

Corridor Program Letter of Interest, Speer

Name of Jurisdiction / Agency Nominating Project

City & County of Denver Department of Transportation & Infrastructure (DOTI)

Description of study. What phase of project development will this study address? What are the desired outcomes or key deliverables?

This study would result in a Corridor Plan to prepare the Speer/Leetsdale/Parker corridor (from Colfax to I-225) for future BRT or Bus Priority implementation, consistent with the DRCOG 2050 MVRTP, along with safety and multimodal improvements. The study would define a clear public-supported vision and complete preliminary technical analysis to advance towards design and funding in subsequent phases. The final plan would contain a table with near-, mid-, and long-term recommendations.

Key scope elements/deliverables may include:

- Comprehensive multimodal and safety assessment.
- Extensive community engagement to inform corridor vision.
- Identification of potential BRT station locations.
- Dynamic traffic modeling to assess operations and impacts.
- Collaboration with RTD on bus service planning.
- Development of conceptual design for corridor improvements.
- Development of preferred cross-section(s), including reevaluation of the bidirectional reversible transit lane as previously recommended in the Go Speer/Leetsdale Study.

Is this corridor in any transportation plans for your city or county, or in a regional plan from DRCOG, CDOT or RTD? If so, please describe which plan it is included in and if possible, link to the relevant plan.

[2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan](#) (DRCOG, 2024)

- Recommends BRT.
- Table 3.4 Regional BRT Projects (page 57).

[RTD Regional BRT Feasibility Study](#) (RTD, 2018)

- Recommends BRT.
- See tier 4 project cut sheet (page 59).

[Denver Moves: Transit](#) (CCD, 2019)

- Recommends High-Capacity / Regional BRT.

- See figure 4-2 Transit Capital Investment Corridors (page 4-12).

[Arapahoe County Transportation Master Plan](#) (Arapahoe County, 2021)

- Recommends BRT evaluation, mobility hubs, and other multimodal improvements.
- See corridor summary and recommendations (pages 72-73).

[Aurora Places \(Comprehensive Plan\)](#) (City of Aurora, 2018)

- Recommends high frequency transit corridor.
- See transit system map (page 69).

Have any corridor or subarea plans been conducted in the last 5-10 years focused on this corridor? If yes, please name the study and provide a short description or project website address.

[Denver Moves: Cherry Creek](#) (CCD, 2024)

- Included the section of the Speer/Leetsdale corridor that travels along 1st Avenue, Steele Street, Cherry Creek Drive North, and Alameda Avenue between University Boulevard and Colorado Boulevard.
- Developed multimodal recommendations.

[Alameda Corridor Study](#) (DRCOG, 2024)

- Included the section of the Speer/Leetsdale corridor that travels along Alameda Avenue between Cherry Creek Drive North and Leetsdale.
- Developed table of short-, mid-, and long-term multimodal recommendations.

[Go Speer/Leetsdale](#) (City & County of Denver, 2017)

- Included the full Speer/Leetsdale section of the Speer/Leetsdale/Parker corridor.
- Developed multimodal recommendations at the intersection-level as well as corridor-wide preferred cross sections. Recommendations should be revisited, particularly for the bidirectional reversible managed transit lane, which may not make sense in a post-covid context.

[Parker Road Corridor Improvements](#) (Mississippi to Hampden, Arapahoe County, 2025)

- Included evaluation of forecasted travel and land use conditions.
- Recommended shared-use path improvements, bus route adjustments, bus stop improvements, transit signal priority, and intersection safety improvements.

Why would this corridor study be a good candidate for the DRCOG Corridor Planning Set Aside?

The Speer/Leetsdale/Parker corridor is a critical regional connection between downtown Denver and key destinations in southeast Denver, Arapahoe County, and Aurora, including Cherry Creek, Glendale, Willow Grove, and Nine Mile Station. It supports strong existing transit use (1,300+ daily riders as of Fall 2023), faces significant safety and multimodal challenges (included in both Denver and DRCOG's High Injury Networks), and is identified as a priority for BRT investment in local, regional, and RTD plans. While past studies have laid important groundwork, an updated plan is needed to reflect post-COVID travel trends, address evolving community needs, and align with current design and funding opportunities. This study would establish a shared vision and define clear next steps to advance the corridor toward implementation.

How could a study of this corridor help to advance overarching themes and outcomes outlined in Metro Vision?

