

Transportation Advisory Committee

Meeting date: June 23, 2025

Agenda Item #: 6 (Attachment D)

2050 Regional Transportation Plan Update

Agenda item type: Discussion

Summary

Continuing the scenario planning results discussion and initiating next steps in the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan major update process.

Background

At the May TAC meeting, DRCOG staff presented results from testing several conceptual 2050 transportation and land use scenarios. Given the volume of information presented in May, DRCOG staff would like to continue the discussion on results, highlight potential next steps, provide an overview of how investments are expressed in the RTP, and provide general updates on the development of the RTP.

Scenario planning

As a reminder, the scenario planning assessment is not intended as a rigorous “evaluation” of the scenarios or to “choose” a specific scenario (or hybrid). The objective is to understand how and to what extent each scenario influences regional relationships between urban form, transportation system approaches, travel and mobility patterns.

Results from this scenario planning effort show that land use alone is not the primary driver of mobility changes. Complementary transportation strategies, when combined with certain land use scenarios, show significant increases in walking, bike, transit trips and decreased growth in vehicle miles traveled and vehicle hours of delay when compared to the adopted RTP and current land use. In addition to changes at the regional level, there are also potential impacts at the community and neighborhood level through increased microtransit and reconnecting local streets across highways.

Expressing and identifying investments

One of the most important foundations in expressing investments in the RTP is the “Policy Framework and Desired Outcomes.” This framework is comprised of the various major plans, priorities and studies identified by DRCOG, CDOT, RTD, and local governments. Together, this framework represents the region’s major multimodal transportation vision, needs, and priorities.

Regional investment priorities are expressed in the RTP in several ways: as specific projects, project categories, financial plan investment allocations, or narrative content. The specific projects/project types in question include:

- The air quality regionally significant roadway capacity, interchange, and fixed guideway transit projects that are federally required to be identified in the 2050 MVRTP.



- Other major multimodal investment priority projects consistent with local, regional, and state plans and studies (safety, active transportation, freight, corridor planning) that contribute to achieving desired regional outcomes.

As noted, there are many important priorities, such as maintenance, traffic operations, local bus service, smaller-scale priorities, and others that do not lend themselves to identification as specific “projects,” but will be included in the 2050 RTP in another way.

DRCOG staff have been reviewing current projects in the 2050 RTP and have identified the following potential actions for discussion with the TAC:

- Projects that have been completed or will be completed by the end of 2025 are no longer by definition part of the MVRTP.
- Projects under construction for completion beyond 2025 will be included in the 2050 RTP.
- Projects that have completed or are in the federal project development (NEPA) process will be included in the 2050 RTP.
- Projects funded for NEPA and/or construction in the TIP will be included in the 2050 RTP.
- Projects that have or are planning to conduct Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL), corridor planning, or other pre-NEPA activities are eligible to compete through a solicitation described for regional funding in the 2050 RTP.
- Projects for which no activities have yet occurred are also eligible to compete for regional funding in the 2050 RTP.
- Locally funded projects within the 2050 RTP meeting the above guidelines are also eligible to compete for regional funding in the 2050 FC RTP.

DRCOG staff are interested in continuing the dual-track framework developed the last time the RTP was updated, which would include two parallel tracks:

- County transportation forums: DRCOG would solicit investment priority projects through each forum.
- Inter-Agency Coordination Process: DRCOG, CDOT and RTD would develop draft regional investment priorities through a series of workshops based on the Policy Framework and Desired Outcomes foundation.

Candidate projects would be evaluated using the existing six RTP priorities and via a committee comprised of staff from DRCOG, CDOT, RTD, and a staff representative from each county transportation forum. The Inter-Agency Coordination Process would review those outcomes, along with the draft financial plan and the broader Policy Framework and Desired Outcomes, to develop draft program and project investment priorities. That draft would be reviewed through DRCOG’s committees and Board to develop final draft investment priorities for the 2050 RTP.

