

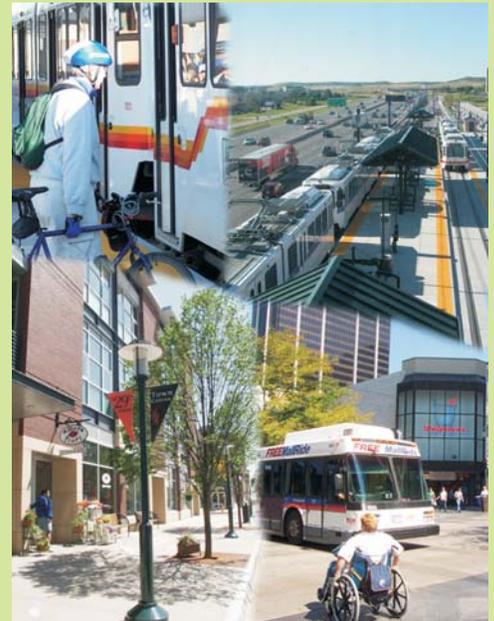
WHAT'S IN THE PLAN FOR 2035?

PROPOSED UPDATES TO METRO VISION

For more than 50 years, the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) has championed a regional perspective on key issues facing our metropolitan area and identified solutions through cooperative local government action. Metro Vision, DRCOG's long-range plan for our future growth and development, is the latest example of this regional approach.

Metro Vision's goal is very simple and important - - to protect the quality of life that makes our region such an attractive place to live, work, play and raise a family. The Denver region is one of the nation's most desirable metropolitan areas. Our success as a region has produced some basic quality of life challenges:

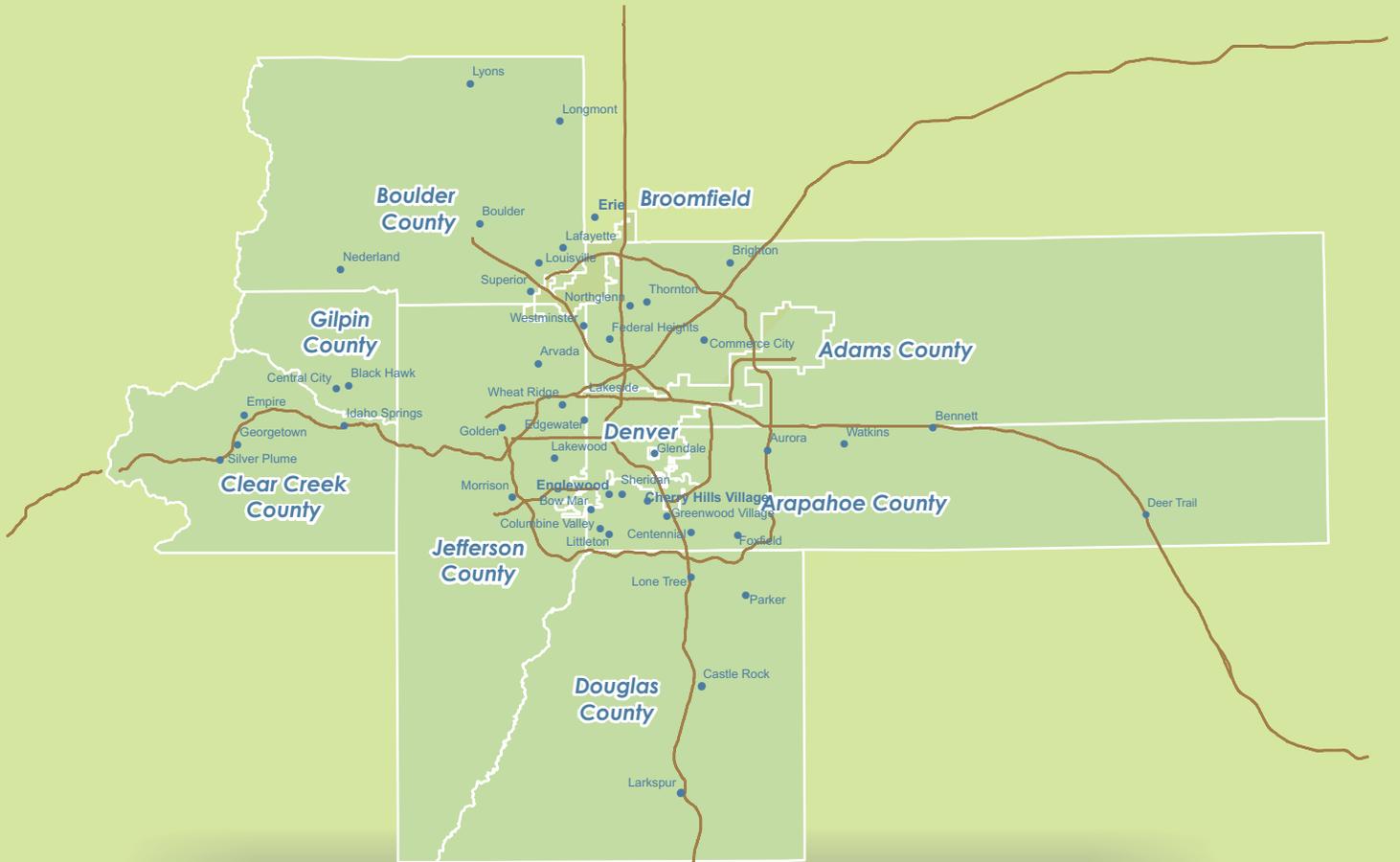
- severe traffic congestion that can impede economic development,
- concerns about air and water quality and water supply,
- the burden on taxpayers of paying for the new facilities and services (such as roads, water and sewer, drainage, schools, and police and fire protection) that must accompany new growth, and
- the preservation of adequate parks and open space for current and future generations.



