

Moving Around in a Livable Community

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Photograph provided by Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments

Transportation touches every facet of our lives. Improving transportation in any way—making it quicker, less expensive, or easier to get from place to place, reducing the impact of travel on the environment—makes our community more livable. When any part of the transportation system breaks down, we feel the impact immediately. Surveys¹ have shown that reducing the time people spend in cars is one of the quickest and most effective ways to improve their quality of life.

It is well documented that investment in our transportation system is vital to Growing a Vibrant Economy because transportation improvements lead to increased and more efficient economic activity. Investment in specialized transit can help in Promoting Social Wellbeing by preventing social isolation of otherwise home-bound people. Preserving our Natural Environment requires minimizing habitat fragmentation and destruction from transportation infrastructure, reducing transportation-related noise, and minimizing pollution caused by vehicle operation. Sustaining a Healthy Community includes providing walking and bicycling facilities because communities without pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure experience much higher rates of obesity and stress.² Keeping the Community Safe includes reducing injuries and deaths from crashes. In the Pikes Peak region, the deaths from traffic accidents equal deaths from crime in a year. Finally, with our scenery and climate, transportation can be recreation.

According to the Texas Transportation Institute's 2010 Urban Mobility Report, Colorado Springs is the 75th largest metropolitan statistical area in the country, and the 54th most congested. Transportation costs are our residents' second highest expenditures, next to housing.³ The yearly cost of congestion in the Pikes Peak area is \$493 per person, while the cost of deteriorating roads and bridges increases our yearly maintenance costs by an average of \$250 per vehicle. These costs will continue to increase due to our current inability to provide enough funds for needed maintenance.

For decades, communities and regions have addressed housing, economic development, transportation, and community as completely separate issues. However, it is possible to plan in ways that benefit local economies, provide housing that people can afford and reduce our reliance on our cars, all while improving the quality of our lives. This collaborative planning requires commitment to communication and coordination and evaluating the trade-offs that lead to the best overall solution, rather than the best transportation solution that also is the worst for the community. Over time, if we build more housing closer to where people work, shop and recreate, pay attention to transportation when we are developing our economies, and give people alternative ways to get where they want to go, we may find that we spend less time in our cars and more time doing important things, like enjoying life.

During the extensive community outreach used to develop Moving Forward, the Regional Transportation Plan for the Pikes Peak Region, area residents developed the following vision for our transportation system:

“Create a sustainable multi-modal transportation system that meets regional mobility and accessibility expectations as essential elements of the Pikes Peak area's quality of life.”

Concurrent to the Regional Transportation Plan development, the region also has developed a comprehensive Sustainability Plan. The Transportation goal for the Plan is:

“By 2030, the region has a sustainable, equitable, and affordable multi-modal transportation system (roads, transit, bicycles, and pedestrian walkways) that efficiently and safely moves people and goods.”

Achieving this goal means:

1. The region has sustainable, adequate transportation funding for all modes, including regional transit, which is an integral part of the transportation solution.
2. There is increased accessibility, integration, and connectivity between where we live, work, and play.
3. Half of all fuels purchased in the region are sustainable fuels and transportation-related fossil fuel use is reduced by 40% from a 2010 baseline.
4. All transportation infrastructure is constructed, maintained, and operated using sustainable practices.
5. There is increased reliance on non-single-occupancy-vehicle modes of travel with public transit's share of trips increasing to over 3 percent.”

It is through regional collaboration and integrated consideration of land-use and transportation that we will most effectively guide investment in our multi-modal transportation facilities and services to efficiently move people and goods, support economic vitality, and sustain and improve the quality of life in the Pikes Peak region.

1 <http://www.massinc.org/index.php?id=596>; http://www.psychotron.org.uk/resources/environmental/A2_OCR_env_commute.pdf; www.bestworkplaces.org/coorkit/files/step4/newsletter_san_francisco_campaign.doc.

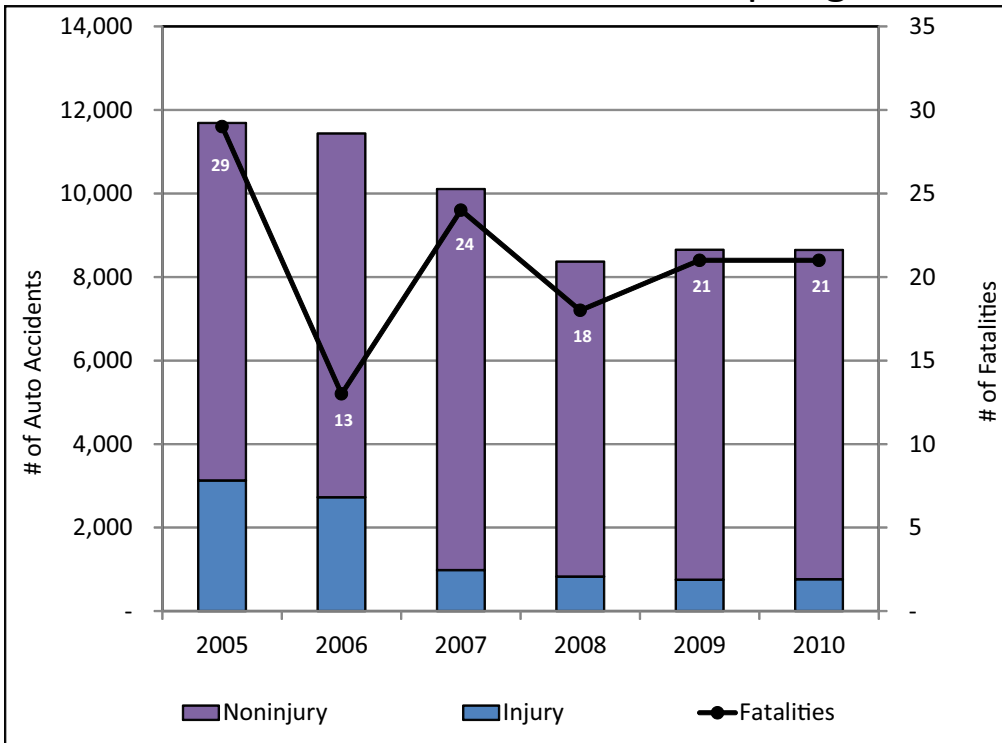
2 <http://www.urbanhabitat.org/node/322>.

