** and **transit**. When asked what they would spend money on to solve transportation issues, **transit** received nearly three-quarters of the votes, vastly more than any of the other options.

Civic Advisory Group priorities to achieve their vision for transportation in 2050:

- 1) Overarching priorities:
 - a) Equity and environment.
- 2) Tools:
 - a) Transit.
 - b) Alternative transportation.
 - c) Technology.
- 3) Other priority or tool:
 - a) Housing location.



At the [second meeting](#) focused on scenario planning, the Civic Advisory Group did the same bracket exercise as the Youth Advisory Panel to identify the most important transportation measures to use to assess scenarios. The group's final four most important measures were: **more low-income people have good access to transit and jobs, more walking and rolling trips, fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and more people have access to transit and jobs.** The group decided that the most important measure was that more people have access to transit and jobs.

Most important transportation measures to analyze scenarios

- More low-income people have good access to transit and jobs
- More walking and rolling trips
- Fewer greenhouse gas emissions
- **More people have good access to transit and jobs**

The [third meeting](#) focused on the results of the scenarios, and group members provided their feedback on transportation budget priorities as well as the plan for greater public engagement through the online engagement site. In the budget game, group members felt that the scenarios that were highest priorities for investment were **travel choices, infill, centers and centers and transit.**

Key phase two guidance from advisory groups

The advisory groups played an important role in the process of developing the 2050 RTP. During phase two, both groups emphasized the importance of investment

in transit as well as travel choices like walking and biking. Equitable access to transportation and reducing greenhouse gas emissions were also consistently identified as top priorities for both groups.

The advisory groups continued to meet throughout the later phases of the plan; details of their input in later phases can be found in each phase summary.



Welcome to our online engagement page!

Online engagement site

DRCOG staff developed an online engagement site, which included a budget game activity and survey, to draw out public reactions to the scenario results and learn how members of the community believe those scenario results should inform investment priorities in the plan.

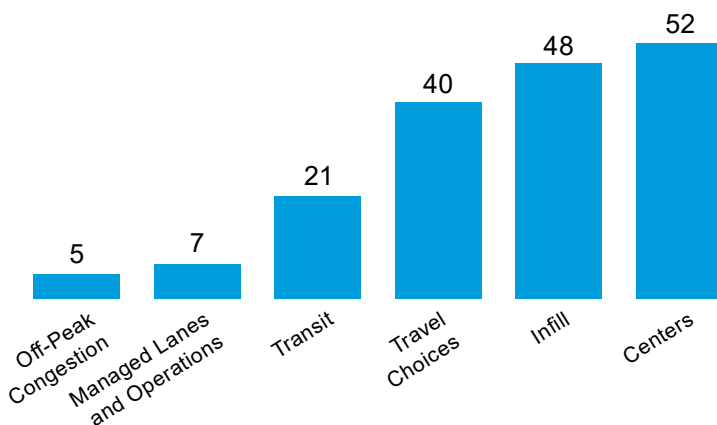
The site provided introductory information about the plan and the purpose and process of scenario planning. Videos featured on the site were recorded in both Spanish and English to describe the results of the various scenarios. Additional charts and a handout summarizing the results were also made available on the site. The site included a budget game for the public to complete as well as a short survey.

Promotion

The opportunity for input on the site was sent out in numerous eblasts and promoted on social media through both organic and paid posts. The eblasts were each sent to about 1,700 respondents on existing DRCOG mailing lists. In total, the social media posts had over 115,000 impressions (the majority of which were through the paid ads) with nearly 2,000 link clicks to the online engagement site. One of the paid Twitter posts was in Spanish and received a significantly higher engagement rate than the other posts. In total, the online engagement site received over 3,000 visits from over 1,000 unique users; of the visitors, 70 people completed the budget game and 74 filled out the follow-up survey.

Budget game results

In the budget game, community members were asked to choose the kind of transportation future (which scenario) they would fund with a \$100 budget. The two land use scenarios, **infill** and **centers**, received the most votes from the 70 participants in the budget game. Of the transportation-focused scenarios, **travel choices** was by far the most popular, receiving almost double the votes of the next highest transportation scenario, **transit**.



For reference, below is a screenshot of how the budget tool appeared to participants:

Your transportation investment budget

REMAINING: \$100.00
 SPENT: \$0.00

Agree to terms and conditions Submit Budget

Centers
 Focus on: Local governments focus opportunity for development around key centers and corridors.

Scenario Results:

- Over **twice** as many walk & bike trips
- 8% decrease** in vehicle miles traveled
- Over **3 times** as many transit trips
- Average Person Delay per Trip **decreases by 27%**. Some localized areas experience **more congestion**.

\$10.00 Fund

Managed Lanes and Operations
 Focus on: Improving operations & traffic flow on region's highways/freeways.

Scenario Results:

- People in vehicles experience **25% less delay** on average
- Fewer secondary crashes** and **improved safety** due to enhanced incident management
- Travel reliability increases significantly** on the region's freeways
- 3% increase in vehicle miles traveled** (~800,000 more daily miles)

\$90.00 Fund

Travel Choices
 Focus on: Increasing travel & mobility choices along region's major roads.

Scenario Results:

- 400,000 fewer** drive-alone work trips every day
- More than **twice as many teleworkers**
- 50% increase** in bicycle/pedestrian trips
- Slight decrease** in transit trips

\$40.00 Fund

Infill

Focus on: Local governments allow for more urban and suburban redevelopment and infill.

Scenario Results:

- People in vehicles experience **11% less delay** on average
- **6% decrease** in vehicle miles traveled
- **Almost twice as many transit trips**
- **50% increase in walk and bike trips**

\$10.00 Fund

Transit

Focus on: Improving/expanding the region's transit network and service.

Scenario Results:

- **79% of households** have good transit access to jobs
- **76% more** transit trips
- **Small decrease** in walk and bike trips
- **100,000 more households use transit**
- **2% decrease** in vehicle miles traveled

\$90.00 Fund

Off-Peak Congestion

Focus on: Build out the freeway/interstate system to address congestion at non-peak times.

Scenario Results:

- **Less than 1%** change in vehicle miles traveled and transit trips
- While there are few changes at the regional level, **some specific corridors have significant impacts**
- **Some traffic is diverted** from larger roads onto I-70 and I-25

\$50.00 Fund

- 1) Reduce vehicle miles traveled.
- 2) Increase walk and bike trips.
- 3) Increase transit trips.
- 4) Fewer people drive to work alone.
- 5) Reduce traffic delay time.

The survey also asked respondents to identify other transportation goals that are important to them that were not included in the above list. Many responses focused on **climate**-related goals, such as improving air quality or reducing pollution and greenhouse gases. Many of the other comments were related to **transit, walking, biking, safety and telework**.

Next, the survey asked respondents how they think the investment priorities in the plan should be guided by the scenario results. The question received a wide range of responses but several focused on investing in solutions that provide the most **return on investment** and using the scenario results and public input to **inform decisions about priorities**.

The final question was more open and simply asked if the respondent had any additional comments about the investment priorities or scenario planning results. Common topics were **telework, climate issues, education and engagement**.

Observations:

Several themes emerged from the engagement work completed in phase two. The connection between land use and transportation is worth further study, as there was strong respondent support for the land use scenarios included in the budget game. The

Survey results

The site received 74 responses to the short survey that participants were asked to complete after reviewing the scenario results and submitting their responses to the budget game.

The first question asked respondents to identify the most important transportation goals for the Denver region to achieve by 2050. Highest ranked were reducing vehicle miles traveled and increasing walk and bike trips. The full ranked results, averaged from all responses, from most important to least important, were:

land use changes in the scenarios led to significant transportation effects. While the land use changes are local decisions that are not necessarily part of the 2050 RTP, the scenario results and respondent support should be integrated into further work at DRCOG and conversations with member governments.

Second, the input received during phase two showed significant respondent support for projects that emphasize transit and walking and biking trips. Both consistently rank highly on most respondent priorities. In addition, supporting projects that reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions were top respondent priorities.

Throughout phase one there was **less** support from respondents for funding new roads, and as shown above, phase two of engagement showed limited support from respondents for either the managed lanes or off-peak congestion scenarios. Although the members of the public who have participated in the engagement efforts consistently note that traffic congestion is an issue in the region, reducing travel time and congestion rank low on their investment priorities. As noted above, there was more respondent support for reducing travel delay through land use strategies than through the managed lanes or off-peak congestion scenarios.

Regional partner presentations

In addition to the general public, stakeholders such as DRCOG member government transportation staff, elected officials and various transportation groups also provided input and guidance throughout phase two of the plan development.

