

Statewide Transportation Funding - Talking Points:

About the Coalition:

The coalition represents voices from the Eastern Plains to the Western Slope, Republicans and Democrats, and advocates for the environment, business and transportation. We have been putting politics aside and working together for the last five years to find a solution to our transportation challenges.

Background:

Colorado's transportation needs have gone unmet for decades. Despite a growing population, we lack the resources to maintain our roads, highways and local bus routes. Today, we spend just \$69 per capita on transportation infrastructure, compared to 25 years ago when we spent almost twice that amount - \$125 per capita. Increased fuel efficiency has led to less and less revenue available to fix our roads and create multimodal transportation options.

Today, CDOT has more than \$7 BILLION in much needed projects with no funding - and that's only part of the issue, our local communities lack the resources to address congestion, maintain roads and improve safety.

Our economy is expanding and our population is growing. For us to keep up, we need a sustainable, dedicated funding source to address critical transportation construction, improvements and maintenance.

Our failure to invest in infrastructure is costing us real money. Drivers in the Denver area are paying more than \$2,000 a year because of traffic congestion delays, damage to vehicles, accidents and lost gas efficiency. Those costs really add up - Coloradans are paying \$6.8 billion annually due to the poor condition of our transportation system.

We need a new funding source to fix our roads. Unlike other sources, a sales tax increase promotes fairness, taxes out-of-state tourists who use our infrastructure, and raises enough revenue to immediately begin to address our transportation problems.

Funding Transportation in Colorado:

These proposals increase the sales tax by **point-five** percent, **point-six-two** percent or **one-point-zero** percent, which amounts to just five to ten cents on a ten dollar purchase. A fourth proposal includes a **point-five** percent sales tax increase and maximizes existing resources by requiring the state to transfer \$150 million from the general fund each year to state and local transportation projects.

We need a statewide solution that ensures local governments have the resources to meet demands, address high-priority projects on I-70, I-25 and other state highways, and promotes multimodal transportation options that reduce congestion and protect our air quality.

We're taking a new approach to funding transportation and delivering resources where they have the most impact - to local communities, to a specified list of projects and to multimodal projects that decrease congestion.

- **State Projects:** 45% of the funding will go toward addressing projects on major highways, like I-25 and I-70, to state highways that connect communities throughout Colorado. **Our needs at the state level are serious and immediate.** By using bonds, we'll be able to start these projects right away.

- **Local Projects:** Local governments will have full flexibility of 40% of the funding. This revenue will be split 50/50 between cities and counties. This will send sales tax revenue where it belongs - back to local communities for transportation projects.
- **Multimodal Projects:** 15% of the funding will support multimodal transportation options that decrease traffic congestion and protect our air quality, including bus and rail transit, large scale bike lanes and paths, and improvements for pedestrians;
 - Up to \$30 million per year in a match program that supports innovative local projects.
 - 15% of the remainder will go toward **state multimodal projects**, including inter-regional transit like Bustang, park-n-ride lots, or bicycle and pedestrian projects.
 - 85% of the remainder will go toward **local multimodal projects**, including fixed route and on-demand transit, and bicycle and pedestrian projects. This funding will be allocated to Metro Planning Organizations and, in rural communities, to Transportation Commission Regions.

Protecting Taxpayers:

- **20 Year Sunset:** This tax won't last forever, nor should it. We have problems with transportation in Colorado that need an immediate solution. These proposals give voters the chance to re-evaluate where we are in 20 years and whether this tax is still necessary.
- **Transparency and Oversight:** These proposals establish oversight of our tax dollars by creating an oversight committee, which will represent every region of Colorado, and a user friendly website that Coloradans can log onto to see how these dollars are being spent, what projects are being funded and when they will be able to see improvements in their communities.

FAQs:

Why file four different initiatives?

We do not want to ask Coloradans to reach into their pockets any more than is absolutely necessary. The state will release an economic forecast in March that will help the legislature determine what amount to allocate to fund transportation. At that time, we'll make a determination based on all of the funding available and what it will take to address our transportation infrastructure.

Have you done any polling?

In a number of statewide research polls conducted in the past 3 years, we repeatedly see transportation as *the top* issue raised by Coloradans, it affects everyone's lives on a daily basis. The fact that people from around the state - from Grand Junction to Denver, from Pueblo to Vail - see this as the top issue gives us confirmation that something has to be done to improve transportation infrastructure *now*.

How much will my county or city receive?

It will depend on several factors, including population and lane-miles. In the first year, cities will see 77% more funding from the state and counties will see 54% more funding from the state.

Why a sales tax? Why not income tax, vehicle registration, fuel tax or property tax?

We've found a sales tax to be the best solution to our transportation funding challenges because it provides an immediate source of revenue, so we can start projects quickly; a small amount will go a long way, compared to a fuel tax that would require an increase of more than 20 cents per gallon; and, most importantly, everyone pays their fair share, including tourists.

Isn't there more money at the state level already?

At the same time we are preparing for the ballot, we are also working hard to ensure the state commits current revenue to this critical need. We know we can't ask voters for additional revenue if, as a state, we're not using every dollar available to address traffic congestion and our transportation infrastructure. But that will only address half of the problem, our local communities need the resources to address transportation too.