This corridor study directly supports Metro Vision's goals to improve mobility, safety, sustainability, and equitable access. It would promote connected urban centers by enhancing a major transit link between downtown Denver and regional destinations. The study would advance multimodal transportation options by addressing gaps in pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure, particularly in underserved areas. It would contribute to reducing serious traffic crashes along a HIN corridor, support greenhouse gas reductions through more efficient and attractive transit service and ensure that future investments reflect community-driven priorities through inclusive public engagement. By coordinating across jurisdictions, this study also advances Metro Vision's collaborative regional planning goals.

How will this corridor study advance priorities outlined in the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan, in particular safety, regional transit, multimodal options, and air quality?

The Speer/Leetsdale/Parker Corridor Study will advance several core priorities of the 2050 RTP. The study will include a comprehensive safety assessment to identify targeted strategies to reduce crashes and improve conditions for people walking, biking, and accessing transit.

The corridor is also identified in the RTP as part of the region's future BRT network. This study will move the corridor from concept to project-ready status by evaluating station locations, developing conceptual designs, modeling traffic operations, and collaborating with RTD on service planning.

Additionally, the study will improve multimodal connectivity by identifying pedestrian, bicycle, and first/last mile improvements that can better serve existing neighborhoods and

emerging centers of activity. This includes filling infrastructure gaps and making the corridor more accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

By encouraging shifts from single-occupancy vehicles to transit and active modes, the study supports regional air quality and State greenhouse gas goals.

How will the proposed corridor study address the needs of marginalized communities? What is the average DRCOG Index (compilation of demographic info) score within the half mile buffer around this corridor? Are there any other specific community needs this study will address?

The Speer/Leetsdale/Parker Corridor Study will directly address the needs of marginalized and historically underserved communities along the route. According to DRCOG's Equity Index the corridor has:

- 29% of census tracts in the top equity quartile,
- 31% of residents in that quartile, and
- a mean Equity Index score of 26.2, slightly above the regional average of 25.7

[Community analysis from Denver Streets Partnership](#) highlights missing BRT investments on this corridor.

What is the regional significance of this study or this corridor?

The Speer/Leetsdale/Parker corridor is one of the most regionally significant arterial transit corridors in the Denver metro area, linking jobs, housing, healthcare, and education across jurisdictional boundaries. With a high concentration of commercial activity, growing residential density, and constrained roadway geometry, the corridor presents both complex planning challenges and significant opportunities for multimodal upgrades that will benefit the region.

As a designated future BRT corridor in DRCOG's 2050 RTP and RTD's Regional BRT Feasibility Study, it plays a critical role in advancing the regional vision for fast, frequent, and reliable transit service. This corridor is served by multiple existing RTD routes, including Routes 83D, 83L, 3L, and 3, which collectively serve thousands of daily riders. The corridor's ridership places it in the top ten routes of RTD's bus system.

Is this corridor study ready to proceed? Is there strong local support for this study? How will your jurisdiction be able to support this study? Are there any partners prepared to support this study?

Yes, this corridor study is ready to proceed and has strong local and regional support. DOTI is prepared to serve on the PMT and lead internal CCD coordination.

There is substantial political and community support for advancing BRT and multimodal improvements along the Speer/Leetsdale/Parker corridor. Denver City Council has publicly called for action on this corridor and community groups, [including the Denver Streets Partnership, have also urged action.](#)

Denver has coordinated with both the City of Aurora and Arapahoe County, and both jurisdictions have expressed support for participating in the study. These conversations reinforce that this is a corridor of shared interest with regional implications.

Is there a clear need to conduct this transportation planning effort? How far along is this project in the planning process and how will this study move the project towards implementation? Is this corridor key to the future of the region's transportation system? Are there urgent transportation challenges on this corridor? Are there barriers to regional collaboration on this corridor?

There is a clear need for this planning study. Urgent transportation challenges include significant safety issues, as the corridor is part of Denver and DRCOG's High Injury Networks and infrastructure gaps limiting pedestrian and bicycle access. The corridor's constrained roadway geometry complicates improvements, underscoring the need for integrated planning.

The corridor is identified as a priority future BRT corridor in multiple local and regional plans, yet no comprehensive, up-to-date corridor plan exists to advance this vision. The study can build on prior planning efforts including Go Speer/Leetsdale, which laid groundwork for multimodal improvements but requires updating to reflect post-pandemic travel trends and evolving community priorities. This study will advance the corridor towards design and funding readiness by delivering technical analyses, community engagement, and a strategic implementation plan.

Regional collaboration is well established among Denver, Aurora, Arapahoe County, RTD, and DRCOG, minimizing barriers and maximizing coordinated outcomes. This study represents a critical next step to unify these partners around a shared vision for a vital regional transportation corridor.