



Denver Regional Active Transportation Plan

Regional Transportation Committee, December 16, 2025

Active Transportation Plan

The Active Transportation Plan envisions a region where all people living, working and visiting have access to safe and comfortable places to walk, bike and roll.

The plan establishes a regional active transportation network that is complete, connected and comprehensive, and recommends actions for DRCOG and its partners to extend access to active transportation through policy, programs, guidance and encouragement.





Planning process

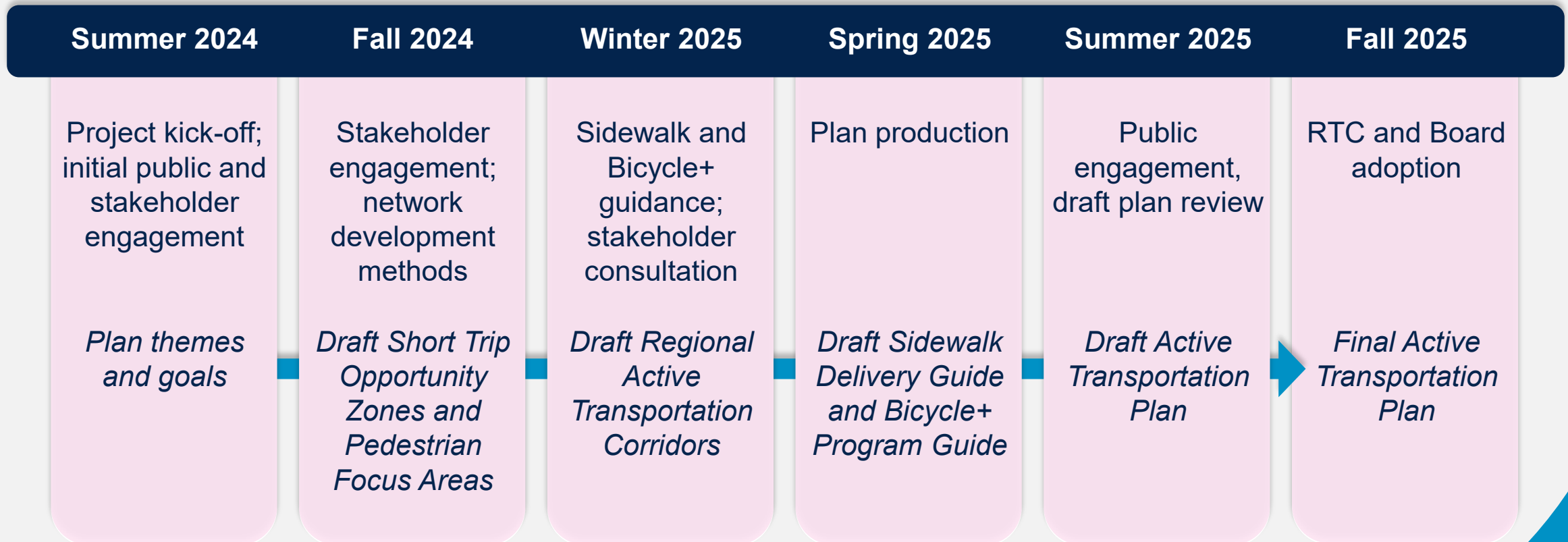
- Active Transportation Advisory Group:
 - Eight committee meetings.
 - Two surveys.
 - Three network review periods.
- Public engagement:
 - Five focus groups.
 - Office hours.
 - Bike to Work Day events.
 - Community Advisory Group.



