

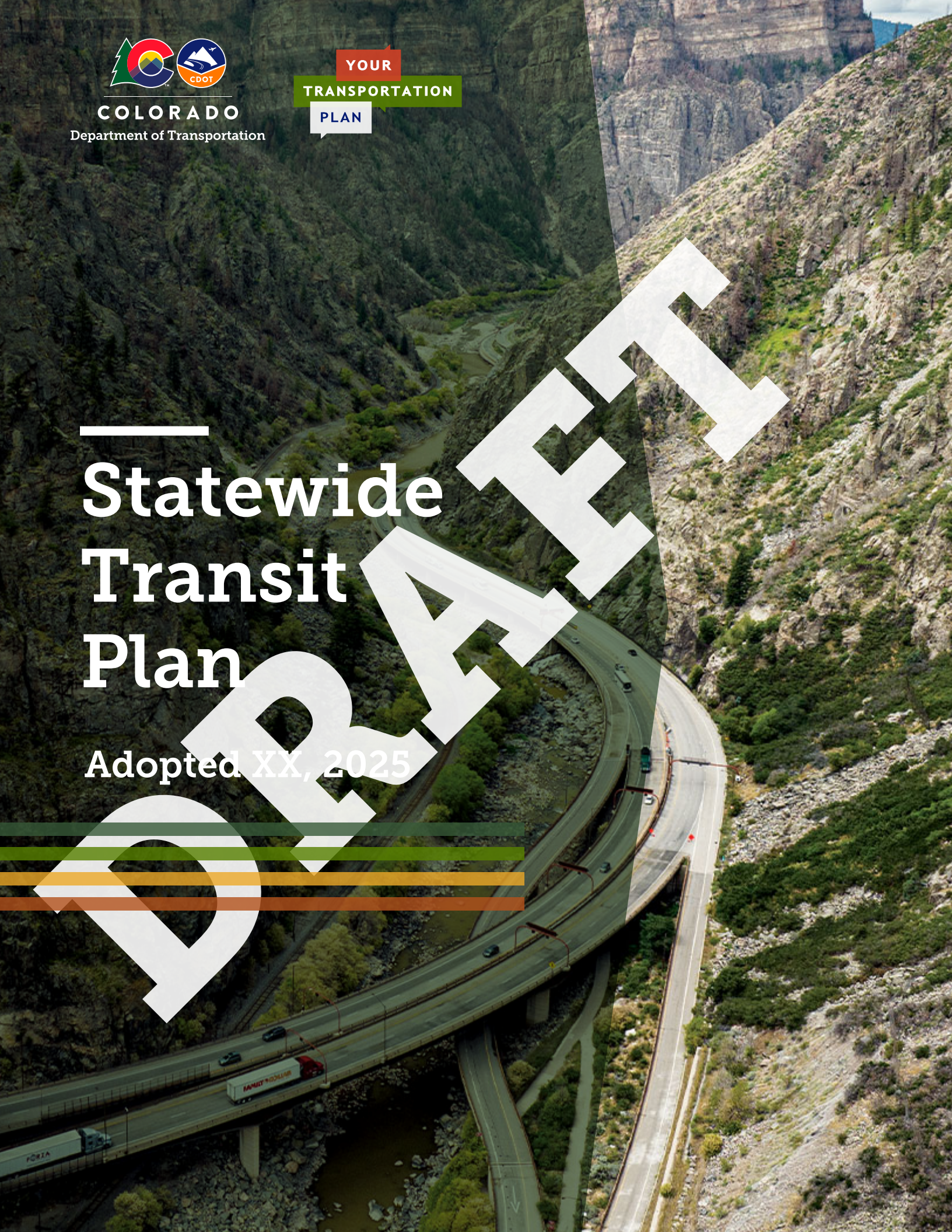


COLORADO  
Department of Transportation

YOUR  
TRANSPORTATION  
PLAN

# Statewide Transit Plan

Adopted XX, 2025







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## Acronyms

## Definitions

AAA	Area Agency on Aging
ADAS	Advanced Driver Assistance Systems
AV	Autonomous Vehicles
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CASTA	Colorado Association of Transit Agencies
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
CFR	Central Front Range
CTE	Clean Transit Enterprise
CV	Connected Vehicle
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
DTR	Division of Transit and Rail
EA	Eastern
EV	Electric Vehicle
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FRPR	Front Range Passenger Rail
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GV	Gunnison Valley
GVMPPO	Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
IM	Intermountain
MPH	Miles per hour
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NECALG	Northeastern Colorado Association of Local Governments
NTD	National Transit Database
NW	Northwest
NWCCOG	Northwest Colorado Council of Governments
OIM	Office of Innovative Mobility





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## **Acronyms    Definitions**

PACOG	Pueblo Area Council of Governments
PD 14	The Transportation Commission and CDOT's Policy Directive 14
PPACG	Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments
RFTA	Roaring Fork Transportation Authority
RTCC	Regional Transportation Coordinating Council
RTD	Regional Transportation District
SC	South Central
SCCOG	South Central Council of Government
SE	Southeast
SLV	San Luis Valley
SMART	San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation
SoCoCAA	Southern Colorado Community Action Agency
SOP	System Optimization Plan
SRDA	Senior Resource Development Agency
SW	Southwest
TAM	Transit Asset Management
TPR	Transportation Planning Region
UFR	Upper Front Range
ZEV	Zero Emission Vehicle



# State of Colorado



Photo Credit: Town of Mountain Village

Public transit plays a vital role in Colorado’s multimodal transportation system, supporting the mobility needs of tens of thousands of residents and visitors across the state. Transit services connect people to jobs, schools, shopping, healthcare, and recreational destinations—supporting economic activity and enhancing personal independence. These services benefit both rural and urban communities by promoting economic development along transit corridors, improving public health outcomes, and enhancing overall quality of life.

To ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of transit planning in Colorado, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), in partnership with rural and urban regional planning partners, updates the Statewide Transit Plan every four to five years. The 2025 Plan builds on the foundation of the 2020 Plan and focuses on documenting changes made since then to reflect Colorado’s evolving transportation needs. While a full update to the Statewide Transit Plan is scheduled for the next major planning cycle in four to five years, this interim update ensures continued alignment with CDOT’s goals.

CDOT’s Division of Transit and Rail (DTR) developed this Plan in accordance with all CDOT and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) planning requirements. In collaboration with public, private, and non-profit transit and human service providers, CDOT will use this Plan to guide transit investment priorities and advance the state’s long-term transit vision.



A scenic landscape photograph showing a paved road winding through a hilly area with autumn-colored trees. A blue bus is driving on the road, and a colorful hot air balloon is visible in the sky. The right side of the image is overlaid with a dark green semi-transparent panel containing text.

# Statewide Transit Vision

Transit is an essential part of a connected multimodal transportation system that offers reliable, safe, and accessible mobility options for everyone who lives, works, visits, and recreates in Colorado. Through strategic investment, coordinated planning, and a focus on clean and efficient travel, the transit network enhances public safety, reduces environmental impacts, and expands equitable access to opportunity, thereby strengthening Colorado's communities now and into the future.

## Alignment with PD 14

The Transportation Commission and CDOT's Policy Directive 14 (PD 14) establishes the overarching framework and objectives for key statewide planning efforts, including Your Transportation Plan (the Statewide Transportation Plan), the Statewide Transit Plan, and the Statewide Active Transportation Plan. PD 14 outlines performance measures that support the implementation of these plans by guiding investment decisions through the 10-Year Plan, the fiscally constrained 4-Year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and the annual budget process. It also ensures alignment with the Governor's Key Priorities.

Informed by feedback from the public and stakeholders, PD 14 identifies three core priority areas—Advancing Transportation Safety, Sustainably Increase Transportation Choice, and Fix Our Roads—and establishes measurable performance targets to reflect the values and concerns of communities statewide. To effectively prioritize and fund transit projects, it is critical that they align with these goals to ensure improved connectivity, accessibility, and equitable mobility throughout Colorado.



# Statewide Transit Goal Areas

PD 14 outlines three core priority areas that serve as the guiding framework for statewide planning efforts. These goal areas have been linked to the Statewide Transit Goals developed during the previous Statewide Transit Planning process to enable better alignment across all modes of transportation and planning initiatives.



## Advancing Transportation Safety

No matter where you're going or how you're getting there, Colorado is committed to providing you a safe and efficient transportation network so that you arrive safely at your destination.

- A resilient transit network that makes travelers feel safe and secure.



## Sustainably Increase Transportation Choice

Provide alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel that increase choices and reduce air pollution from transportation.

- A modally integrated transit system that provides local, regional, and interregional connectivity and is affordable, efficient, and easy to use.



## Fix Our Roads

Prioritize strategic investments in Colorado's highways to improve infrastructure conditions.

- A high-quality transit system that is financially sustainable and operates in a state of good repair.



