



**BARB KIRKMEYER'S PLAN TO FIX
COLORADO'S UNRAVELLING INFRASTRUCTURE:**

DRIVE

DELIVER RELIABLE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR VEHICLES EVERYWHERE

COLORADO



"When funding decisions are driven by political agendas rather than practical needs, critical projects are delayed or underfunded, jeopardizing public safety and economic efficiency." - Sen. Barb Kirkmeyer

The Problem:

- Colorado [road conditions are rated 43rd in the nation, and getting worse](#). 800 state highway miles in Colorado are at the end of their drivability lifespan.
- Bureaucratic growth: CDOT froze surface treatment/maintenance funding for three straight years (2020-2023) while CDOT's Administrative budget grew by more than 30%.
- The Polis Administration [intentionally sidelined long-prioritized road improvement projects](#) and diverted millions of transportation dollars into non-road projects, environmental programs and bureaucracy.
- \$1.4 billion in allocated project funding is sitting unspent in CDOT accounts. This includes projects completed years ago with millions left in their accounts, as well as tens of millions for high-priority projects that are ready for construction if CDOT only initiated the process.
- Timeframes for highway improvements and maintenance significantly increased under the Polis Administration. Project delays cost the state millions of dollars due to inflation, and cost drivers on our highways more time in traffic jams and more money in car repair bills.

The Need:

- Safe roads save lives and save families money.
- Relieving congestion improves a region's air quality, economy, and quality of life.
- Regional transportation improvements help housing become more affordable, by expanding access and increasing competition.
- [Improving roads helps to lower auto insurance rates and vehicle maintenance costs](#).
- [Delayed transportation projects cost more due to inflation. Road construction materials prices rose 9.6% in 2024](#). CDOT left an extra \$1 billion sitting in project accounts last year rather than deploying those funds—that money is now worth \$96 million less in today's dollars.
- A top-notch road system facilitates commerce and is a must if Colorado's economy is to thrive.

Barb's Record:

- Barb is a former member of the State Transportation Advisory Committee- an important partner in CDOT's budgeting and planning process.
- Barb brought federal, state and local transportation leaders together to negotiate much-needed, game-changing major expansions and improvements tol-25 in northern Colorado and facilitated major road improvements throughout Weld County.



Barb's Plan: DRIVE Colorado!

Summary

To ensure Colorado's transportation system remains efficient, safe, sustainable and meets the the unique needs of communities, Barb Kirkmeyer will assign Colorado's Transportation Department a New Mission as Governor:

Deliver Reliable Infrastructure for Vehicles Everywhere. DRIVE Colorado!

DRIVE will:

- 1) Maintain our roads properly and set a high standard for safety.
- 2) Support regional transportation planning and local communities so they — not politicians and the bureaucrats in Denver — set transportation priorities.
- 3) Tackle the big stuff that's been tossed aside for political reasons.

Creative, aggressive funding strategies:

Barb's DRIVE plan is funded through improved prioritization, increasing cash flow utilization, and cost savings. *This program should roughly double CDOT's annual road maintenance and capital construction line item budgets.* In the first four years, the plan will raise \$6 Billion, including a solicitation for new Public Private Partnership funding for major interstate managed lane extensions. As the industry adds additional construction capacity, the construction and maintenance program will grow to \$10 billion over 8 years.

\$2.5 Billion: Improved utilization: Sweep unspent project and agency cash.
\$3.5 Billion: Prioritize transportation revenue on surface transportation programs.
\$1-3 Billion: Leverage Public Private Partnership and TIFIA project financing where feasible



DRIVE Mission Overview

It's Time!

To maintain Colorado's roads to a high standard.

As Governor, Barb will direct CDOT to make the safety and preservation of Colorado's road and bridge infrastructure its highest priority. It's time for CDOT to get back to the basics: Every bridge must be structurally sound, every highway mile properly surfaced, every lane must be well striped, and every construction zone managed to the highest safety standards.

To let local communities and governments set their regional transportation priorities.

What works in Denver and Boulder may not work in Alamosa, Grand Junction or Sterling. Colorado's transportation planning process is designed to facilitate local planning through five Metropolitan Planning Organizations and 10 Rural Transportation Planning Regions. As Governor, Barb will make sure that Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Transportation Planning Regions lead decisions on regional projects, and receive full road funding, including the sources that have been siphoned away to pay for ineffective pet programs designed by special interest groups.