Responding to these challenges, local elected officials, and business, environmental and civic leaders worked together to craft Metro Vision in the mid-1990s. The DRCOG Board, representing the region's municipalities and counties, formally adopted the Metro Vision plan in 1997 and updated it in 2005. The plan outlines long-term goals for our region in three key areas: growth and development, transportation and the environment.

This brochure summarizes key elements of the current Metro Vision plan and proposed updates to the plan. The proposed changes build on the currently adopted policies and extend the planning period from 2030 to 2035.

DRCOG PLANNING AREA



Participating Governments

Counties

Adams County
 Arapahoe County
 Boulder County
 City and County of Broomfield
 Clear Creek County
 City and County of Denver
 Douglas County
 Gilpin County
 Jefferson County

Municipalities

City of Arvada
 City of Aurora
 Town of Bennett
 City of Black Hawk
 City of Boulder
 Town of Bow Mar
 City of Brighton
 Town of Castle Rock
 City of Centennial
 City of Central City
 City of Cherry Hills Village
 Town of Columbine Valley
 City of Commerce City
 Town of Deer Trail
 City of Edgewater

Town of Empire
 City of Englewood
 Town of Erie
 City of Federal Heights
 Town of Foxfield
 Town of Georgetown
 City of Glendale
 City of Golden
 City of Greenwood Village
 City of Idaho Springs
 City of Lafayette
 City of Lakewood
 Town of Larkspur
 City of Littleton
 City of Lone Tree
 City of Longmont
 City of Louisville
 Town of Lyons
 Town of Morrison
 Town of Nederland
 City of Northglenn
 Town of Parker
 City of Sheridan
 Town of Silver Plume
 Town of Superior
 City of Thornton
 City of Westminster

KEY PRINCIPLES

Six key principles have guided Metro Vision's development.

Metro Vision protects and enhances our region's quality of life.

Metro Vision's most basic purpose is to safeguard for future generations our region's many desirable qualities, including beautiful landscapes, interesting and livable communities, cultural and entertainment facilities, and employment and educational opportunities.

Metro Vision is long-range and regional in focus.

Metro Vision's updated planning period extends to 2035 to help our region address future concerns, but current issues are priorities too. The plan expresses a regional perspective.

Metro Vision provides direction.

Local governments can use Metro Vision as they make decisions about land use planning and development. Metro Vision also helps local governments coordinate their efforts with one another and with other organizations.

Metro Vision respects local plans.

The region's local governments developed Metro Vision, working collaboratively through DRCOG. The plan doesn't replace the vision of any individual community; it is a framework for addressing common issues. Metro Vision is sensitive to the decisions local governments make in determining when and where growth will occur. Metro Vision also recognizes that each community has its own view of growth.

Metro Vision encourages communities to work together.

The impacts of growth don't recognize jurisdictional boundaries and it is important for jurisdictions to address growth collaboratively. Metro Vision provides the framework for doing that; DRCOG provides the forum.

Metro Vision is dynamic and flexible.