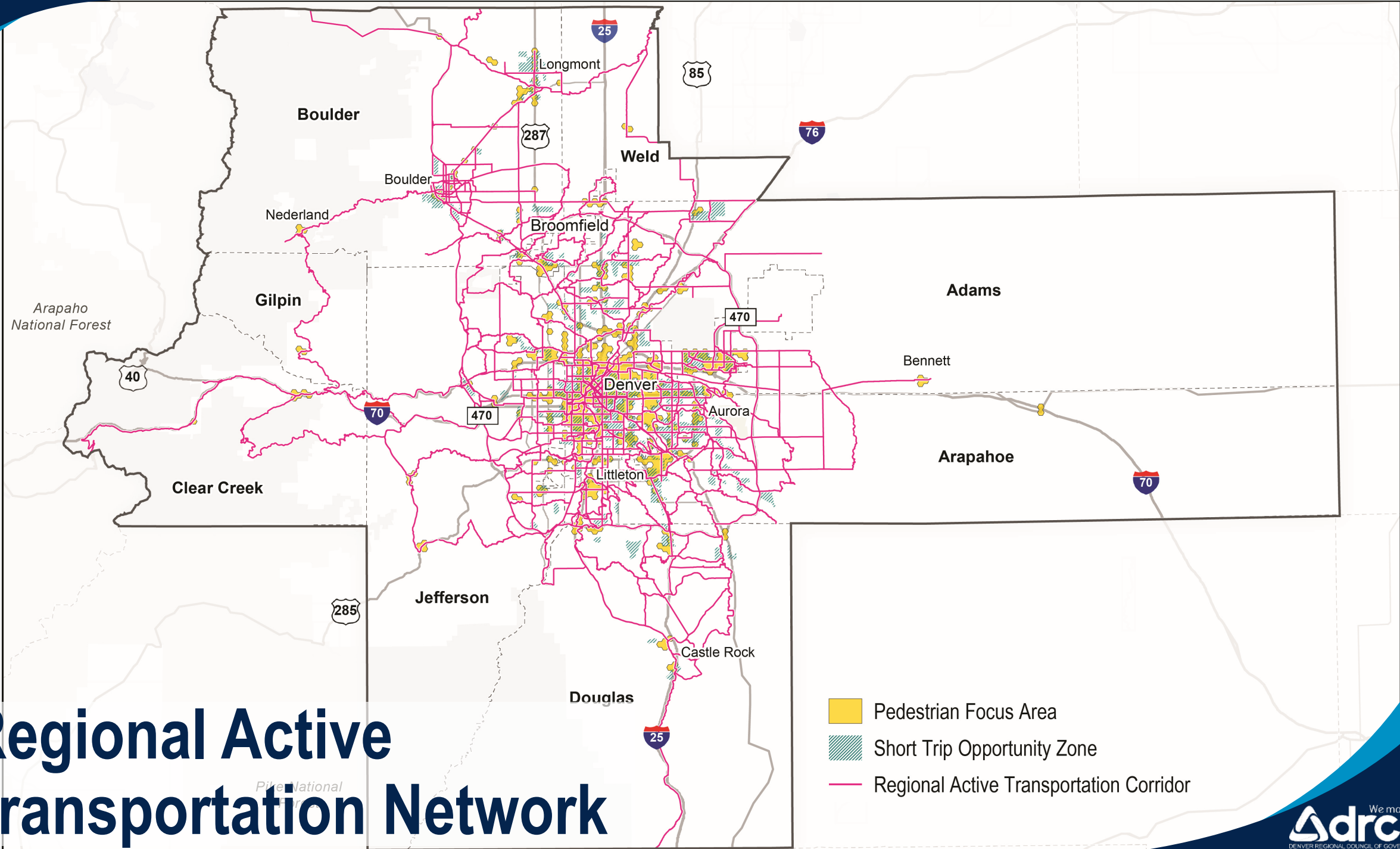
Planning process

- Network development.
 - Technical analysis.
 - Stakeholder feedback.
- Plan recommendations.
 - DRCOG staff workshop and feedback.
 - Peer MPO research.
- Resource guides.
 - National and local best practices.
 - Stakeholder and public input.

Plan development timeline



Regional Active Transportation Network



Recommended actions

1. Develop a **regionwide gaps analysis** for the walking and bicycling network.
2. Expand DRCOG's **capacity to support** our member governments' multimodal planning, design and evaluation work.
3. Support **land use and development initiatives** that advance active transportation and mode shift for short trips.
4. Update the Transportation Improvement Program Policy to include **minimum active transportation facility standards** and guidance that builds on the Regional Complete Streets Toolkit.

Recommended actions

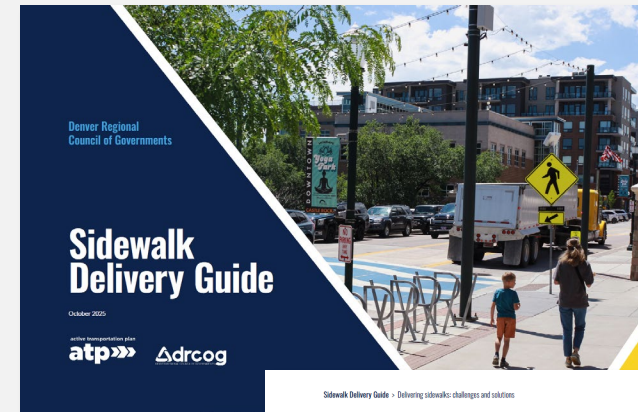
5. Develop and implement a **Regional Active Transportation Counts Strategic Plan** to benchmark active transportation activity.
6. Expand **benchmarking of active transportation safety trends** to achieve DRCOG's Vision Zero goal.
7. Explore **alternative funding strategies** to raise funds for and support completion of the regionwide active transportation network.
8. Leverage the regional active transportation network to **support operational activities** at the local level.

Recommended actions

9. Support and expand **bicycling and walking promotion and encouragement** programs.
10. Update **performance measures** for active transportation progress that DRCOG supports.