3 <http://www.bls.gov/cex/csxstnd.htm>.

Photograph by Dave Gastisha

-Getting Around Safely-

★ Automobile Accidents in Colorado Springs



Source: Colorado Springs Police Department

This Chart shows the annual number of accidents per vehicle mile traveled in Colorado Springs. No data is available for accidents on state highways, so this number is almost certainly less than the actual number

Why is This Important?

This data is collected as a measure to effectively propose and implement traffic accident prevention countermeasures and evaluate the effectiveness of those countermeasures. Accidents are a major contributing factor to traffic congestion. Reducing traffic accidents is a principle goal of transportation planning and roadway management.

How are We Doing?

Since 2001, the rate of crashes per vehicle mile of travel (VMT) has been decreasing.

Potential for Action

Safety is traditionally viewed as a concern to be addressed during project design or left to enforcement agencies. A traditional engineering approach might be to simply improve the geometric design of a road or to change the operation of an intersection. Safety should be more broadly defined as an issue to be addressed through a combination of engineering, enforcement, education and emergency services (the four "E's").

A new framework called Safety Conscious Planning replaces the fractured, narrow approach to safety as a purely engineering or enforcement concern by integrating safety concerns into planning at all levels. Safety Conscious Planning is a comprehensive, system-wide, multi-modal, proactive process:

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Accidents per 10,000 VMT	13	12	12	11	9	9	9

Source: Colorado Springs Police Department, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments

Comprehensive: Considers all aspects of transportation safety-engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency medical response.

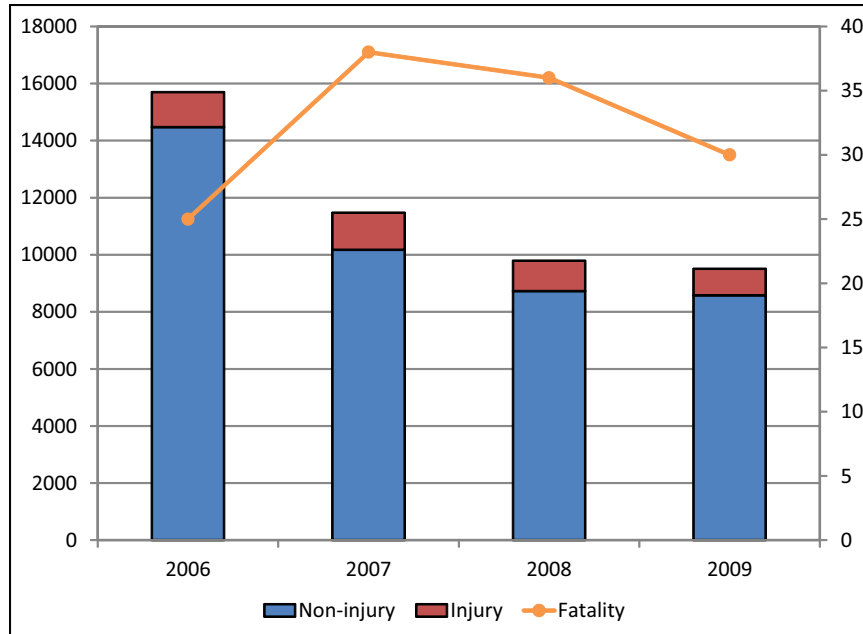
System-wide: considers corridors and entire transportation networks at the local, regional and state levels as well as specific sites.

Multi-modal: includes transit, bicycle, and pedestrian safety improvements.

Proactive: addresses current safety problems and presents future hazards and problem behaviors.

Regional Auto-Pedestrian/Bicycle Crash Comparison

El Paso County Automobile Accidents



Source: Colorado Department of Revenue

These charts show the number of crashes in El Paso and Teller counties involving a vehicle and either a pedestrian or a pedal bicycle, including injuries and fatalities. Accident reports involving automobiles are only one measure of the safety of walking or biking. Injuries due to unsafe or inadequate infrastructure also occur.

Why is This Important?

The City of Colorado Springs is making significant progress in creating a more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly environment for its residents and visitors. The City currently maintains 104 miles of multi-use trails. An additional 14.5 miles of multi-use trail are maintained by homeowners associations. Multi-use trails are typically 10-12' wide and accommodate many non-motorized uses and are referred to as Tier 1 and Tier 2 trails. Tier 3 trails are rustic, single track trails, usually found within open spaces.