Advisory groups

DRCOG staff have convened two advisory groups for the development of RTP: a Civic Advisory Group and a Youth Advisory Panel. The Civic Advisory Group is made up of interested residents who may not have participated in transportation planning previously. The



Youth Advisory Panel includes high school age representatives from DRCOG's member government youth boards and commissions to hear younger voices and priorities.

Action by others

None.

Previous discussion/action

[October 28, 2024](#) – Transportation Advisory Committee

[December 16, 2024](#) – Transportation Advisory Committee

[May 19, 2025](#) – Transportation Advisory Committee

Recommendation

None.

Attachments

DRCOG Staff Presentation.

For more information

If you need additional information, please contact Alvan-Bidal Sanchez, Regional Transportation Planning Program Manager, at 720-278-2341 or asanchez@drcog.org.





Regional Transportation Plan update

Transportation Advisory Committee: June 23, 2025

Topics for discussion

- Conducting further scenarios analysis.
- Expressing investment priorities in the RTP.
- Engagement advisory groups.

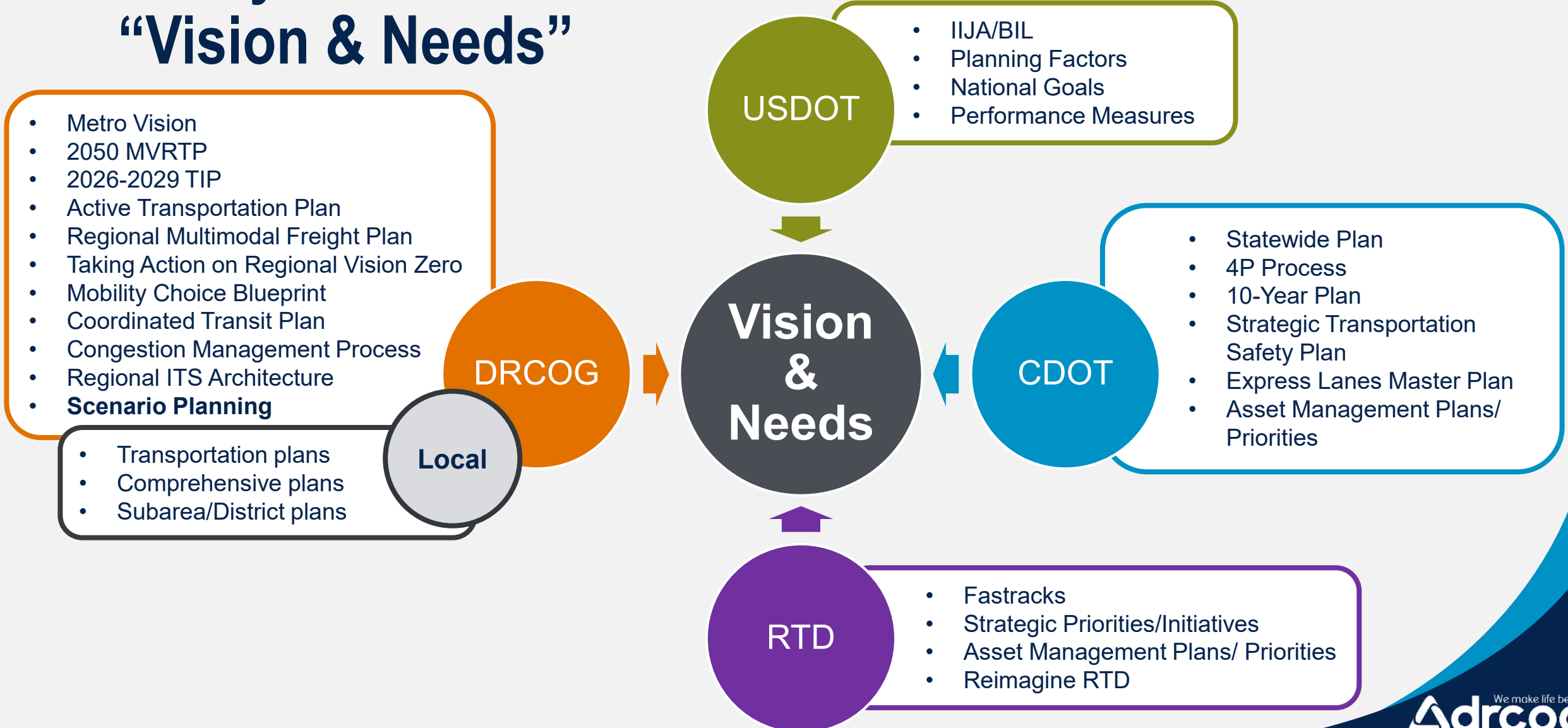


Scenarios key takeaways...so far

- **Land use alone is not the primary driver** of mobility changes.
- **Complementary transportation strategies are needed** in combination with land use changes around planned transit investment.
- In addition to regional changes, there are significant changes possible at the **community** and **neighborhood level**.
- Select transportation scenarios meet Metro Vision targets for VMT, non-SOV trips, and delay, but **transportation-land use combinations show greater magnitude of change**.

Policy Framework & Desired Outcomes

“Vision & Needs”



- Metro Vision
- 2050 MVRTP
- 2026-2029 TIP
- Active Transportation Plan
- Regional Multimodal Freight Plan
- Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero
- Mobility Choice Blueprint
- Coordinated Transit Plan
- Congestion Management Process
- Regional ITS Architecture
- **Scenario Planning**

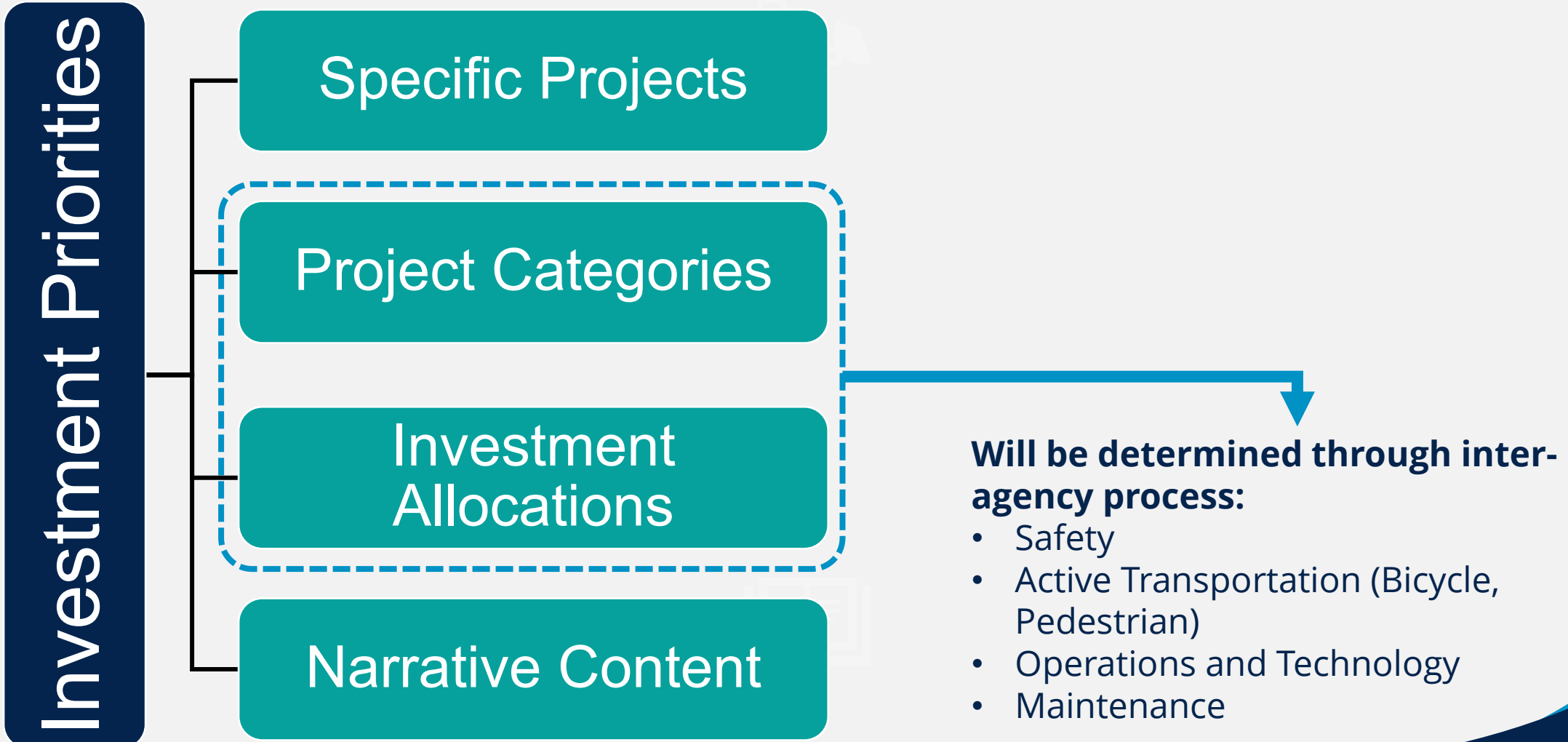
- IIJA/BIL
- Planning Factors
- National Goals
- Performance Measures