During phase two, presentations were made to other groups at their request, including the Littleton

Transportation and Mobility Board, Leadership Douglas County Forum, Downtown (Denver) Democratic Forum, Smart Commute Metro North Board and a Statewide Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting. DRCOG staff also briefed the City and County Managers Forum during phase two.

County transportation forums

DRCOG staff briefed several of the county transportation forums about the draft scenario concepts in late 2019 and received their feedback.. In March, prior to the draft results of the scenarios being available, DRCOG staff and forum members discussed the scenarios at additional forum meetings. Forums were also updated on the plan status in May and June.

A few forum meetings were canceled or postponed during the stay-at-home order, primarily in March and April 2020. During this time DRCOG staff provided periodic planning process updates and started to roll out the scenario analysis results. The information was presented to the region through several Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and Board of Directors meetings from March to May 2020.

Website and social media posts

Throughout phase two, the project website remained the main source of general information and materials related to the plan process, and additional information was available on the online engagement site. DRCOG used social media to help promote the online engagement site's budget game and survey.

Phase three, plan development: July 2020 – January 2021

Phase three engagement methods used:

- Stakeholder engagement: project solicitation and evaluation process.
- Advisory groups.
- Transportation photo contest.
- Regional partner presentations.
- County transportation forums.

How did input from phases one and two guide phase three?

Along with input received in the first two phases of the plan, DRCOG staff used a framework of the various plans, priorities and studies identified by DRCOG, CDOT, RTD and local governments to help further define the region's major multimodal transportation vision, needs and priorities.

The DRCOG Board of Directors approved a major project solicitation and evaluation process at its July 2020 meeting. While there were multiple components to the process, three components directly integrated the first two phases of engagement. The candidate project priorities were solicited through the county transportation forums. DRCOG staff specifically encouraged the forums to identify major safety, transit, bicycle and pedestrian, multimodal, and other projects that go beyond minimum federal requirements of what must be portrayed in the 2050 RTP to better communicate the region's priorities around the modes

and strategies. This draws directly from the public emphasis on transit, walking and biking, and safety throughout engagement efforts.

While evaluating the candidate projects, DRCOG staff used the Metro Vision plan's primary objectives, which are part of the strategic planning framework of Metro Vision, to address the multimodal transportation policy priorities reflected in the recent public input. DRCOG staff incorporated the key observations learned through the public engagement efforts in the narrative, project types, financial plan and other components of the document.

Stakeholder engagement: Project solicitation and evaluation

The plan development in phase three was largely led by stakeholder input, taking into account the earlier guidance from the public in previous phases. Stakeholders, particularly member governments, provided guidance on how investment decisions should relate to Metro Vision targets and identified which targets are most important to address. In addition, stakeholders helped evaluate whether the plan responded to public feedback and included projects that reflected the vision and priorities of the public. The recommended candidate projects were adopted by the DRCOG Board of Directors at the December 2020 meeting.

DRCOG Committees and Board

During phase three of the plan, DRCOG staff worked with the Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and the Board of Directors to adopt a candidate project solicitation and evaluation process.

DRCOG staff solicited major projects using a “dual-track” process described below. The process was developed to address CDOT’s feedback about its role in the process and to be consistent with the “3C” planning process of metropolitan planning organizations. The solicitation process had two parallel tracks:

- County transportation forums: DRCOG solicited investment priority projects through each forum. The number of proposed candidate projects each forum submitted was based on each county’s share of regional population, employment and vehicle miles traveled.
- Interagency coordination process: DRCOG, CDOT and RTD developed draft regional investment priorities through a series of workshops based on previously-adopted policy framework.

DRCOG staff presented regularly throughout the plan development process to the Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and the Board on plan updates. Presentations included updates on the financial plan, summaries of engagement, project solicitation and evaluation, and draft and final investment priorities.

Interagency coordination

In addition to drafting regional investment priorities through workshops with CDOT and RTD, DRCOG staff held weekly meetings with staff from CDOT regions 1 and 4 and RTD staff. The meetings provided regular communication between the three regional agencies to collaborate and coordinate on project evaluation, fiscal constraint and plan development.

The three regional agencies took numerous points of input to reach fiscal constraint:

- Multimodal project investments consistent with the priority programs investment strategy.
- The planning and project development status of a candidate project or corridor.
- Projects with some level of likely regional benefit (instead of primarily localized benefit or driven primarily by local growth and development).
- County forums’ candidate project rankings.
- Regional agencies’ priorities.
- Combining multiple versions of submitted projects and geographically adjacent projects.
- Geographic balance.

Other important considerations of the interagency process to reach fiscal constraint included:

- Additional regional revenue was added to the overall fiscal constraint.
- Despite the additional revenue, there was a multibillion-dollar gap to close to reach fiscal constraint.
- For projects that had to be excluded from fiscal constraint, a “multiple rationale” strategy was used. In other words, excluded projects ranked low on a forum’s priority list, ranked low in DRCOG staff’s

Metro Vision/FAST Act qualitative scoring and had additional rationale(s) for not being included in fiscal constraint. (Example additional rationales include primarily local-growth driven, project implementation timeframe, etc.)

County transportation forums

Based on the 2050 RTP candidate project solicitation and evaluation process and criteria adopted by the DRCOG Board at its July 15, 2020, meeting, DRCOG staff worked with the county transportation forums and mountain counties to solicit and evaluate major multimodal candidate projects for potential inclusion in the fiscally constrained component of the 2050 RTP.

DRCOG staff presented at multiple county transportation forum meetings throughout the summer months to provide guidance as each forum developed solicitation and evaluation processes unique to its subregion.

Regional Evaluation Panel

The qualitative scores conducted by DRCOG staff were the primary input for the 2050 RTP Regional Evaluation Panel. The Panel, composed of one staff representative from each of the county transportation forums, mountain counties and staff from CDOT, RTD and DRCOG, met twice in September to review the list of candidate projects and their qualitative scoring results. The purpose of the panel was to provide input to the subsequent interagency process for further developing fiscally constrained multimodal project investment recommendations.

Advisory groups

The Civic Advisory Group and Youth Advisory Panel each met twice during phase three of the project. Due to

the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings were held virtually. The two groups met separately in September and discussed the project evaluation and solicitation process.

Through an interactive exercise using eight illustrative projects, the groups provided their reactions to various project types submitted during the candidate project solicitation. Eight anonymous projects were chosen as representative of many of the types of projects submitted to DRCOG. Each project was described in terms of its context, the problem, the proposed project and the reasons why the county transportation forum thought that it should be included in the plan.

The [Youth Advisory Panel](#) members were asked to rate each project from 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely well) in response to the questions. The projects with an interchange, managed lanes on a highway, and road widening with medians and side paths received the lowest ratings. The projects with a regional bike trail, safety improvements for bikes and pedestrians, and road widenings with bike and pedestrian facilities received the highest ratings.

While there were many overlaps, the [Civic Advisory Group](#)'s responses were slightly different than the Youth Advisory Panel. The lowest rated projects by the Civic Advisory Group were road widening with medians and side paths, managed lanes on a highway and road widening with bike and pedestrian facilities. The highest rated projects were safety improvements for bike and pedestrians, high-capacity transit and the regional bike trail.

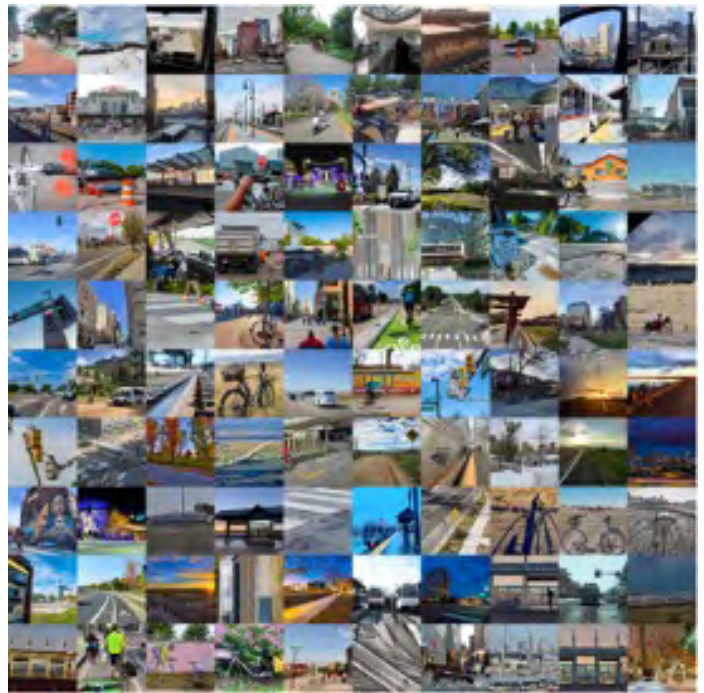
In December, the [Youth Advisory Panel](#) and [Civic Advisory Group](#) each met again. The meetings focused on two topics that had come up regularly throughout the

previous year: environmental justice and greenhouse gas emissions. Each of the groups participated in a brainstorming activity to identify locations that vulnerable populations may have challenges reaching to assist in determining the destinations that will be analyzed for the plan. Grocery stores were brought up by both groups and were ultimately added to the environmental justice analysis in this plan. In addition, DRCOG staff facilitated a discussion about greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, transportation emission reduction strategies and the potential effect of electric vehicles.

