



COLORADO
**Transportation
Investment Office**

Colorado Transportation Investment Office Memorandum

To: The Transportation Commission and the CTIO Board of Directors

From: Simon Logan, Special Projects Lead and Policy Analyst

Date: January 14, 2026

Subject: Globeville and Elyria Swansea (GES) Tolling Equity Program Progress Report

Purpose:

To update the Transportation Commission and the Colorado Transportation Investment Office (CTIO)¹ Board of Directors on the progress of the GES Tolling Equity Program.

Requested Action:

The purpose of this memo is informational only, and no action is being requested.

Background

The 2017 Record of Decision (ROD) for the Central 70 project included a commitment for CTIO to explore ways to provide discounted access to the Express Lanes for low-income residents of the GES neighborhoods. As a result, CTIO embarked on a year-long process to comply with this commitment and identify a program to bring to the CTIO Board of Directors for approval. This effort included significant engagement with peer agencies nationwide, the GES community, and other local stakeholders. The CTIO Board of Directors (CTIO Board) approved the program in April 2022.

The approved GES Tolling Equity Program has three main components:

1. Benefits

- Toll credit (\$100) and a transponder for eligible residents to access the Express Lanes.
- Free Transit passes. Available within the community at various distribution sites.

2. Eligibility:

- Residents of GES with an annual household income below 100 percent of the Aera Median Income (AMI) (a recent change approved by the CTIO Board in 2025) and households displaced from GES due to eminent domain for the I-70 Central Project with an annual household income below 100 percent of the AMI. CDOT holds a list of these displaced households.
- Eligible residents don't have to choose one or the other; they can receive both benefits.

2. Funding

¹ The High Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) is now doing business as the Colorado Transportation Investment Office (CTIO). CTIO is how the enterprise refers to itself now and in the future. However, the HPTE name is retained for legislative and legal documents.

- Administrative and start-up costs, up to \$1 million, provided by CDOT.
- CTIO covers the initial cost of the free transponder and promotional credit for all eligible residents.
- Each subsequent year, 15 percent of net toll revenue from the Central 70 Express Lanes is allocated for toll credit and transit passes, making this an ongoing benefit to the community.

In support of the program, the Transportation Commission (TC) approved an Intra Agency Agreement (IAA) between CDOT and CTIO, contributing one million dollars for start-up and administrative costs and activities. Per the IAA's terms, CTIO must provide an annual progress report by January.

As of January 2025, CTIO has expended all the funds provided by CDOT for start-up and administration costs associated with the program completing the scope of work between CTIO and CDOT. Moving forward revenues from the Central 70 Express Lanes will fund one hundred percent of the costs associated with the program.

Benefit distribution and partners

- **Transit Pass Distribution**
 - Five sites within Globeville and Elyria-Swansea have been distributing the transit passes within the community. They include rec centers, libraries, and schools.
 - In the last year, the program invested approximately \$314,858 in single ride, and monthly tickets - an increase of 22% from the previous year.
- **Toll Credits and Transponder Distribution**
 - Almost 147 vehicles have been registered to date (almost 50 in 2025) at a total cost of \$18,375.
 - The enrollment window for in-person appointments was extended to year-round and an online portal was created to receive enrollments.
 - CTIO staff continue to conduct a review of outreach efforts to determine how to increase the number of enrolled participants in the toll credits element.
- **Partners**
 - **Community outreach and enrollment (NETC)**
 - CTIO continues to work with Northeast Transportation Connections (NETC) for community outreach, toll credit enrollment, and transit pass distribution.
 - NETC supports the development and distribution of promotional materials to increase program participation and educate the community on how to use Express Lanes.
 - **Toll credit account management (BancPass)**
 - CTIO has contracted with BancPass to manage the tolling element of the program. They offer more ways for participants to top up accounts using cash or cards, have more touch points to notify users when their balance is running low and provide customer services in English and Spanish.

Program reflections

- The GES Tolling Equity Program is going well overall and is really appreciated by program participants. The transit pass element continues to be popular, with an increasing number

of residents receiving passes. The toll credits element continues to have a slower uptake than anticipated and requires more attention. CTIO staff continue to monitor vehicles registered on the toll credits through monthly reports (see Attachment A: Toll Credits Dashboard for a breakdown) and explore ways to increase participation in this element.

- CTIO staff use survey data and toll credit reports to gauge how the program could be improved to benefit the GES community. For example, door-to-door outreach was conducted within the community during the Summer of 2024 to seek to increase the number of vehicles registered on the toll credit element. Residents within GES were contracted to conduct this outreach and gather information on people they spoke to about why they wouldn't or didn't sign up. High level takeaways include:
 - Around 40% of respondents either don't drive on the interstate, aren't comfortable sharing documentation, do not own a vehicle, or it is not registered in GES (around 10%). This population is highly unlikely to sign up for the tolling element of the program, further reducing the pool of potential vehicles to around 4250.
 - This outreach pointed to possible programmatic changes that could improve program participation, such as changes to income verification and vehicle registration. For example, a significant number of respondents highlighted that they were on the cusp of eligibility using the old income verification (Federal Poverty Level for household income).
 - Both of these changes were approved by the CTIO Board in 2025.
- Lastly, an annual survey of transit pass users conducted in the summer of 2025 to continue to monitor who is receiving passes and how they are using them. Attachment B provides a full breakdown of the results of the survey. High level takeaways include:
 - The age demographics of residents receiving passes remain broadly the same.
 - More people are taking 21+ trips per month resulting in a significant number of people receiving monthly passes instead of 10-ride ticket books. This saves the program money (monthly passes are cheaper) and reduces the frequency of residents having to pick up passes from the distribution sites.
 - A significant number of residents expressed their gratitude for the program and its impact on helping them travel to work, grocery stores, and medical appointments.
 - Free transit passes helped over two thirds of respondents replace trips they would have driven or been driven by a family member, friend or Uber/Lyft.