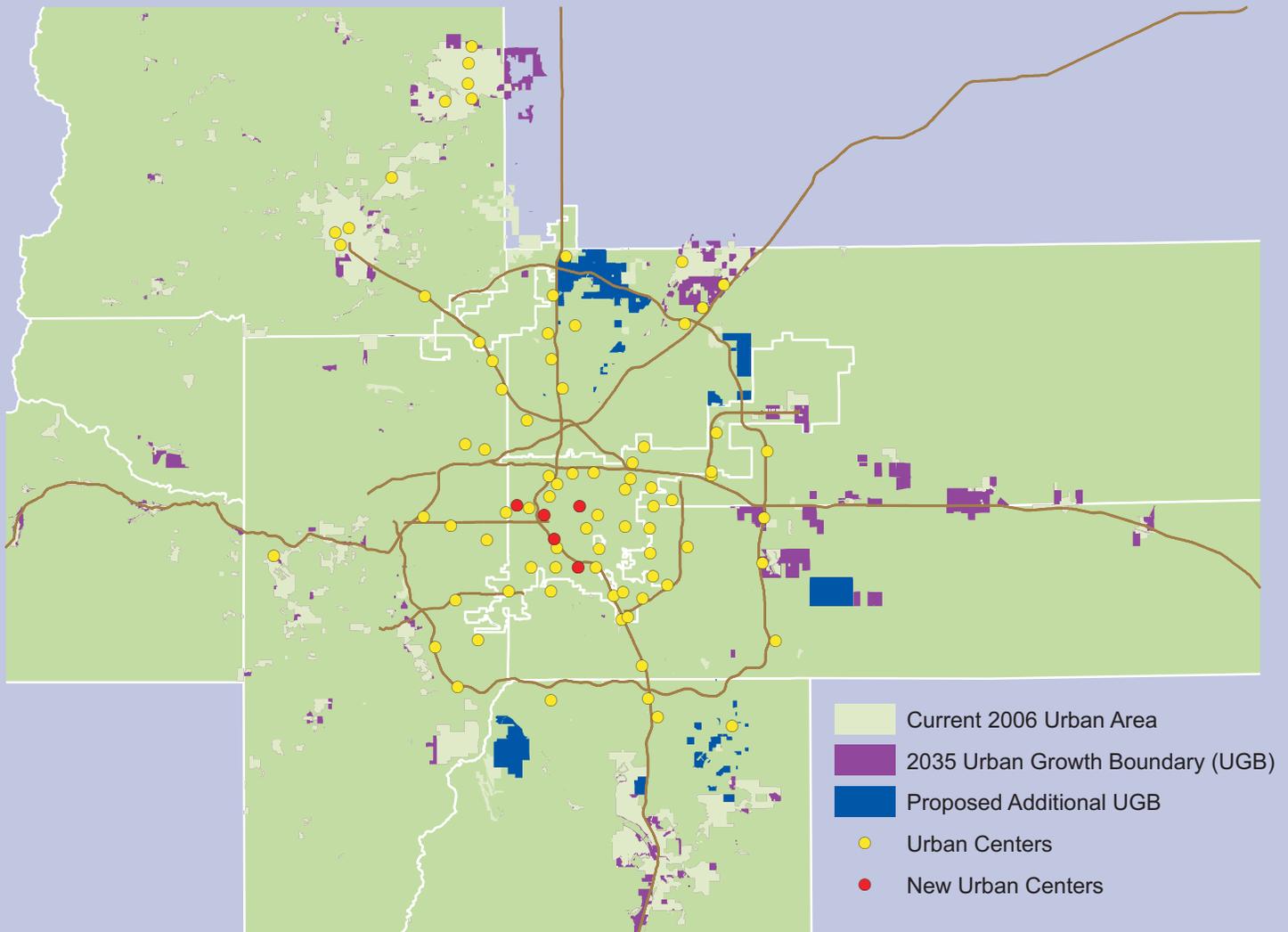
Metro Vision reflects contemporary perspectives on the future of our region and is updated as conditions and priorities change. Minor revisions to the plan are made annually while major updates occur every four years.



What is the vision for the Denver region?
In 2035, the Denver region will be a dynamic mixture of distinct urban and suburban communities designed to support multiple modes of travel within a designated growth area.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Growth in our region is inevitable. Metro Vision's goals and policies are designed to influence our region's shape, size and other characteristics, but leave specific growth decisions up to local governments. Because how our region grows will be key to our quality of life, Metro Vision strategies ensure our region can support the economy and manage growth.



