

Introduction

The overall purpose of this plan is to provide the community and policymakers a series of choices with regards to improvements and projects that will enhance mobility in Boulder County over the next ten years. The plan will not be a singular roadmap, but will provide a variety of options that can be implemented with varying funding levels.

Mobility in Boulder County should be thought of as a continuum of options covering travel at the inter-regional (for example, Fort Collins to Boulder County to the Denver metro area), regional (for example, Brighton to Boulder), and local (for example, demand-response transit in Longmont) scales. The over-arching objective is to provide a balance of options so that inter-regional travel needs, regional travel needs, and local travel needs are discussed with an understanding of the population served, concepts of projects or services, funding options, and trade-offs. It is broadly recognized that it is unlikely there will be adequate resources to fund all needed services at the desired levels. Nevertheless, the plan should clarify the trade-offs between available funding and the types and levels of services identified in the plan. Furthermore, there needs to be a careful analysis of the level of capital needed to support various types and levels of service and the costs and delivery timelines associated with those capital elements.

There is also a need to drill into the specific technical needs of each project or service. A concept will need supporting details to understand how it enhances mobility while the technical details of rolling out the concept are also explained. It is likely the plan will be used by parts of the county to roll out new mobility options that are not necessarily under the purview of any transit agency but recognized by that area as critical to establishing improved mobility. The plan may also enable Boulder County and coalitions of municipalities to identify and implement services not considered to be regional priorities, even though the services may well be fully within the RTD service area. Equally, there may be new combinations of adjacent areas outside of Boulder County limits where there are mobility needs identified, service concepts defined, and roadmaps for implementation established.

While it is not possible for one plan to be everything to everyone, there is an expectation this plan will provide a policy tool and a rich technical guide to meeting a very wide spectrum of mobility needs generally with Boulder County in the center, but certainly not strictly within the boundaries of Boulder County. The plan will present the results of listening, distilling, presenting possibilities, prioritizing, and establishing trade-offs all within a range of potential financial options.

Community outreach will be a critical element of arriving at this plan. There is a need for the community, all the community, to have an opportunity to consider the options, weigh in on trade-offs, and understand the costs associated with each element of the plan. Of particular importance will be to ensure that voices not always heard (or sometimes under-represented) in these types of efforts have an opportunity to express their needs and views while at the same time, engage with a broad spectrum of the entire community.

Ultimately, the plan will offer a range of outcomes, financial options, and metrics by which to measure mobility progress in Boulder County.

Task 1: Project Management, Initiation, & Oversight

Task 1.1: Project Management Plan

Consultant will prepare an updated work plan, timeline, public outreach plan, and list of contacts. The public outreach plan will be a collaboration between County staff and the Consultant, but shall be included in the Project Management Plan and integrated into the project schedule. The Project Management Plan should be updated with each significant change (e.g., outgoing personnel).

Outreach/Engagement Plan

Prior to the project kickoff, Consultant will lead the development of a plan for public outreach and engagement to be used by the full project team throughout the project. This plan will add critical details to the menu of strategies for outreach and engagement proposed by the Consultant. For each strategy, event, or method, details should include the timelines and resources needed to develop content, set up, wrap up, follow up, and summarize findings. The plan will be initially developed by the Consultant, then discussed with the client in full collaboration, discussed with the project partners at the kick-off meeting, then finalized and made part of the Project Management Plan and integrated into the project schedule

Because there must be continued intentional efforts to address each individual community's transit needs, the majority of the plan must be focused on the strategy for establishing contact with equity focused and/or under-represented populations in the county, along with identifying resourcing for multi-lingual outreach and accommodations of people with a diverse range of ages, abilities, incomes, and backgrounds.

Task 1.2: Project Team Kickoff

Consultant will start the project with an in-person meeting attended by all project managers and task leads, in which the following may be reviewed and refined:

- Project objectives
- Scope of work
- Timeline and milestones
- Composition and format of deliverables and presentations
- Communications
- Review the public outreach and engagement plan
- Requested data
- Agency (and stakeholders/partners) ability to fulfill requests on the data needs list
- Template and branding concepts.

Task 1.3: Project Team Recurring Check-Ins

The Consultant and County project managers should commit to meet on a recurring bi-weekly basis for no greater than forty-five minutes. During these calls, project progress will be discussed, new findings will be shared, and questions will be answered. Following the conclusion of Tasks 3 and 4, a special ninety-minute meeting will be held with the Consultant

and County project managers for the purpose of updating the project timeline and workplan for Tasks 5,6, and 7, and confirming any other relevant adjustments.

Task 1.4: Development of Project Templates/Branding

The Consultant will work to create a set of templates for all deliverables, along with a color scheme and logo to provide a “brand” around the project. The templates will be drafted and shared with the County, and finalized following the County’s feedback in a single set of non-conflicting comments.