Transportation photo contest

Phase three engagement was largely stakeholder-focused as the plan was being drafted, but DRCOG staff did not want to lose momentum or the public's attention during the phase. To maintain interest and momentum, DRCOG staff launched a transportation-themed photo contest through social media during phase three. Announcing the contest to over 2,200 people through DRCOG's email distribution lists and through many social media posts, DRCOG staff asked the public to submit photos that captured the many modes of transportation in the region.

The contest ran from mid-December 2020 through mid-January 2021. In total, DRCOG received over 200 photo submissions. DRCOG staff were invited to vote on the photo submittals to narrow the selection to five photos. Then, another social media announcement was made to present the five winners and ask the public to vote on a grand prize winner through an online survey. The grand prize winner won a gift basket of treats from local businesses in the region. The five finalist photos were used in the design of the plan document.



Regional partner presentations

In addition to the coordination with regional partners described above, DRCOG continued to give presentations about the plan to partners around the region, including the Aurora Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee, Douglas Leadership Forum and the City and County Managers Forum, during phase three.

County transportation forums

The forums played a lead role in developing candidate major project priorities for the 2050 RTP. The role is described in greater detail in the project solicitation and selection process subsection above.

Phase four: draft plan review, February 2021-April 2021

Phase four engagement methods used:

- Notices and promotion.
- Website and social media posts.
- Advisory groups.
- On-demand virtual open house.
- Interactive map.
- Virtual public meetings.
- Regional partner presentations.
- Agency review.
- County transportation forums.
- Public hearing.

Executive summary

The recommendations included in the 2050 RTP represent the culmination of a nearly two-year outreach effort throughout the Denver region. In developing the draft plan document for phase four, DRCOG staff incorporated the public and stakeholder input received from all earlier phases. The project solicitation and evaluation process undertaken in phase three and advisory group input informed the projects that ultimately were presented in the draft plan. In addition, staff incorporated the winning photos from the phase three photo contest into the draft.

Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic

The original approach for engagement during phase four included several in-person events in different parts of the region. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, DRCOG staff adapted the planned engagement strategy for phase four to include as many options for the public to provide input as possible from the safety of their homes. Significant emphasis was placed on developing an on-demand virtual open house, where people could review plan resources and provide input in a variety of different ways at a time convenient to them. In addition, staff conducted several live virtual public meetings to provide overviews of the draft plan and answer questions from community members.

Summary of engagement results

With all engagement conducted virtually, DRCOG staff incorporated interactive polling at the regional partner presentations, public meetings and advisory group meetings via virtual meeting platforms during phase four. The polling questions focused on the six main priorities of the 2050 RTP: safety, active transportation, air quality, multimodal mobility, freight and regional transit. Identical polling questions were asked at each meeting, allowing for the data to be compiled from the various meetings. The topic-specific questions were also replicated on the virtual open house website.

A summary of the compiled results follows, with more detailed response summaries incorporated in the “Advisory groups” meetings and “Virtual public meetings” subsections of this report. In all, DRCOG staff received **260 responses** to the questions through the meetings and the virtual open house. Interactive polling results are not a statistically valid, representative sample survey of the region’s views, but rather are an

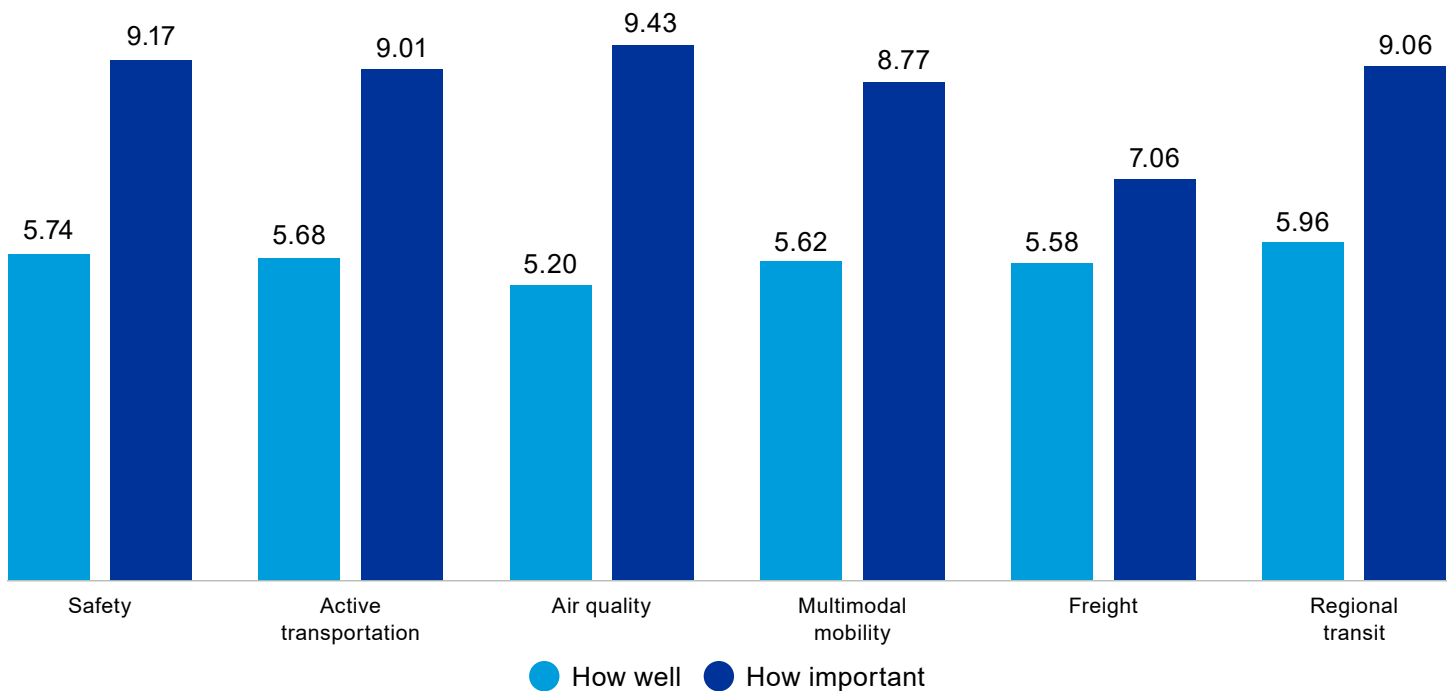
engagement tool for collecting feedback from the public on the 2050 RTP.

The polling questions asked “How well do you think the 2050 RTP will improve” each topic, and then “How important to you is” the topic. On average, respondents rated all of the topics between 5 and 6 (on a scale of 1-10) in terms of how well they thought the plan would improve the topic. The highest rated topics were **regional transit** (5.96) and **safety** (5.74). Lowest rated were **air quality** (5.20), **freight** (5.58) and **multimodal mobility** (5.62). Overall, respondents in the meetings and on the virtual open house site rated all six of the plan’s priority topics above a 7 on a scale of 1-10. Most

of the topics received high ratings of importance (above an 8), although freight was rated lower than the other priorities (7.06). On average, **air quality** was rated highest (9.43), followed by **safety** (9.17).