Urban Centers



Creating urban centers is another way our region can respond to its growth challenges. These pedestrian-oriented locations offer a range of retail, business, civic, cultural, service, employment and residential opportunities in a compact environment. Metro Vision identifies both existing and future urban centers throughout our region, where denser development is desirable. Urban centers:

- concentrate mixed-use development,
- reduce land consumption,
- serve as transit origins and destinations,
- keep activities and services near where people live and work,
- help improve air quality, and
- reduce the need for travel.

Proposed Updates

- Recognize five new urban centers (highlighted in red on the map)

Extent of Urban Development



Metro Vision calls for most of the region's growth between now and 2035 to occur within a defined area known as the urban growth boundary. The DRCOG Board of Directors collaboratively sets the growth area and allocates a portion to each jurisdiction. Specific growth decisions are made locally. Focusing growth in this area:

- allows local governments and other agencies to more efficiently provide roads, transit, water, and sewer services,
- reduces driving distances by concentrating jobs and services,
- separates the larger metro area from neighboring communities,
- conserves open land outside the boundary for open space preservation or future urban development, and
- achieves more compact growth that stimulates infill.

Proposed Updates

- Apply new method for mapping the urbanized area, based on subdivision information rather than aerial photography interpretation. This new definition of urban includes most urban open space (e.g., parks and golf courses) and increases DRCOG's estimate of the current (2006) urbanized area from 547 square miles to 717 square miles.
- Establish the 2035 extent of urban development at 921 square miles, including 21.8 square miles of growth area recently requested by five jurisdictions, but not yet allocated by the DRCOG Board.

Senior-Friendly Development



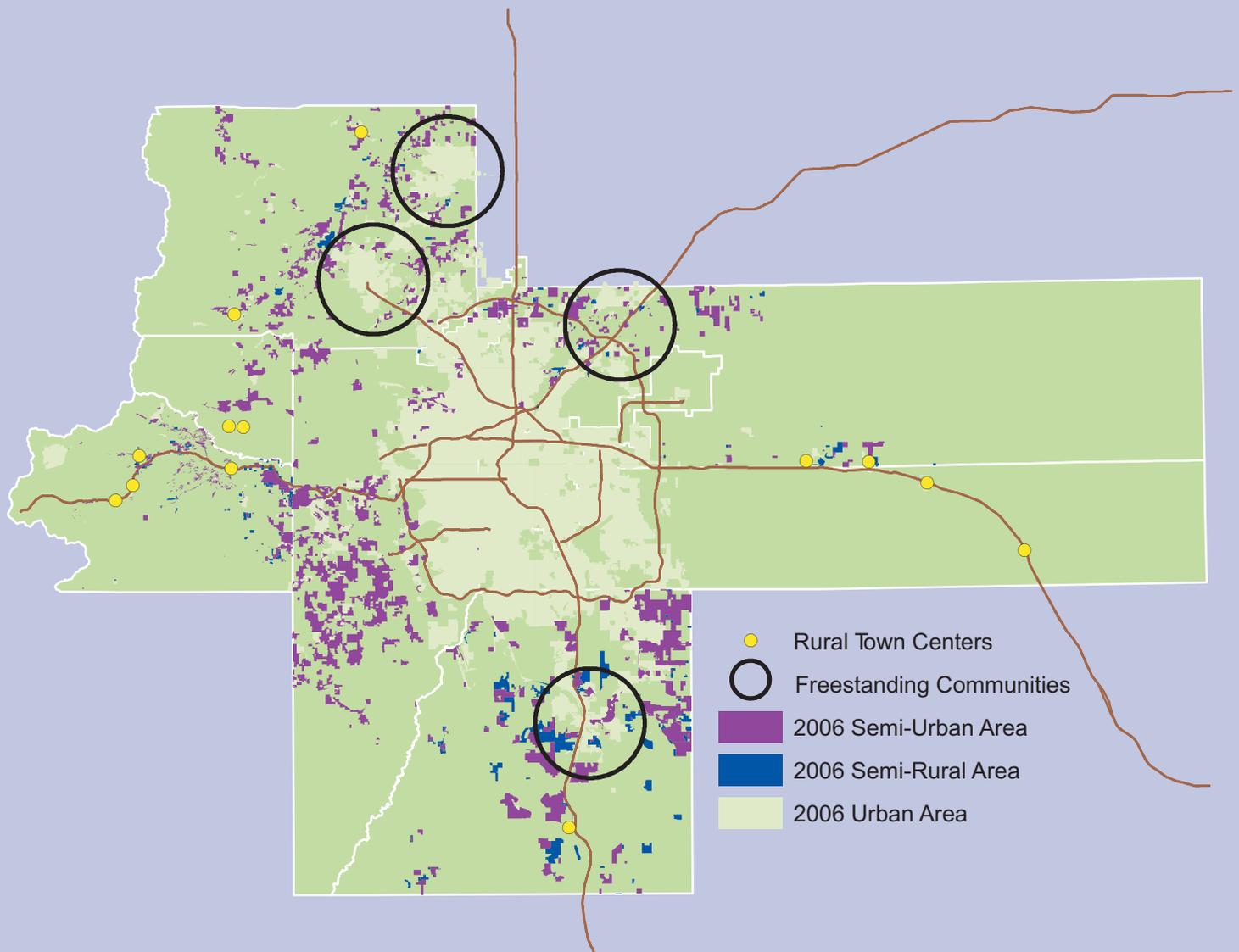
By 2035, nearly 25 percent of our region's population will be 60 years of age or older. This doubling of the senior population challenges us to look at housing, transportation and recreational needs with a new perspective. Metro Vision offers guidelines on how our region can respond and be prepared. Senior-friendly development meets the needs of older adults by:

- providing a diversity of housing options, including affordable housing,
- encouraging compact development patterns and pedestrian-friendly environments, maximizing access to employment, recreation, and shopping opportunities,
- providing transportation options and minimizing the need to use automobiles,
- designing parks and buildings to be more accessible,
- making sure that community and street signs are easy to read, and
- lighting walkways and public spaces.

Proposed Updates

- Add text to the plan document expanding on various topics including housing affordability and suitability; safety and security; wayfinding; and the connection between the built environment and the social support and service environments.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



Additional Proposed Updates

Add text to the plan document discussing the benefits of and Metro Vision support for:

- transit-oriented development - concentrated, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented development that supports and is supported by transit facilities and service,
- sustainable development - development that seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, and
- livable communities - a design concept that considers the architectural and urban design elements of the built environment and how they affect quality of life.

Large-Lot Development



Large-lot development is typically located on the urban area's fringe, beyond the urban growth boundary. It includes semi-urban areas (average lot size of 1-10 acres) and semi-rural areas (average lot size of 10-35 acres). This kind of development offers a low-density residential lifestyle, and when creatively designed can integrate homes into environmentally sensitive areas. However, large-lot development uses land less efficiently than urban areas, incurs higher costs for infrastructure and services, and can adversely affect open space areas and water quality. Metro Vision calls for careful planning to reduce the negative impacts of future large-lot development. Well-designed large-lot development:

- avoids urban areas and potential future open space,
- does not burden local service providers (i.e., pays for its own way), and
- ensures adequate water supply and wastewater treatment and redevelopment.

Proposed Updates

- Establish a regional growth target limiting the total number of semi-urban households in 2035 to the existing (2006) proportion, approximately 3 percent of all households.

Rural Town Centers



Metro Vision acknowledges the importance of rural town centers to the greater Denver region. These small, established towns, found well outside the urban area, provide services, employment and entertainment for area residents. Rural town centers:

- have central water and sewer and other infrastructure to accommodate new population growth,
- maintain community identity,
- offer another lifestyle option, and
- are vital to their local areas.

