



March 3, 2021

Speaker of the House Alec Garnett
Senate Majority Leader Steve Fenberg
Senator Faith Winter
Representative Matt Gray

Dear legislative leaders:

Colorado is currently one of the top ten fastest growing states in the nation. Our statewide population is expected to grow by **another two million people by 2040**. This kind of growth will continue to outpace the maintenance and expansion of our transportation system – especially when our fuel tax has not been increased since 1991 and these revenues continue to decline relative to growth. Increased congestion continues to affect our productivity and quality of life and makes it increasingly difficult to move goods throughout the state. **These problems are a clear threat to the economic well-being of Colorado and its citizens.**

CCI has been at the table as stakeholders working on this issue for the past decade, and we remain committed to finding a **bipartisan, statewide solution** to the continued shortfall in funding for our state's aging transportation system.

Counties in Colorado currently maintain over 100,000 lane miles of county road. We also maintain over 3,000 off-system county bridges – two-thirds of which are in need of repair or replacement, according to CDOT.

We need to develop transportation funding methodologies **that are stable, flexible and predictable over time**. We have historically sought a legislative package that includes both new, voter-approved revenue and a dedicated state general fund contribution.

Both the general fund contribution and new transportation revenue should be shared among state, county and municipal governments in the same historic proportions as current Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) payments (60% - state/22% - counties/18% - municipalities) and any new revenue sources should have a direct nexus to the use of the transportation system.

While population growth and congestion issues are largely centered on the Front Range, transportation funding needs are statewide in nature and critical to our agricultural and tourism economy. Whether it is beef from Yuma County, Olathe sweet corn from Delta County, potatoes from the San Luis Valley, Rocky Ford melons from Otero County, or hops from the Western Slope to support the state's burgeoning craft beer industry, Coloradans depend on agricultural products traveling long distances on county roads and rural highways to get to market. Additionally, tourism in our beautiful state takes metro residents and out-of-state tourists all over Colorado as they enjoy the great outdoors.

We also urge CDOT to continue to strive for more efficiency in their contracting and maintenance practices going forward. We support HB21-1056 and applaud Executive Director Lew and the administration for their efforts to expedite repairs on rural highways around the state.

We understand from our conversations with you that enhanced multimodal transportation options will be a centerpiece of this legislative proposal. We agree that multimodal solutions are integral to addressing both worsening congestion problems in the Front Range and achieving some of the goals set forth in the Governor's Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap. We ask that the term "multimodal" be broadly defined and that local governments be given maximum flexibility in their allocations in order to try and integrate these policy objectives and still meet the myriad needs of their communities.

Representing 61 of the 64 counties, CCI is comprised of county commissioners from across the political spectrum. Please know the proposed concept of enacting a series of fees to address our state's transportation funding issues raises concerns with some of our members. Nonetheless, we are committed to staying at the table on this debate and understand that compromise on **all sides** is going to be absolutely critical if we are to be successful.

This is a watershed moment in our state's history, and we look forward to the hard work ahead. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely



John Swartout
Executive Director, Colorado Counties, Inc.

cc: Governor Jared Polis
CDOT Executive Director Shoshana Lew