Photo Credit: Telluride Hotel



# Statewide Snapshot



Transportation—whether walking, rolling, biking, taking transit, vanpooling, carpooling, or driving a car—is a critical element of everyone’s daily life and well-being. Providing access to safe and reliable transportation for all, regardless of who they are or where they come from, results in accessible and inclusive communities, healthier lifestyle choices, and improved economic prosperity.

When considering Colorado’s mobility future, reviewing and analyzing available data helps uncover potential gaps and needs in the transportation network. Populations that often have a higher than average need for transit and/or have limited access to transportation services and facilities include:

- Older adults
- People with disabilities
- People of color
- Low-income residents
- People with limited English proficiency
- Households without a car
- Veterans
- Youth
- Tourists and business visitors

## Creating an Equitable Transportation Network

Colorado’s statewide transportation and transit planning efforts consider the needs of all communities through an equity framework to ensure that equity is meaningfully integrated into the planning process. This approach acknowledges that communities face unique challenges and have varying needs, particularly those that have been historically underserved. An equitable transportation network ensures convenient and affordable access to essential services such as jobs, medical care, education, groceries, and social or recreational activities. By addressing these unique needs, equitable access creates opportunities that can significantly improve personal health, well-being, and overall quality of life.



# Foundational Elements of the Statewide Transit Plan

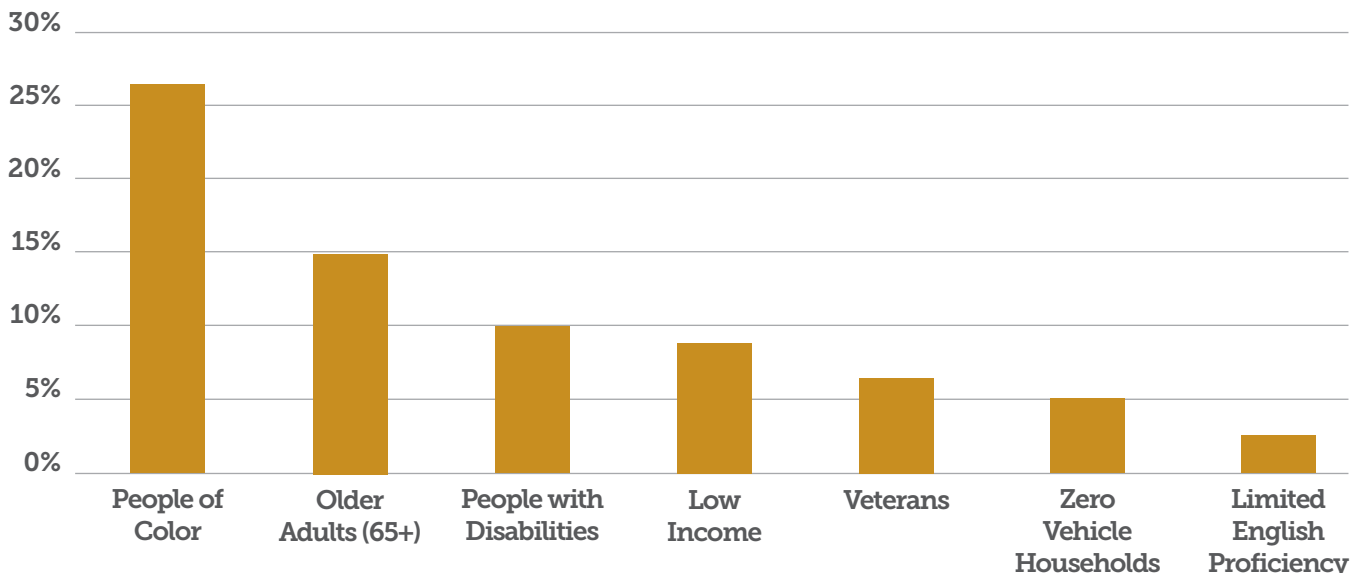
The Statewide Transit Plan, led by CDOT's DTR, is grounded in planning and policy principles aimed at improving the quality of life of everyone who lives in, works in, and visits Colorado. It identifies what Coloradans want from their transit system and focuses on the projects that best deliver on that shared vision. The Plan integrates insights from regional partners and the communities they serve to identify comprehensive multimodal solutions that effectively and equitably serve Colorado community members and visitors.

CDOT developed this Plan concurrently with the Statewide Transportation Plan to ensure a comprehensive approach to Colorado's transportation network. Together, the Statewide Transit and Transportation Plans create a unified vision for transportation and maximize return on investment across all modes. This effort reflects a commitment to inclusive, integrated planning that gives all regions of the state equal opportunity to provide input and incorporates the full range of modal needs into a single, cohesive statewide vision.

By aligning with the Statewide Transportation Plan and leveraging data analysis, this Plan also informs the 10-Year Plan update, ensuring that the State's long-term transportation strategies are data-driven, are equitable, and reflect public needs and priorities. This Statewide Transit Plan was developed in full compliance with all applicable civil rights laws.

## Historically Underrepresented Populations

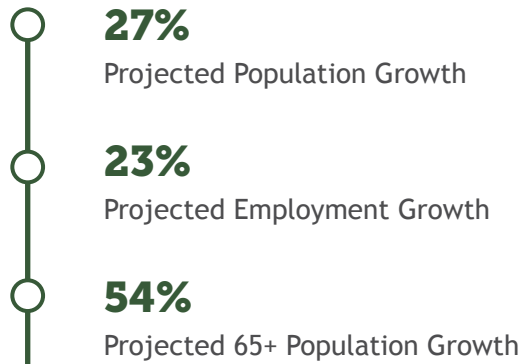
The following bar chart illustrates the distribution of historically underrepresented population groups, highlighting the importance of inclusive transit planning in Colorado. People of color represent the largest share at 27 percent, followed by older adults (65+) at 15 percent, people with disabilities at 10 percent, and people with low-income at 9 percent. Veterans account for 6 percent of the population, while zero-vehicle households represent 5 percent. Individuals with limited English proficiency make up the smallest share at 2 percent.







# Statewide Population & Employment Growth by 2050



## Identified Transit Needs

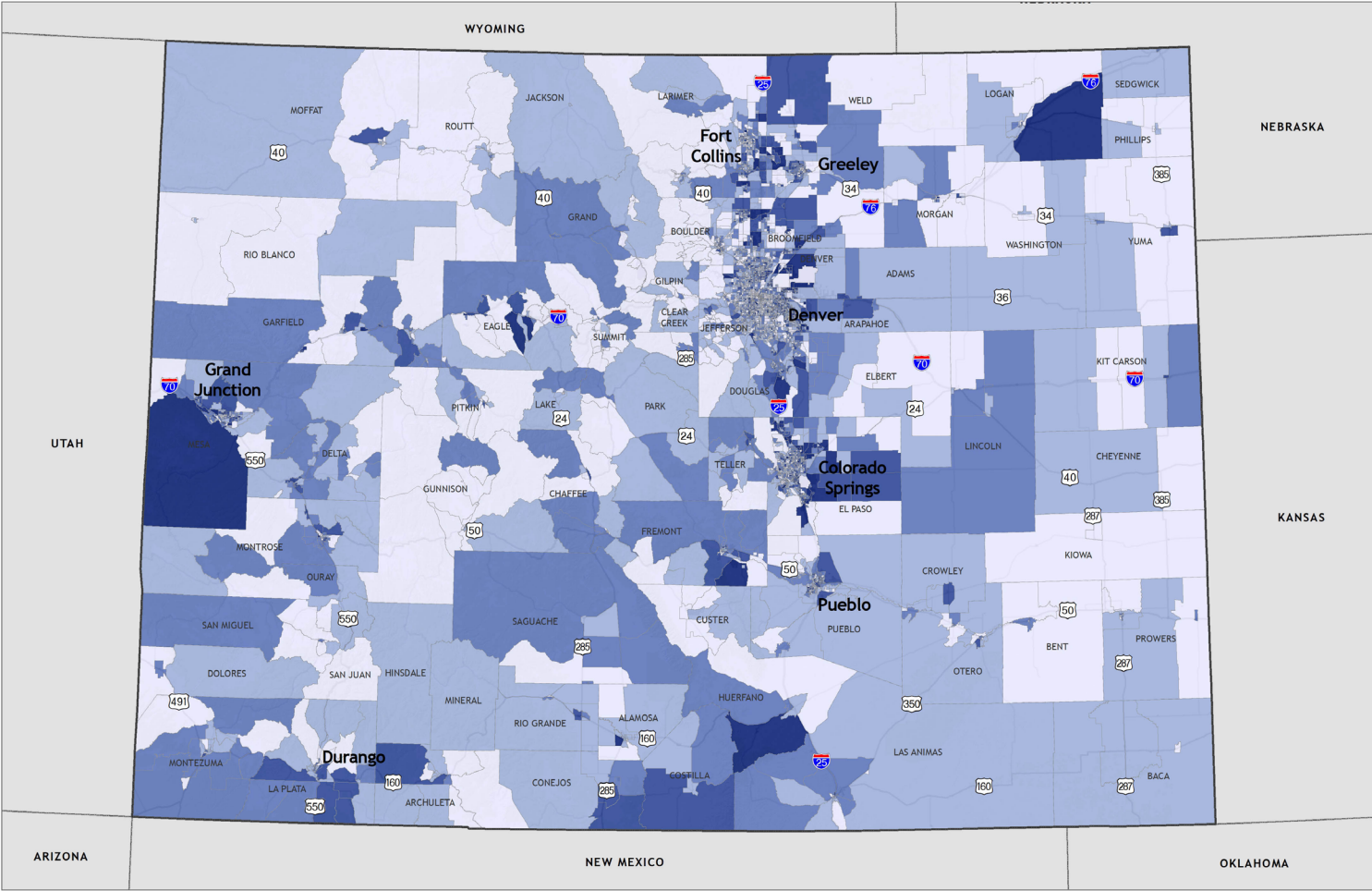
Data about underrepresented populations paints a picture about the areas of the state most likely to have a higher than average need for transit. The following Statewide Transit Needs map shows the combined index of older adults (65+), people with disabilities, people of color, populations with low-income, those with limited English proficiency, and those without access to vehicles.