Freestanding Communities

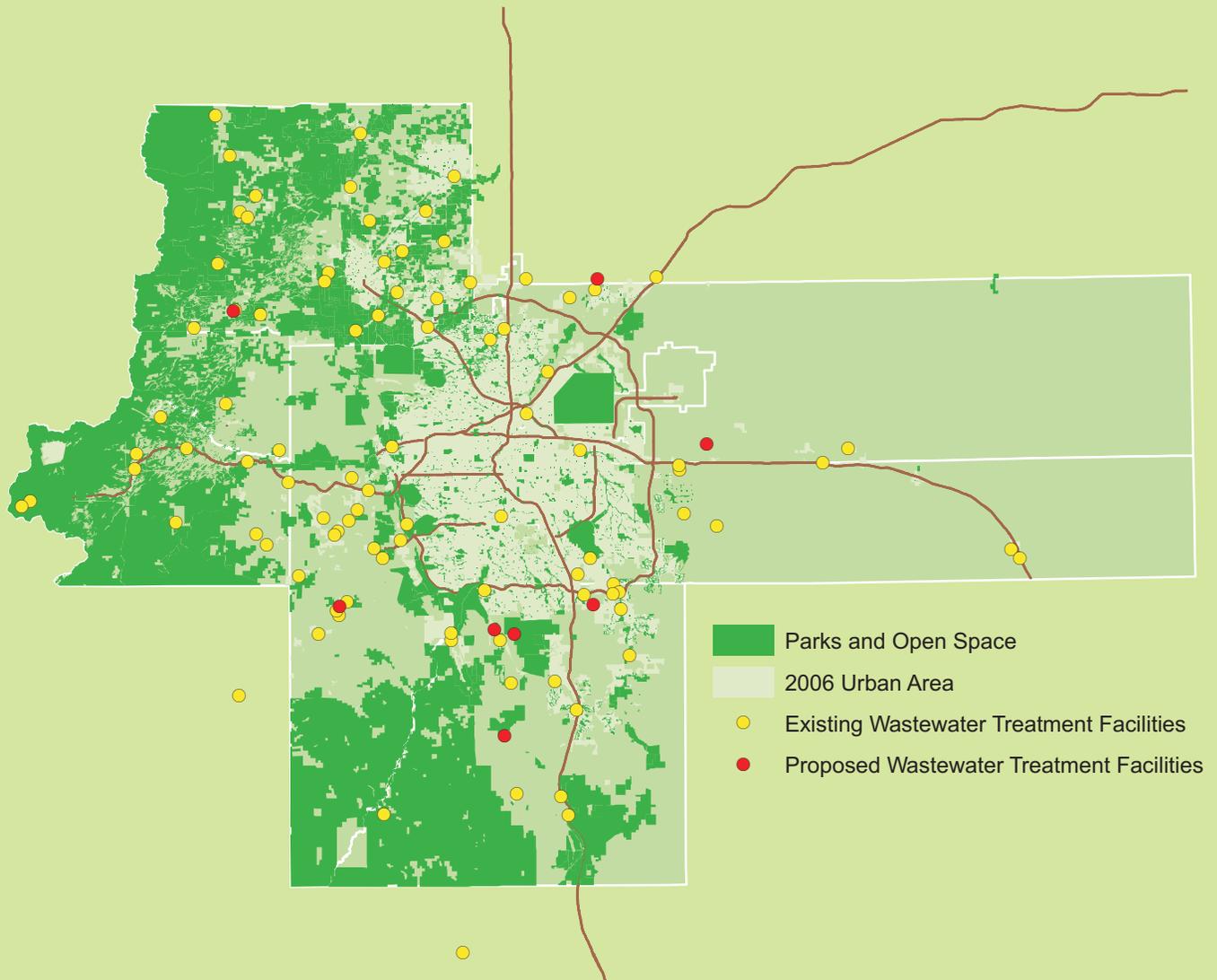


Metro Vision recognizes and supports the unique role of our region's freestanding communities: Boulder, Brighton, Castle Rock and Longmont. Freestanding communities are visually and physically separated from the core of the metro area, and strive to be self-sufficient. These communities contribute to our region's smart growth and development by:

- absorbing regional population growth (10 percent of the total),
- balancing jobs and housing, and reducing driving distance,
- giving residents different living choices, and
- maintaining community identity.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The Denver region's greatest natural asset is its environment. Mountain views, large expanses of land and pleasant weather have drawn people to the area for centuries. As the area becomes more populated, our region must take greater care to ensure these assets don't disappear. Development is encroaching on open land, and the effects of more people and more vehicles threaten air and water quality.



Water Quality



Water quality and availability have tremendous influence on our region's development pattern. Coordinating water quality planning as a region means that everyone uses the same standards to define what's "clean." The Metro Vision Clean Water Plan endorses:

- an integrated approach to managing our region's water,
- preparing utility plans for our wastewater treatment facilities to identify future service needs,
- defining ways to deal with additional urban runoff and stormwater that future growth will create, and
- conservation and reuse strategies that won't damage existing uses.

Parks and Open Space



The lure of outdoor activities in a breathtaking setting attracts both visitors and new residents to our region. Because land is a limited resource, preserving open space is vital to maintaining our region's wonderful quality of life. Metro Vision calls on our region to establish an integrated, linked, permanent parks and open space system that

- provides for recreational use,
- focuses on key preservation areas,
- shapes urban growth and land development with open space buffer areas,
- preserves important geologic and geographic features, and
- includes a network of trails to link open spaces and provides citizens with access.

Proposed Updates

- Protect a minimum of 854 square miles of state and local parks and open space by the year 2035, thereby maintaining the current (2006) per capita amount of protected land.
- Add text to the plan document discussing Metro Vision support for “green infrastructure,” an interconnected network of green space that conserves natural ecosystem values and functions.