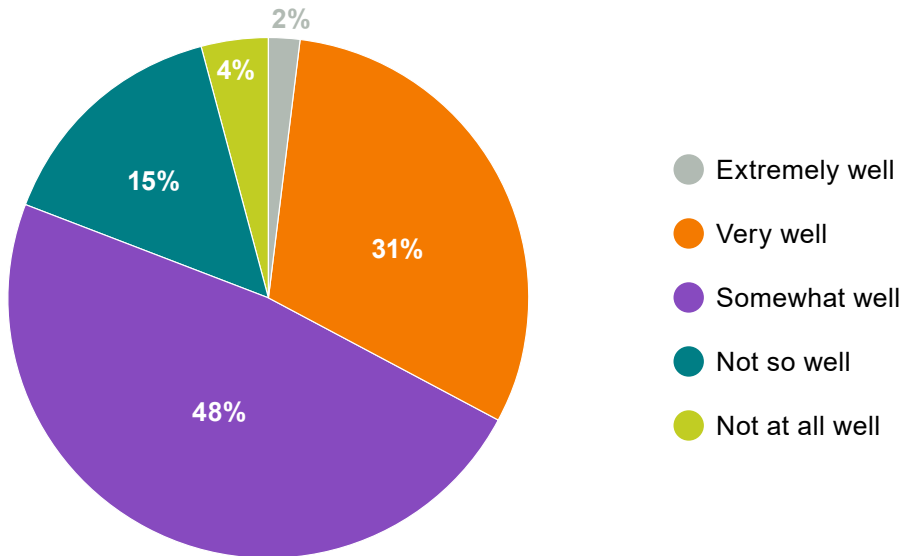
In the regional partner presentations, public meetings and advisory groups, DRCOG staff also posed an interactive poll question asking “How well does the plan align with your ideal transportation system?” Nearly half (48%) of respondents said that the plan aligned “somewhat well,” 31% noted that it aligned “very well,” and 15% responded “not so well.” Full results are below.

How well do you think the 2050 RTP will improve ... ? How important to you is ... ?



Respondents: 260

How well does the plan align with your ideal transportation system?



Respondents: 250

Staff also used interactive polling to elicit more detail, posing two follow-up questions at the majority of meetings (dependent on time): “In what areas does the plan least align with your ideal transportation system” and “In what areas does the plan most align with your ideal transportation system.” A summary of the common themes among responses is listed below.

Areas where the plan **least** aligns with ideal transportation system:

- Too much investment in automobile infrastructure.
- Not enough investment in active transportation.
- Needs more focus on safety.

- More focus on multimodal options.

Areas where the plan **most** aligns with ideal transportation system:

- Investment in bus rapid transit.
- Emphasis on safety.
- Active transportation funding.
- Multimodal system focus.

DRCOG staff received over **200 written comments** about the plan from the general public and local stakeholders during the phase four public comment period. Staff received responses via email and on the virtual open house site. The most common themes of the written comments were:

- Funding is misaligned with priorities of plan, too much investment in roads and highways instead of transit and active transportation.
- Concerns about climate change and air quality impacts of plan investments.
- Want more investment in active transportation.
- Want more investment in safety improvements.
- Support for transit investment, concern about implementation timelines.
- Equity and environmental justice considerations.

Examples of comments related to each theme are presented below for reference. A full list of all comments received, as well as responses from DRCOG staff, is available at the end of this appendix.

Comment theme: Funding is misaligned with priorities of plan, too much investment in roads and highways instead of transit and active transportation (42 comments)

- *I have one major comment/concern about the 2050 RTP, namely the priorities described in the plan are completely at odds with the actual projects being funded.*

- *Far too much of this plan is committed to widening highways and making it easier to travel the region by car. By reallocating highway funds to transit, building a connected, protected bikeway network and building out some of the region's most basic needs, like sidewalks, we will gain much more ground in lessening environmental impacts and creating a more equitable city.*
- *After 120 pages talking about how important multimodal mobility, Vision Zero, better air quality, and active transportation are, it is incredibly jarring to get to the list of projects and see that it's mostly highway and arterial widenings. Stop inducing car demand by building more lanes.*
- *I think we need to be focusing spending on reducing vehicle miles traveled, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and encouraging more active transportation and public transportation.*
- *They say an organizations heart is where its budget goes, and I sincerely hope DRCOG will revisit the priorities so we may make Denver a better place for future generations.*

Comment theme: Concerns about climate change and air quality impacts of plan investments (31 comments)

- *I'd like to see a dedicated section of this plan that calls out climate change, outlines impacts associated with it and describes how this plan is investing in a cleaner, greener future. We need to address climate change holistically.*

- *The plan pays lip service to air pollution and greenhouse gases but goes on to recommend tens if not hundreds of road-building schemes, road-widening projects and interchange replacements.*
- *Unfortunately this plan shows a serious lack of vision towards the critical need to address public transportation options and thus the climate crisis. It has the word multimodal in the plan but does nothing to promote light rail and only a small allocation of resources to bus rapid transit. Old ways of thinking will not get us to where we need to be to address carbon output and crowding on our roads.*
- *As you are well aware, climate change is an existential threat to our city, state, country and planet and it is essential that we aggressively change the structure of our transportation system and how we live if we are to have any hope of addressing climate change in any meaningful way. Continuing to spend on building additional car infrastructure is both a waste of scarce public dollars and undermines any hope of mitigating the impacts of climate change within the time frame required.*
- *It's clear this plan doesn't even go somewhat far enough in air quality management. Far and away, most of the money is going to additional highway lanes and interchanges, which will only increase vehicle miles traveled (and particularly single-occupant vehicle miles traveled), which is bad for air quality.*

Comment theme: Want more investment in active transportation (26 comments)

- *Would like to see more funding dedicated to active transportation infrastructure. We need to invest in spaces for people!*
- *Please add far more new bike paths in lieu of roads and highways.*
- *Roadway widening projects do not promote active transportation. In fact, they do the opposite, encouraging more people to drive on wider and less congested roads. If active transportation were a priority I would expect it to be funded like a priority.*
- *I think in the future we will continue to see a need for an even greater amount of funding for these types of investments. I think prioritizing these projects will help us reduce congestion in the present as well as the future and help our region to develop more sustainably by encouraging "center-like" development over sprawl.*
- *A local and regional multiuse network that connects people safely deserves as much funding and consideration as our regional motor vehicle network. This is a prerequisite for converting people from "interested" to "active." That is how we can actually and equitably achieve safe, environmentally responsible mobility.*

Comment theme: Want more investment in safety improvements (21 comments)

- *I think we need to prioritize people walking and people biking, they represent a very disproportional share of the overall*

deaths in the transportation system.... We need to approach infrastructure at the areas of conflict, and protect the most vulnerable.

- The current plan really misses the opportunity to change travel behaviors or set RTD up for success along a major thoroughfare and, as written, will cause more traffic deaths on our roads, as well as unnecessary displacement of vulnerable populations and increased pollution.
- I really like the emphasis on safety, I think Vision Zero should be the main priority for 2050.
- The safest roads are ones where cars travel slowly and carefully. Roadway expansion is not compatible with safety as a priority.
- Overall, though, beyond the safety-identified projects, I think this plan does a very poor job at improving safety. Most funding is directed towards growing the highway network to more miles, more lanes, greater widths, all of which are correlated with more crashes, damaging the lives of drivers and non-drivers alike. One surefire way to increase road user safety is to reduce speeds, increase traffic, and provide non-car means of transportation. This plan seems to encourage the opposite.

Comment theme: Support for transit investment, concern about implementation timelines (21 comments)

- Very happy to see so many multimodal projects in the plan, especially investments in bus rapid transit on key urban corridors.

- Please focus on getting a light rail or rail system along the front range! People have been asking for this for years.
- Do not wait until 2040-2050 to fully fund our bus rapid transit network.
- Systems change needs to happen, starting today. Please immediately halt interstate-building and -serving infrastructure through Denver and reallocate all of this funding to bus rapid transit, sidewalks, bikeways, safer street design and amenities to support transit.
- I was also disappointed to see the timeline for less polluting, safer modes of travel such as bus rapid transit being put off to 2040, and relatively little funding being allocated to safer, narrower, car-deprioritized, Complete Streets re-designs across streets in the High Injury Network.
- Liked seeing investment in regional transit, this is really important.
- It is imperative that people throughout the region can function without having to own a car.

Comment theme: Environmental justice: Equity and environmental justice considerations (19 comments)

- The environmental justice map should differentiate between projects that will mitigate environmental harm (transit, sidewalk improvements) vs. highway projects that will exacerbate harm.

- *More resources need to be dedicated to correcting historic harms that our transportation system has brought upon poor and minority neighborhoods.*
- *The funding as allocated will continue to adversely impact communities of color that live near most of our major interstate highways.*
- *This seems like the bare minimum. I would like to see refocusing transportation investments to low income and minority communities that have historically been under invested in. How is this plan doing that?*
- *More meaningful work to consider transportation outcomes for low income and minority residents is needed.*
- *The plan spends too much time and effort on automobile infrastructure. We need to heavily invest in pedestrian, bike and transit options to do our part for climate change and equity.*

As noted in the beginning of this section, all comments received, and DRCOG staff responses, are located at the end of this appendix.