Program Changes

As noted above, the results from the door-to-door outreach in the summer of 2024 pointed to program changes around income eligibility and possibly adding an additional service that would increase program participation. Following an analysis of options, the following changes were approved by the Board in 2025:

- **Income Eligibility and Vehicle Registration**
 - The CTIO Board approved changing the income eligibility, moving from 200% Federal Poverty Level for household Income to 100% Area Median Income to better reflect the cost of living in Denver, and removing restrictions of the location of where vehicles need to be registered to apply for toll credits. These changes are expected to increase the number of vehicles eligible to receive toll credits and transit passes within the community by 10-20 percent (5300 individuals/4200 vehicles).

- **Expanded days/hours of the GES Connector**

- The GES Connector shuttle service acts like an Uber/Lyft and has a high reach using its 3 vehicles to transport people throughout the communities' boundaries i.e. it is only within GES. It has high utilization with an average of 90 rides per day, carrying an average of 140 passengers. Currently, funding from the City and County of Denver only allows for a service from Monday to Friday.
- The service works in tandem with the transit passes by facilitating the first/last mile transportation to and from transit hubs, as well as a few select locations outside of GES like grocery stores (GES is a food desert).
- The CTIO Board approved extending this service to the weekends (Saturday/Sunday) in GES.
- CTIO staff are finalizing a contract with the current vendor to extend this service. It is expected to begin in early 2026.

Next Steps

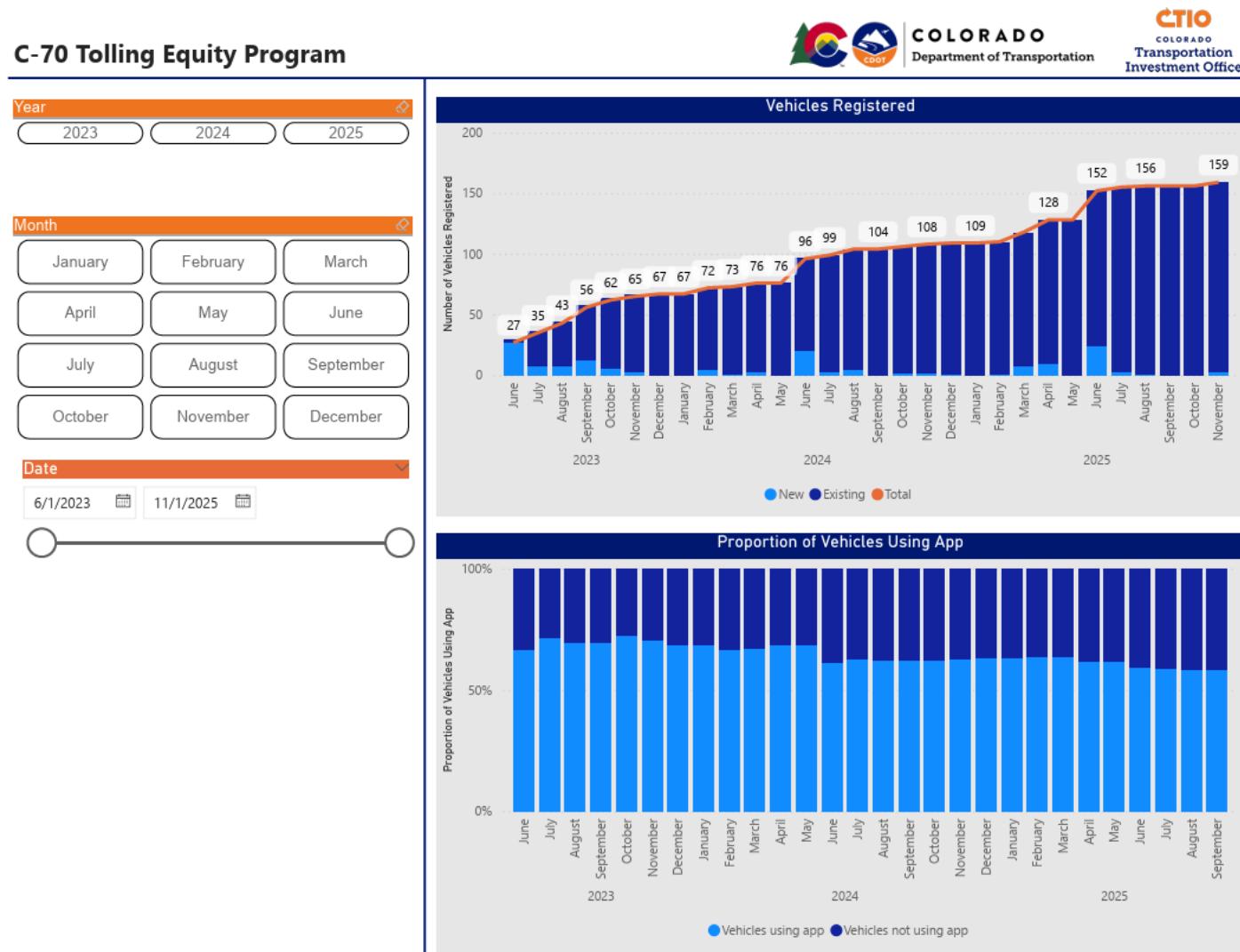
- 1) The GES Connector service extension to the weekends will be added to the community's benefits in early 2026.
- 2) Another transit pass survey will be conducted in Q2/ Q3 of 2026 to continue gathering data on how the passes are used.
- 3) Door-to-Door enrollment for the toll credits will be conducted in the Spring/Summer of 2026.
- 4) CTIO will continue to provide progress reports to the CTIO Board of Directors, and the Transportation Commission (if requested) on or before January 2027.