The map highlights census tracts with the highest propensity of underrepresented populations in Colorado. By overlaying these groups, it illustrates which Regions require more focused investment in transit services, tailored to meet the specific mobility needs of these communities. The map also highlights broader areas across the state that may need additional attention to ensure equitable access to transportation. High transit needs were identified in several communities along the Front Range and the I-25 corridor, as well as in more remote rural areas, where residents often rely heavily on public transit or alternative mobility options, including areas of the Eastern (EA), San Luis Valley (SLV), and Upper Front Range (UFR) Transportation Planning Regions (TPR). This information is critical for shaping transportation needs, identifying projects, and ensuring that the needs of all Coloradans, regardless of their geographic location, are addressed.





# Identified Transit Need



**Legend**

Transit Propensity Index

Low Transit Need

Low to Medium Transit Need

Medium Transit Need

Medium to High Transit Need

High Transit Need

Interstate/Highways

City Boundaries

County Boundaries

Colorado State Boundary

Transit Propensity Index is developed from inputs including Low Income Households, Communities of Color, Population with Limited English Proficiency, Population over 65, Population under 18, Disabled Population, Zero Vehicle Households, and Veteran Population. Data was derived from the U.S. Census Bureau/American Community Survey (2019-2023).

NORTH

0 45 Miles



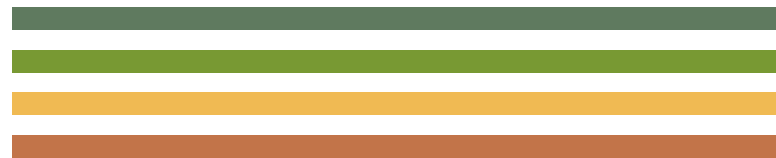
# What We Heard



This Plan builds on the expansive outreach from our last planning effort, carrying forward the voices, priorities, and insights we heard from communities across the state. It reflects not just a continuation, but an evolution of that dialogue, to ensure that we stay connected to what matters most to the people we serve.

CDOT developed a multi-faceted approach to better understand the mobility needs of communities across the state since the last Plan update. CDOT conducted four rounds of meetings between fall 2024 and spring 2025 with each TPR and urban area partners to assess local goals, priorities, and desired transit improvements, while also identifying any changes since the previous Plan.

To expand public input, CDOT hosted nine region-specific telephone town halls, giving community members from all parts of the state an opportunity to share their mobility concerns and needs. An online survey was also available concurrently with the town halls to offer an additional, accessible way for people to provide feedback about transportation gaps and needs.





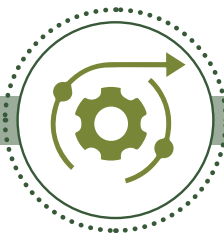
# Transportation Planning Region Input

The four rounds of meetings with TPR members revealed several recurring concerns and priorities shared across the state. The summary below highlights key themes.



## Interregional and Regional Connectivity

Regions across the state consistently emphasized the need for stronger connections between rural areas and urban centers. This need includes enhancing service along key corridors like I-70, I-25, US-24, and US-50, with expanded options such as Bustang, Bustang Outrider, and local transit. Regions also voiced support for long-range investments like Mountain Passenger Rail and the integration of forward-looking technologies, such as electric and autonomous vehicles, to improve mobility across the state.



## Coordinated Multimodal Planning

Regions expressed an interest in more thoughtfully integrating transit, roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and micromobility systems as interconnected elements of a comprehensive transportation network. Public input emphasized the importance of planning for all types of trips, including daily commutes and recreational travel. Key strategies to support more flexible and interconnected mobility options included investments in multimodal hubs and intermodal connections.



## Mobility Solutions for Visitors and Locals

With increasing congestion, particularly in high-traffic and tourist areas, many Regions identified transit as an essential tool to manage travel demand. Regions also noted improved and frequent transit access to recreational destinations as a critical need to reduce strain on roadways and improve the visitor experience.



Photo Credit: South Central Council of Governments



# Transportation Planning Region Input



## Equitable and Accessible Transit Service

Equity and accessibility continue to be key priorities statewide. TPRs expressed a desire to improve transit amenities like shelters and signage, conduct more inclusive outreach, and ensure that services are welcoming and navigable—especially for historically underserved populations and riders unfamiliar with transit.



## Sustainable Transit Funding

Communities cited challenges in understanding and accessing funding streams for both general public and human services transportation. They expressed a need for clearer guidance, technical assistance, and more inclusive long-term investment strategies to support ongoing operations and system expansion.



Photo Credit: Basalt Chamber of Commerce



# Public Engagement Overview

## Telephone Town Halls

As part of the public outreach conducted for the statewide planning process, CDOT hosted a series of regional telephone town halls between April and June 2025. These live, over-the-phone events served as a highly accessible platform for engaging Coloradans across all regions of the state. More than 50,000 participants joined the town halls, where they had the opportunity to ask questions about transportation issues and provide input through interactive live polling. Each session connected residents directly with CDOT leadership, who answered over 120 questions live, addressing concerns ranging from road conditions and transit service expansion to safety, accessibility, and long-term investment strategies. On average, participants stayed engaged for more than eight minutes per call, reflecting a high level of interest and involvement. The telephone town halls were designed to broaden access, especially for those who may not be able to attend in-person meetings or navigate digital tools.

## Statewide Online Survey

To complement this outreach, CDOT also conducted a Statewide Online Survey to gather additional public feedback on transportation priorities. More than 3,400 Coloradans from all 64 counties participated, providing valuable input on needs and opportunities related to transit and mobility. Together, the telephone town halls and online survey played a crucial role in understanding statewide, regional, and local transportation needs, to ensure that the planning process was informed by a wide and representative range of voices from urban, suburban, and rural communities alike.





# Public Engagement Key Themes

## 1. Transit Growth and Expansion

- Expand of public transit services, including passenger rail, particularly along the Front Range corridor
- Increase frequency and reliability of bus service, including expansion of Bustang routes in rural and interregional areas
- Provide light rail connectivity in metro areas and between smaller towns and urban hubs
- Improve statewide transit access, particularly for people with disabilities, older adults, youth, and underserved rural populations, and low-income riders

## 2. Multimodal Integration

- Improve connectivity between transit stations and bike and pedestrian facilities
- Enhance walking and biking infrastructure to connect neighborhoods to stops and improve first/last-mile access

## 3. Transit Infrastructure and Amenities

- Provide secure park-and-ride facilities with improved station accessibility and comfort
- Improve information and navigation tools (e.g., apps, signage)

## 4. Support for Alternative Transportation Options

- Support the integration of low or no emission vehicles in transit fleets across the state
- Incentivize transit-oriented development and non-single occupancy vehicle travel options.

## Regional Themes

- Urban corridors: Denver metro and Front Range cities emphasized rail connectivity, fare affordability, and reducing congestion through transit alternatives.
- Mountain and rural areas: Prioritized bus service expansion (e.g., to ski areas, medical centers), regional rail access, and transit tailored to tourism and seasonal needs.
- Eastern and Southern Colorado: Noted gaps in basic transit availability and stressed the need for investment in foundational service.





# 2050 Statewide Transit Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

In 2020, CDOT conducted a statistically valid statewide survey of older adults and adults with disabilities to better understand their travel behavior, transportation needs, and preferences. This effort aligned with a similar survey conducted in 2014, allowing CDOT to benchmark progress and identify areas where additional support is needed to meet the mobility needs of these communities. The 2025 survey offers another opportunity to capture insights from across the State and to ensure transit investments are strategically targeted. Approximately 15,000 households with older adults and/or adults with disabilities received the survey. Just under 2,500 responses were completed, yielding a response rate of approximately 17 percent.