Air Quality



Growth and development can adversely affect our region's air. Keeping the air clean and breathable involves many partners. Careful planning brought the Denver region within federal standards for carbon monoxide and particulates, but our region will likely violate new ozone standards in 2007. Building on our air quality improvements of the last two decades, Metro Vision works in concert with the Regional Air Quality Council's State Implementation Plan to reduce pollution by:

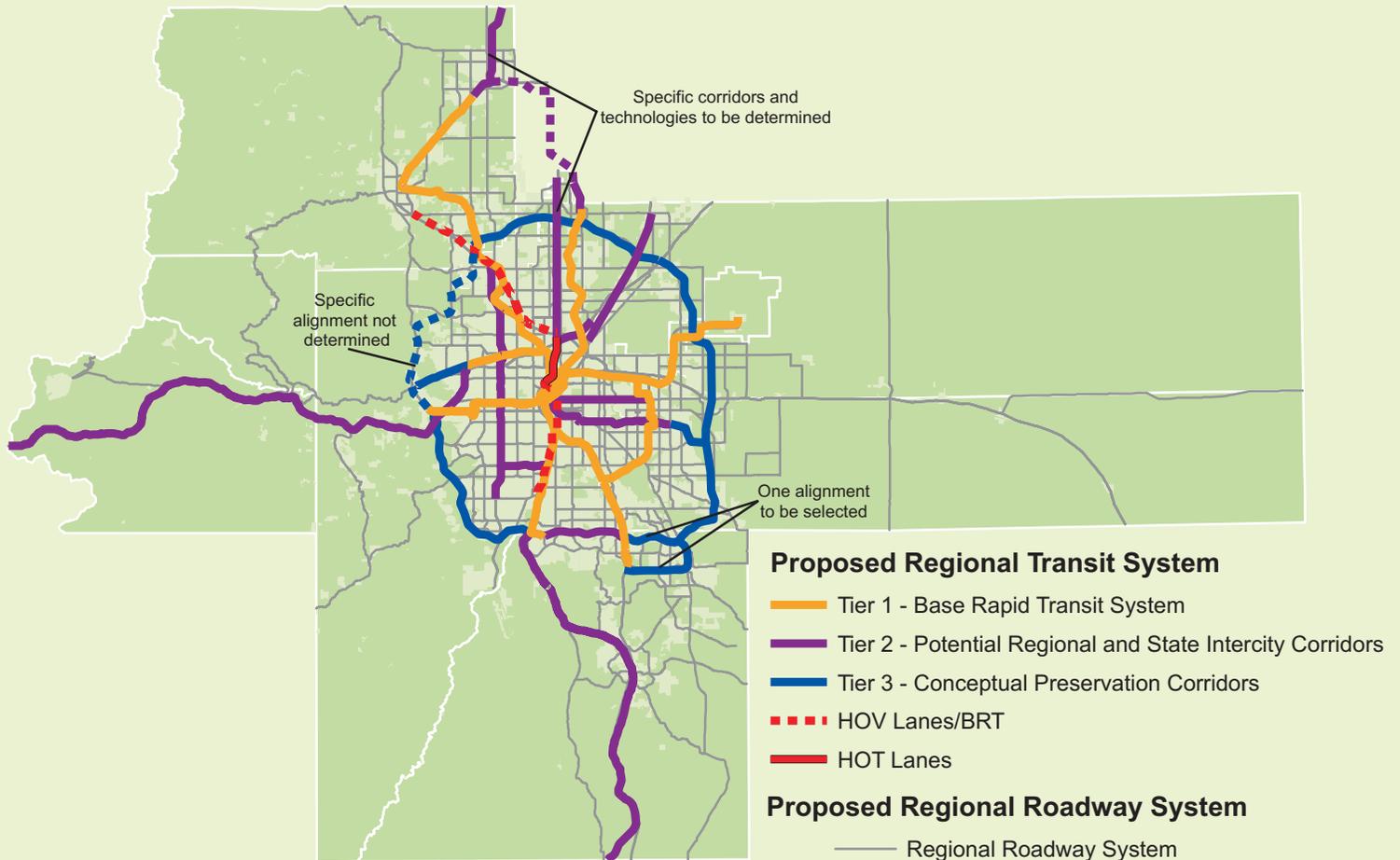
- developing land in a way that reduces travel,
- making pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities more accessible,
- reducing the growth of emissions from facilities like power plants, and
- encouraging local governments to control wind erosion and particulates from road grading, construction projects, recreation and other activities.

Proposed Updates

- Add text to the plan document discussing the anticipated violation of federal ozone standards.

