Glossary of Terminology
January 30, 2006

Note: All items in **bold** font are defined within the document (in alphabetical order).

Alternative: An action, or package of suggested actions considered that could potentially fulfill the project's **Purpose and Need**.

Broadway/I-25 Junction: The track layout south of the I-25/Broadway Station, which permits trains to access any track from any direction. In railway terminology, this is configuration is also known as a **"**wye" and in public transit terminology it is known as a **"**half union" in that it is an intersection with three legs, having access from all three to all three.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): A type of limited-stop bus service that relies on technology to help speed up the service. It can operate on exclusive **transitways**, **high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes**, highways, or ordinary streets. A BRT line combines **intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technology**, priority for transit, rapid and convenient fare collection, and integration with land use policy in order to substantially upgrade performance.

Capacity: In public transport uses, the standard definition is applied to:

- the number of trains or buses that a station can handle in a given time period; or
- the number of passengers who can be served in a given time period on a bus, other transit vehicle, or station; or
- the number of passengers who can be served in a given time period at a given service level on a particular transit service; or
- the number of passengers who can be served in a given time period at a given service level in one direction.

Example: The scheduled capacity of the current C-Line service northbound in the AM peak hour is 512 seated passengers on a 2-car train (at 64 seats per car x 4 trains running at 15 minute intervals).
Example: The theoretical capacity of the northbound Central Platte Valley line is 24 trains per hour.

Categorical Exclusion (CATEX): Categories of actions which normally do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the environment and for which, therefore, preparation of an EA or EIS is not required.

Central Business District (CBD): The downtown area of a city or transit "hub" where a large percentage of the region's a.m. and p.m **peak hour** trips generally terminate and originate.

Central Corridor: The existing light rail corridor that connects the Broadway / I-25 station to the split at **CPV Junction** where **light rail** trains turn to either go to Union Station (C Line) or towards the mid-mall and 30th/Downing stations (D Line). This corridor includes three tracks and the Alameda and 10th/Osage stations.

Central and/or **Trunk Line:** The segment of the RTD light rail network between **Broadway Junction** (immediately south of the I-25/Broadway Station) and **CPV Junction** (underneath the Colfax Viaduct).

Central Platte Valley (CPV) Junction: The place where **Central Corridor** light rail transit lines converge before branching to serve the CPV (C Line) or downtown (D Line).

Consist: A train that includes one or more vehicles. The word evolved from long-winded forms, such as "...the trains *consist* of three vehicles each...." Currently RTD runs two and three car consists on it light rail system.

Consolidated Main Line Railroad (CML): The consolidation of through freight and train tracks in the southwest portion of Denver's urban core. It consists of double-tracked mainline between the south end of the rail yards (north of 20th Street) and the I-25/Broadway area and continuing south.

Couplet: An adjacent pair of opposing one-way streets that carry traffic in a manner similar to a two-way street. The northbound Lincoln Street/southbound Broadway couplet is an example.

Cumulative Impact: An impact on the environment which results from the addition of several individual impacts of a proposed project. The addition may include a combination of past, present, and/or reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG): A nonprofit association of 52 local governments dedicated to enhancing and protecting the quality of life in the nine-county Denver region. DRCOG has worked to promote a regional perspective toward the most pressing issues facing the metropolitan area and to address those issues through cooperative local government action. In 1977, DRCOG was designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Boulder, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson counties, as well as portions of Adams and Arapahoe counties. The DRCOG MPO process creates a partnership among state, local government, and transit operations in providing transportation improvements.

Environmental Assessment (EA): A public document that analyzes the environmental impacts of a proposed federally-funded action and provides sufficient evidence to determine the level of significance of anticipated impacts of the proposed project. Indicates whether subsequent **NEPA** activity will be a **Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)** or need to prepare an **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): The "detailed statement" required by Section 102(2)(C) of **NEPA** which an agency prepares when its proposed action significantly affects the quality of the environment. Results in a **Record of Decision (ROD)** documenting the selection of the proposed project.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI): A public document prepared at the end of an **EA** that briefly presents the reasons why a proposed project will not have a significant impact on the quality of the environment and therefore will not require preparation of an **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**.

Gap Filler/Loop Extra: Terms used to describe an extra train or bus that is scheduled to wait at a strategic location to maintain service when regular train or bus trips are interrupted or delayed. Service is provided to reduce the number of customers inconvenienced by a disruption. Example: Light-rail transit vehicles on the **Central Trunk Line** operate close to the theoretical capacity of the track. However, if a train from Mineral Station has a medical emergency on board, the gap filler train slips onto the main line from a siding and would go into service from I-25/ Broadway to replace it.

Heavy Rail: A high-capacity transit system for passengers or freight using trains cars operating in an exclusive **right-of-way.**

High-occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes: Designated lanes found on freeways and high-speed expressways designed for the exclusive use of vehicles carrying two or more people. They are often limited ingress and egress and may be utilized by transit vehicles as well.

Independent Utility: A project that is able to function on its own, without further construction of an adjoining segment. Projects that have independent utility should not restrict alternatives in a future segment of the same project.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS): The application of a wide range of advanced wireless and wire-line communications-based information technologies to enhance the operation and management of the surface transportation system. Examples include live surveillance and traffic/ramp control devices, travel lane and incident management, and real-time information dissemination.

Lead Agency: The agency or agencies that have taken the primary responsibility for the **NEPA** process. For the South Broadway NEPA process, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead agency.

Level of Service (LOS): A qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream, based on service measures such as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, and convenience.