Task 1.5: Ongoing Project Management, Invoicing, and Closeout

Consultant will provide a monthly progress report alongside invoicing for time and materials. Additional attention will be given to the onboarding new project staff in the event of any staff transitions, and the packaging all deliverables and analyses for the County upon the completion of the project.

Deliverables: Kickoff agenda, Kickoff meeting notes, Project Management Plan, data needs list, draft and final project templates and branding

Task 2: Outreach & Engagement

Task 2.1: Project Advisory Committee Meetings

Boulder County will be responsible for convening four project advisory committees (each composed of a dedicated set of stakeholders):

- Policy Advisory Committee (elected officials and/or their appointees)
- Technical Advisory Committee (staff from local communities, transit agencies including RTD, Via Mobility Services, TransFort, and COLT, local transportation policy and finance experts)
- Community Advisory Committee (transit riders, community-based organization representatives)

Spanish Language Equity Advisory Committee It should be noted that the members of the community advisory committee should receive compensation for attendance and that a good faith effort is taken to convene in settings which are accessible and representative of the community of current transit riders. The County will provide the mechanism for compensating the Community Advisory Committee member unless it is mutually agreed to include that expense in the Consultant’s fee.

Meetings (of which there will be no more than 24 in total) should be tied to specific project milestones:

- Project Introduction and Understanding of Transit Needs
- Presentation of Existing Conditions
- Developing Strategies/Alternatives (See Task 5.4)

- Evaluating Strategies/Alternatives (See Task 5.4)
- Project Priority Criteria (See Task 5.4)
- Final Presentation and Implementation Support

Each committee meeting should have no more than 15 attendees each (not including Consultant).

The Public Outreach and Engagement Plan will confirm the milestones and attending committees for each meeting.

Task 2.3: Public Outreach and Engagement

The Public Outreach and Engagement Plan will confirm specific tactics of public-facing outreach under this task, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Content for County Web Site and Social Media
- In-Person Workshops/Listening Sessions
- In-Person and Virtual Open House Presentations
- Asynchronous Virtual Meeting Options

Task 2.4 Community Survey/Questionnaire

This questionnaire (online and hard copy) will need a distribution plan included in the Public Outreach and Engagement Plan. This would be done as part of the Task 3 (“State of Transit”) report, and help support the development of Task 4, so there is a clear direction to the survey effort.

Survey should be available in English, Spanish, and Nepali, target the public and clearly present tradeoffs in a digestible and accessible manner.

A second survey (detailed in Task 7.4) will be developed as part of the public comment process on the draft plan report.

Deliverables: Outreach and meeting schedule, Spreadsheet of full community survey results, Draft and final memorandum summarizing task findings

Task 3: Existing Conditions & Travel Demand Forecasting

Task 3.1: Summary of Existing Transit Services, Market, Performance, and Service Standards

This study should look at the existing conditions (and subsequent opportunities for improvement) in the transit system at multiple scales: inter-regional, regional, and local. It will be crucial for the Consultant to supply specific direction for each geography in obtaining meaningful data, understanding services standards and performance metrics, and proposing future opportunities for service provision and financing.

To understand the transit market, data will be imported into ArcGIS to provide a geospatial view of how population characteristics relate to the existing transit services. The data set could include information from several of the following sources:

- US Census - Median Household Income
- US Census - Households with No Vehicles
- US Census - Population Density
- Schools with Free/Reduced Price Meals (student poverty)
- Land use in Boulder County communities
- Local activity centers, including shopping centers, schools, medical and social service facilities
- LODES - Employment density
- US Census - Age, race, language, national origin, disability status, non-owner occupied housing

For existing transit services, Consultant will review existing route-level and stop-level data to understand where the system is working efficiently from an operating perspective as well as effectively from a rider perspective. In this task, source data may come in different formats or be aggregated differently between different systems. It is anticipated that teams will need to work together to get to a level of detail that will help lead to actionable service recommendations within the designated budget to keep the project on the scheduled timeline.

This task will also include a summary of the service standards currently used by each transit agency operating within the county (including RTD), and how each agency evaluates their respective services.

Task 3.2: Supplemental Origin/Destination Analysis

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, travel patterns throughout the County have changed in ways that affect all transportation modes. To understand how well existing transit service is meeting existing travel patterns, the Consultant shall analyze origin/destination (O/D) travel pairs throughout Boulder County and into adjacent counties. Data sources considered for this analysis should include cellphone GPS data, Census data, and LEHD data.

The Consultant shall work with the County to establish a travel zone map for this analysis. This may be comprised of Census tracts, transportation analysis zones, jurisdictional boundaries, and other such characteristics that will clearly delineate travel patterns within Boulder County, as well as external travel to important destinations in other counties. The travel zone map shall be developed and accepted by the County before the analysis proceeds.

