



RESOLUTION  
IN SUPPORT OF  
TRANSPORTATION FUNDING BALLOT MEASURES  
Adopted August 20, 2018

WHEREAS, mobility is a key factor in quality of life and economic vitality, and

WHEREAS, the general public in Colorado is increasingly unhappy with congestion and the growing dysfunction of the state's transportation system, especially roads, with 9 of 10 likely voters viewing the state's roads, bridges and infrastructure as desperately in need of repair, and

WHEREAS, highway accessibility was ranked by corporate survey respondents as the top site selection factor in the 2018 annual survey by Area Development Magazine, and

WHEREAS, the State of Colorado has an unfunded transportation project list of \$9 billion and underspends on transportation by \$1 billion annually, and

WHEREAS, for the past decade the Colorado General Assembly has failed in its responsibilities to appropriately fund the state's transportation needs as recently demonstrated by the passage of Senate Bill 18-001 during the 2018 legislative session, a bill that could ultimately leave the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) with LESS than it had before, and

WHEREAS, while this inaction hurts all parts of Colorado, it is particularly felt in Northern Colorado where the improvements to North I-25 have been long-delayed. In fact, until the 3-mile climbing lane was built on southbound Berthoud hill in 2016-17, no capacity improvements (i.e. lane miles) had been made to North I-25 between Highway 66 and the Wyoming border since the interstate opened a half-century ago in 1968. It's noteworthy that the Berthoud hill project was in-part paid for by local Northern Colorado communities. And during that half-century, the population of the Larimer-Weld county region had nearly quadrupled from 168,497 to 648,609, and

WHEREAS, the two-county region is one of the fastest growing and economically important regions of Colorado with the population expected to surpass 1,000,000 by 2040 and the Larimer-Weld gross domestic product being over 8 percent of the state's total GDP, and

WHEREAS, the past inattention to North I-25 combined with population growth has reduced the flow of traffic to Level of Service D (i.e., speed declines; freedom to maneuver more limited) on its way to LOS F (i.e., breakdown of flow) by 2030 or so, meaning that trips from Fort Collins to Denver and Denver International Airport could routinely take up to 3 hours to travel 63 and 69 miles, respectively, and

WHEREAS, fixing this issue will require adding two additional lanes each way between Highway 14 in Fort Collins and Highway 66 in Longmont, but price is a barrier with the cost over \$1.7 billion, and

WHEREAS, local government and business leaders of the two-county region decided to band together to advocate for funding for North I-25 through the I-25 Coalition (Sept 2013) and the Fix North I-25 Business Alliance (March 2014, [www.FixNorthI-25.com](http://www.FixNorthI-25.com)), and

WHEREAS, working closely together with CDOT officials, state leaders, and Colorado's federal delegation, these groups have helped secure to-date \$590 million for projects on North I-25 including the climbing lane on southbound North I-25, new bridges and interchange improvements at Crossroads, an additional lane between Highway 14 in Fort Collins and Highway 402 south of Loveland, and other related projects, and

WHEREAS, in the process of working together over the past 4½ years, area leaders realized that in an environment of limited money the only way North I-25 could be completed would be by helping the state solve its transportation funding problem, and to that end area leaders worked directly and through the creation of Fix Colorado Roads ([www.FixColoradoRoads.com](http://www.FixColoradoRoads.com)) to lobby state leaders for increased general fund monies for transportation and a \$3.5 billion transportation bonding program to accelerate construction, while remaining open to completely new funding sources, and

WHEREAS, two ballot measures have been proposed and petitioned onto the ballot that would provide more funding for Colorado's road system, including North I-25, and preliminary analysis of the two measures indicates that both meet

NCLA's longstanding support of general revenue funding for transportation, bonding, and new revenue, and

WHEREAS, Initiative 167, colloquially known as 'Fix Our Damn Roads,' would do the following:

- Requires CDOT to issue \$3.5 billion of transportation bonds
- Directs appropriation of state budget \$250 million to service bonds (net new general fund obligation of \$150 million) and the obligation is on the state general fund not CDOT
- \$3.5 billion Project List delineated within proposal
- Replaces just over \$1 billion of certificates of participation (COP) revenue to CDOT under the prior legislation (SB 267) for new net revenue to CDOT of \$2.251 billion

WHEREAS, Initiative 167 (Fix Our Damn Roads) would benefit North I-25 in the following manner:

- Full 2+1 Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Standard Build of Segment 6 (Hwys 402 to 56, \$200M in SB267 Funding)
- \$653 million allocated for North I-25 to be included in "Blue Book" Voter Guide
  - Full 2 free lanes+1 express toll lane EIS Standard Build of Segment 5 (Hwys 56 to 66)
  - Full 2+1 EIS Build of Segments 7 (Hwys 402 to 392) and 8 (Hwys 392 to 14)