Notices and promotion

Public notice

From Feb. 12 through March 17, 2021, DRCOG held a final public comment period to ask the region's residents and transportation stakeholders to share their thoughts of the public review draft of the 2050 RTP. The draft plan was released for public review and notice was posted on the DRCOG website and shared through an eblast on Feb. 12. Public notice was placed in the

Sunday, Feb. 14, *Denver Post* announcing the public comment period and public hearing.

Eblasts

DRCOG staff sent three eblasts to promote the public comment period and opportunities to provide input on the draft plan. These eblasts were sent to over 2,000 recipients on existing DRCOG mailing lists. The first and third eblasts provided information on the various ways to review the plan and share feedback, including information about how to join the three public meetings and the public hearing. The eblasts also requested that recipients share the information with their networks.

Media release

DRCOG shared a press release about the draft plan and the opportunity to provide comment on the draft to nearly over 100 English-speaking outlets and 44 Spanish-speaking outlets. The City of Aurora shared a story about the 2050 RTP on its Channel 8 broadcast. Denver7 [ran a story](#) on March 1, 2021 about the 2050 RTP, which reached over 37,000 viewers.

Local government promotion toolkit

DRCOG staff reached out to the communications staff of all 58 member governments with a request to share information about the draft plan and open public comment period. The request included a promotion toolkit with sample social media posts, newsletter copy and shareable graphics. Many of the member governments shared the information on their social media accounts or through newsletters throughout the public comment period.

Website and social media posts

Social media posts were used throughout phase four of the plan to announce the opportunity to review the plan and provide comments. A monthlong campaign was planned in advance, incorporating animated and still images to attract attention. The majority of the social media posts were organic, but DRCOG also invested in several paid posts to reach a wider swath of the region's residents.

DRCOG's social media promotion was successful at reaching a wide range of people. DRCOG's 12 Facebook posts, 10 Twitter posts and five Instagram posts received a total of **141,196 impressions** during the public comment period. The paid ads received about 110,000 of total impressions. Social media users clicked on or reacted to posts **over 10,000 times**. The average engagement rate of the posts was **5.68%**, which is higher than most of DRCOG engagement social media

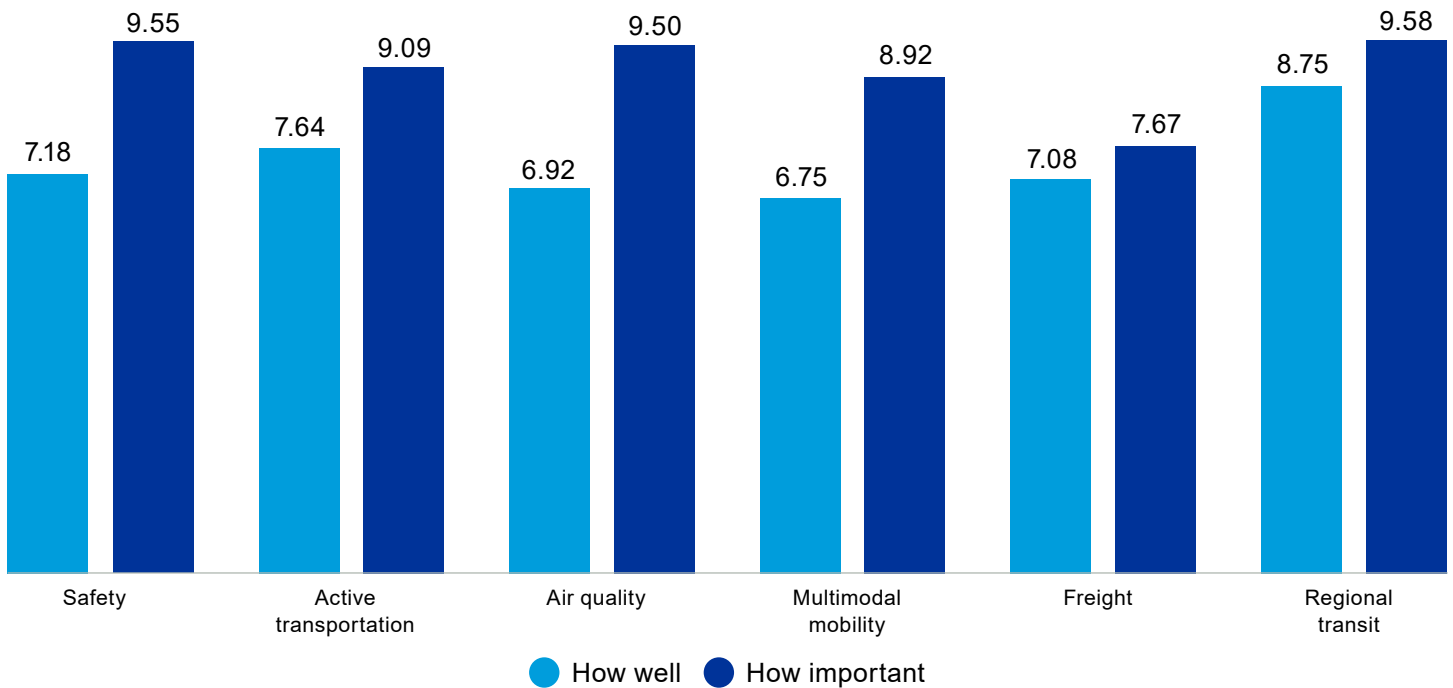
posts for other efforts. Two of the paid posts were in Spanish and received nearly **40,000 impressions** but had a lower engagement rate than the English posts.

Paid advertising received higher social media engagement than organic, which is unusual. Because paid advertising reaches a larger audience and social media engagement is calculated as a proportion of clicks and shares to the total number of impressions, the unusually high engagement suggests users had a strong emotional response to conversations about transportation in the region and that the posts were successful at capturing the users' attention.

In addition to directing the public to explore plan information on the virtual open house, the DRCOG website also promoted the plan. A webpage featured on the homepage provided notice of the public hearing and detailed how to provide comment. The 2050 RTP webpage used throughout plan development was also

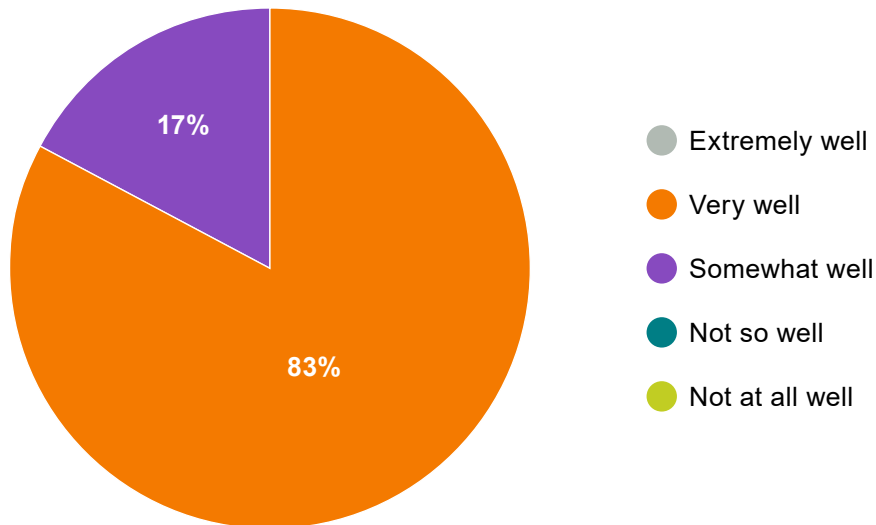
updated to reflect the public comment period. Visitors spent dramatically more time on both the 2050 RTP landing page and public hearing page than the drcog.org average, suggesting the webpages were successful as well.

Advisory groups: How well do you think the 2050 RTP will improve ... ? How important to you is ... ?



Respondents: 12

Advisory groups: How well does the plan align with your ideal transportation system?



Respondents: 12

Advisory groups

The Civic Advisory Group and Youth Advisory Panel, which were convened to provide input and guidance throughout the planning process, each met to review the draft of the 2050 RTP. Staff provided an overview of the draft, then facilitated interactive polling and a discussion about the plan.

Staff integrated interactive polling into the presentation to assess initial reactions to each of the six priority topics. With the exception of **freight** (7.67), the groups indicated that they found all of the topics to be extremely important (rated above 8.9). The groups indicated that **regional transit**, **safety**, and **air quality** were most important to them. On a scale of 1-10, the advisory groups felt that all six topics fell within the 6-9 range, with the most confidence in the plan to improve

regional transit (8.75) and **active transportation** (7.64). The plan's improvement of **multimodal mobility** and **air quality** received the lowest ratings. Full results are below.