Light Rail Transit (LRT): An electric railway technology that may use shared or exclusive **rights-of-way**, high or low platform loading, and multi- or single-vehicle trains. Power is provided by overhead electric cable.

Load factor: The ratio of passengers actually carried versus the total passenger capacity of a vehicle. Used in both intercity transportation work and urban transit. In intercity transportation, it is the number of passenger miles traveled divided by the number of seat miles provided. In urban transit, it is usually the number of passengers passing a point in a one direction during a specified period, or on a transit trip, divided by the number of seats available for that time period. Associated terms include seated load meaning the actual number of seats on a vehicle and crush load meaning the total number of seated and standing passengers a vehicle can carry.

Logical Termini: Rational end points for transportation improvements used to review the environmental impacts of a transportation improvement.

Modal split: A term which describes how many people use alternative forms of transportation. Frequently used to describe the percentage of people using private automobiles, as opposed to the percentage using public transportation.

Multiway Boulevard: Designed to separate through traffic from local traffic and often to provide special pedestrian ways on tree-lined malls. Like typical streets, it provides access to abutting uses, but often - unlike others - it is also designed for recreation. It is characterized by a central multi-lane roadway for generally fast and non-local/through traffic; on either side of this roadway are tree-lined medians that separate it from parallel, one-way side access roads for slower local traffic. The medians can be of various widths: some are nothing more than planting strips, while others in addition to rows of trees, contain walks, benches, transit stops and even horse trails or bike paths. The sidewalks may or may not have their own line of trees. The local access roads may allow for one or two lanes of parking and one moving lane, possibly with transit and/or bicycles.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA): Federal legislation that establishes environmental policy for the nation. It provides an interdisciplinary framework for federal agencies to prevent environmental damage and contains "action-forcing" procedures to ensure that federal agency decision makers take environmental factors into account.

No-Action Alternative: A fully assessed alternative that is used as a baseline for environmental analysis purposes in **NEPA** documents. It includes only those projects that already have committed funds for improvements. These improvements would be made whether or not any improvements are made in conjunction with the proposed project.

Peak-hour(s): The maximum-volume hour or hours of the day on a transit route or roadway. Weekday morning peak-hours are generally somewhere between 6:00-9:00am, while weekday evening peak hours are somewhere between 3:00-6:00pm.

Preferred Alternative: The alternative which the **lead agency** believes would best fulfill its statutory mission and responsibilities, giving consideration to economic, environmental, technical and other factors.

Project Goals: Indicate desired outcomes secondary to meeting the **Purpose and Need** of the project. They also address community values and other transportation-related interests. They may be used in developing and evaluating **alternatives**.

Purpose and Need: Describes the transportation problem (the "need") and the intention to solve the problem (the "purpose"). It serves as the cornerstone for the definition and evaluation of **alternatives** while not discussing specific alternatives. It also clarifies what the **lead agency** is planning to accomplish and why it is necessary. It cannot predetermine a particular **alternative**.

Record of Decision (ROD): A federal decision document that includes a description of the background of the project, a statement of the decision made, synopses of other alternatives considered, the basis for the decision, findings on impairment of environmental and community resources, a description of the preferred alternative, a listing of mitigation measures, and an overview of public and agency involvement in the decision-making process and a description of any applicable enforcement and monitoring programs, as documented in an **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**.

Ridership: The number of rides taken by people using a public transportation system in a given time period.

Right-of-Way (ROW): 1) Publicly owned property used for transportation and utility infrastructure including sidewalks, through travel lanes, parking lanes, tree lawn areas between detached sidewalks and streets, roadway median strips, parkways, bridges, and alleys. 2) Designated travel lanes where vehicles and/or pedestrians are given preference over other vehicles or pedestrians by the display of sign or signal indications. Example: Freeway rights-of-way are designated for motor vehicles exclusively.

Study area: Spatial boundaries that closely resemble an area of potential effect or area of influence of the **alternatives** to be developed.

Transit-oriented Development (TOD): A broad planning movement to put new developments around transit stations that particularly take advantage of the proximity to transit access. The goals are to reduce vehicle use and increase pedestrian access. Transit-oriented development is pedestrian-friendly development focused around a major transit access point. Elements include compact, mixed-use development patterns with facilities and design that enhance the environment for pedestrians in terms of safety, walking distances, comfort, and the visual appeal of the surroundings.

Transitway: A transit-designated **right-of-way**.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): Measures that focus on ways to increase traffic capacity without major construction of new travel facilities. This includes developing alternative transportation modes and the incentives to use alternate modes so that fewer vehicles are needed to transport the same number of people. Other commute alternatives include carpooling/vanpooling, bicycling, shuttle systems, alternative work hours, parking controls, telecommuting, and **HOV lanes**.

Transportation Systems Management (TSM): Measures involving operational improvements to existing transportation facilities that maximize their person-moving capacity, reduce the severity and duration of temporary (i.e., crash and weather) delays, improve safety, and incorporate advanced technologies and communications to optimize the efficiency of transportation systems. The package of TSM strategies may include a number of options designed to improve traffic flow and increase the number of people using alternate modes of transportation.

Turnback (Also called a **Short-turn):** This is a bus or train that covers only part of a route. Turnbacks are used for several purposes, including:

- Service recovery after disruptions, to get the system back on schedule, or
- Service capacity, deploying vehicles or using infrastructure closer to the demand for service, or
- Reducing negative impacts, for example: reducing noise issues, versus eliminating an entire route segment.