

VISION AND GOALS

Thornton in the Region

Thornton is located in the northeastern part of the Denver Metropolitan Area. Traditionally, it has been a bedroom community offering affordable housing for workers commuting westward to the US-36 corridor, to downtown Denver, or even further south to the Denver Technical Center. The City of Thornton has been encouraging the location of job related land uses within the City and has had success with the location of businesses in the Washington Square Business Park, north east of I-25 and 120th Avenue.

The City is well located with respect to Denver International Airport which is situated east of the City. Airport traffic travelling from the northwest suburbs of the Denver Metropolitan area moves through Thornton to access the airport and needs to be considered when viewing traffic flows within the City

The City's most important north-south regional link is I-25 which forms the western boundary for much of the City and its growth area. The City's other continuous major north-south regional corridors include Washington Street which is located just east of I-25, Huron Street located just west of I-25 and Colorado Boulevard. Railway lines, I-70 and E-470 have formed barriers with limited crossings along the southeast area adjacent to the City, which restricts most other north/south corridors, thus adding a large amount of traffic pressure to I-25. As a growing thoroughfare, Colorado Avenue is proposed to be improved to provide a link to Weld County. Unfortunately, many physical barriers prevent Colorado Boulevard from extending southward to link up with Colorado Boulevard in Denver. This is a regional concern and funding this link up is an important policy decision to consider in the future at the regional level.

E-470, a toll road, is an important regional link for Thornton to the rest of the metro area. Other important east-west links are Highway 7, located in the North Thornton growth area, 144th Avenue, 136th Avenue, 120th Avenue, 104th Avenue and 88th Avenue. All highways to the east are constrained by the South Plate river which runs down the eastern border of Thornton growth area.

Thornton has a potential future regional commuter rail connection to Denver Union Station. One of FasTracks lines is proposed to run through Thornton within the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of-way. RTD is currently in the process of purchasing the UPRR right-of-way. This transit line will run north through Thornton starting from Denver Union Station and will terminate just north of Highway 7 close to the existing Colorado Boulevard alignment. Additional future rail lines into northern Colorado have also been considered and are currently being studied.

Goals

The overall goals of the Transportation Plan are as follows.

- A. Develop a safe, effective and sustainable multi-modal transportation system for people, goods and services.
- B. Locate and design transportation systems in harmony with existing neighborhoods and the natural features of the City while promoting connectivity between neighborhoods.
- C. Educate the public about transportation choices and opportunities.
- D. Recognize the important relationship between land use and transportation.
 - 1. Follow the Comprehensive Plan and other long range plans for future transportation planning
 - 2. Recognize the transportation ramifications when making decisions on new development
 - 3. Maximize the location of high intensity uses near multi-modal transportation nodes, such as interchanges and transit stations.
- E. Enhance existing and encourage new relationships between all agencies impacting and being impacted by transportation decisions i.e. the Federal Government, State Government, Counties, School Districts, RTD and surrounding cities.