

Making the Land Use and Transportation Connection:

Innovations in the Denver Region

**New Partners for Smart Growth Conference
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DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Presenter:

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- Commissioner, Boulder County

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Overview

- Who is DRCOG?
- What is Metro Vision?
- Integrated Regional Model
- Regional Transportation Plan
- Transportation Improvement Program
- Challenges
- Questions for discussion

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Who is DRCOG?

- Regional Planning Commission
- Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Areawide W.Q. Planning Agency

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What is Metro Vision?

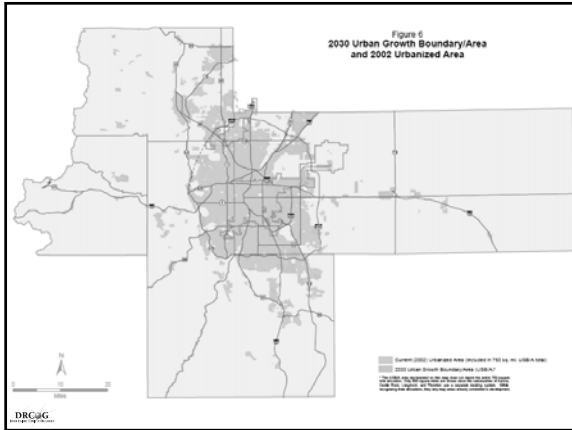
- Comprehensive plan for the Region.
- Originally adopted in 1997.
- Voluntary participation through the Mile High Compact.
- Some incentives for participation through the transportation funding process
- Nationally recognized

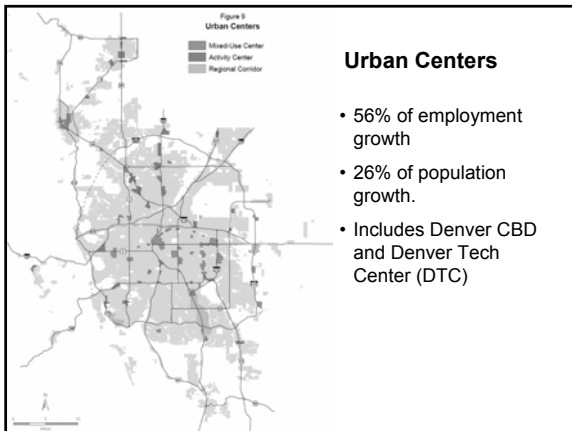
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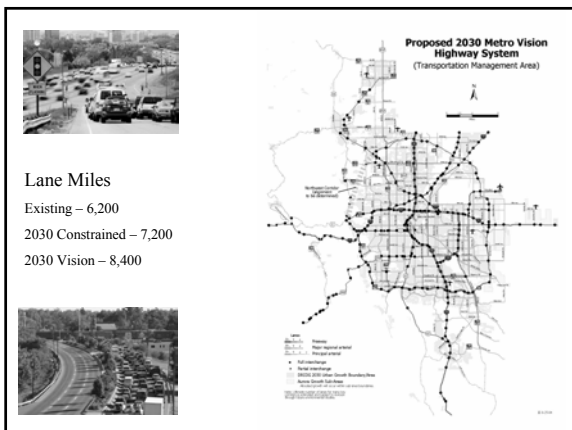
Key Features

- Urban Growth Boundary
- Urban Centers
- Highway system
- Visionary transit system: linked to TOD in urban centers

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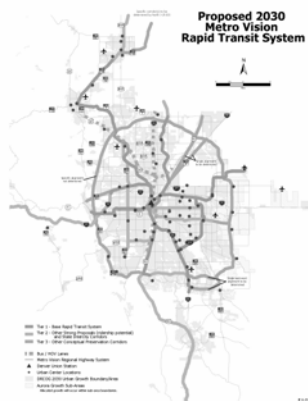




Tier 1 – 200 miles
(funded by Fastracks)

Tier 2 – 150 miles

Tier 3 – 115 miles



Key Interrelationships

- Plan policies reinforce each other
- Incorporated into local plans.
- Used to develop population and employment forecasts, which are used as model inputs.
- Model reflects desired outcome, not simply continuation of current trends.

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Integrated Regional Model (IRM)

- A “leading edge” effort to improve modeling capabilities.
- Ability to account for “induced demand.”
- Ability to model the benefits of transit-oriented development:
 - Non-motorized modes
 - Trip chaining

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Regional Transportation Plan

- Based on Metro Vision Policies
- Establishes eligibility for regional funding
- Criteria favor urban centers and UGB
- Strong correlation between transit lines + urban centers
- Highway investments have spurred significant "sprawl" development

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Transportation Improvement Program

- Allocates federal funds
- Local proposals prioritized
- Criteria favor urban centers and favor communities which comply with Metro Vision policies

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Summary of Key Concepts

- Plan policies reinforce each other
- Plan influences model outputs
- IRM will improve accuracy
- Scoring criteria "incentivize" plan implementation

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Challenges

- Growth beyond the DRCOG planning area.
- Local jurisdictions approve development despite overburdened and under funded state transportation facilities.
- Major transportation facilities could stimulate growth in inappropriate areas.
- Current growth patterns creating fiscally unsupportable transportation needs.
- Transit and nonmotorized modes get very limited state support

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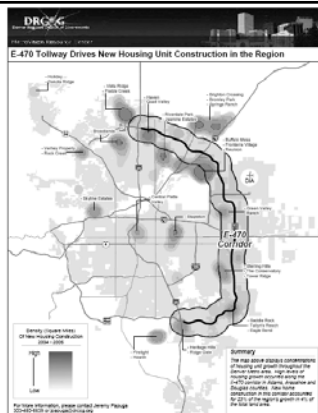
Growth beyond the DRCOG planning area impacts the region.

Weld, Elbert and El Paso counties are new growth frontier



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- Example of how a major transportation facility (E-470) influences development.
- New NW Parkway segment incorporated some additional protection measures: downzoning of commercial/industrial lands and use of bond proceeds for open space acquisition.



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Questions for Discussion

- What more can Metro Vision Do?
- What more can local governments do?
- Can we direct a larger portion of regional
- Can these issues be effectively addressed through purely voluntary regional plan?
- How can larger scale regional planning be addressed?