WHEREAS, Initiative 167 (Fix Our Damn Roads) has many favorable aspects

- Project List delineated in ballot question with \$653 million attached to North I-25 Project for full build of 2+1 EIS Standard Project in Segments 5, 7 & 8
- Requires CDOT issuance of \$3.5 billion in bonds
- Restores a general fund commitment to transportation
- No tax increase
- Achieves NCLA original objective of \$3.5 billion of transportation bonds
- Commits same general fund amount as Let's Go Colorado (Initiative 153)
- Appears politically viable – 73 percent voter support
- Colorado Springs leaders in support
- Republican leadership in support

WHEREAS, Initiative 167 'Fix Our Damn Roads' has some negative aspects:

- Requires \$150 million general fund commitment of dollars necessary to make annual bond payment i.e., no new revenue source to cover bonds

- No transit so builds in opposition from transit supporters and does not recognize need of transit in many parts of state
- Campaign has limited funds

WHEREAS, Initiative 153, colloquially known as ‘Let’s Go Colorado,’ would do the following:

- .62 state sales and uses tax
- Projected 20-year average \$1 billion annual revenue
- Overall Revenue Allocation
  - 45% CDOT Highway, \$450 million
  - 20% Counties, \$200 million
  - 20% Cities, \$200 million
  - 15% Multi-modal, \$150 million
- State Allocation
  - State Highway Projects designated on CDOT Tier One Project List
- Local Allocation
  - Allocated based upon Highway Users Trust Fund (HUTF) formula
  - Full flexibility of local expenditure of funds - transit, roadway, other
  - No requirement for local project list
- Multi-modal Allocation
  - Process established within CDOT for allocation of funds
  - Multi-modal project list approved by CDOT in July

WHEREAS, Initiative 153 (Let’s Go Colorado) would benefit North I-25 in the following manner

- Full 2+1 EIS Standard Build of Segment 6 (\$200M in SB267 Funding)
- Inclusion of Segments 5, 7 and 8 in Tier One Project List
  - Full 2+1 EIS Standard Build of Segment 5 (300M + \$100M Grant)
  - Full 2+1 EIS Build of Segments 7 and 8 (\$250M + \$80M from “other sources”)
- Potential for dollars to fund 3+1 EIS Configuration in Segments 7 & 8 from anticipated growth in sales tax revenue over 10-year period

WHEREAS, Initiative 153 (Let’s Go Colorado) has many favorable aspects

- Full 2 + 1 (EIS) standard build for Segments 5, 7 & 8 with the potential to fund 3+1 in 10 years
- \$7.14 billion in bonding capacity (TRANS/COPs)
  - Transportation Commission approved \$6.5 billion in projects statewide
  - \$2 billion in anticipated revenue from growth in sales tax
- Participation/contribution to the overall state system
- Key leadership is in place with up to \$9 million campaign largely funded by Denver Chamber and contractor community

- Restores General Fund commitment to transportation with \$150 million annual general fund commitment
- Voters understand sales tax
- Tourists and other non-residents contribute to solution
- Funds are protected for transportation

WHEREAS, Initiative 153 (Let's Go Colorado) has some negative aspects:

- The proposed tax rate is too high to the point of diminishing local community taxing capacity to address various local needs
- The additional CDOT commitment to North I-25 Segments 7/8 is limited to the 2+1 EIS build configuration and does not include the commitment to 3+1 configuration in Segments 7/8 necessary as soon as 2031; a verbal "assurance" for a 10-year plan of action could prove inadequate
- The 3+1 configuration in Segments 5/6 still needs additional commitment
- Full funding of North I-25, and other regional priorities, could be secured with a local Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) so passage of a .62% statewide hurts the region's ability to pass an RTA to cover full future 3+1 configuration funding of the entire corridor
- Lacks bi-partisan political leadership support - Governor Hickenlooper has been silent, GOP Gubernatorial Candidate Walker Stapleton has expressed opposition; Democrat Gubernatorial Candidate Jared Polis relatively silent
- Colorado Springs opposes
- Political viability in doubt: NCLA Polling – 49% support, Denver Chamber Polling 52% support
- CDOT is only authorized, not required, to issue bonds against revenue

WHEREAS, in anticipation of some of the issues cited above, we asked Denver Chamber leaders (proponents of Let's Go Colorado) to keep the proposed tax rate below .50, and we lobbied the state legislature to make a stronger commitment to transportation in the General Fund using new unencumbered money than they were willing to do, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Board of Directors of the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce recommends the following position on the two proposed statewide transportation ballot measures to its five partner boards:

- Because both transportation ballot measures benefit North I-25, we support both Initiative 153 and 167 and thank initiative advocates for their leadership,
- 'Support' would mean that the Chamber will:
  - lend their name in support of both campaigns to be publicly used by the campaigns

- notify members and investors about the endorsements
- host presentations by both campaigns – both or neither but not one or the other
- not fund raise as organizations for either campaign
- not actively campaign for either campaign meaning Chamber representatives will not work on the campaign committees or make appearances on behalf of either campaign
- release a press statement about the Chamber's position and field subsequent media inquiries