- Statewide Plan
- 4P Process
- 10-Year Plan
- Strategic Transportation Safety Plan
- Express Lanes Master Plan
- Asset Management Plans/Priorities

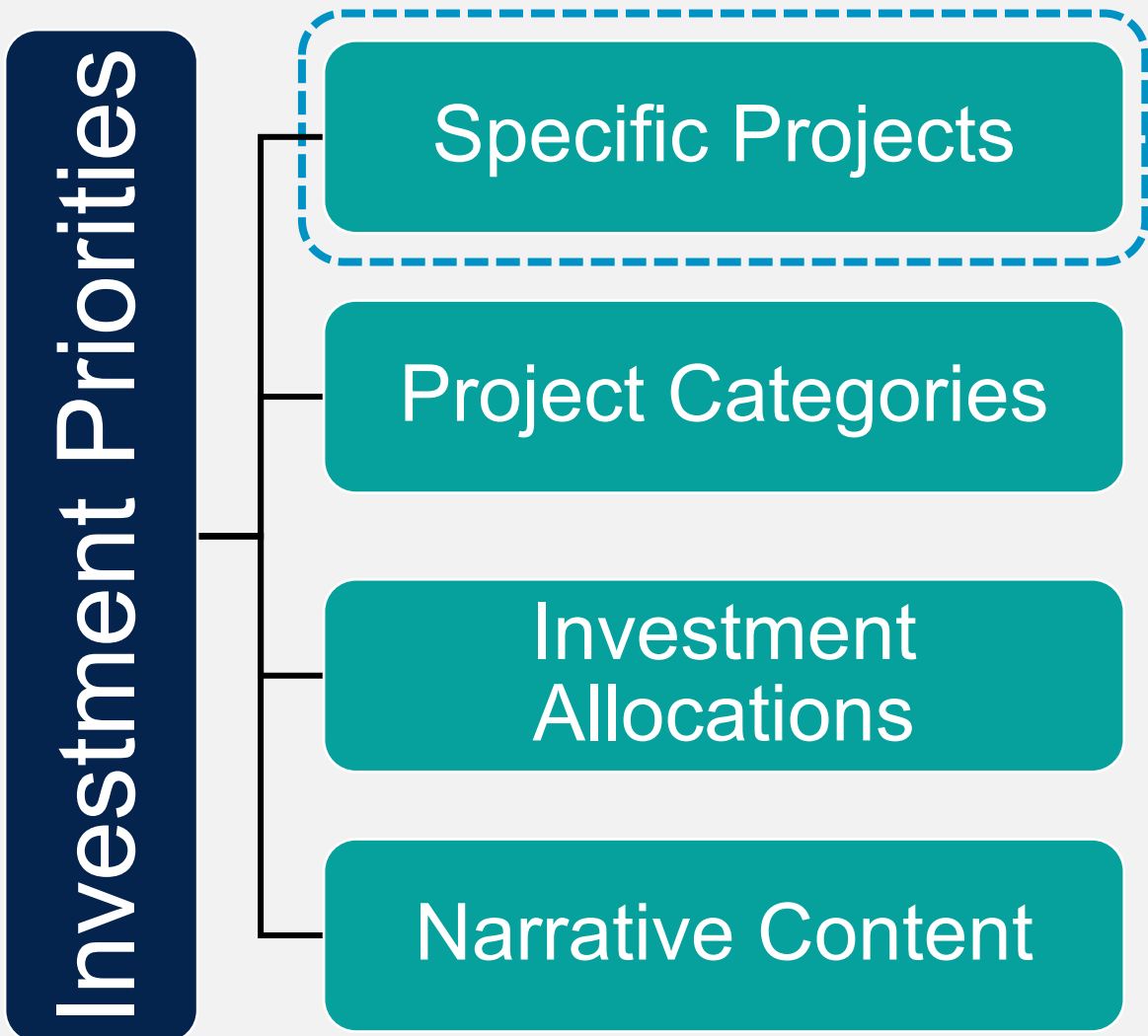
- Transportation plans
- Comprehensive plans
- Subarea/District plans