TRANSPORTATION

How can over four million people get around? That's a question Metro Vision addresses by planning for a balanced transportation system that offers many travel options. The system takes into account the need to move people and goods easily and efficiently, incorporating bus and rapid transit, highways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and local streets. To achieve Metro Vision's goals, the region's transportation partners (DRCOG, the Regional Transportation District, the Colorado Department of Transportation and local governments) must work cooperatively on strategies for obtaining funding.



Additional Proposed Updates

- Increase the estimated transportation funding shortfall. DRCOG estimates the total cost to implement, operate and maintain the entire Metro Vision 2035 transportation system is about \$128 billion. However, DRCOG expects only \$88 billion in revenue through 2035, creating a \$40 billion shortfall that our region must work to overcome.

Rapid Transit System



The key to an effective transportation system is options. Metro Vision recognizes the important contribution transit makes to the system. Light rail transit has become a popular way to travel in the region, with southwest, southeast and central corridors currently in operation. The plan identifies several additional rapid transit corridors that would improve mobility. Highlights of other improvements Metro Vision calls for include:

- expanding regular bus service and routes in the region,
- expanding the number of places to park and take transit, and
- serving the elderly, disabled and low-income populations with transit, to name a few.

Proposed Updates

- Substantially revise the description of bus rapid transit facilities
- Modify the alignment and planning category (potential vs. conceptual) of some northern transit corridors
- Include high-occupancy/toll (HOT) lanes as part of the rapid transit system

Regional Roadway System



The Metro Vision plan calls for the regional highway system to increase from about 6,200 lane miles in 2005 to about 8,600 lane miles in 2035. The Metro Vision regional roadway system includes:

- new roadways (e.g., 120th Avenue extension),
- new interchanges (e.g., SH-119/SH-52),
- widened roadways (e.g., I-225),
- improved existing interchanges (e.g., Santa Fe/C-470), and
- street improvements that accommodate a variety of transportation modes (e.g., Colfax Avenue).

Proposed Updates

- Modify the regional roadway system (230 more lane miles than 2030)

Other Transportation System Features



Metro Vision also calls for getting the most out of the transportation system by:

- providing more facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists,
- improving the efficiency of the transportation system, through such activities as traffic signal improvements,
- promoting opportunities to carpool, vanpool, telework and work variable schedules,
- preserving and maintaining the existing transportation system, and
- conducting activities that improve the safety and security of the system.

Proposed Updates

- Introduce and place a strong emphasis on the concept of multimodal corridor visions
- Split safety and security into separate policies
- Recognize that Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport anticipates a moderate increase in air cargo activity
- Encourage airport operators and affected local governments to collaborate in addressing potential conflicts between increased airport operations and surrounding land uses

HOW TO COMMENT ON THE PLAN

Send us your thoughts, call us or post them

Mail: 4500 Cherry Creek Drive South, Suite 800, Denver CO 80246-1531

Phone: 303-455-1000

E-mail: info@drcog.org

Online: <http://www.drcog.org/metrovisionpubliccomment/PostComment.aspx>

Give comments at DRCOG Board meetings

Interested citizens may make a statement during the public comment period at the beginning of each DRCOG Board meeting, held at 6:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month. For more information, check our calendar at www.drcog.org

Attend public workshops and the public hearing on the plans

DRCOG is hosting three public workshops on the draft updates to Metro Vision and the Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan. DRCOG staff will make a presentation and be on hand to answer questions and take comments.

Oct. 4, 2007
7 - 9 p.m.

Planning and Zoning
Hearing Room #2
Jefferson County
Administration Building
100 Jefferson County Parkway
Golden, Colorado

Oct. 9, 2007
7 - 9 p.m.

Arapahoe Room
Arapahoe County Public Works
and Development Building
10730 E. Briarwood Ave.
Centennial, Colorado

Oct. 11, 2007
7 - 9 p.m.

Blue Spruce &
Cottonwood Rooms
Adams 12 Five Star Schools
Conference Center
1500 E. 128th Ave.
Thornton, Colorado

PLAN UPDATE SCHEDULE

Oct. 16, 2007 DRCOG releases the draft 2035 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan for public comment

Dec. 5, 2007 Public hearing on the draft plans

Dec. 19, 2007 DRCOG Board acts on updated plans

For more information on the Metro Vision Plan, contact Bill Johnston at bjohnston@drcog.org or 303-480-6754.

For more information on the Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan, contact Steve Rudy at srudy@drcog.org or 303-480-6747.