How are We Doing?

In 2007 five pedestrians were killed in crashes, there were two pedestrians killed in both 2008 and 2009. In 2007 there was one fatality as a result of bicycle crashes, in 2008 there were two, and in 2009 there was one fatal bicycle crash. Reported pedestrian accidents increased dramatically from 75 in 2006, to 152 in 2007, 148 in 2008 and 134 in 2009.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Fatalities in Colorado Springs

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Pedestrian	5	2	2	4
Bicycle	1	2	1	0

Source: Colorado Springs Police Department

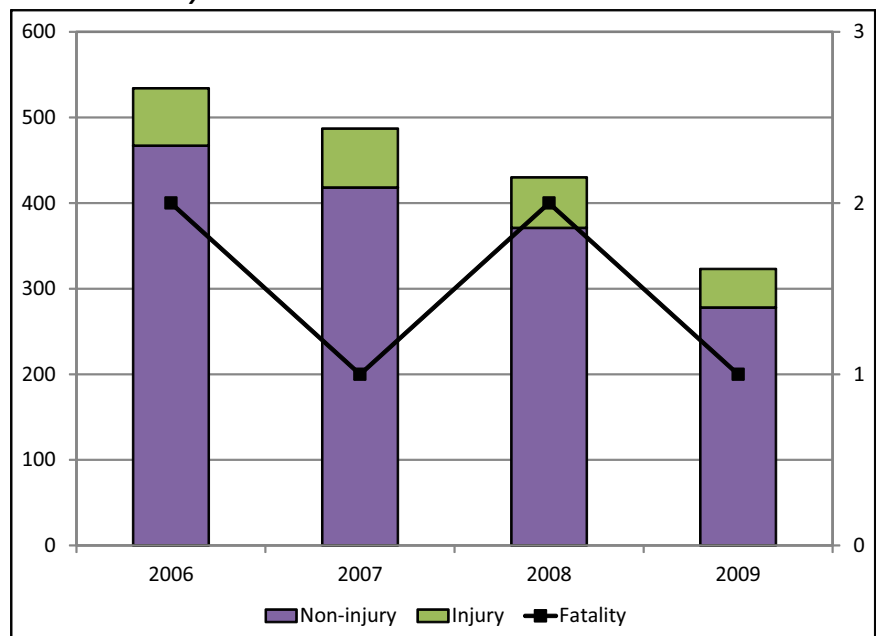
In 2007, Colorado Springs was awarded a Silver-level Bicycle-Friendly Community Award by the League of American Bicyclists.

Sixty-one miles of the total 94 miles of Tier 3 trails within the City of Colorado Springs are open to mountain biking and there are 54 miles of bicycle lanes within city limits. The number of bicycles carried by buses, including the Front Range Express Bus (FREX), has increased steadily since 2004.

Potential for Action

Increasing motor vehicle driver awareness and safety training for bicyclists and pedestrians can help improve these numbers. Connecting the disconnected multi-use trail system that we currently have will help. A lot of the crashes occur when non-motorized travelers try to cross busy streets in places because good connections don't exist.

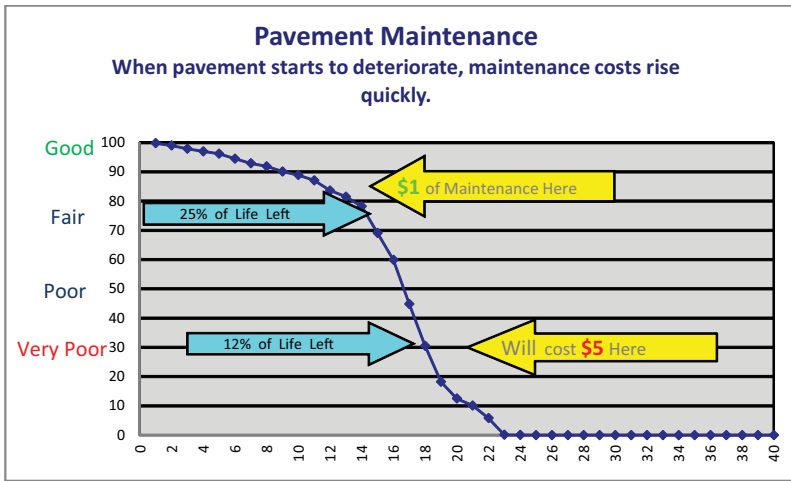
Teller County Automobile Accidents



Source: Colorado Department of Revenue

-Infrastructure Maintenance and Preservation-

Pavement Condition and Maintenance Needs



Source: City of Colorado Springs Streets Division

This Chart shows the cost results of deferred pavement maintenance. Nearly 77% of the roads and 19% of bridges in our Region are in fair or poor condition and require some type of maintenance treatment.

The two bottom Charts show the current condition of bridges in both El Paso and Teller counties. While work is needed to improve the structurally deficient and functionally obsolete structures, at least three-quarters of the bridges in both counties are without deficiencies

Currently, there is an approximate \$900 million backlog of unmet road maintenance needs. Factors contributing to this backlog include an aging infrastructure, increased traffic, deferred maintenance, and reduced funding.

Why is This Important?

Measuring the quality of roads and bridges allows governments to allocate annual revenue to keep the roadways passable and safe. When a maintenance backlog occurs and quality declines from Fair to Poor it becomes more expensive to fix problems. Maintaining our local roadways and bridges ensures efficient commerce, reducing costs of products and services. It also protects each of our personal investments in our cars, homes, and personal safety. We have been neglecting the maintenance of our roads and we are going to pay a heavy price to repair them.