Youth Advisory Panel and Civic Advisory Group members were then asked, "How well does the plan align with your ideal transportation system?" The majority (83%) of members responded that the plan aligned "very well" with their ideal transportation system, and 17% responded that the plan aligned "somewhat well."

The two groups discussed the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to the plan. The topics raised are summarized below.

Strengths:

- Amount of investment in public transit.
- Equity, getting people more access to job opportunities is a huge strength.
- The integrated street typologies of Complete Streets into future projects and planning.
- Many stakeholders and counties have provided input, so it seems that everyone has some part in the plan or has had their say.

Weaknesses:

- Would love to see alternative forms of transit considered. Bus rapid transit may not keep up with demand or attract new residents. This may lead to increased congestion.
- A lot of these projects are focused on making more capacity.
- Wanted less investment in highways, but this isn't reflected in plan.
- The plans has lots of road widenings, which are not making it more accessible to walk.
- With so many different stakeholders, some of the opportunities of the plan are weakened. The plan should stop bad things as well as propose good things.

Opportunities:

- I think there are a lot of opportunities for this plan to thrive. Especially how it can be adapted and changed at any point over the years.
- As the state's climate change road map is implemented, there should be opportunities to integrate that into this plan.
- The focus on bus rapid transit and bus service is great for current city/population, but also need to the think about the future needs of people who don't live here yet. Will bus rapid transit be enough?
- Will the trends of people moving from urban to rural areas in pandemic be a strength, weakness,

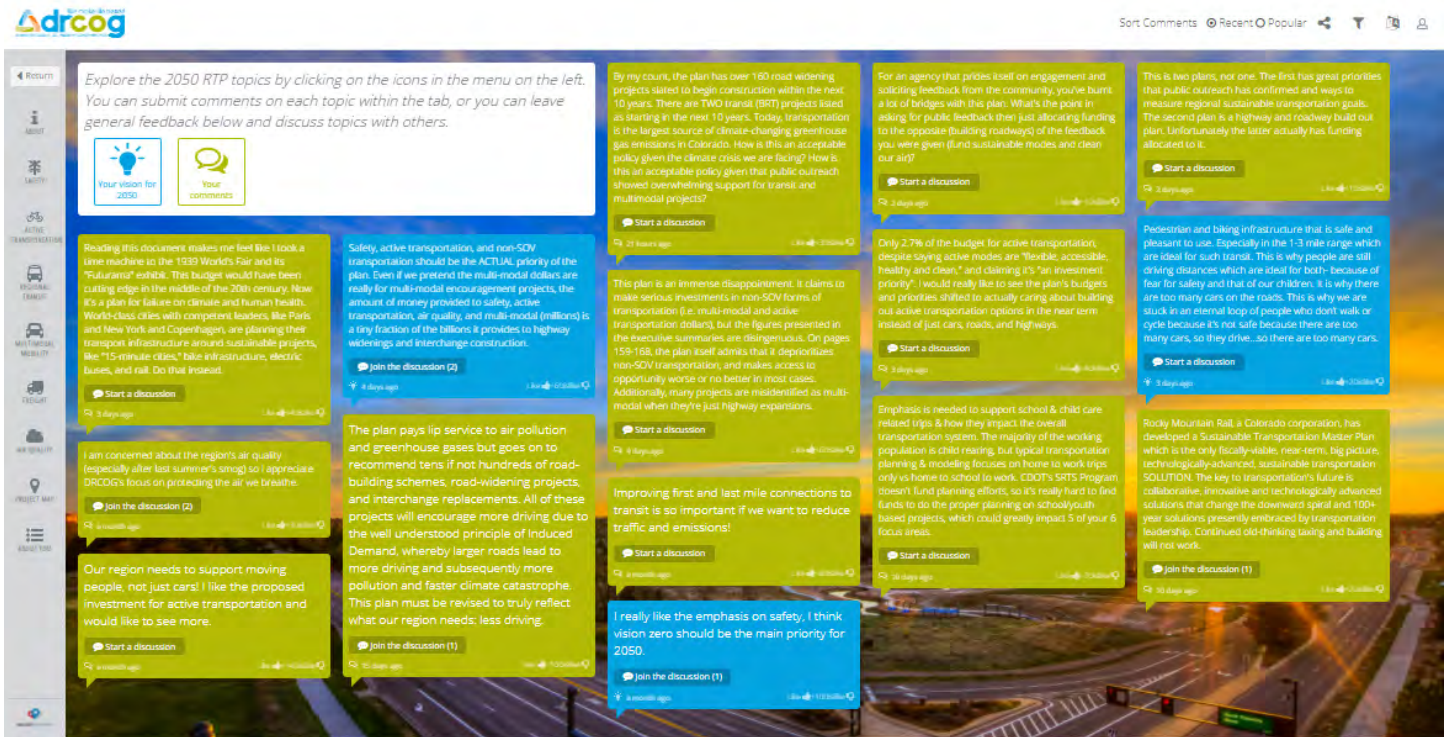
Threats:

- The possibility of population growth being above or below the predicted amount.
- Potential issues with budget in future.
- How will the plan adapt as environmental standards change?
- There is a possibility for more growth caps like in Lakewood.
- How do we work with adjacent metro areas along the Front Range and avoid a megalopolis?

The screenshot shows the DRCOG website for the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan. The page is organized into several sections:

- Header:** DRCOG logo and navigation links.
- Main Image:** A large image of a modern bridge structure.
- 2050 METRO VISION REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN:** A prominent title for the plan.
- Welcome Message:** A paragraph explaining the plan's purpose: "Welcome to our on-demand virtual open house! As the Denver region continues to grow, DRCOG is committed to contributing to improve the region's transportation infrastructure. The 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan is a comprehensive vision for improving how we get around."
- DRAFT PLAN PUBLISHED:** An orange banner stating: "The Draft 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan is ready for your feedback! We want to know what is most important to you. Click here to view the full plan."
- Explore by topic:** A section with icons for various transportation modes like a car, bicycle, bus, and train.
- Explore by chapter:** A dropdown menu with options: "Plan documents", "Appendices", and "Explore the Interactive Project Map".
- Get Involved:** A section with two sub-sections:
 - Attend an Event:** A list of four events:
 - Virtual Public Meeting (Feb 24):** 1:00 - 2:30 p.m., General informational meeting and Q&A with DRCOG planners.
 - Virtual Public Meeting (Mar 2):** 6:30 - 8 p.m., General informational meeting and Q&A with DRCOG planners.
 - Mile High Connects Panel (Mar 4):** 10 - 11:30 a.m., Along with Mile High Connects, DRCOG is co-hosting a panel discussion on environmental justice and transportation.
 - Public Hearing (Mar 17):** 6:30 p.m., Speak at the DRCOG Board of Directors meeting.
 - Comment on the Plan:** A form with a text area for comments, a "Submit" button, and a "Mark up the plan" section with instructions on how to provide feedback on specific pages or images.
- Plan Schedule:** A timeline showing key dates:
 - JANUARY 2021:** Plan 1: Writing and release.
 - FEBRUARY 2021:** Plan 2: Document review and revision release.
 - MARCH 2021:** Plan 3: Plan development.
 - APRIL 2021:** Plan 4: Draft plan release.
- What is the RTP?:** A video player with a play button and a "Watch later" button.
- Sign up for notifications:** A form with a text input field and a "Submit" button. Below it is an "Agree to our privacy policies" checkbox.
- Social Media:** Links for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

opportunity or threat?