Attachments:

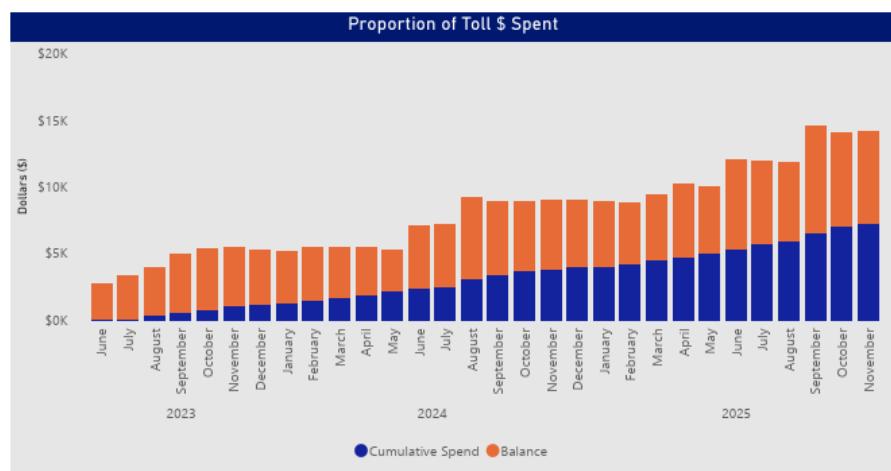
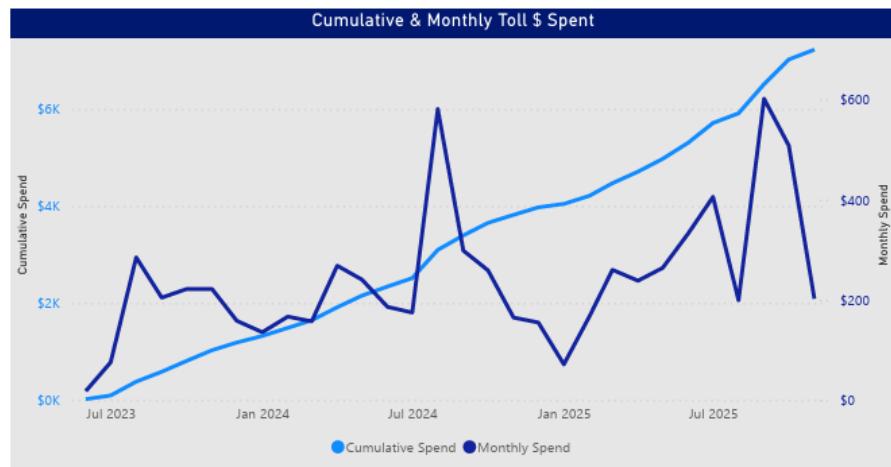
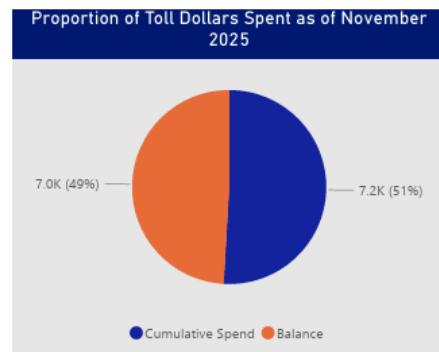
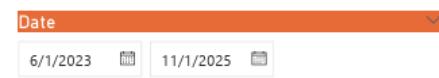
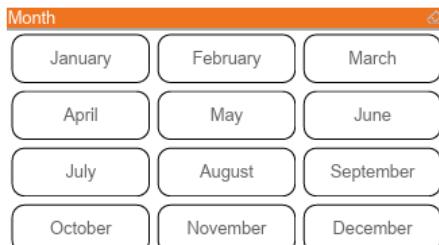
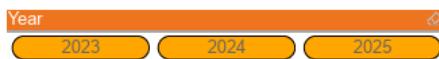
- Attachment A: Toll Credits Dashboard
- Attachment B: 2025 Transit Pass Survey

Attachment A: Toll Credits Dashboard

BancPass, the vendor used to manage the toll credits element, provides monthly reports to CTIO staff detailing the number of vehicles registered, the proportion of vehicles using the app, and spending data. The graphs below cover the period from June 2023 to November 2025.