How are We Doing?

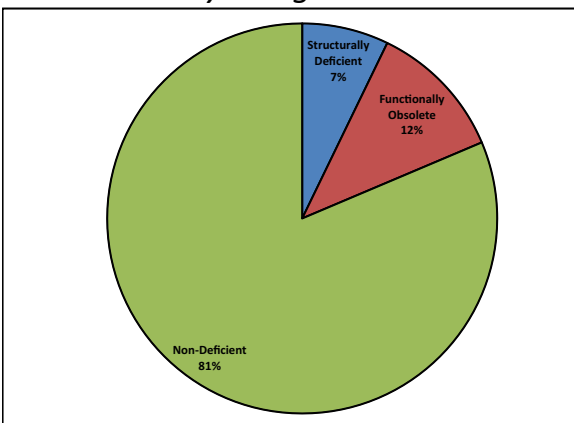
Since 2001, revenues supporting the Pikes Peak Region's transportation budgets, excluding the 2004 one cent sales tax for the Pikes Peak RTA, have decreased 81%. When including the Pikes Peak RTA, overall transportation budgets have decreased 44%. This does not take into account that costs of materials in 2010 were 170% higher than they were in 2001. This combination of factors means that the buying power of transportation funding in 2010 is one third of what it was in 2001. In 2011, the modeled backlog of needed maintenance activities in the two-county MSA was approximately \$1 billion. Without significant new sources of funding this backlog is forecast to grow to \$6 billion. The cost to maintain roads and bridges in their present condition is \$1.96 billion more than we presently have available in the total of local, state and federal funding.

Potential for Action

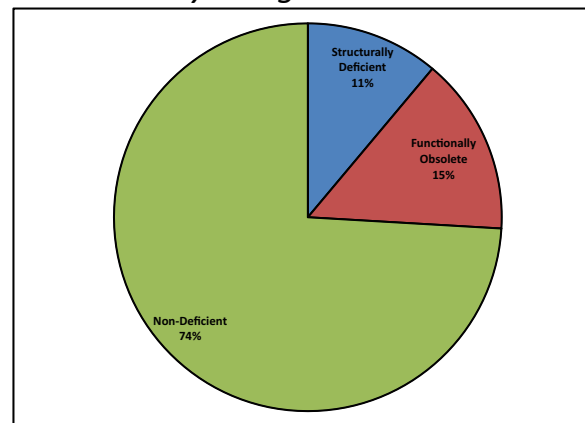
We need to change how we view maintenance activities by simultaneously investing more in regular maintenance and conducting preventative maintenance. Even with the added funding from the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) we can't afford to do this because the lane miles that need to be maintained are expanding faster than is our ability (funding) to maintain them. Page 58 discusses our Infill and Redevelopment challenges. Moreover, deferring maintenance of roads and bridges results in dramatically higher costs for future maintenance and replacement; as well as higher costs to operate vehicles on poorly maintained facilities.

Bridge Conditions

El Paso County Bridges



Teller County Bridges



Source for both pie charts: Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments

-Daily Travel-

Travel Mode

Metropolitan Area	2009 Workers (16 yrs and older)	Mode of Travel (by Metro Statistical Area)			
		Drive Alone	Carpool	Public Transport	Walk, Bike, Other
Austin	860,273	76.0%	10.5%	2.8%	10.8%
Fort Collins	155,327	74.0%	9.6%	1.0%	15.4%
Denver	1,277,368	75.6%	9.5%	4.6%	10.3%
Albuquerque	396,357	78.7%	10.9%	1.6%	8.9%
Colorado Springs	303,830	76.9%	9.5%	1.2%	12.5%
Omaha	437,684	82.2%	10.9%	0.9%	7.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2008 American Community Survey

The Table shows how the Pikes Peak Region's use of different modes of transportation compares with other cities. Automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrian services are expected to remain the primary mobility options in the Pikes Peak region for the near future. In other cities, there is greater use of public transportation as well as other modes of travel not yet available locally.

Why is This Important?

Providing attractive and effective public transportation encourages greater residential and commercial density, which in turn makes the provision of government services more cost-effective; reduces maintenance costs for roads and bridges, traffic congestion, and fuel consumption; and decreases the emission of gases and particulates. A robust public transportation system affords those who cannot drive significant access to medical care, food and clothing purchasing, and employment opportunities.

How are We Doing?