To build the long-overdue big projects

The Kirkmeyer Administration will pursue creative, aggressive strategies to complete long overdue projects across the state. Examples include:

I-25 Denver and I-70 Mountain BRT/Managed Lane extensions: Barb will direct CDOT to pursue Public Private Partnerships to help jumpstart Bus Rapid Transit/ Managed lane extensions through central Denver, North and South of Denver, and continuing along the I-70 Mountain Corridor. These popular projects relieve congestion and pay for themselves.

Powers Boulevard in Colorado Springs: This \$600 million project is ready for construction, and will transform Powers Boulevard into a continuous thoroughfare through the city. By easing pressure on I-25 and improving access to the eastern side of town, this project will radically improve transportation and commerce in Colorado Springs.



DRIVE Colorado Funding Summary

Spend Transportation-related fees and taxes on roadways: \$800m/Year

Barb believes that transportation related fees and taxes should be spent on the roadways used to deliver 100% of our goods and services to market, instead of being spent on pork-barrel projects like electric chargers and electric buses.* Barb supports efforts by transportation and business leaders to submit a ballot initiative to rededicate CDOT's Fee and Tax funding to roadway improvements. Alternatively, she will direct CDOT to manage all Tax revenue and Enterprise Funds to eliminate pet projects and follow the DRIVE mission.

**This does not include funding for RTD-Denver, which is a separate agency with its own tax base. RTD's annual budget of \$1.4 billion rivals CDOT's budget of \$1.7 billion.*

Reduce recent staffing growth and sweep unspent employee vacancy funding.

While CDOT has frozen many maintenance and construction budgets over the past several years, the Polis Administration continues to add administrative staff. Recent financial reports also indicate a revolving vacancy rate of roughly 10%- dollars allocated for those unfilled jobs should be swept and put to use.

Resume Innovative Funding Programs such as Public Private Partnerships and federal TIFIA loans.

Existing BRT/Managed lane projects along I-70, US 36 and I-25 are successful and self-sustaining. There is much more work to be done on our interstate corridors, and Colorado's record of success in these projects means we can expect strong interest from lenders and project managers



Priority and Project List:

NOTE: This is only a draft list of priorities and major projects that are long overdue for construction. The Kirkmeyer Administration will respect CDOT's bottom-up prioritization process led through its regional planning bodies, including MPO and TPR input on critical statewide corridor projects.

Category	Amount (in Millions)	Sub-Amount (in Millions)
Asset Management	\$2,000	(this is an addition to existing program funding)
Rural Highways (Transportation Planning Regions)	\$1,000	
MPOs (5 MPO's)	\$1,000	
Critical Statewide Corridors	\$2,805	
- Vail Pass		\$200
I-70 Mesa County		\$150
I-25 Pueblo Freeway		\$150
I-270		\$300
SH 83 Powers Blvd.		\$600
US 34 Loveland to Greeley		\$400
US 85: I-76 to WCR 16		\$300
I-76 Enhancements (possible PPP)		\$725
PPP/TIFIA Funded	\$2,800	
I-25 North Segments 2, 3, and 4		\$800
I-25 Central Express/BRT Alameda to 20th		\$600
I-70 Mountain Corridor		
- Express/BRT Hogback to Floyd Hill		\$650
- Full width Express/BRT Tunnel to US 40		\$450
- Empire Junction Interchange		\$100



1) Maintenance and Safety: \$2 billion

Barb will direct CDOT to boost its Asset Management program to reduce its repair and resurfacing backlog.

2) Regional Transportation Planning: \$2 billion

Barb will de-politicize CDOT transportation priorities by directing more funding for prioritization by the state's regional planning boards instead of Denver-based boards and directors.

Boost funding directed by the state's regional transportation planning boards:

- a) \$1 billion for the rural TPRs
- b) \$1 billion for the 5 Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

3) Critical Statewide Corridors, Draft List Highlights: \$2.8-5.6 billion
Projects include:

- a) Expanded BRT/HOT lanes on I-70 mountain corridor and I-25 in Central Denver: \$2-4 Billion (TIFIA/PPP dependent)
- b) Powers Blvd (Colorado Springs) \$600m
- c) US 85 I-76 to Weld County Road 16: \$300m
- d) I-25 Pueblo Freeway improvements: \$150m
- e) I-70 Mesa County \$150m