Task 3.3: Evaluation of Recent Transit Enhancement Initiatives

Consultant will review, summarize, and evaluate all the current transit planning work that is currently happening, along with completed and executed plans which involve transit and communities in Boulder County for five years prior to project initiation. From this evaluation, the team will seek to answer: *How to integrate this countywide transit planning process with local community plans and current transit programs?*

Task 3.4: Development of Future Scenarios

Consultant will also conduct a trend-understanding analysis to understand the factors that drive transit demand. There are many variables that could be assessed and that may be responsible for transit demand, and therefore, the County should anticipate identifying the three to five leading factors or trends most responsible for driving fixed-route and demand-response ridership over the past five years and that are most likely to drive ridership into the future. These factors will inform future scenarios and help answer: *What influences will shape the future of travel within, throughout and to/from Boulder County?*

Task 3.5: Summary Report: State of Transit in Boulder County

The findings for all of Task 3 will be combined into a draft report detailing the “State of Transit in Boulder County.” This report will function as an appendix or supplemental report separate from the final plan report described in Task 7. However, the key findings introducing each section/chapter in the State of Transit report will directly inform subsequent presentations and summaries related to the project.

The draft will be sent to the project team and sent back to the client with one set of non-conflicting comments. The revised draft will be sent to the Technical and Community Advisory Committees for further verification and feedback. The revision following that round of feedback will be the final State of Transit report.

Deliverables: Draft, revised draft, and final report on the State of Transit in Boulder County

Task 4: Goals, Objectives, & Performance Metrics

Task 4.1 Goals and Objectives

The goals of this project seeks to answer the following question: *What are we trying to achieve countywide and within local communities?* Subsequently, the objectives will seek to answer: *How will we achieve those goals?*

Goals and objectives will be developed and refined in collaboration with all three advisory committees during the creation of the “State of Transit Report” with a goal to substantially complete a series of goals, strategies, and performance measures prior to substantial work on Task 5.

Task 4.2: Performance Metrics & Service Standards

Building off the outcomes of Task 3, an understanding of service standards aligned with FTA, RTD, municipalities, and localities will be critical to answer the question: *How will we monitor progress and know we are successful?*

Metrics and standards may include, but are not limited to:

- Expected ridership

- Productivity and cost efficiency of transit service
- Transit travel time competitiveness
- Transit-supportive land uses and/or plans
- Measures of transit mobility (e.g., % of population living within ½ of frequent transit)
- Economic development and land use development potential
- Potential speed of service
- Projected benefits and/or cost-benefit analysis
- Community and/or political support
- Regional connectivity and benefits
- First/last mile connections and opportunities
- Existing roadway conditions and right of way availability, including potential engineering challenges
- Benefits to traditionally underserved communities and Title VI/equity concerns
- Safety considerations
- Modal integration, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, park-and-ride lots, commuter rail, and other forms of bus transit
- Considerations of teleworking and/or remote appointments
- Vehicle Miles Travel (VMT) reduction

Although this is part of a separate task, the results should be published with the outcomes of Task 3. The development of service standards moving forward will help guide the future allocation of resources, so special attention to equitable outcomes must be made in addition to increasing government efficiencies.

Deliverables: Draft technical memorandum summarizing proposed goals and objectives, Draft technical memorandum summarizing performance measures and service standards

Task 5: Alternatives Analysis & Strategies

Task 5.1: Service Scenario Development

Consultant will develop no more than 3 scenarios for route and schedule recommendations for implementation across a specific timeline (which shall include consideration of a 10-year horizon), geographic scope (e.g., local, regional, inter-regional), and resource allocation identified for each scenario.

Task 5.2: Strategy Evaluation Framework

Consultant will develop methodologies (or frameworks) for evaluating strategies and project prioritization. Criteria to be considered will include alignment with performance metrics and service standards developed in Task 4.2. The full frameworks, to be confirmed in collaboration with the County, will be described by the Consultant in the final memorandum for Task 5.

Task 5.3: Initial Strategy Development [[or Alternatives??]]

Preliminary recommendations will be based on a revenue-variable approach. With an eye on equity considerations, the foundation of the plan will be built upon the findings from the work completed in earlier tasks.

Strategies would be placed in at least the following categories:

- Operations/service to include all service types (fixed-route, demand-response, express bus, BRT, paratransit, vanpool, et. al.)
- Capital (bus stops, TSP, bus lanes, maintenance facility, vehicles/ZEVs)
- Pass programs/farebox buy-ups/TDM
- Service delivery strategy defining the assumed roles of CBOs and private contractors in service provision

Task 5.4 Strategy Evaluation and Refinement

During development of recommendations, the Consultant will hold three workshops with Advisory Committees (which are listed in Task 2.1) to confirm the direction of strategies/alternatives, evaluate strategies/alternatives, and develop criteria for prioritizing the projects under the preferred strategy/alternative. Additional in-depth analysis will be added to strategies in this subtask, including implementation options.