C-70 Tolling Equity Program

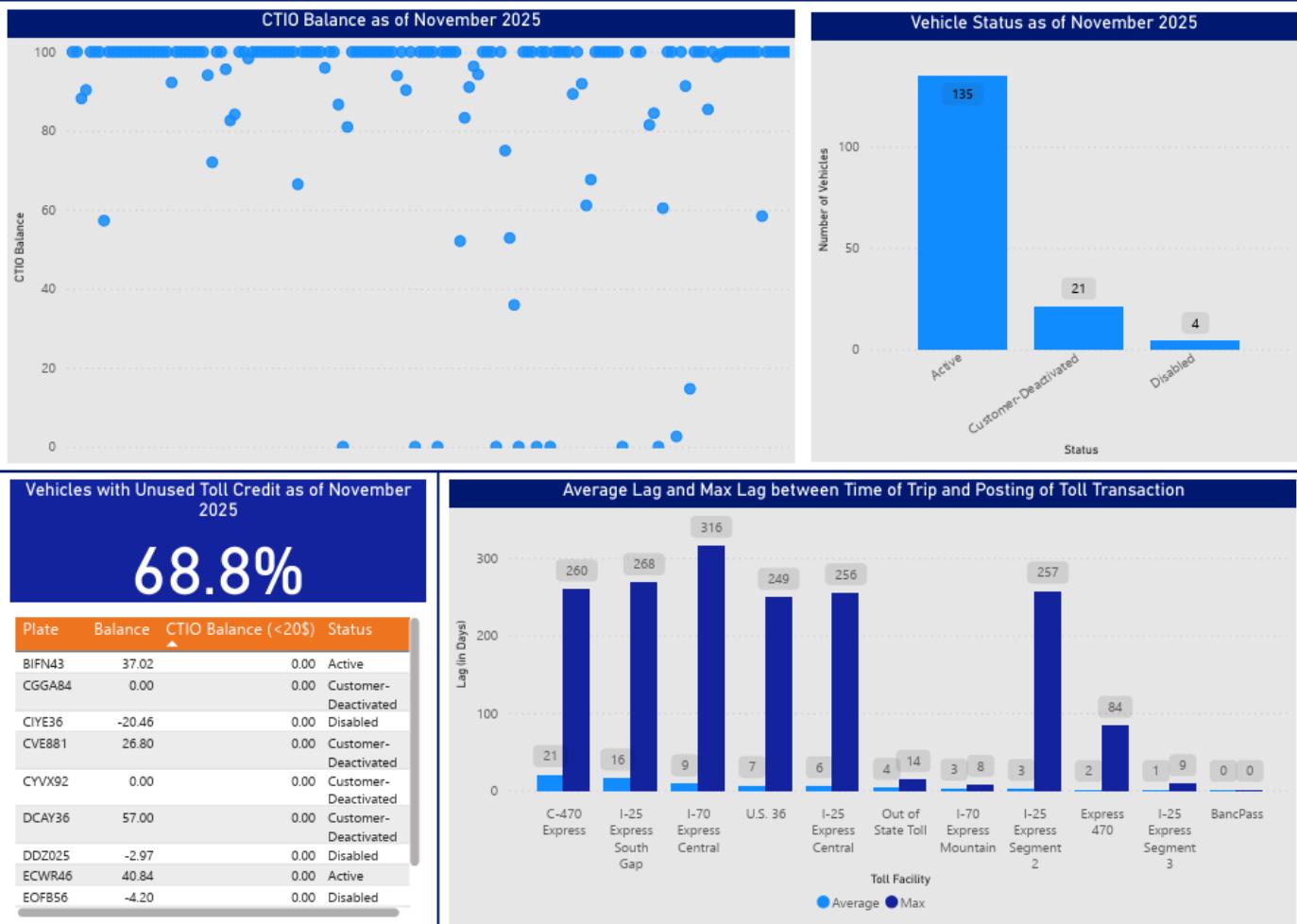


C-70 Tolling Equity Program



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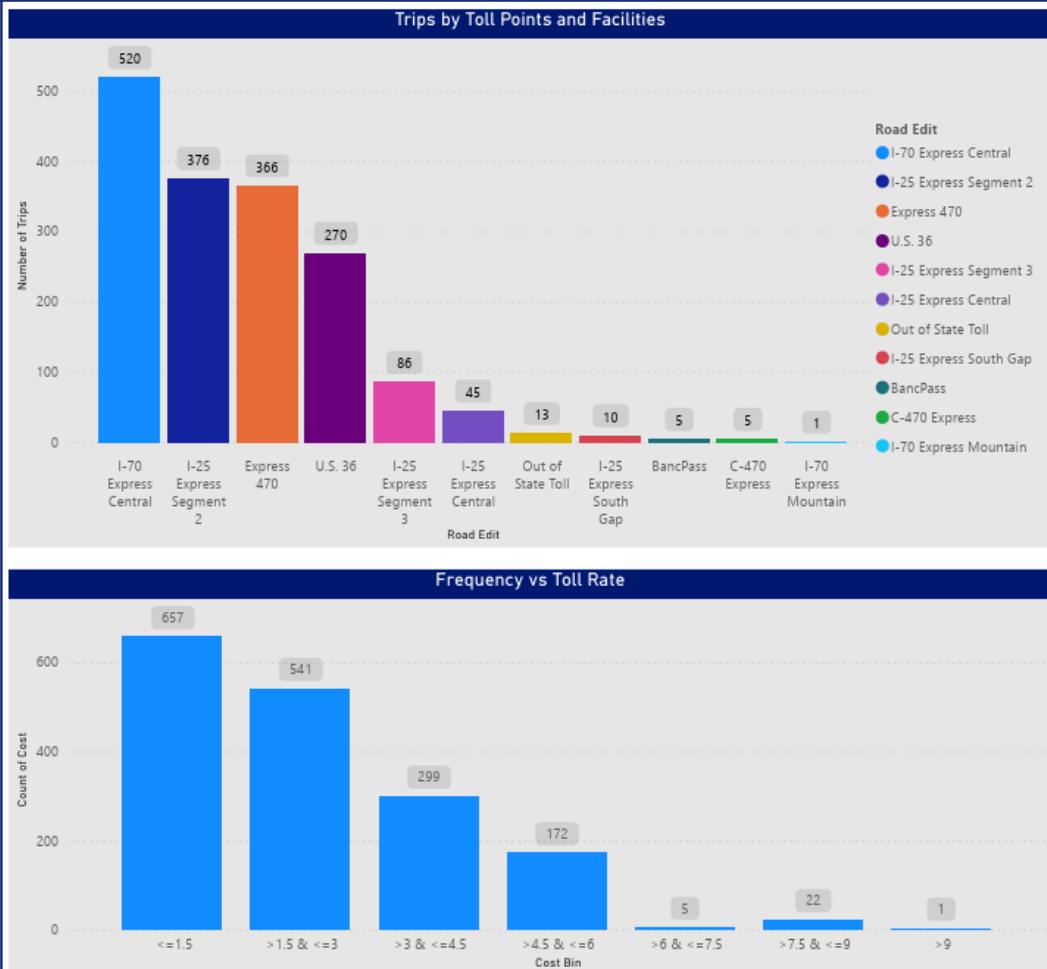
1697
Number of Trips

Year
2023
2024

Month
January May September
February June October
March July November
April August December