## 2025 Survey Results and Key Findings



### Over half

of older adults and adults with disabilities reported that they get a ride in a personal vehicle from family, friends, or neighbors at least occasionally. This represents a statistically significant increase from 2019 and 2014.



### 1 in 3

older adults and adults with disabilities noted that the COVID-19 pandemic changed their travel patterns. However, most report that they have returned to their normal (pre-pandemic) modes of travel.



### 1 in 5

older adults and adults with disabilities walk multiple times a week to reach their destinations



### Only 1%

of respondents used transit multiple times a week



# 2025 Survey Result Key Findings



Respondents most often had difficulty finding transportation for medical appointments and shopping/pharmacy trips.



Top desired improvements included providing lower fares for older adults and adults with disabilities, providing more transportation services, expanding or adding fixed-route public transportation, and providing more transportation services to regional destinations.

Colorado's veteran population is declining and becoming more diverse, with many veterans living in rural areas where transportation barriers limit access to care. To address these challenges, there is a growing need for coordinated, accessible, and age-friendly mobility options that connect veterans—especially older and underserved individuals—to essential VA services across the state. Supporting transportation for veterans was the top priority in the Southwest (SW) and Intermountain (IM) TPRs, indicating a desire for more services and support on the Western Slope.

## Top 3 Mobility Issues

1. Service is not provided where I live or where I want to go
2. Distance from bus, train, or light rail stop/station is too far for me to walk
3. Buses, trains, or light rail do not run with enough frequency

## TPR Comparison

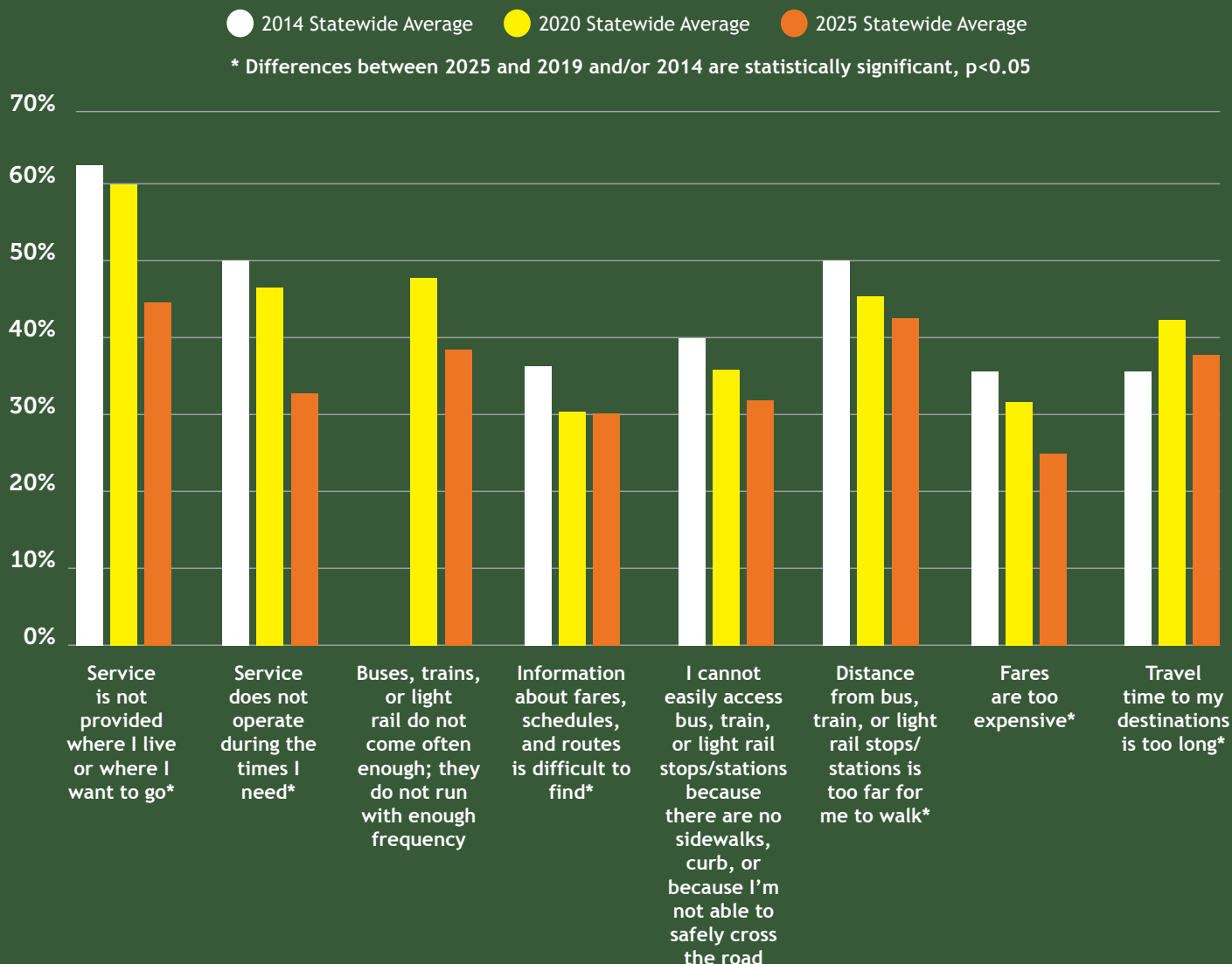
Between 2019 and 2025, willingness to switch from driving to transit increased in a few regions—SLV, Southeast (SE), and Central Front Range (CFR) TPRs—but remained flat or declined elsewhere. Transit access challenges worsened in several areas, with CFR TPR seeing a sharp rise in residents unable to find transportation three or more times a month, from 3 percent to 18 percent. Common barriers across regions included long distances to transit stops and limited service coverage, especially in Denver Regional Council of Governments metro area (DRCOG), Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization area (GVMPO), Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments area (PPACG), SE, SLV, and CFR TPRs. Residents expressed a strong interest in expanded service, including local and regional connections. Specific needs also emerged, such as veterans' transportation in SW and IM TPRs, along with calls for fare subsidies and more fixed-route options. Overall, while some improvements have been made, significant gaps in access, coverage, and connectivity persist.



# 2025 Survey Results and Key Findings

## Barriers to Using Public Transportation

Survey respondents were asked to assess the extent to which eight potential barriers affected their ability to use fixed-route public transportation. In 2025, the most frequently cited issues were the lack of service where respondents live or want to go, stops being too far to walk, infrequent service, and long travel times. Approximately 4 in 10 respondents viewed each of these as a major or minor problem. Compared to previous years, overall concern declined, with no barrier in 2025 identified as a problem by more than 45 percent of respondents. In contrast, earlier survey years saw up to 60 percent of respondents citing the absence of nearby service as a concern, and around half noted issues with service frequency and access to stops or stations. Differences between urban MPOs and rural TPRs were generally minimal. However, urban respondents were more likely to report safety concerns, while rural respondents more often cited a lack of public transportation service as a barrier.