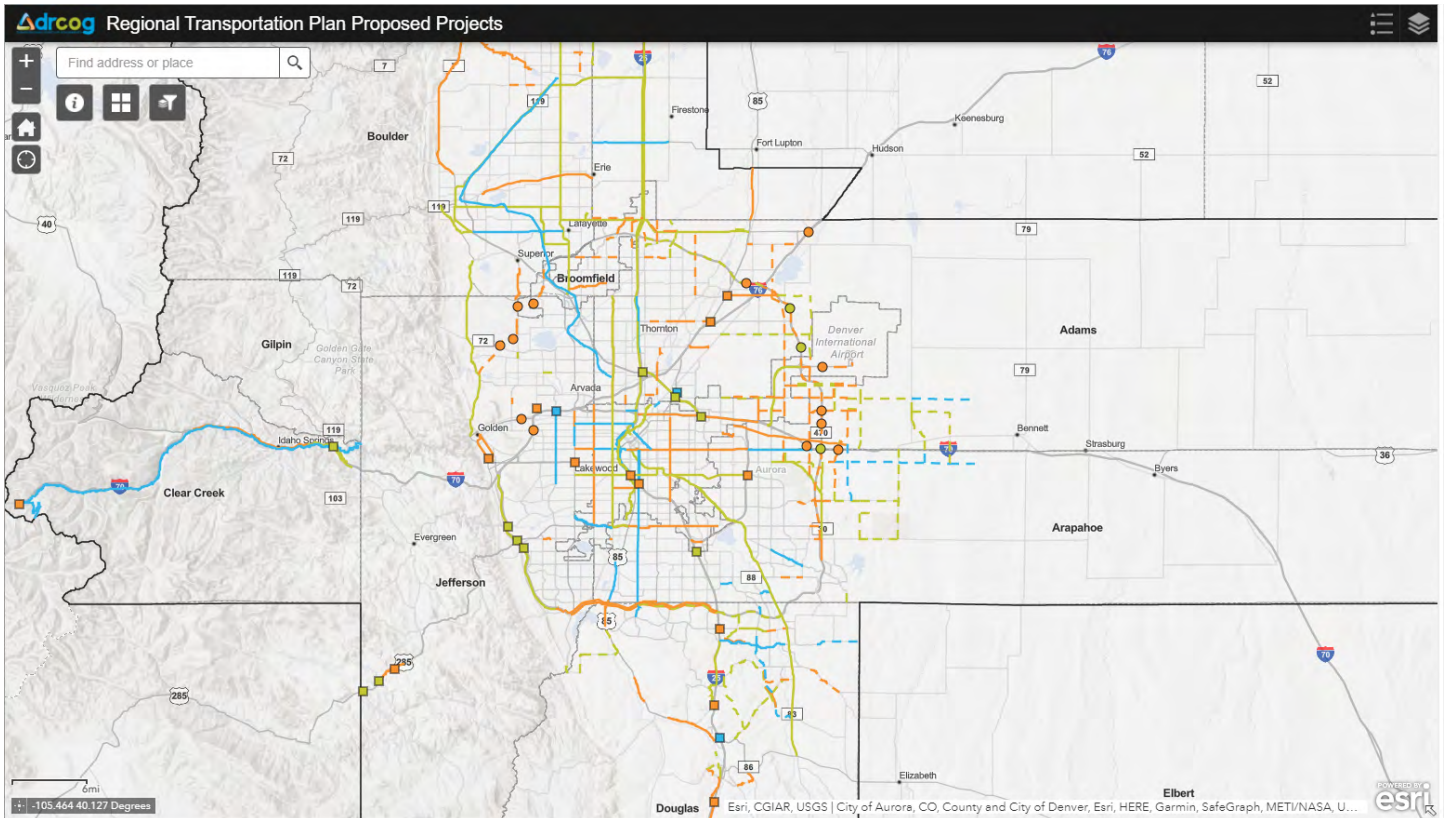
The virtual open house site included a discussion board, with summaries of main plan topics and surveys available.

On-demand virtual open house

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many local governments and regional organizations have shifted to developing online open houses to replace planned in-person events. DRCOG staff identified the need to develop an open house website that would be “on-demand” for people to learn about the plan and provide

input at times convenient for them, and from the safety of their homes.

Using Social Pinpoint public engagement software, DRCOG developed a virtual open house site. The open house provided a range of ways to explore the plan and had the capability to be translated into any language a visitor might require. It included user-friendly access



to all draft plan documents, including the full plan, individual chapters and appendices. In addition, the site provided executive summaries and overview documents in both Spanish and English. DRCOG staff advertised the public meetings and public hearing on the open house site with links to register to attend. The open house site also included the introductory video created during phase one as well as a plan schedule.

The virtual open house site incorporated a range of opportunities to learn more about the plan and provide input.

The open house site offered community members various ways to submit their feedback on the plan. The site had an easy-to-use comment box where users could submit comments directly. In addition, there was an option to view a Google Drive version of the main plan document and provide markup on the plan to allow for easy and direct commenting on specific text, images or maps.

The site also used a discussion board feature to allow for communication among users, attempting to replicate conversations that might have happened among people at an in-person open house. The discussion board also featured topic summaries of the six main priorities of the plan within its left sidebar. Short surveys were integrated within the summaries to capture initial impressions regarding the topics.

The virtual open house site received **4,071 visits** from **1,392 unique users** during the public comment period. Visitors made **22** comments on the discussion board, left **18** comments in the comment box, completed **42** surveys within the topic summaries, and made **26** comments on the direct-markup document. The comments appear in the comment matrix at the end of this report.

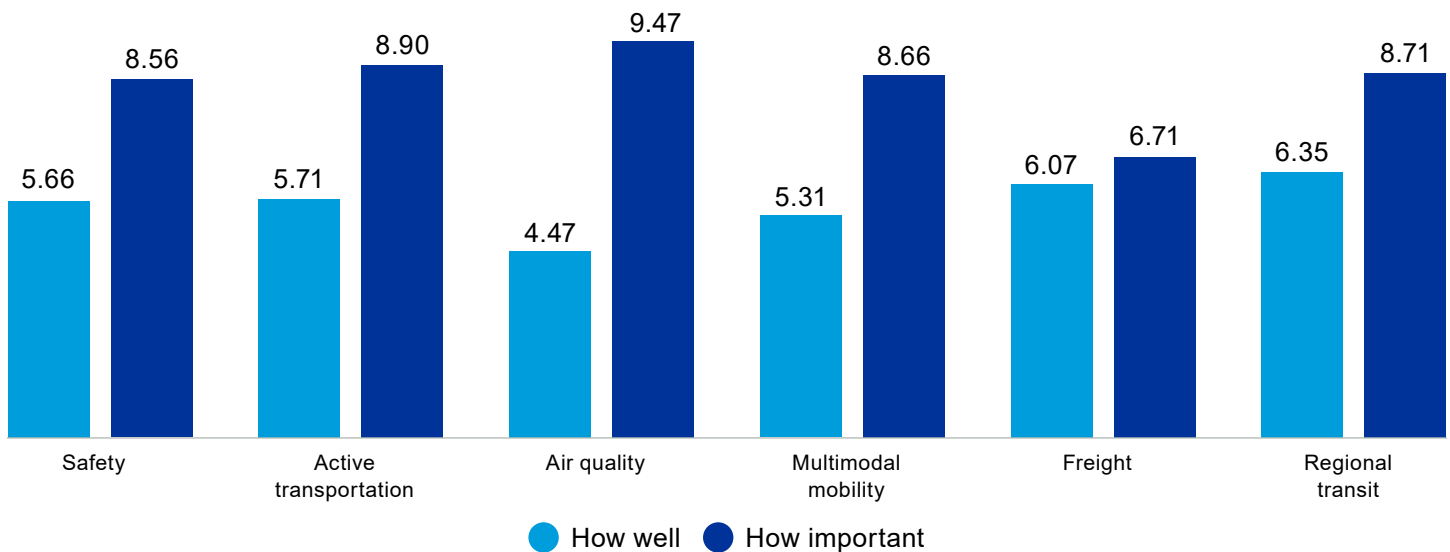
Interactive map

DRCOG’s GIS team developed an interactive web map of the proposed major projects in the draft 2050 RTP. This map allowed the public to explore the projects in more detail; zoom in to a specific community; or filter by project type, implementation timeline and funding source. The map was featured on the virtual open house site and was viewed **533 times** during the public comment period.

Virtual public meetings

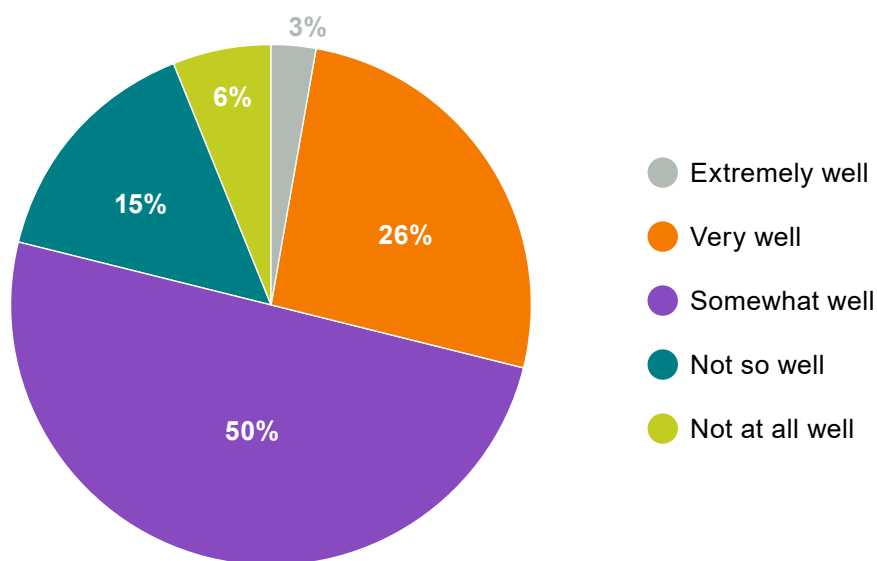
In addition to the on-demand virtual open house website, DRCOG held three public meetings regarding the 2050 RTP during the draft review period. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings were held virtually using Zoom. A total of **90 community members**

Public meetings: How well do you think the 2050 RTP will improve ... ? How important to you is ... ?