Time Of Toll
5/25/2023 11/28/2025

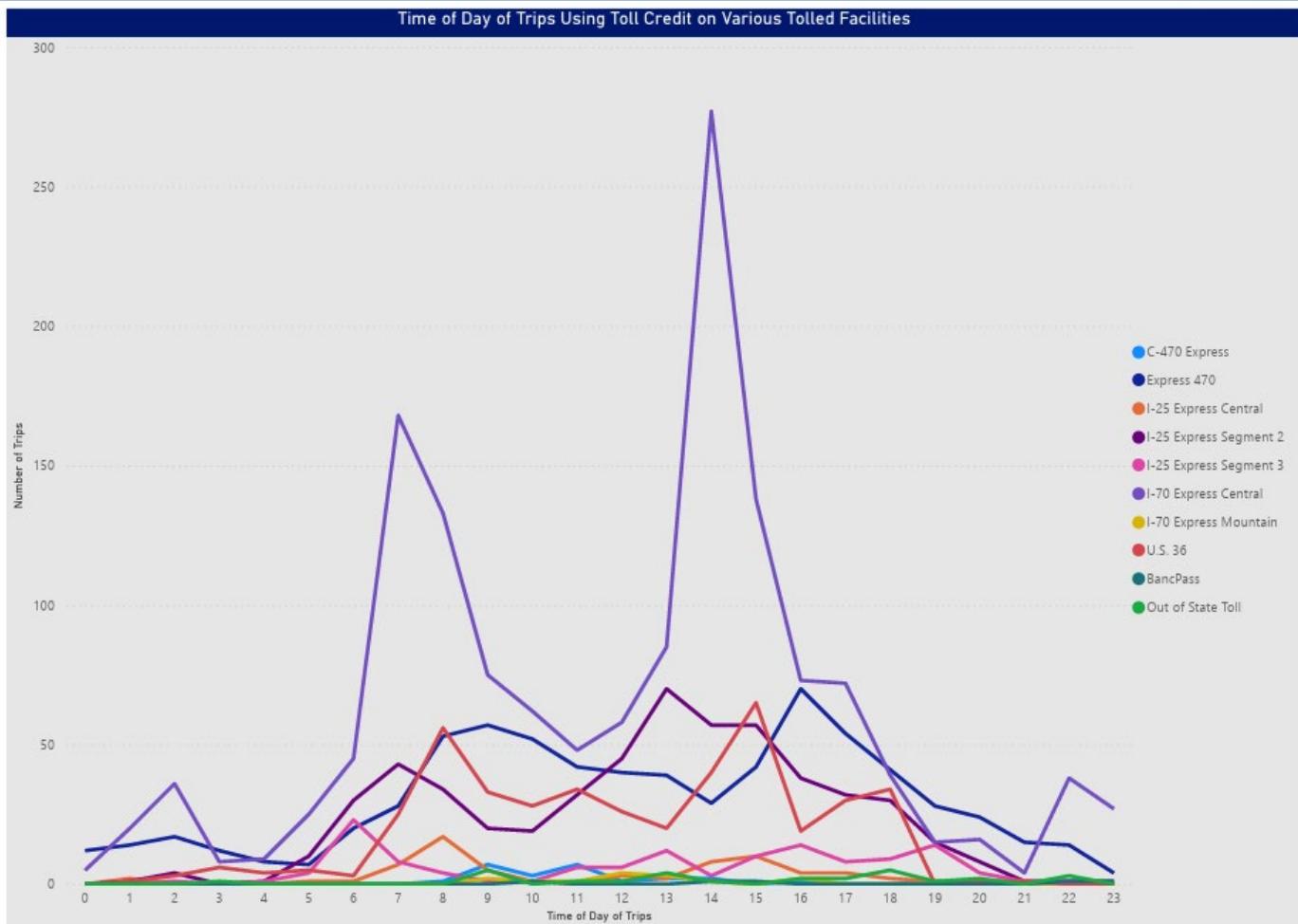
Road Edit
BancPass
C-470 Express
Express 470
I-25 Express Central
I-25 Express Segment 2
I-25 Express Segment 3
I-25 Express South Gap
I-70 Express Central
I-70 Express Mountain
Out of State Toll
U.S. 36



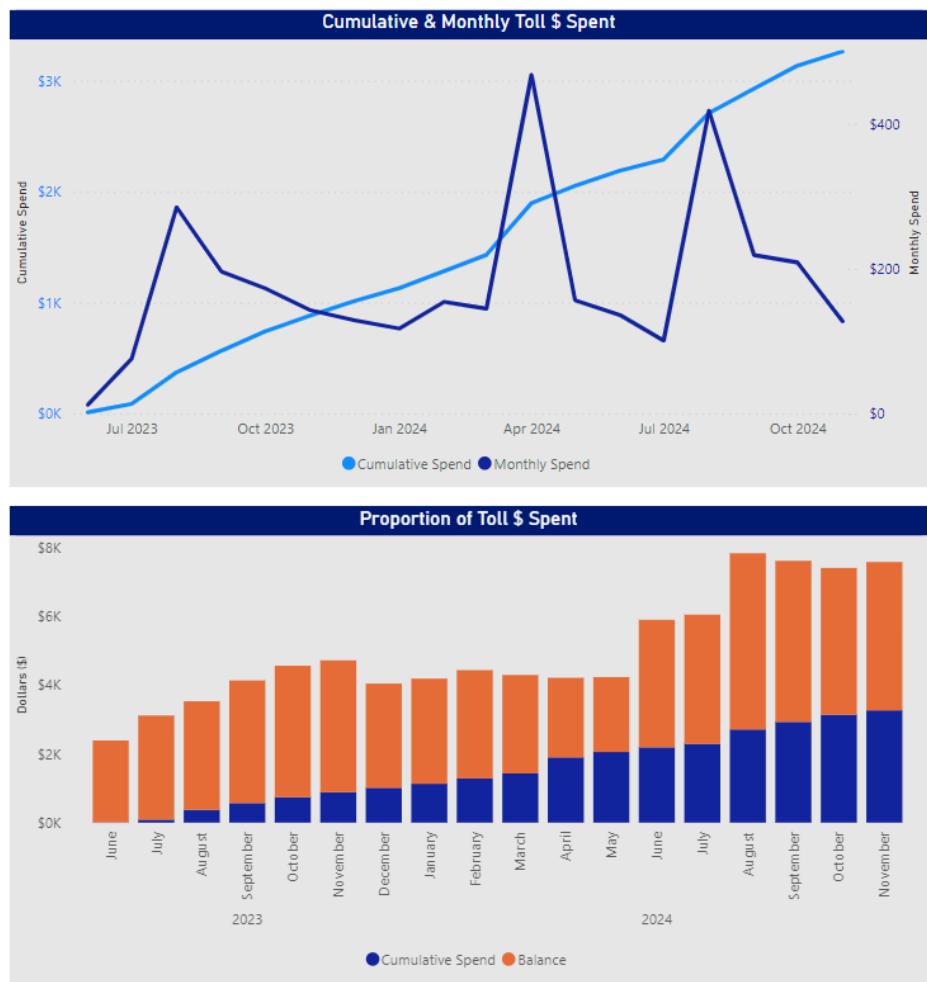
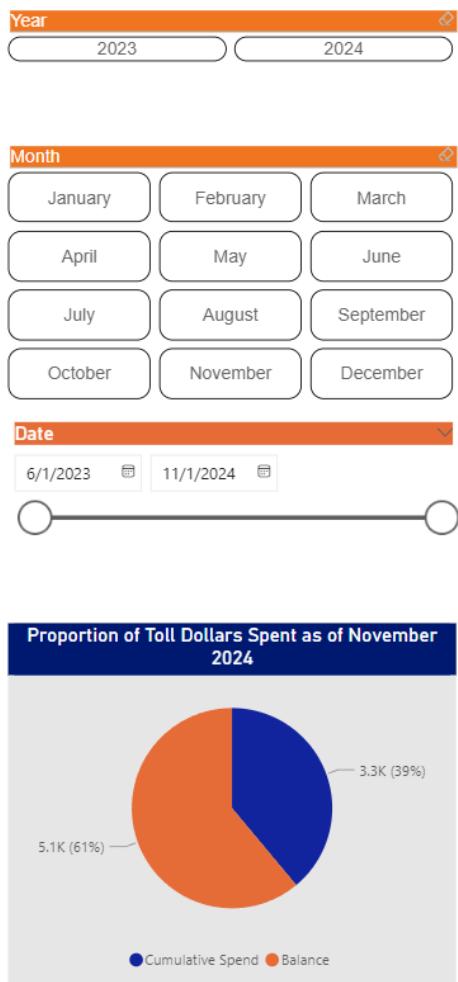
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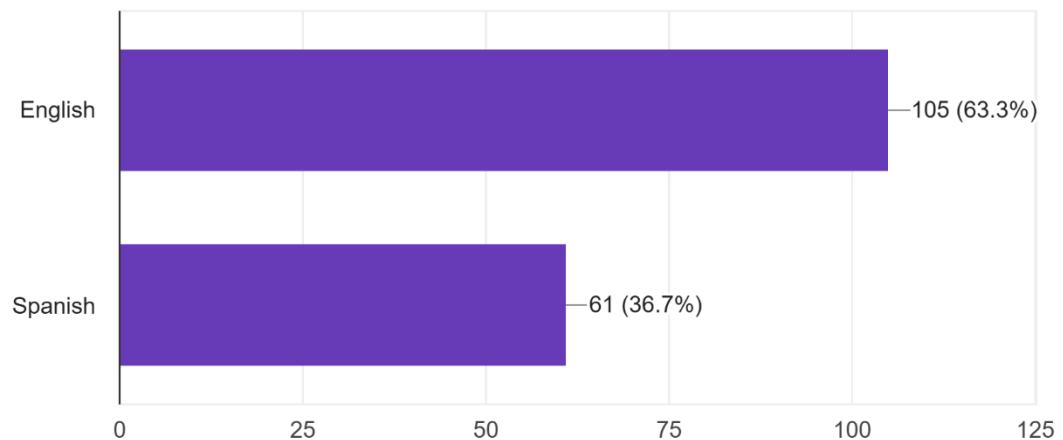
C-70 Tolling Equity Program