Task 5.5: Prioritized List of Potential Projects

Each potential project which has been assigned a priority will feature key characteristics tailored to a general audience. Characteristics could include (but are not limited to): location/representative district, approximate impacts with regards to specified objectives (e.g., transit mode choice), involved stakeholders, etc.

Deliverables: Draft memorandum of Initial Strategies, Draft and final memorandum of Preferred Alternative and list of projects

Task 6: Financial Plan & Implementation Plan

Task 6.1 Potential New Transit Funding Sources

Boulder County's allocation of funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) will help fill critical gaps in the operations of multiple transit services, but it will sunset in 2029. The extent to which transit grows and thrives in Boulder County will depend on finding sustainable and reliable transit funding sources.

The financial analysis will look to leverage opportunities presented by at least the following:

- Allocations from the County Transportation Sales Tax
- State Senate Bill 260
- Local, Non-Profit, and/or Private Partnerships

Task 6.2 Financial Scenario Development

Even with new funding available, it is anticipated that the total countywide needs will outstrip current funding capacity. This is the reason it is so important for projects to be prioritized, so that there is a clear pathway for which projects should be developed within available funding and in what order.

Using the compiled information of past performance measures, existing services, existing expenditures, existing revenues, future needs, future expenditures, possible funding sources, and projected revenue, Consultant will develop a financial model representing multiple funding targets, including a fiscally constrained plan (no additional funding) and a fiscally unconstrained implementation of all elements that shows potential funding gaps. The model will be a tool to provide insights into decisions around the allocation of capital and operational investment coming from the County and partners.

This task will also include the outlining of a schedule of investments under immediate, intermediate, and long-term timelines. Time horizons will be confirmed in concert with the project team, but at least one horizon shall be 10 years.

Intermediate findings – including the trade-offs and implications of different scenarios/adjustments to the model -- will be presented by the Consultant to the County along with a demonstration of the model tool itself. Findings should include visualizations summarizing the financial impacts and implications of each scenario.

Task 6.3 Financial Plan

This plan should demonstrate the financial sustainability of:

- the level of transit service being planned
- the rehabilitation and replacement of capital assets

To that end, a financial plan for both transit operations and capital with a time horizon of at least 10 years, will be developed by the Consultant. The financial plan will take into consideration forecasts and projections of expenses, revenue (local, regional, state, and federal), fare policies, labor agreements, service agreements, competitive demands on funding, regional priorities, and policies. Specific to capital assets, the Consultant will develop a program for revenue vehicles, non-revenue vehicles, facilities, and other capital equipment. It will include a summary of the County's transit capital improvements over the most recent five-year period.

Consultant will also document the financial model's methodology (including assumptions and limitations) in the financial plan.

Task 6.4 Implementation Plan and Timeline

Consultant will synthesize prioritized projects (Task 5.5) and establish their relationship to the financial plan. Each project will be summarized with additional characteristics, including, but not limited to: proposed funding source(s), applicability to financial scenarios, approximate capital/upfront cost estimates, approximate operational/maintenance estimates, the proposed lead agency/organization/division on implementation, and implementation steps across multiple time horizons (including the 10-year time horizon for the highest priority projects).

Deliverables: Draft and final memorandum summarizing existing financial sources, scenarios, methodology, and plan; Financial model developed for this task, Draft and final memorandum summarizing implementation steps; Intermediate presentation of financial model methods and findings

Task 7: Plan Report

Task 7.1 Working Draft Report

Consultant will draft both a detailed Countywide Strategic Transit Plan report and an Executive Summary (which should have more illustrative content and use of simplified language).

Task 7.2 Public Review Draft Report

Both the full draft report and executive summary will be made available to the public for their review and content. The executive summary will also be translated into Spanish. Consultant will also develop presentation materials ready for sharing by County staff and, upon finalization, as part of Task 7.4.

Task 7.3 Public Comment Process

Feedback will be solicited via a survey with a single to-be-determined deadline. This would be the second survey supporting the plan following Task 2. Outreach around the public comment process should include coordination with local communities, stakeholders, public workshops (virtual and in-person, pop up events), and a website with survey. Public comments will be compiled and summarized back to the County in a single technical memorandum with recommendations for changing.

Task 7.4 Final Report and Presentation

Based on a single set of non-conflicting comments from the County, the Consultant will update the draft plan and presentation and create a final presentation.

Consultant will assemble all final versions of project deliverables for the County into a single electronic file package.

Task 7.5 Implementation Support

Consultant will set-aside budget to assist the County in technical and plan implementation assistance as needed.

Deliverables: Draft plan report, Public review draft report, Final report, Final presentation slide deck, Package of project deliverables