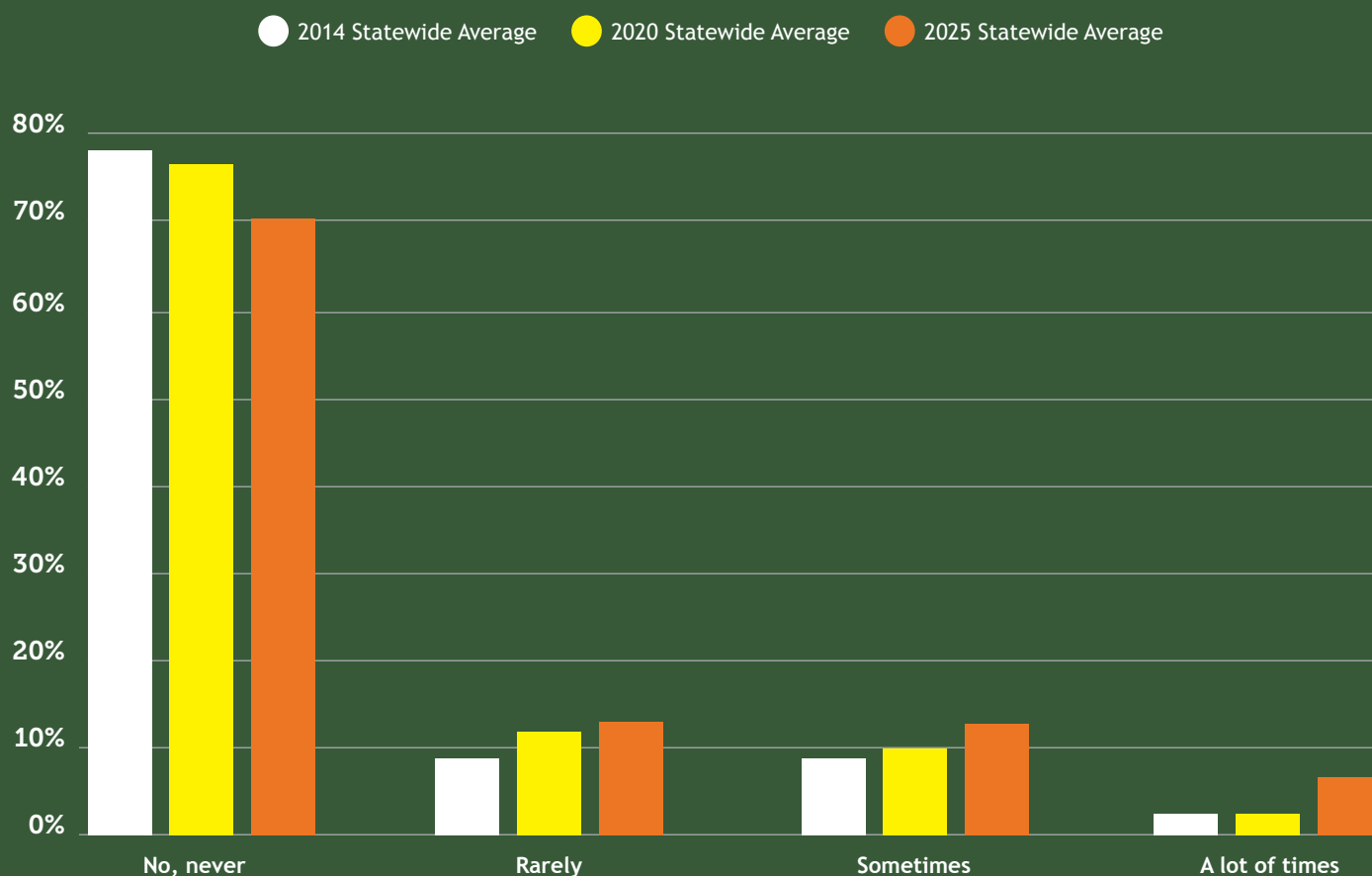




# 2025 Survey Results and Key Findings

## Do you ever have trouble finding transportation for trips you want or need to make?

When respondents were asked whether they have difficulty finding transportation for trips they want or need to make, the data revealed a gradual decline in those reporting no issues. In 2014, 78 percent of respondents said they never had trouble finding transportation. By 2025, this dropped to 70 percent. Meanwhile, the share of respondents who said they “rarely” or “sometimes” had trouble increased from 9 percent in 2014 to 12 percent in 2025 for both categories. Notably, those reporting frequent difficulty doubled from 3 percent in both 2014 and 2020 to 6 percent in the 2025 survey, indicating a modest but meaningful rise in transportation access challenges over time.



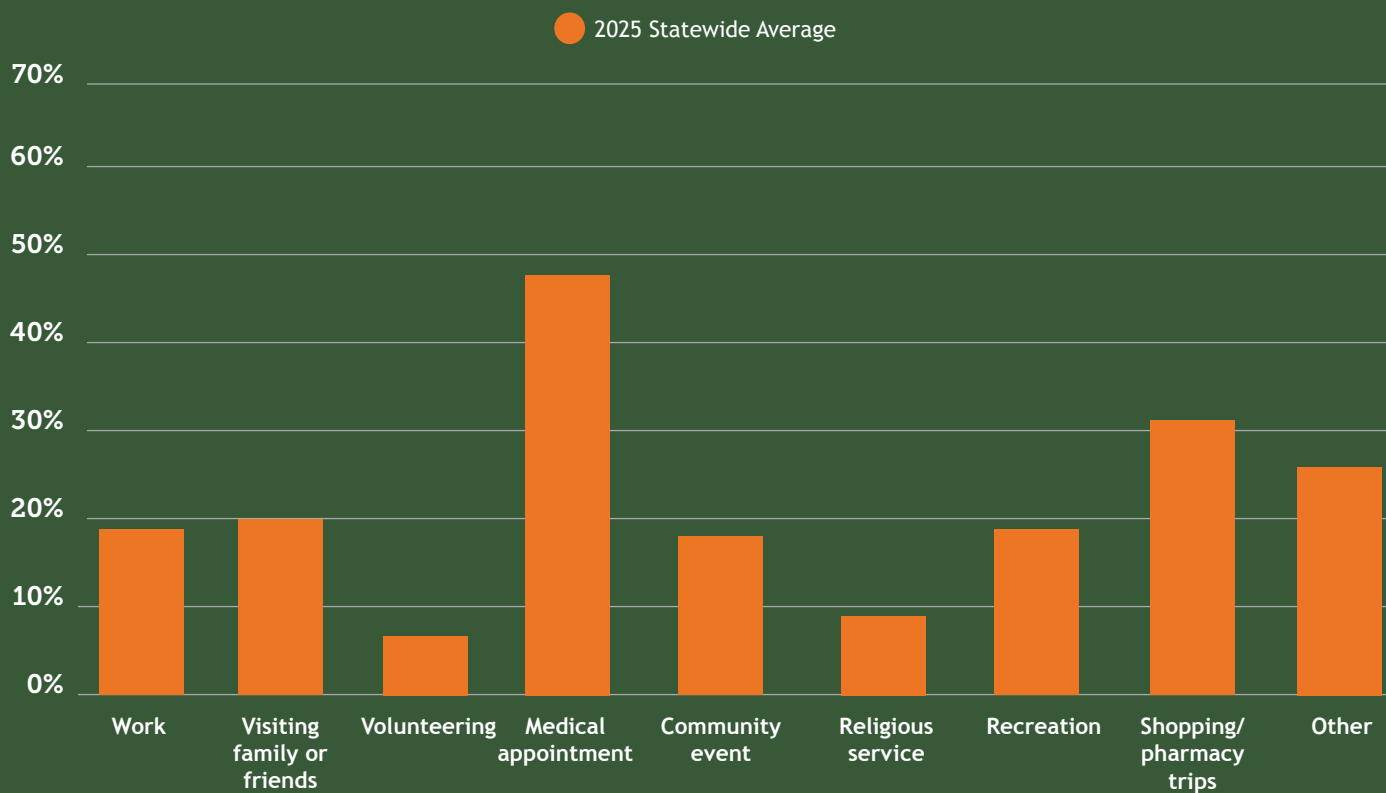


# 2025 Survey Results and Key Findings

## For what types of trips do you need transportation but have trouble finding transportation?

Among respondents who reported having trouble finding transportation for trips, medical appointments were the most frequently cited need, with 48 percent indicating difficulty accessing transportation for this purpose. Shopping and pharmacy trips were the next most common at 31 percent, followed by “other” types of trips at 25 percent.

Social and recreational needs also stood out: visiting family or friends (20 percent), recreation (19 percent), work (19 percent), and community events (18 percent) were all notable trip types where transportation was lacking. Smaller percentages were reported for religious services (9 percent) and volunteering (6 percent). Health-related and essential errands, along with social and employment-related trips, represented the most significant transportation gaps for those who face access challenges.





# 2025 Survey Results and Key Findings

## Relative Importance of Transportation-Related Issues

From 2014 to 2025, the percentage of respondents rating various transportation improvements as “very important” generally declined. Support for accessible transportation information dropped from 57 percent to 34 percent, and interest in veterans’ transportation issues decreased from 50 percent to 34 percent. Similarly, fewer respondents prioritized volunteer transportation services (33 percent to 24 percent) and wheelchair-accessible rideshare options (34 percent to 25 percent).

While interest in increasing taxi and rideshare services stayed relatively low, it rose slightly from 21 percent in 2019 to 23 percent in 2025. The importance of expanding subsidies for transit and fares fell from 42 percent to 34 percent, and support for more local and regional services also declined slightly. Prioritization of longer service hours, increased frequency, and route expansions also dropped across the board.

Overall, although these improvements remain valued, the data reflected a broad decline in urgency or perceived importance across most categories.