Attachment B: 2025 Transit Pass Survey: GES Tolling Equity Program (English and Spanish)

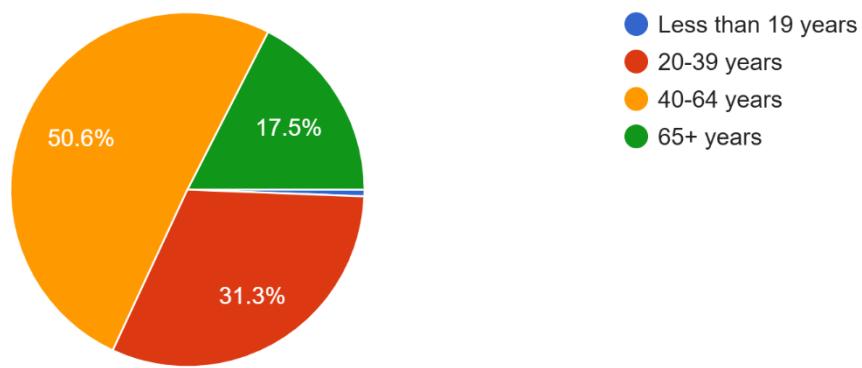
What Language was the survey response in?

166 responses



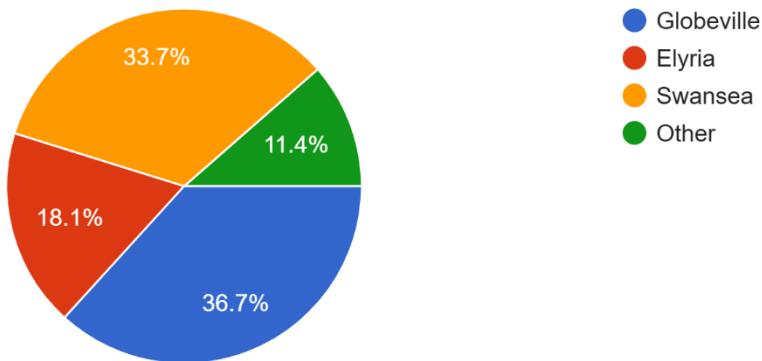
1. Which age group do you belong to? (Choose 1)

166 responses



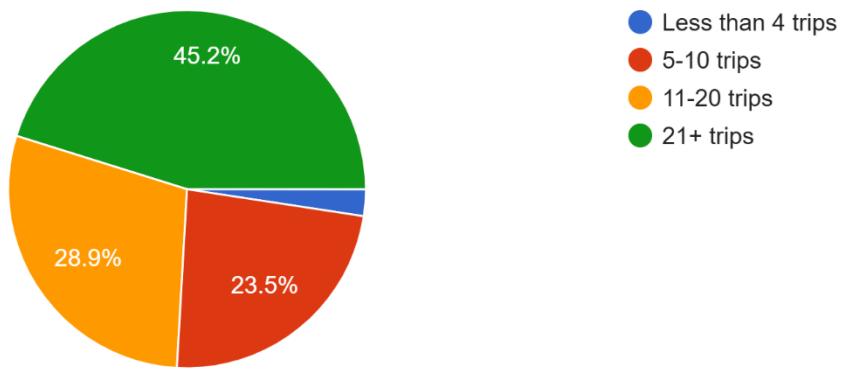
2. Which community do you live in? (Choose 1)