Sidewalk Delivery Guide

1. Designing accessible, inviting walking spaces.
2. Delivering sidewalks: challenges and solutions.
3. Seeking durable and adequate funding.
4. Evaluating performance.



Sidewalk Delivery Guide • Delivering sidewalks: challenges and solutions

The planning process for the development of this guide included two key outputs:

- **Sidewalk Delivery Survey:** Distributed to DRCOG member jurisdictions to identify the key challenges to sidewalk construction in the region.
- **Sidewalk Delivery Case Studies:** These case studies, from both within the region and nationwide, help provide ideas and solutions for how to implement sidewalks in the region. Both outputs include their own reports and are included as an appendix for further information.

As part of the Sidewalk Delivery Guide development process, a Sidewalk Delivery Survey was developed to gain insights from member agencies on the challenges, strategies and best practices in sidewalk delivery across the Denver region. Responses from 27 jurisdictions, including a range of urban, suburban and smaller municipalities, provided a comprehensive understanding of the current state of pedestrian infrastructure planning, funding, construction and maintenance. The survey focused on collecting data related to funding sources, construction responsibilities, performance measures and the major challenges impacting sidewalk delivery.

Delivering and maintaining sidewalk infrastructure across the DRCOG region is becoming increasingly difficult due to a variety of financial, logistical and staffing challenges. Survey responses from jurisdictions throughout the region highlight several key obstacles that hinder timely and cost-effective sidewalk construction and maintenance.

Rising material and labor costs

Over the past decade, construction costs have risen across the U.S. and the state—according to the Colorado Department of Transportation's Construction Cost Index, the unit cost of concrete pavement nearly tripled from 2010 through 2024, and other common construction materials grew by as much as 50% (as shown in Figure 24). During engagement with member governments, DRCOG staff found that member governments in the Denver region assume that a 5-foot wide sidewalk costs \$2.5 – 3 million per mile to construct, including planning and design work. Among Denver region governments, the most frequently cited challenge in sidewalk delivery is the rising cost of materials such as concrete, steel and asphalt. Inflationary pressures and supply chain disruptions have led to increased costs, forcing jurisdictions to prioritize maintenance over expansion.

- **19 jurisdictions** identified rising material costs as a major issue, making it difficult to complete planned projects within existing budgets.
- **16 jurisdictions** cited rising labor costs as a barrier, with high demand for skilled workers leading to increased wages and project expenses.

Cost increases make it challenging for jurisdictions to expand sidewalk networks, particularly in areas with high infrastructure needs. To manage these rising expenses, agencies are implementing cost-saving strategies such as bundling sidewalk projects with other infrastructure improvements, utilizing alternative materials and adjusting funding mechanisms to keep pace with inflation. These approaches help maximize available resources while ensuring continued sidewalk investment.

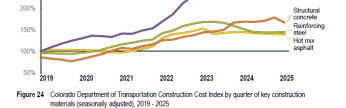


Figure 24 Colorado Department of Transportation Construction Cost Index by quarter of key construction materials (seasonally adjusted), 2010 - 2025

Sidewalk Delivery Guide • Designing accessible, inviting walking spaces

Design needs of blind and low-vision users

An estimated one million people in the United States are legally blind, and a further seven million people have a vision impairment (CDC, Vision and Eye Health, 2024). Blindness comes in many forms—most blind people do not have complete vision loss. Figure 8 illustrates some examples of different types of blindness, ranging from degenerative to genetic to neurological conditions that impact a person's ability to see and discern light, color, shapes, movement and contrast. Another 12 million people in the U.S. are estimated to be colorblind. Pedestrians are charged with quickly receiving and decoding a number of competing signs and cues in the public realm to navigate safely and efficiently. For those who have reduced vision, these cues may be unavailable and require non-visual supplement.



Figure 7 Visual cues for pedestrians at a typical urban crosswalk

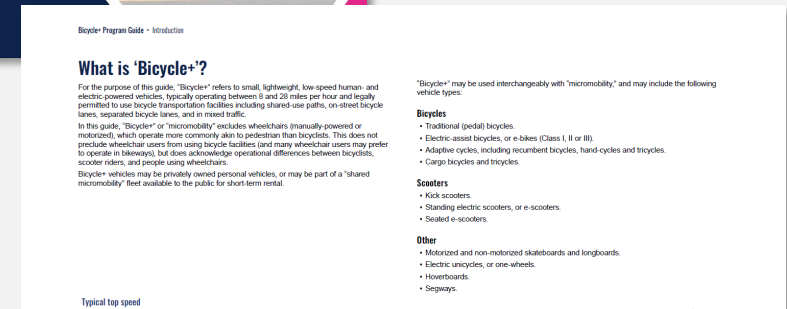
As shown in Figure 7, pedestrians use color, relative position and materials contrast to quickly interpret cues like current traffic signal phase, walk signal indication, roadway edge and crosswalk markings to determine when and where to cross a street. Colorblind pedestrians may use position of the three-phase signal face to determine the signal phase (i.e., rather than looking for the green light, they may look for the bottom ball to be lit). High contrast, limited sign clutter, and audible or tactile cues all support and supplement visual indications.