Respondents: 34

Public meetings: How well does the plan align with your ideal transportation system?



Respondents: 34

attended the public meetings. The first and second meetings, held Feb. 24 and March 2, were focused on providing a general overview of the draft period, facilitating initial feedback through interactive polling and providing an opportunity for DRCOG staff to answer community members' questions about the plan. A recording of the first meeting is [available at this link](#).

The third meeting was co-hosted by Mile High Connects and focused on the topic of environmental justice and transportation. Its format differed from the first two meetings. DRCOG and Mile High Connects convened a panel of speakers from various local organizations to discuss the topics of environmental justice and transportation in general terms. DRCOG staff highlighted the 2050 RTP and promoted opportunities to provide input, but overall the conversation was more generally about environmental justice and transportation in the region, rather than direct input about the plan.

A recording is [available here](#). Main topics discussed included: best practices for implementing equity and environmental justice in transportation; youth engagement in climate change issues; mobility and land use impacts on health; how to integrate equity into transportation planning; prioritizing bus service over rail; potential for free transit; mitigating air pollution due to expanded highways; and coordinating affordable housing and transportation.

At the first and second informational public meetings, DRCOG staff used interactive polling to gauge meeting attendees' initial impressions of the plan. Results obtained at the public meetings are summarized below. In terms of how well the plan would address each topic, meeting attendees rated all topics with an average between 4 and 7, with **air quality** (4.47) and **multimodal mobility** (5.31) rated lowest and **regional transit** (6.35) and **freight** (6.07) rated as most

likely improved by the plan. Public meeting attendees identified **air quality** as the most important topic, rating 9.47 out of 10, followed by **multimodal mobility** (8.66) and **safety** (8.56). Least important to attendees was freight (6.71). Although they had ranked it as most important, public meeting attendees felt air quality was the topic that the 2050 RTP would least improve.

Attendees also responded to the more general question of “How well does the plan align with your ideal transportation system.” Half of respondents said that the plan aligned “somewhat well,” 26% thought it aligned “very well,” and 15% noted that the plan aligned “not so well.”

Regional partner presentations

Another emphasis of the phase four engagement strategy was regional partner presentations. DRCOG staff wanted to reach out to existing community affinity groups and, especially those who may not be able to attend the public meetings or be inclined to visit the virtual open house. The intent for community presentations was to provide an overview of the draft, facilitate feedback and invite additional review and input on the plan. DRCOG staff also asked participants to share information about the plan with their networks.

During phase four, DRCOG staff gave presentations and solicited feedback from the following 13 groups:

- Accountable Health Communities Advisory Board
- Arvada Transportation Committee
- Boulder County Local Coordinating Council

- Boulder Transportation Advisory Board
- Denver Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation Transportation Committee
- Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council
- Denver Streets Partnership Steering Committee
- DRCOG Advisory Committee on Aging
- Golden Mobility and Transportation Advisory Board
- Littleton Transportation Mobility Board
- Longmont Transportation Advisory Board
- RTD Citizens Advisory Committee
- Way to Go Transportation Management Associations Outreach

Presentations incorporated the interactive polling described previously; a summary of the feedback received is located at the beginning of this document. Many meaningful discussions took place at these regional partner presentations. Some of the most frequent comments received and questions raised included:

- Concerns about air quality.
- Funding is misaligned with priorities of plan, too much investment in roads and highways instead of transit and active transportation.
- Too much investment in roadway expansion projects.

- Safety is an important issue.
- Support transit investments.
- Impacts of COVID-19 on travel and commute patterns.

County transportation forums

During phase four of the 2050 RTP engagement process, DRCOG staff met with eight of the county transportation forums to provide an overview of the draft and request help in sharing information about the opportunity for the public and other organizations to review the draft. The county-specific projects lists were also shared with each forum. These meetings took place throughout February and in early March.

Agency review

The draft plan was also reviewed by the Colorado Department of Transportation, Regional Transportation District, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration during phase four. Comments are listed in the appendix at the end of this report, but generally related to minor clarifications of text, maps and graphics. In addition to comments about plan content, agencies commended the draft's user-friendly graphic design, breadth of public outreach and development of interactive maps.

Public hearing

A public hearing was held at the DRCOG Board of Directors meeting on March 17, 2021. The recording of the public hearing is available at [this link](#). Six people testified at the hearing. Below is a brief summary of the comments made:

- Support for the plan, implementation will improve air quality.
- Project list does not include unfinished FasTracks extensions except the Northwest Rail extension. Concern that even though conformity is determined regionally, projects happen one at a time.
- Disappointed in the priorities reflected in the plan, roadway expansion is not how Colorado can overcome climate change. Funding is at odds with public input priorities received for plan. Bus rapid transit timelines should happen sooner.
- Support transit and multimodal projects, but disappointed in the number of roadway expansion projects.
- Should not be expanding roadways, need to think creatively to consider equity.

2024 cycle amendments: draft plan review, March-April 2024

2024 cycle amendments engagement methods used:

- Notices and promotion.
- Website and social media posts.
- Online engagement site (Social Pinpoint).
- DRCOG committee and Board briefings.
- Partner agency review (Colorado Department of Transportation, Transportation Commission and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment).
- Public hearing.

Introduction

Between four-year updates to the Regional Transportation Plan, DRCOG staff have historically provided an opportunity for project sponsors to propose targeted revisions to fiscally constrained projects in the adopted plan in a process called cycle amendments. DRCOG initiated a cycle amendments process in September 2023 with a call for amendments.

This section summarizes the outreach and engagement efforts conducted during the review period that ran from March 17 to April 17, 2024, and the comments received during that period and at the public hearing.

Notices and promotion

Public notice

DRCOG staff published a legal notice in the Sunday, March 17, 2024, edition of The Denver Post officially announcing the public review period.

Eblast

DRCOG staff sent an eblast announcing the public review period and opportunities to provide input on the draft amended plan. It provided information on the various ways to review the plan and share feedback, including information about how to join the public hearing. The eblast also requested that recipients share the information with their networks.

Website and social media posts

Social media posts were used throughout the public review period to announce the opportunity to review the plan and provide comments. In addition to directing the public to explore plan information on the virtual open house, the DRCOG website also promoted the plan. A webpage featured on the homepage provided notice of the public hearing and detailed how to provide comment. The 2050 RTP webpage was also updated to reflect the public review period.

On-demand virtual open house

Using Social Pinpoint public engagement software, DRCOG staff developed a virtual open house site. The open house provided a range of ways to explore the plan and had the capability to be translated into any language a visitor might require. It included user-friendly access to all draft plan documents, including the full

Metro Vision and Regional Transportation Plan Amendments

Cycle amendments and staff proposed amendments.



Home / Metro Vision and Regional Transportation Plan Amendments

Project overview

Regional Transportation Plan

The Regional Transportation Plan helps the Denver Regional Council of Governments and its many partners implement the shared aspirational vision of Metro Vision and sets the long-range vision and investment framework for the region's multimodal transportation system.

Between four-year updates to the Regional Transportation Plan, DRCOG staff have historically provided an opportunity for project sponsors to propose targeted revisions to fiscally



plan and appendices. In addition, the site provided executive summaries and overview documents in both Spanish and English. DRCOG staff advertised the public hearing on the open house site with links to register to attend. The open house site also included the introductory video created during phase one as well as a plan schedule.

The open house site offered community members various ways to submit their feedback on the plan. The site had an easy-to-use comment box where users could submit comments directly. In addition, there was an option to view a Google Drive version of the main plan document.

Agency review

The draft amended plan was also reviewed by the Colorado Department of Transportation, Transportation Commission and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Public hearing

A public hearing was held at the DRCOG Board of Directors meeting on April 17, 2024. The recording of the public hearing is available at the event page at the [DRCOG website](#). Zero people testified at the hearing.

Comment matrix

All written comments that have been received through public review periods for the 2050 RTP are listed and available on [DRCOG's website](#).