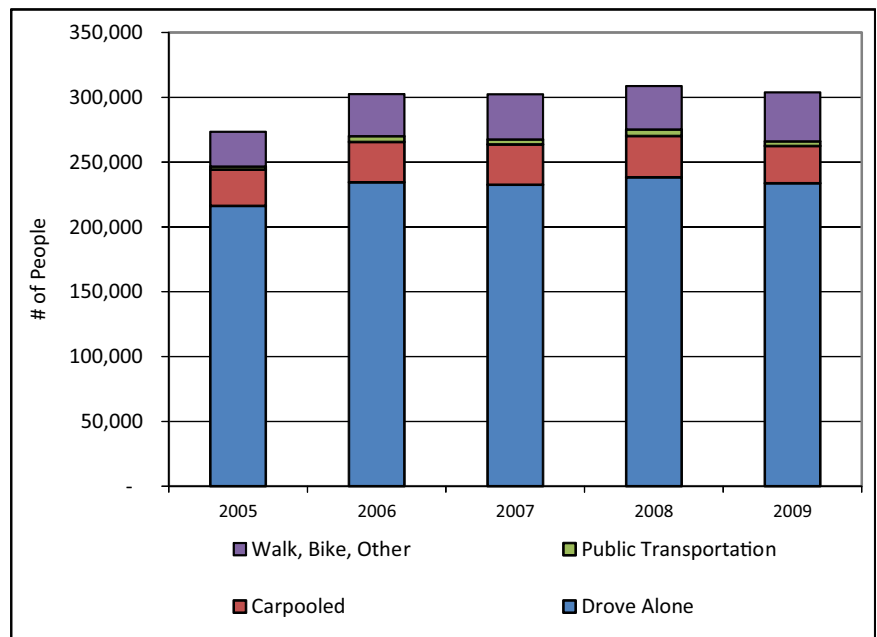
In 2009, 77% of El Paso County residents drove alone to work, and 10% carpooled. Some residents walk or bike to work. The region has many designated bicycle routes and a trail network that continues to expand. Non-motorized transportation takes traffic off roads, reduces emissions, and provides a healthy alternative for commuters. Unfortunately, budget shortfalls required the City of Colorado Springs to reduce transit funding 20% from 2008 to 2009 and 70% from 2009 to 2010.

Potential for Action

For a city its size, Colorado Springs is highly dependent on automobile transportation. By developing a more robust, more diversified transportation system, we can reduce our reliance on increasingly expensive fossil fuels, provide affordable transportation for those who lack access to private automobiles, and mitigate the adverse effects of air pollution. Completing our comprehensive plan for bike and pedestrian trails and lanes will encourage more people to walk or bike to work, shop, recreate, and worship.

Freeing our transit system from its reliance on local funding and moving toward a regional paradigm, as suggested recently by the Future of Regional Transit (www.FutureOfRegionalTransit.com) study, will make it both more sustainable and more responsive

to the transportation needs of the entire region. Building a business model for providing intra-region bus and streetcar and intercity rapid transit will stimulate the economy, improve the environment, promote walkable neighborhoods, and encourage higher levels of physical activity.



Source: US Census Bureau

Public Transportation Use

Annual Operating Characteristics	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Vehicle Revenue Miles	2,883,096	3,390,229	3,441,890	3,663,734	3,168,664
Vehicle Revenue Hours	168,678	210,934	213,877	220,399	176,390

Source: Mountain Metropolitan Transit, National Transit Database

The **Charts** shows annual operating characteristics for Mountain Metropolitan Transit's (MMT) bus division. Vehicle revenue miles and hours measure a system's performance by identifying the actual amount of transit service (in miles and hours) that is operating on the road, picking up and transporting individuals to their destinations. The data in this table show that transit service increased every year since the Pikes Peak RTA (PPRTA) was formed in 2004, and declined after 2008, when budget shortfalls in the City of Colorado Springs necessitated transit cutbacks.

Why is This Important?

An efficient transit system can provide an effective alternative to personal car trips for residents who must commute to work every day. Transit systems become more efficient as population density increases, and well-planned systems help to encourage development along sustainable service corridors. Efficient transit systems reduce traffic congestion, decrease fuel consumption, and limit emissions, resulting in a healthier environment. Such systems also enable those who are mobility impaired the important opportunity to live fuller lives.

Annual Bus Ridership (millions)	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Colorado Springs	2.3	2.3	3.5	3.6	3.4
Albuquerque	7.6	8.5	9.3	10.4	10.7
Austin	32.4	34.4	33.0	36.3	38.4
Grand Rapids	6.0	7.0	7.7	8.6	8.9
Little Rock	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.5	2.3
Omaha	4.6	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.0
Richmond	12.4	13.4	14.7	13.6	13.2
Spokane	7.7	8.4	9.4	11.1	11.2

Source: Texas Transportation Institute 2009 Urban Mobility Report, National Transit Database

How are We Doing?

Due to the economic downturn in 2009 and 2010, City of Colorado Springs' funding for MMT was cut by more than 70%. This required 2010 MMT service to be cut in half from 2008 service levels. 2010 fixed route service in the Colorado Springs metropolitan area is operating at levels last seen in 1995. This reduction in service follows all-time

Annual System Passenger Miles of Travel (millions)	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Colorado Springs	17	25	27	26	24
Albuquerque	21	30	33	37	38
Austin	113	132	137	162	183
Grand Rapids	27	31	35	39	39
Little Rock	9	9	9	14	14
Omaha	15	17	17	18	18
Richmond	45	49	58	61	69
Spokane	41	39	50	52	52

Source: Texas Transportation Institute 2009 Urban Mobility Report, National Transit Database

ridership highs that were observed in 2008 and a significant increase in the region's population. The recently-completed regional transit study (see below) recommended that the Pikes Peak Region pursue a phased approach to increasing public transit service; return transit service levels to what was delivered in 2008; and shift responsibility and governance of the transit system, from the City of Colorado Springs to a new public transportation governing board within the PPRTA.