Figure 8 Illustrations of types of blindness, adapted from What blindness really looks like, Perkins School for the Blind

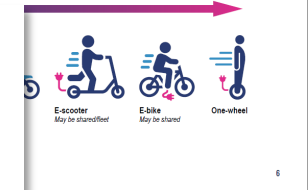
Bicycle+ Program Guide

1. Emerging mobility trends.
2. Fit with national and local guidance.
3. Design controls for emerging modes.
4. Context-sensitive bicycle+ design.
5. Focus on Regional Connector Streets.
6. Strategies for shared-use path comfort.
7. Bicycle facility maintenance.

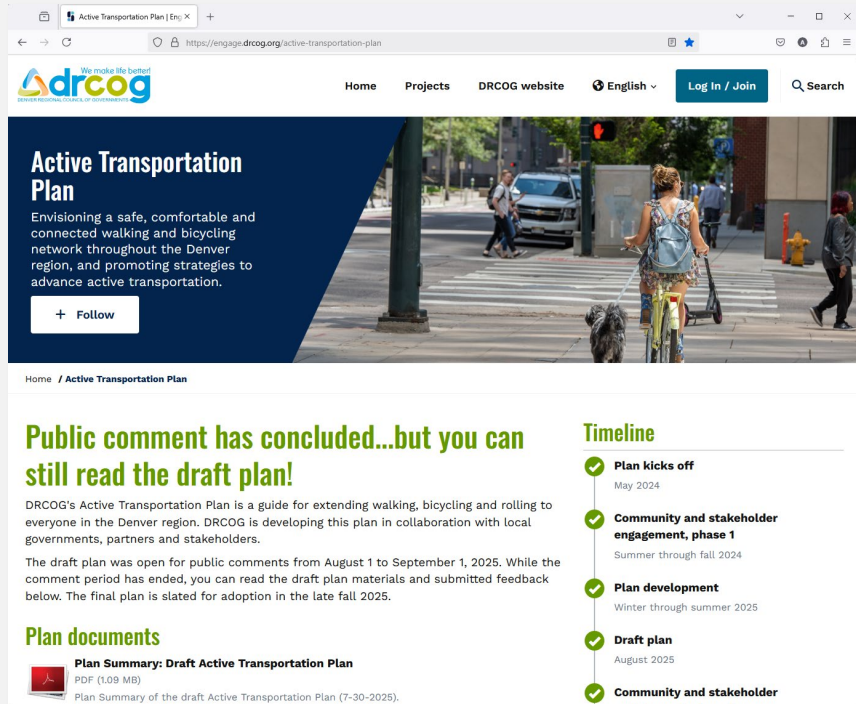


Bicycle+ Program Guide • Context sensitive bicycle+ design considerations

Bicycle+ Design Element	Suburban Commercial Street	Suburban Major Arterial Street	Neighborhood Main Street	Minor Arterial Street	Regional Connector Street	Neighborhood Connector Street	Mid-Neighborhood Local Street	Industrial Street	Special Use Street	Arterial Road	Mountain Road	Highway
CONTROLLER CROSSINGS (design element refers to turning the street with the bicycle facility, not the cross street)												
Bicycle Signals	High	High	Low	Medium	High	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	Low	Low	High
Ball Signals	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Ballback Signals	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Right Turn Lane	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Forward Running Lane	High	High	Medium	High	High	High	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	High
Separated Bicycle Lane, Regional/Arterial	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	High	High	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	High
Bicycle Box	Low	Low	High	Medium	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	High
CROSSING ACCESS												
Shared Roadway	High	High	High	High	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Shared Roadway	Low	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Shared Roadway, Stop Sign with Stop Sign	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Accessible Parking Stall	High	High	High	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Freeway and Expressway	High	High	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	High
SUPPORTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE												
Wayfinding	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Mobility Hubs	High	High	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	Medium
Bicycle+ Parking	High	High	High	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	Medium



Public comment period



July 31 – September 2, 2025:

- Included Plan and two resource guides.
- Project engagement website (engage.drcog.org/atp).
- Email blasts (August 4 & August 18).
- Three advisory group meetings.
- Office hours.
- 82 comments received and addressed in final plan.

Public comment highlights

- Enable seamless regional travel.
- Inform and drive funding decisions.
- Expand sidewalks and active corridors for comfortable use.
- Strengthen alignment with local plans.



Plan implementation

Early 2026

- Support TIP Policy update.
- Commence regionwide gaps analysis.
- Develop active modes count strategic plan.

Motion

Move to recommend that the Board of Directors adopt the *Active Transportation Plan*.

Thank you!

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