- Fastracks
- Strategic Priorities/Initiatives
- Asset Management Plans/ Priorities
- Reimagine RTD

Expressing Investment Priorities in the MV RTP



Expressing Investment Priorities in the MVRTP



Must be included:

- **Roadway widenings** of one center-line mile or more on the regional roadway system
- New interchanges and interchange improvements that add or delete travel movements (**new or deleted ramps**)
- New rapid transit lines (**light rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit**)

Does not include:

- Local/Collector Roads (Changes not on the regional roadway system)

Project types included in the RTP



Regionally significant **roadway capacity**



Regionally significant **rapid transit capacity**



Safety and Complete Streets improvements (arterial safety, vision zero)



Active transportation improvements (bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, trails)



Freight improvements (bridge reconstructions, overpasses/underpasses, new bridges)



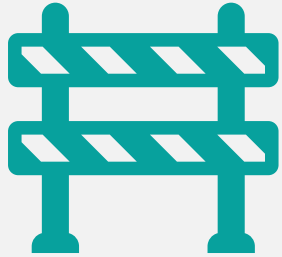
Corridor planning – roadway and transit (generalized corridors/concepts)

Current 2050 MVRTP Projects



Projects to be complete by 2025

No need to include



Projects under CONST or in NEPA

Will be automatically included



Projects with NEPA/CONST in the S/TIP



Projects planning for pre-NEPA studies

Can be submitted for evaluation

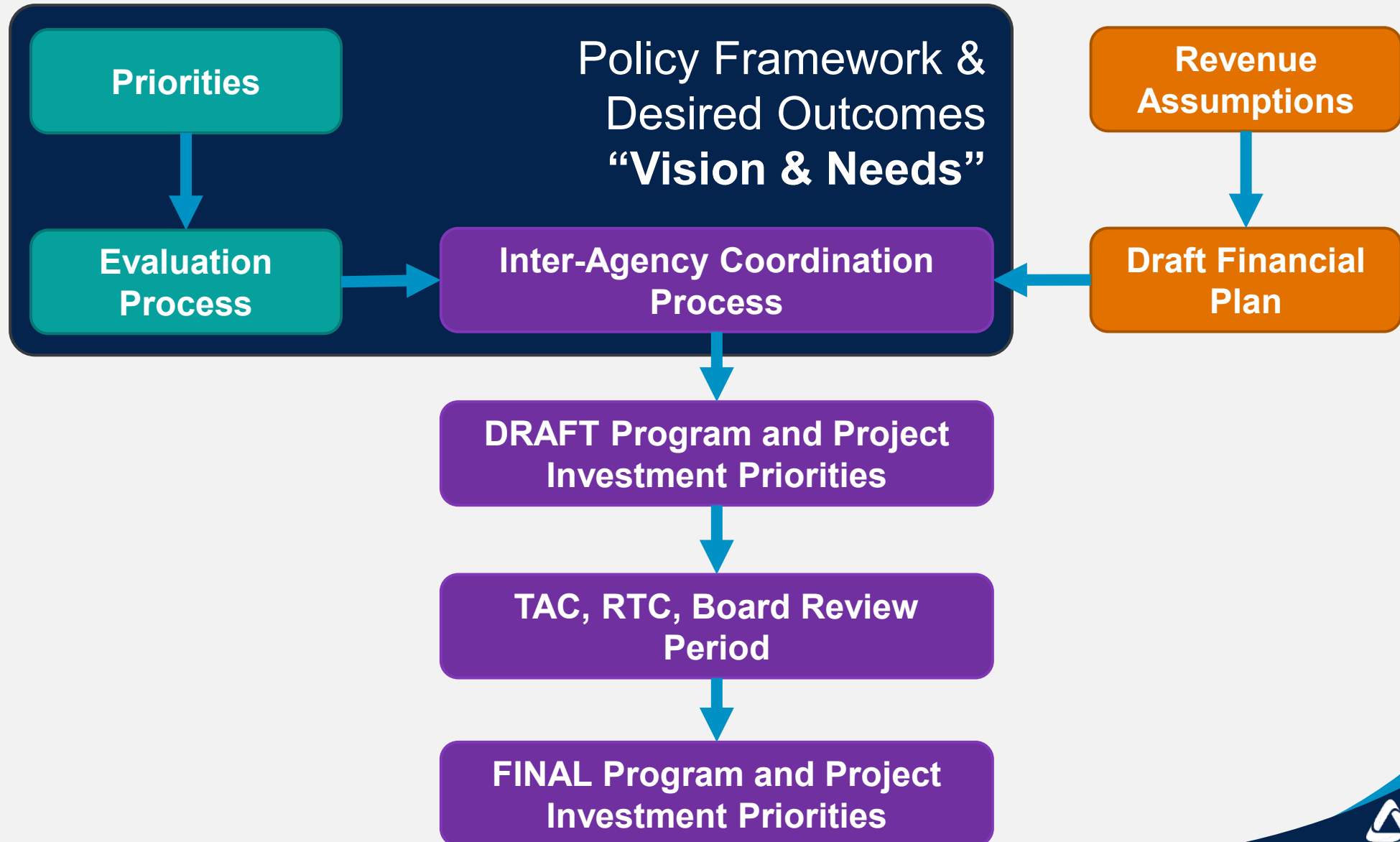


Other 2050 projects



Locally funded projects

Investment Priorities Framework



Identifying priorities

Interagency priorities

*Represent the greatest transportation needs **for the region** as determined by **DRCOG, CDOT, and RTD**.*