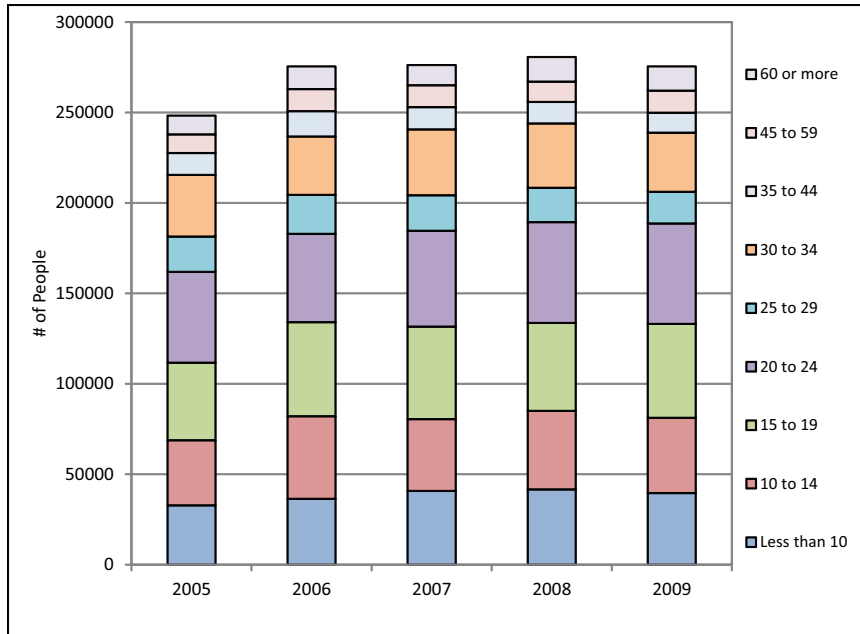
Potential for Action

Encouraging higher-density development and re-development is an important step in achieving the public's stated goal of improving mobility in the Pikes Peak Region. We need to find ways to make development and re-development of our urban cores more attractive and affordable than developing vacant land.

There is growing interest in providing alternative modes of transportation. The Streetcar Feasibility Study (<http://www.springsgov.com/Page.aspx?NavID=2758>) found that a system between Downtown and UCCS is attainable without significant tax increases. The Future of Regional Transit Study (www.FutureOfRegionalTransit.com) found that a viable transit system requires a dedicated governing body focused on operating a transit system. The Study also concluded that higher land use density, on the order of 10 dwelling units per acre, is necessary to support a viable transit system.

Commuter Time

Travel Minutes to Work



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The Chart shows the average travel time to work of all workers in El Paso County 16 years and older who did not work at home.

Why is This Important?

Traffic congestion is a major quality of life issue. Congestion is caused by more cars, farther commutes and increasing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) per person. The number of miles traveled, travel times and the number of residential vehicles are increasing at a more rapid rate than lane miles in the Pikes Peak region. This provides insight into the reasons for increased traffic congestion.

Travel time is the natural measure of the effectiveness of a transportation infrastructure. The purpose of a road or freeway is to transport people and goods to their destinations. While safety, simplicity of route and scenery play some role, the measure that is most important to people is travel time.

How are We Doing?

Completion of the COSMIX project has had a positive impact on the travel time of the average commute. In 2005, the average commute in El Paso County was 22 minutes, up from 18.7 minutes in 1990, but still lower than the average commute times in the U.S. (25 minutes in 2005 and 22 minutes in 1990).

The Map Image shows the combined cost of housing and transportation and its impact on household income in El Paso County.

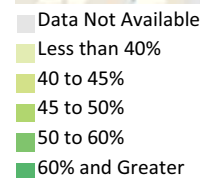
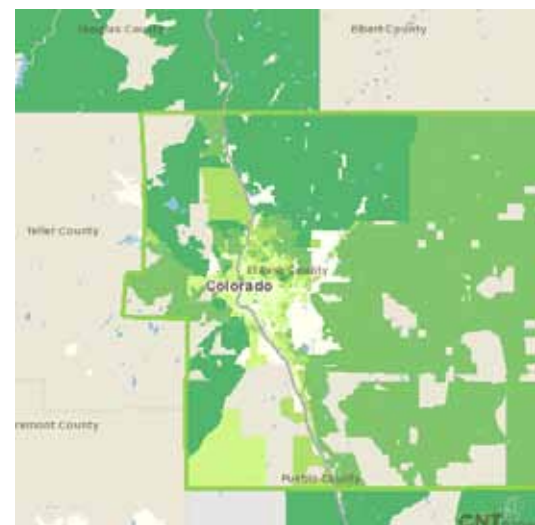
Considering the cost of housing plus transportation developed a more complete measure of affordability beyond the standard method of assessing only housing costs. By taking into account both the cost of housing as well as the cost of transportation associated with the location of the home, Housing plus Transportation provides the true cost of housing decisions.

Dividing these costs by Representative Regional Incomes illustrates the Cost Burden placed on a Typical Household by combined housing and transportation expenses. The national standard is 45% or less for the combined cost.¹

Potential for Action

In addition to building new interchanges where major arterials cross as an attempt to improve traffic flow throughout the region, travel time to work can be held steady or even decreased if high-density and infill land use development patterns are implemented. These actions will allow residents to travel on a more efficient roadway system while providing opportunities for citizens to live closer to where they work, shop, and recreate.

Housing and Transportation Costs as a Percentage of Income



Source for map image: Center for Neighborhood Technology

1 <http://htaindex.cnt.org>.