● 2014 Statewide Average ● 2020 Statewide Average ● 2025 Statewide Average  
\* Differences between 2025 and 2019 and/or 2014 are statistically significant,  $p < 0.05$

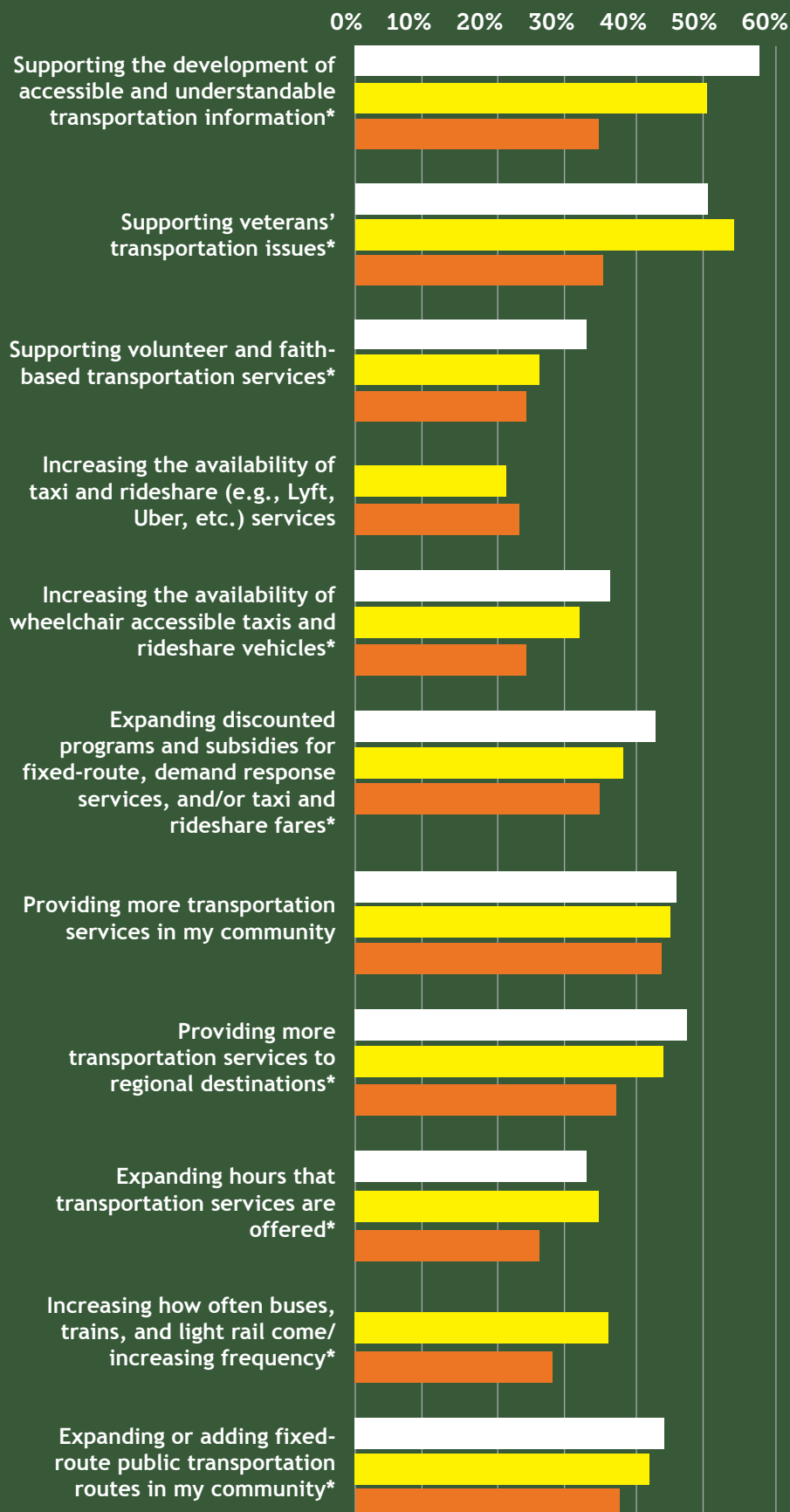






Photo Credit: RFTA

# Statewide Transit Existing Conditions

Transit service across the state includes bus service (local, regional, interregional, intercity, bus rapid transit [BRT], trolley bus), vanpools, passenger rail service (light rail, commuter rail, and intercity rail), private shuttles, taxis, ridehailing services, and human services transportation. We collected transit provider information from various sources, including the National Transit Database (NTD), previous plans, CDOT's DTR, tailored outreach to providers, and internet research. While we made extensive efforts to collect information about all providers, the information may not be comprehensive.



# Overview of Transit in Colorado



**75**

public operators



**200+**

rural and urban  
human services  
providers offer,  
fund, or support  
transportation  
services



**190+**

private for-profit  
transportation  
providers, most of  
which operate in  
urban areas



**91.1**

million one-way  
passenger trips (2023)



**5.5**

million revenue hours  
(2023) services



**77.7**

million revenue miles  
(2023)

## Rural and Urban Transportation Planning

CDOT supports the 10 rural TPRs in developing their Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plans. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), which include Grand Valley, Greater Denver Area, North Front Range, Pikes Peak Area, and Pueblo Area, develop their own Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plans in the five urban areas of the state. Both the rural and urban area plans are integrated into the Statewide Transit Plan.

## Colorado Transportation Planning Regions

- 15 Colorado Transportation Planning Regions
  - 5 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (urban areas with populations greater than 50,000)
  - 10 Rural Transportation Planning Regions

# Statewide Inventory of Transit Providers

Transportation providers in the state were inventoried and organized into three categories based on funding mechanisms and clientele served: public transit providers, human services transportation providers, and private for-profit transportation providers.

## Definitions

- **Public Transit Providers:** Services funded (at least in part) by public agencies and open to all members of the general public. Public transit is divided into the following categories:
  - **Interstate Public:** Open to the general public and connections one or more regions/TPRs to regions outside the state of Colorado. Interstate providers include Amtrak and Greyhound.
  - **Interregional Public:** Open to the general public and connects one region/TPR of the state to another region/TPR. Interregional providers include Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG), Bustang, and San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART).
  - **Regional Transit Service:** Open to the general public and connects communities and counties within a region/TPR. Regional transit providers include Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA), SETran, and Mountain Valley Transit.
  - **Local Transit:** Open to the general public and operates primarily within a city, town, or community. Local transit providers include Parachute Area Transit System, Lone Tree Link On Demand, and City of Cripple Creek Transit.
- **Human Services Transportation:** Services provided by a human services agency that is typically for a specific population, such as older adults, people with disabilities, and veterans.
- **Private For-Profit Transportation:** Services that are operated privately and can include taxis, resort transportation, ridehailing services (Uber, Lyft), etc.



Photo Credit: Mountain Metro





# Existing Intercity, Interregional, and Regional Transit

## Intercity Bus Services (Privately Operated)

Provider	Route	Stops	TPR/MPO Connections
Burlington Trailways	Denver to Indianapolis, IN	Denver, Brush	DRCOG, EA
Burlington Trailways	Denver to Omaha, NE	Denver, Brush	DRCOG, EA
Express Arrow	Denver to Omaha, NE	Denver, Brush	DRCOG, EA
Express Arrow	Denver to Buffalo, WY	Denver, Greeley	DRCOG, NFRMPO
Greyhound	Denver to Los Angeles, CA via Las Vegas, NV	Grand Junction, Glenwood Springs, Vail, Frisco, Idaho Springs, Denver	GVMPO, IM, DRCOG
Greyhound	Denver to Dallas, TX	Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Lamar	DRCOG, PPACG, PACOG, SE
Greyhound	Denver to Albuquerque, NM	Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Walsenburg, Trinidad	DRCOG, PPACG, PACOG, SC
Greyhound	Denver to Reno, NV via Salt Lake City, UT	Denver, Fort Collins	DRCOG, NFRMPO
Los Limousines	Greeley to El Paso, TX	Greeley, Gilcrest, Fort Lupton, Brighton, Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Walsenburg, Trinidad	NFRMPO, DRCOG, PPACG, PACOG, SC
Omnibus	Greeley to El Paso TX via Las Vegas, NM	Greeley, Longmont, Denver, Colorado Springs, Fountain Pueblo	NFRMPO, DRCOG, PPACG, PACOG
Omnibus	Denver to El Paso TX via Las Vegas, NM	Denver, Colorado Springs, Fountain Pueblo, Walsenburg, Trinidad	DRCOG, PPACG, PACOG, SC



# Interregional Bus Service

Interregional bus service provides transportation among TPRs, connecting cities, towns, and counties across Colorado.

## Bustang

[Bustang](#), which began operating in 2015, is CDOT’s interregional express bus service that connects urban areas across the state. Funded and managed by CDOT, Bustang is operated through a contract with a private transportation provider, Ace Express. The following table outlines each Bustang route, including the origin and destination for each, as of summer 2025.

Route	To/From
North Line	Denver to Fort Collins
West Line	Denver to Grand Junction
South Line	Denver to Colorado Springs
RamsRoute	Denver to Fort Collins (Colorado State University)
Bustang to Broncos	Fort Collins/Loveland to Mile High Stadium (Denver)
Bustang to Broncos	Colorado Springs/Monument to Mile High Stadium (Denver)
Pegasus	Denver to Avon
Snowstang - Arapahoe Basin	Denver to Arapahoe Basin Ski Area (Keystone)
Snowstang - Breckenridge	Denver to Breckenridge Ski Resort (Breckenridge)
Snowstang - Copper Mountain	Denver to Copper Mountain Ski Resort (Frisco)
Snowstang - Loveland Ski Area	Denver to Loveland Ski Area (Clear Creek County)
Bustang to Estes	Denver to Rocky Mountain National Park via Westminster, Broomfield, Superior, Boulder, and Lyons



## Bustang Outrider

In 2018, CDOT initiated an interregional lifeline transit service, [Bustang Outrider](#), to serve rural Colorado. Eight Bustang Outrider routes operate today to connect residents to major activity centers the provide access to goods and services. Between 2021 and 2024, Bustang Outrider added four new routes. CDOT will consider modifications or enhancements to services as funding changes or becomes available in coordination with the goals and vision spelled out in DTR’s Bustang Business Plan and Transit Connections Study.