166 responses



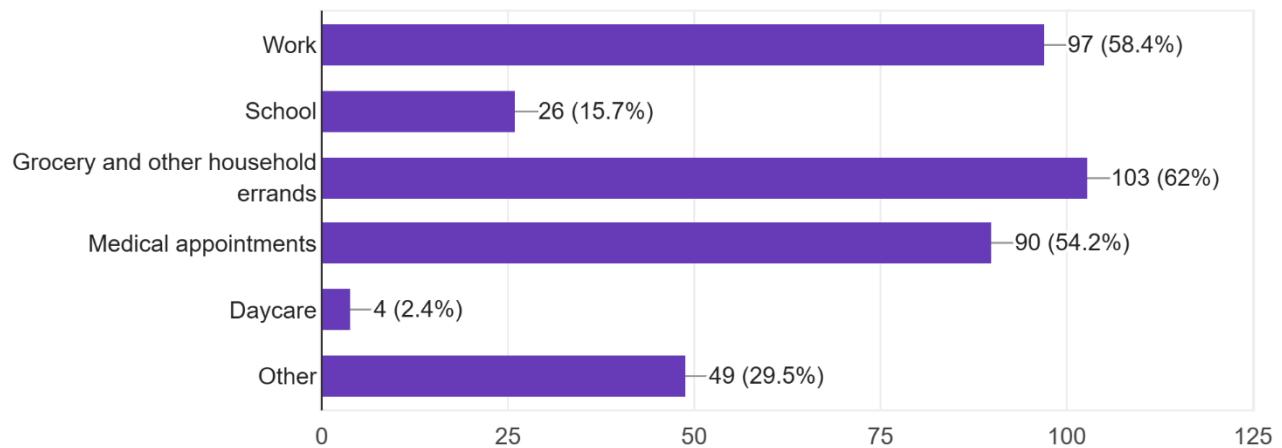
3. On average, how many transit trips did you make in the last month? (Choose 1)

166 responses



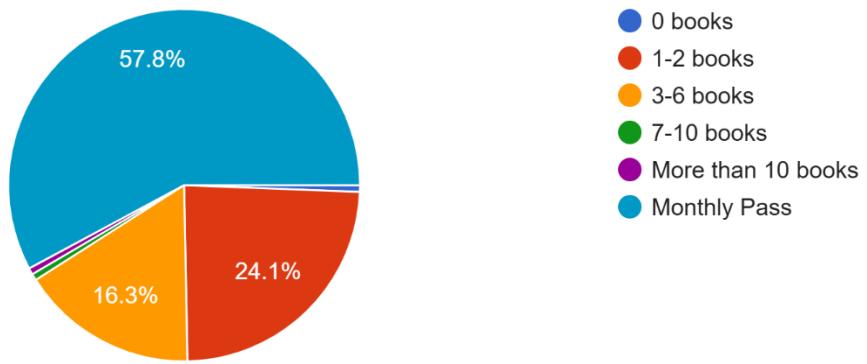
4. Where did you travel using the free tickets? (Choose all that apply)

166 responses



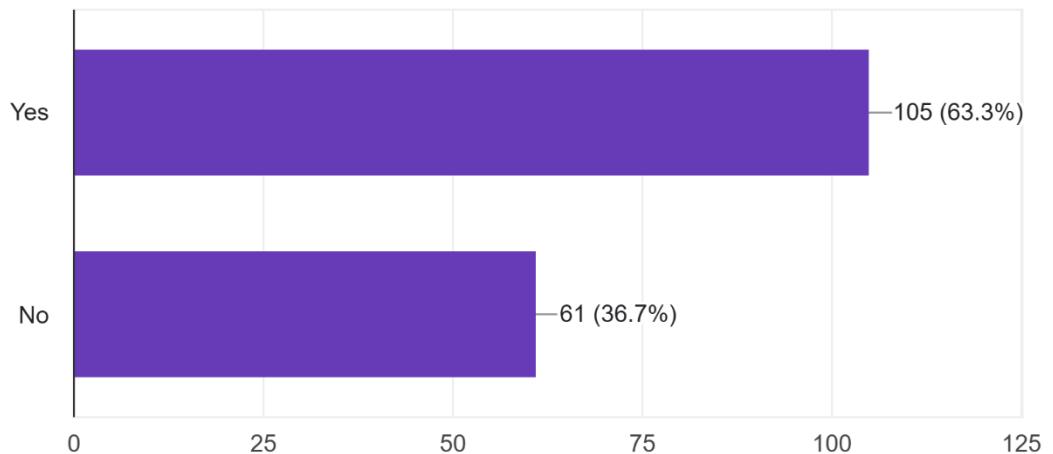
5. How many free ticket books did you pick up in September? (Choose 1)

166 responses



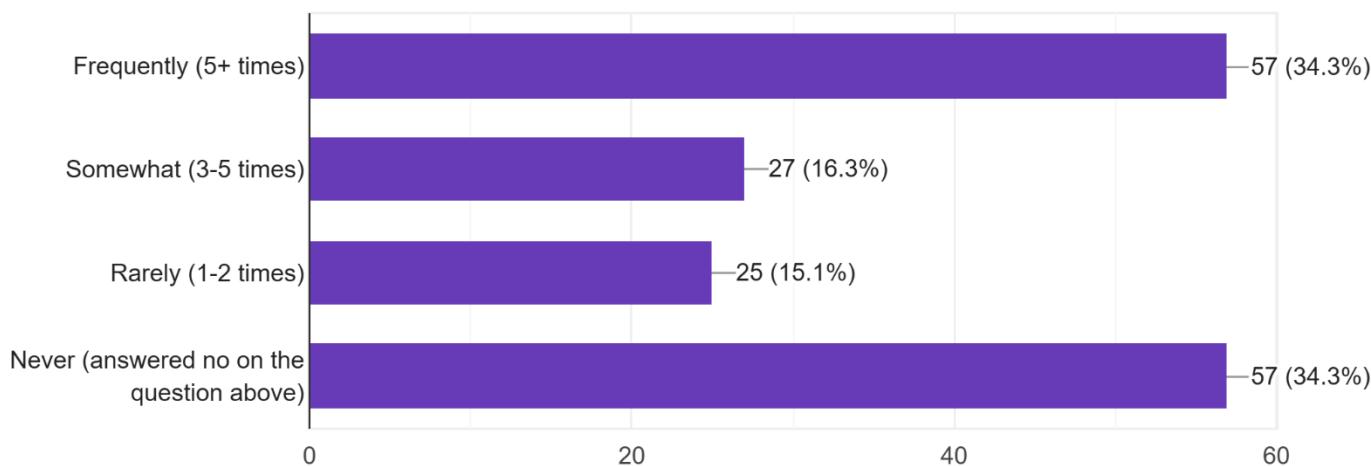
6. Has access to free transit passes replaced trips where you or someone else would have driven (family member, friend, Uber/Lyft)?