★ Bicycling in the Pikes Peak Region

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Ute Pass Express	N/A	N/A	N/A	920	884
Bikes on MMT Fixed Routes	52,587	64,940	76,989	69,038	57,150
Bikes on FREX Buses	2,191	2,587	2,500*	3,147	1,621
TOTAL	64,778	67,527	79,489	73,105	59,655

*2008 figure is an estimate. Due to malfunctioning fare boxes, only 4th quarter data was accurately collected

Source: Mountain Metropolitan Transit

The Table shows the number of bicycles carried on Mountain Metropolitan Transit vehicles. The number of bicycles carried on transit steadily increased until service reductions took effect in 2009.

The Chart shows the increase in bicycle lane mileage since the late 1990s. 2006 and 2008 were the years with the largest expansion of lane mileage with 9.65, and 17.85 miles added, respectively.

Why is This Important?

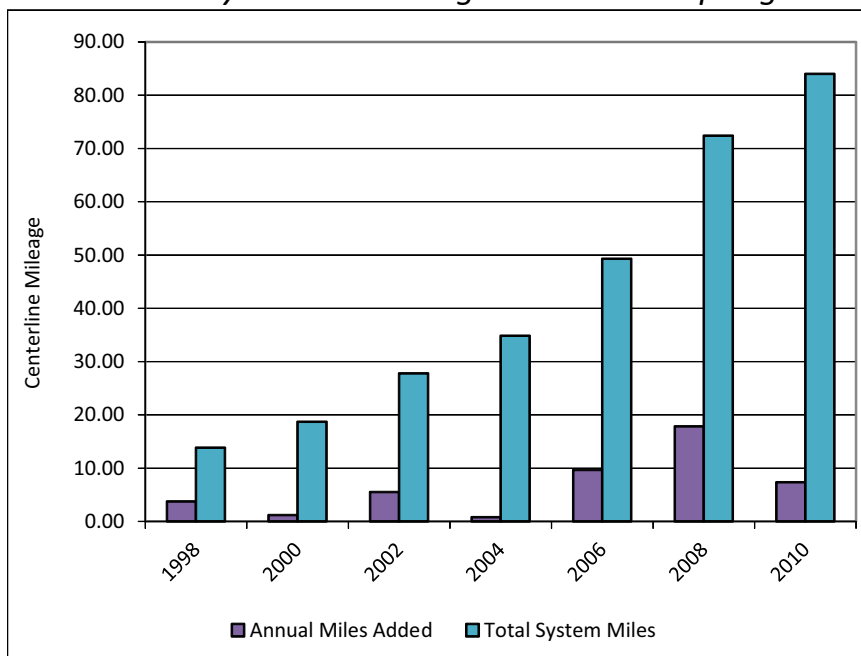
Bicycles are single occupant vehicles that many of us love. Bicycling promotes active lifestyles, healthier citizens and employees, reduces traffic congestion and improves air quality. Bicycling helps create fun, vibrant places to live and work. According to the Worldwatch Institute, "Advancing cycling may be the best buy in raising a city's quality of life. Not only does cycling capture the manifold benefits of moderate exercise, it is good for a city's environment, livability, and fiscal health." Bicycling can also be a much greater contributor to the growth of our region's tourist industry.

How are We Doing?

In 2008 the City of Colorado Springs received a Silver-level award as a Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC). In its assessment report back to the City following the award designation, the League of American Bicyclists highlighted several significant bicycling strengths in Colorado Springs:

- Bicycling opportunities: on street, trails, BMX, dirt jumping, skate park, and even a velodrome
- Annual increases in bicycle lane mileage
- Annual Bike Month with a broad range of activities for lots of audiences, including the Mayor's Ride
- Steady and unique funding sources: portions of the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority transportation sales tax (1 cent); a portion of the Trails, Open Space and Parks sales tax (1/10th cent); and Bicycle Excise Tax (\$4.00 per new bicycle sold in City limits)
- Complete Streets policy (City Ordinance 05-196) in place in the City of Colorado Springs.

Increase in Bicycle Lane Mileage in Colorado Springs



Source: City of Colorado Springs

Since the 2008 award, the City of Colorado Springs has continued to make progress in several areas:

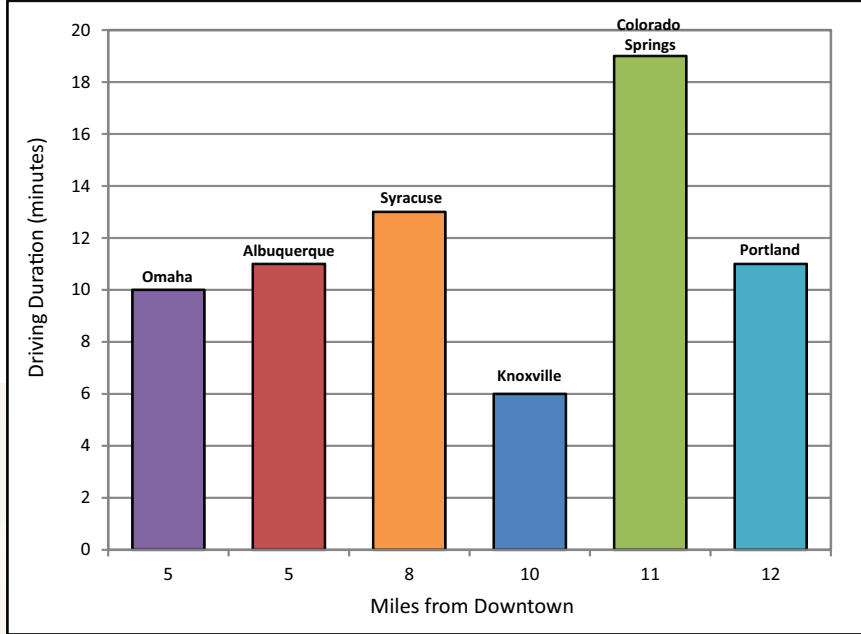
- 29.5 miles of bicycle lanes have been added, bringing the City's total Bicycle Lane mileage (through 2010) to 84 miles.
- The City has upgraded 2.7 miles of existing urban trails and added 5.75 miles of new trail mileage. City staff from Public Works, Transit and Parks have been working together to improve trail crossings of streets, connections to transit routes, and connections between on-street bicycle lanes/routes and the off-street urban trail system.
- The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) and the City of Colorado Springs initiated an on-going bicycle/pedestrian data collection effort in September 2010, using volunteers to collect trail and bike lane user data several times each year.