Route	TPR/MPO Connections	Operator
Alamosa to Pueblo	SLV, CFR, PACOG	Pueblo Senior Resource Development Agency (SRDA)
Craig to Denver	NW, DRCOG	Ace Express
Crested Butte to Denver	GV, SLV, CFR, DRCOG	Alpine Express
Durango to Grand Junction	SW, GV, GVMPO	Southern Colorado Community Action Agency (SoCoCAA)
Lamar to Colorado Springs	SE, PACOG, PPACG	Pueblo SRDA
Sterling to Denver	EA, UFR, DRCOG	Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG)
Sterling to Greeley	EA, UFR, NFRMPO	NECALG
Trinidad to Pueblo	SC, PACOG	South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG)

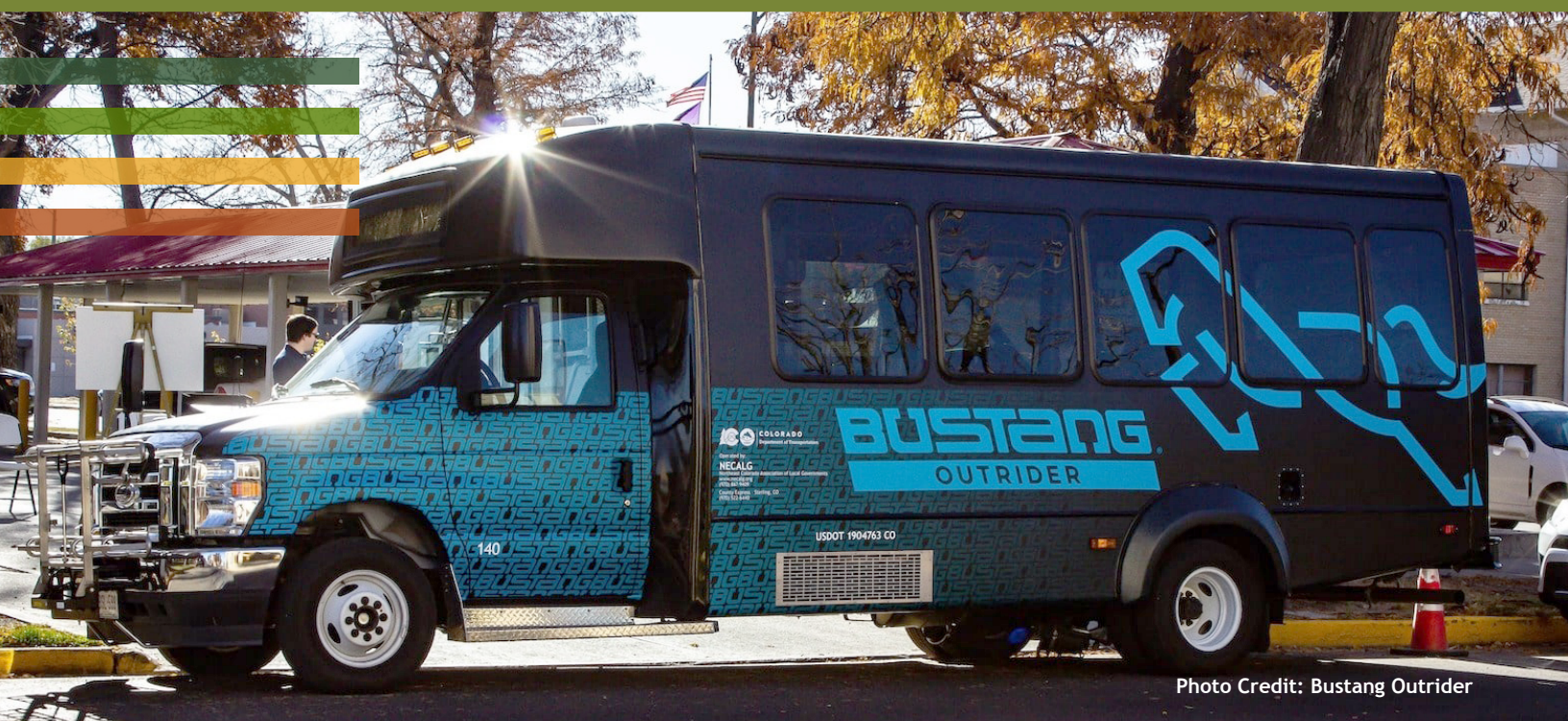


Photo Credit: Bustang Outrider

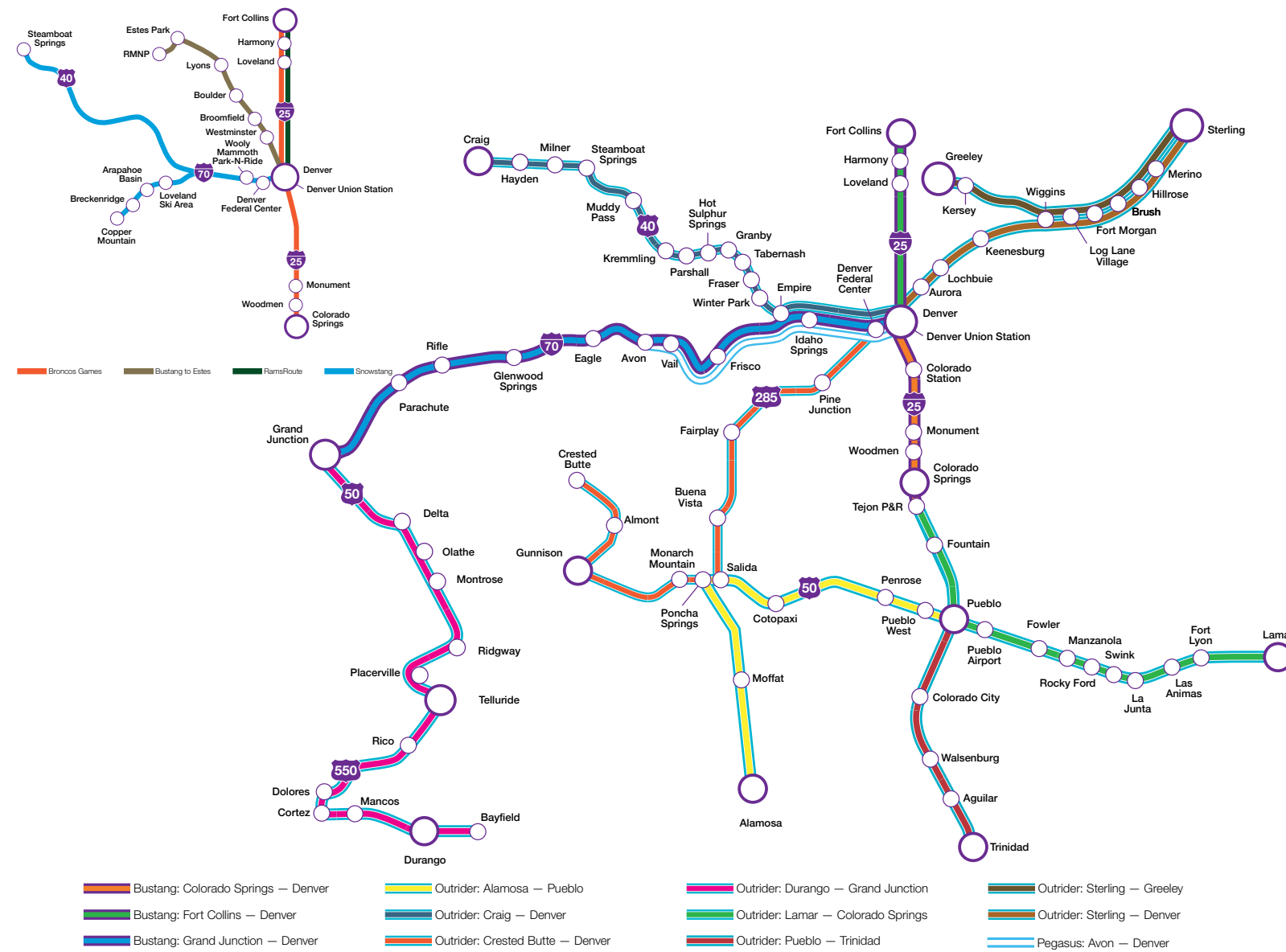


Photo Credit: Bustang

# Bustang and Bustang Outrider Routes and Stops

The following map shows Bustang West, North, South and Outrider routes, as well as Seasonal Services.