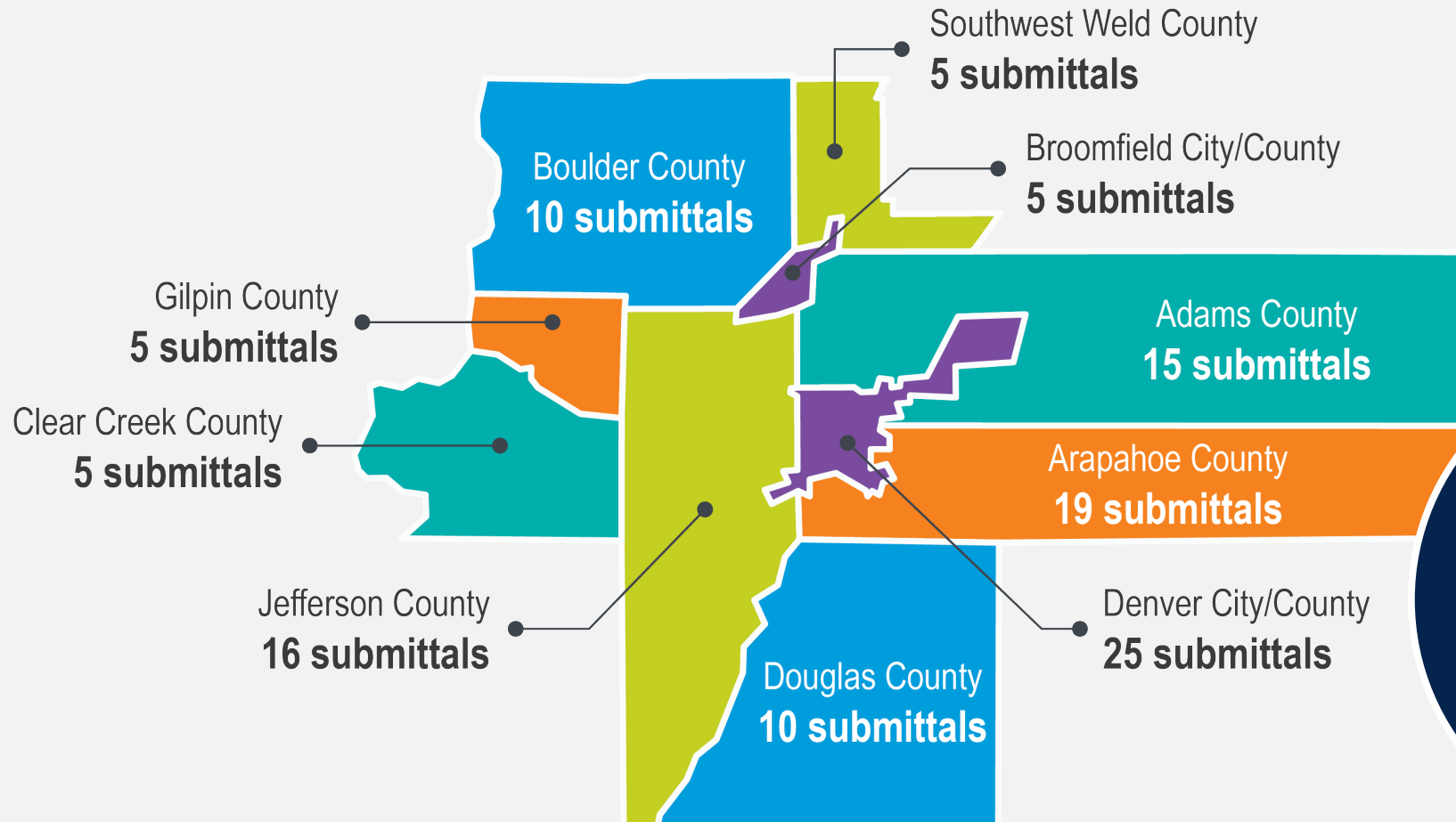
- DRCOG, RTD, CDOT work sessions.