Potential for Action

The following actions would play a significant role in helping our region achieve its full bicycling potential: 1) Update the City's 1996 Bicycle Transportation Plan, preferably in conjunction with an update to the City's 2000 Trails Plan; 2) Fund a full-time Bicycle Transportation Coordinator; 3) Improve network connectivity and safety in addition to adding new facility miles; 4) Develop a meaningful relationship between area law enforcement agencies and the bicycling community, including identifying their respective roles in targeted enforcement and bicycle safety education.

-Intercity Connections-

Airport Usage Airport Access to Downtown



The first Chart shows the amount of time travelers spend driving from the airport to downtown.

The Table shows the number of enplanements at the Colorado Springs (COS) airport and peer airport facilities.

The second Chart shows trend enplanement data for Colorado Springs and peer airports during the 2005-2009 period.

Why is This Important?

Access to the airport from the surrounding community is a crucial part of the overall success of the airport. The location and accessibility of one airport over another has a significant effect in the evaluation process of which particular airport a passenger may choose to use. The importance of having a rapid link between an airport, the central business district and surrounding attractions is essential to encourage new businesses to

the community. An influx of new businesses will benefit the community economically as well as boost the airports potential of gaining additional non-stop destinations. Having a relatively high amount of time spent driving to an airport can deter potential passengers to other surrounding airports.

How are We Doing?

Colorado Springs travelers spend a longer time driving from downtown to the airport in comparison to other travelers from similarly sized airports. This can be attributed to those airports having better road infrastructure and accessibility to the surrounding population.

Colorado Springs has seen a drop in the number of passengers over the past five years due to a nationwide effort by all airlines to reduce capacity in response to the economic downturn. The trends in Colorado Springs are consistent with other small markets around the nation.

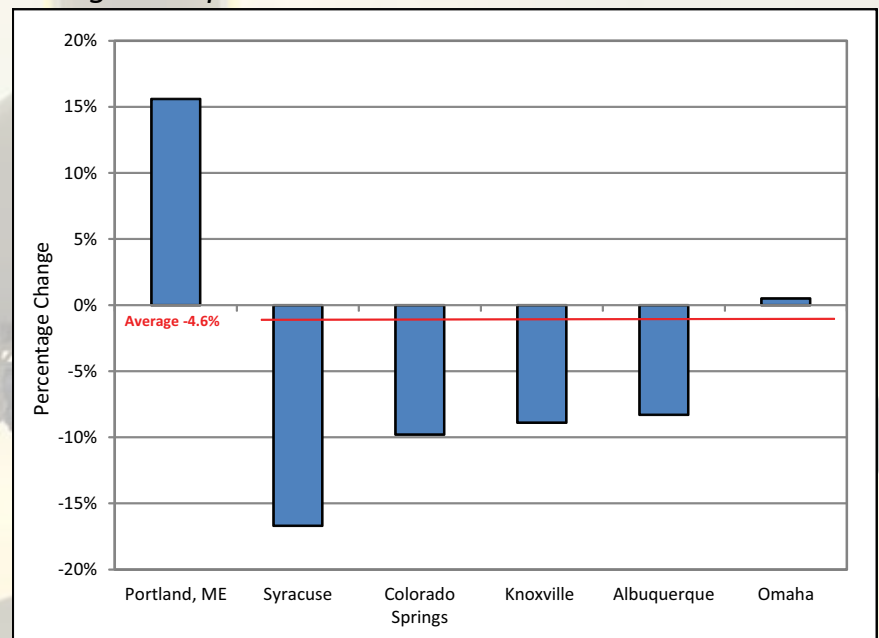
2009 Enplaned Passengers	
Colorado Springs	931,993
Syracuse, NY	1,019,146
Omaha, NE	2,112,179
Portland, ME	862,475
Knoxville, TN	842,351
Albuquerque, NM	2,820,371

Source: Federal Aviation Administration

Potential for Action

An improved ground access infrastructure will increase the amount of passengers served by the COS airport and ultimately strengthen potential new entrants of air carriers at COS airport. A more convenient access from the surrounding communities will encourage passengers to choose this airport.

Change in Enplanements 2005-09



Photograph courtesy of Shutterstock.com

Source for both charts: Federal Aviation Administration, local airport websites and airport staff