166 responses



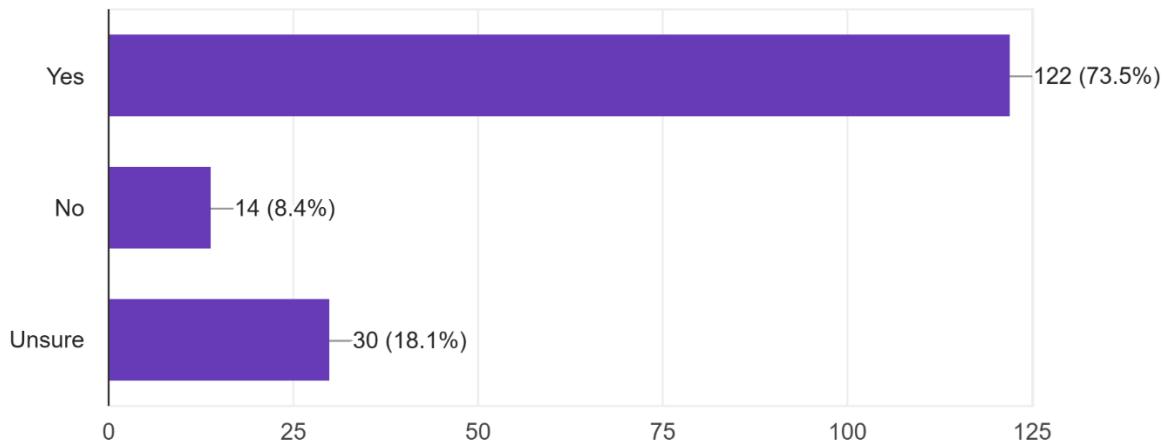
7. If yes, how often did you replace a driving or ride-sharing trip with a transit trip?

166 responses



8. Would you use the connector if it was extended to the weekends?

166 responses



9. (Optional) Is there anything else you want us to know-positive comments or concerns?

Thank you!

Thank you for your help, ladies and gentlemen, for the bus passes. It's not just for me, because it helps me a lot for my health and because I don't have to work hard and I don't have to worry about my health. Thank you very much, ladies.

I wish the connector came to Aurora

Keep up the good job. Well done. Thank you.

Thank you very much for the help!

I am grateful for the tickets

I appreciate the help. It really means a lot.

Want the connector to Denver Health

Thank you.

great job, great job.

Keep doing good.

This program help me be more mobile as I am disabled.

I live in a shelter, these passes make getting medical and trips for my job crucial in my life.

I would to know how to get discounts on uber/lyfts or driving lyfts.

The monthly pass has help me very much with my day to day commute

Great help!

Can the connector go to Denver Health

Is very good, it helps

You all are wonderful!

The monthly pass is very beneficial and helpful. Thanks!

Muy agradecida por este servicio bendiciones (Very grateful for this service, blessings)

transportation is great

Thank you very much it is a life saver!

Thank you for this program

great resource to have at swansea center

adonde pregunto sobre las paradas del bus. Where do I ask about the bus stops

They are very useful for transporting and traveling by bus

correcor de la tarde es mas lento si fuera mas rapido estaria vien (The afternoon rush hour is slower. If it were faster, it would be fine)

Thank you so much, god bless!

Great Program

My connector limitations are small children, I have kid in car seat .

I love the connector, I also use the bike library with NETC

would love "connector" longer day times and also into the weekends. Also if 1 transit to a downtown destination available like the post office for passport, that would help many people.

I wouldn't have been able to go to health appointments or to work without these programs

Keep up the good work

Thank You!

seria exrelente siel conector brindara sus servicios los fines de semana considero que seria un gran beneficio para la comunidad. (It would be excellent if the connector offered its services on weekends. I think it would be very beneficial for the community.)

It is good!

Thank you for making public transportation easy for a few of us

Highly appreciate the RTD passes each month I would not be able to do business without the bus pass on my budget.

The monthly pass is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Very helpful for people who are struggling

Transit Pass Survey Comparison

Note: only questions repeated in the 2025 survey are included in the comparison below.

1. Which age group do you belong to?	2023	2025		Comments
Less than 19 years	2	0.6	-1.4	
20-39 years	38	31.3	-6.7	
40-64	50	50.6	0.6	
65+	15	17.5	2.5	
				The Ages of people receiving the pass is broadly the same.
2. Which community do you live in?	2023	2025		
Globeville	43.3	36.7	6.6	
Elyria	18	18.1	0.1	
Swansea	26.7	37	10.3	
Other	12	11.4	-0.6	
				The percentage of people from outside the community has reduced slightly.
3. On average, how many transit trips did you make in the last month?	2023	2025		
Less than 4 trips	6.7	2.4	-4.3	
5-10 trips	17.3	23.5	6.2	
11-20 trips	36.7	28.9	-7.8	
21+ trips	39.3	45.2	5.9	More people are taking 21+ trips per month, indicating that they are likely monthly pass users, and also 5-10 trips per month.

4. Where did you travel using the free tickets?	2023	2025		
Work	53.3	58.4	5.1	
School	17.3	15.7	-1.6	
Grocery and other household errands	59.3	62	2.7	
Medical Appointments	50.7	54.2	3.5	
Daycare	6.7	2.4	-4.3	
Other	36.7	29.5	-7.2	
				The uses of the transit passes remain broadly the same.
5. How many ticket books did you pick up?	2023	2025		
0 books	24	0	-24	
			-	
1-2 books	51.3	24.1	27.2	
3-6 books	18	16.3	-1.7	
7-10 books	4.7	0.6	-4.1	
More than 10 books	1.3	0.6	-0.7	
Monthly Pass	0.7	57.8	57.1	
				There has been a significant increase in the percentage of people receiving monthly passes, which is much more economical - if people receive more than 3-4 books per month, it is cheaper to give them a monthly pass. This has been driven by the distribution centers identifying who are regular users and moving them to monthly passes.