Subregional priorities

*Represent the greatest transportation needs **for each forum area** as determined by each of the **forums**.*

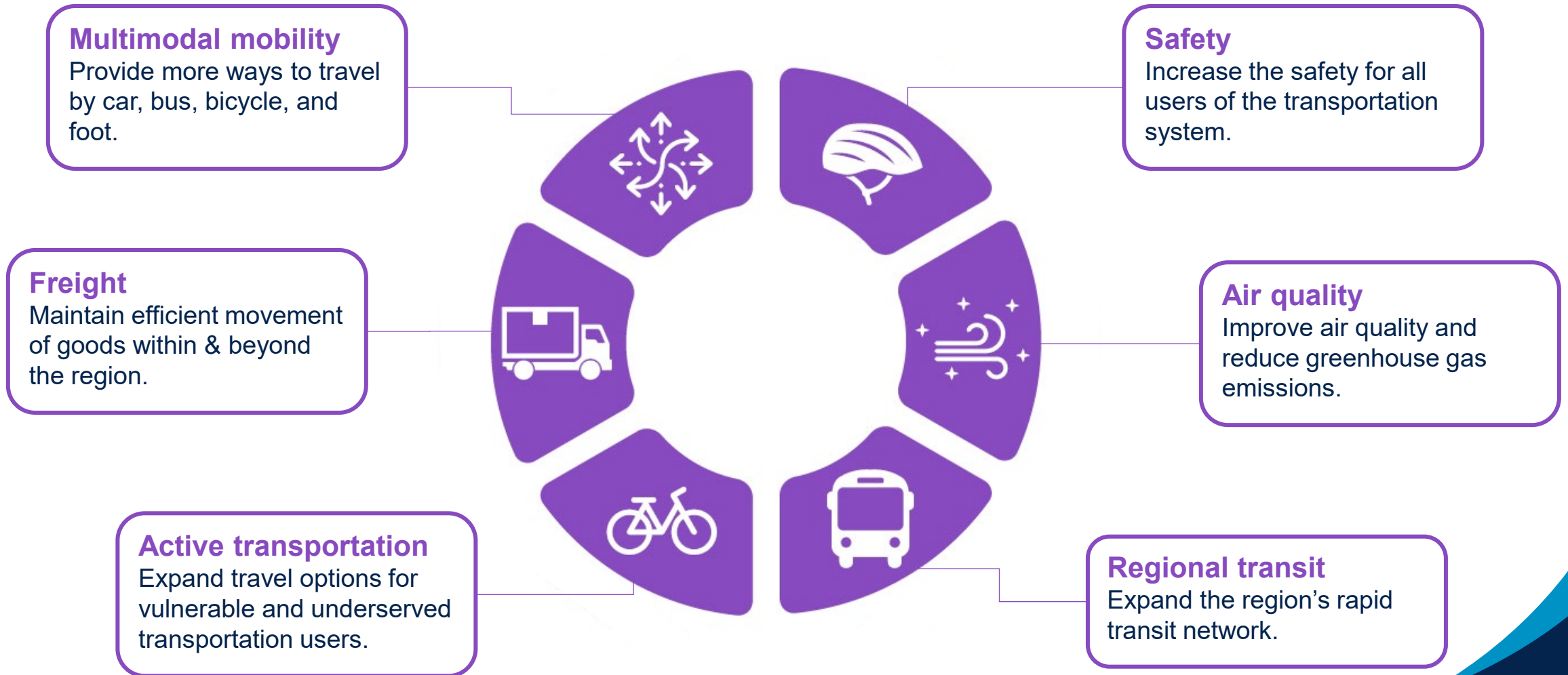
- Transportation forum solicitation.

Subregional candidate project submittals



Average of
population +
employment
+ vehicle
miles
traveled

Evaluation framework



Advisory groups



CIVIC ADVISORY GROUP

“...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.”



YOUTH ADVISORY PANEL

“...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.”

Discussion questions

- Are there **project types missing** from the current RTP that would help the region achieve its goals?
- Are there **other priorities** in the region not identified currently in the evaluation framework?

Contact information

Alvan-Bidal Sanchez, AICP
Program Manager
asanchez@drcog.org

If you need digital accessibility assistance, submit a request at drcog.org/access or call 303-455-1000. Please expect a response within 72 hours (three business days).