## Seasonal Services





## Bustang Ridership

Route	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Bustang - West	70,611	31,024	39,553	84,352	94,901	106,812
Bustang - North	102,342	28,129	26,269	48,652	59,965	72,395
Bustang - South	72,877	21,374	24,626	35,068	42,423	48,312
Bustang - DTC (Discontinued 2024)	5,332	1,531	261	1,676	1,486	190
Bustang - Pegasus	0	0	0	7,832	23,870	22,777
Snowstang (all routes)	610	2,318	267	4,534	8,048	8,254
Outrider (all routes)	27,240	11,299	23,497	31,667	42,919	44,438
Bustang - Special Services RamsRoute, Bustang to Estes and Bustang to Broncos	4,118	4,161	4,162	4,096	3,793	3,689
<b>Total</b>	<b>283,130</b>	<b>99,836</b>	<b>118,635</b>	<b>217,877</b>	<b>277,405</b>	<b>306,867</b>

350,000

300,000

250,000

200,000

150,000

100,000

50,000

0

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

2024

● Bustang West

● Bustang North

● Bustang South

● Bustang DTC (Discontinued 2024)

● Bustang Pegasus

● Snowstang

● Outrider

● Bustang Special Services

## Bustang Outrider Ridership

Route	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Alamosa - Pueblo	3,296	1,248	2,102	2,748	2,908	2,517
Lamar - Colorado Springs	2,414	1,561	1,896	3,116	3,797	3,922
Trinidad - Pueblo	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,088	1,371
Crested Butte - Denver	15,613	5,614	10,070	13,216	17,534	17,277
Durango - Grand Junction	5,917	2,876	4,063	4,155	4,548	4,871
Craig - Denver	N/A	N/A	5,243	7,150	11,430	12,495
Sterling - Denver	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	176	658
Telluride - Grand Junction (Discontinued 2025)	N/A	N/A	123	1,282	1,386	1,209
Sterling - Greeley	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	52	118
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,240</b>	<b>11,299</b>	<b>23,497</b>	<b>31,667</b>	<b>42,919</b>	<b>44,438</b>

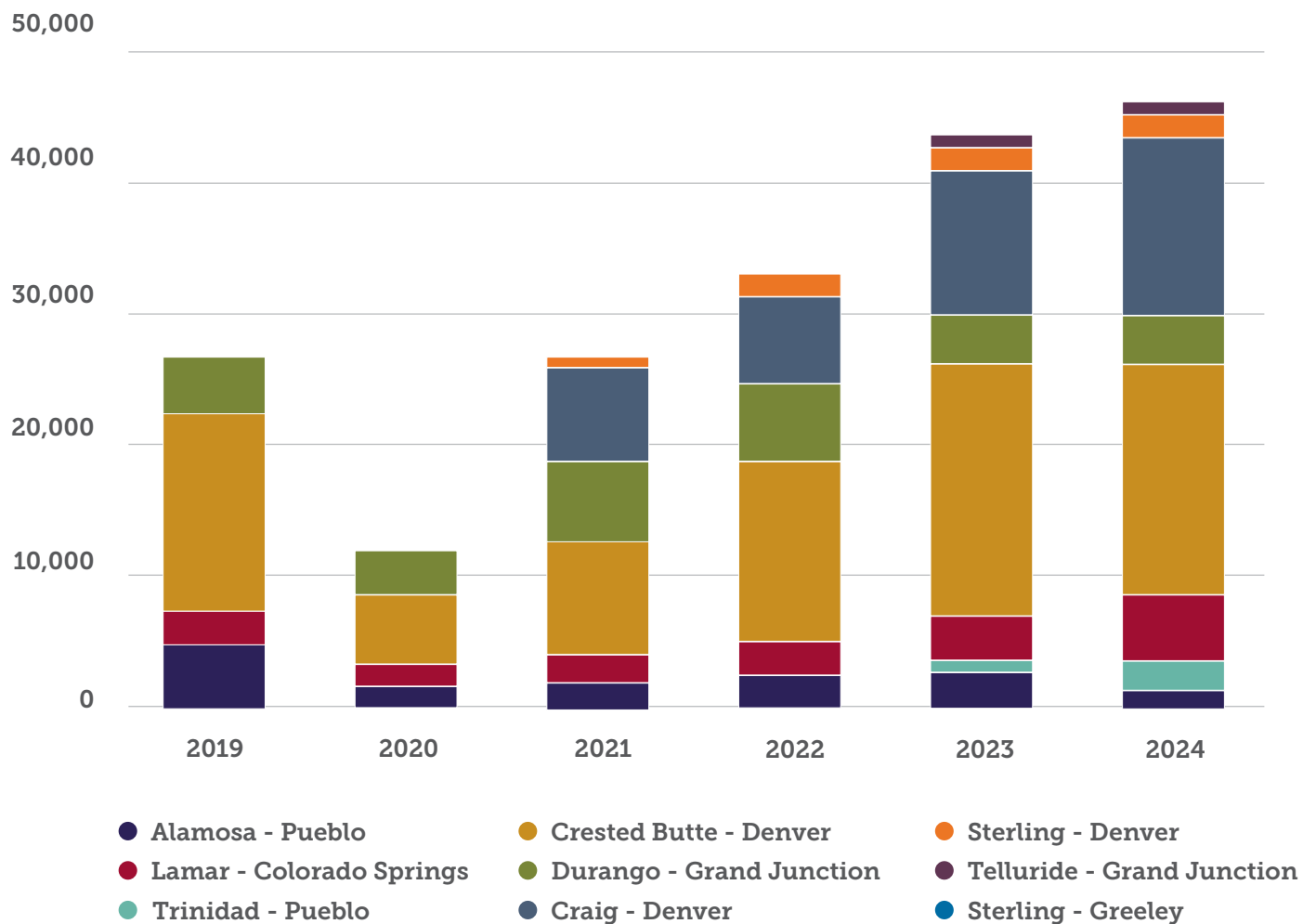






Photo Credit: Felsburg Holt & Ullevig

## Other Interregional Bus Service Providers

In addition to Bustang Outrider, several other transit providers offer interregional service connecting TPRs across the state. The following table identifies public transit agencies that operate interregional transit routes, including commuter buses, fixed-route buses, and demand response services. These interregional routes are essential as they provide mobility across the state, allowing community members to access housing, employment, and key destinations across Colorado. These transit agencies may also provide local, regional, or additional services.

Transit Agency	Routes	TPR/MPO Connections
All Points Transit	○ Delta/Montrose counties to Grand Junction	GV, GVMPO
Clear Creek County Transit	○ Idaho Springs to Evergreen	IM, DRCOG
Dolores County Senior Services	○ Dove Creek to Egnar (San Miguel County) ○ Dove Creek to Farmington, NM ○ Dove Creek to Monticello, UT ○ Dove Creek to Moab, UT	SW, GV
Envida Cares (Disability Services)	○ Teller and Park counties to Colorado Springs	PPACG, CFR
NECALG (County Express & Prairie Express)	○ County Express - Morgan, Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma counties	EA, UFR
San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART)	○ Telluride to Rico	GV, SW
South Central Council of Governments Transit (SCCOG Transit)	○ Las Animas County to Colorado Springs/Pueblo ○ Huerfano County to Colorado Springs/Pueblo	SC, PPACG, PACOG
Summit County (Summit Stage)	○ Park County Commuter - Breckenridge to Fairplay, Alma, and Blue River	IM, CFR
Teller County Senior Coalition	○ Teller County, eastern Park County, and western El Paso County	CFR, PPACG
Via Mobility Services	○ Denver metro area to Weld County, Estes Park, and Larimer County	DRCOG, NFRMPO, UFR



Photo Credit: SCCOG

## Regional Bus Service Providers

Regional bus service is defined as an express-type service, including BRT, that travels between cities or counties but stays in one TPR. The following table lists transit agencies provide regional routes. They may also provide interstate, interregional and/or local routes.

Transit Agency	Route	TPR/MPO Connections
All Points Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MOD Express - Montrose, Olathe, Delta</li> <li>OurWay - Montrose, Ridgway, Ouray</li> </ul>	GV
Dolores County Senior Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dove Creek to Cahone, Pleasant View, Cortez, and Durango</li> </ul>	SW
San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Montrose Route - Montrose, Ridgway, Down Valley, Placerville, Sawpit, Hillside, Telluride</li> <li>Norwood Route - Nucla, Naturita, Redvale, Norwood, Down Valley, Placerville, Sawpit, Hillside, Telluride</li> </ul>	GV
South Central Council of Governments Transit (SCCOG Transit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Las Animas/Huerfano County Route - Trinidad, Walsenburg</li> </ul>	SC
Lake County (operated by Summit Stage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lake County Commuter - Frisco to Leadville</li> </ul>	IM
Archuleta County (Mountain Express Transit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pagosa Springs to Arboles, Igancio, and Durango</li> </ul>	SW
City of Fort Collins (Transfort)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fort Collins to Longmont</li> <li>Fort Collins to Boulder</li> </ul>	NFRMPO
Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) (Way to Go)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vanpool and Schoolpool - Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson counties</li> </ul>	DRCOG



## Regional Bus Service Providers (continued)

Transit Agency	Routes	TPR/MPO Connections
East Central Council of Governments (Outback Express)	○ Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, and Lincoln counties	EA
Greeley Evans Transit	○ Poudre Express - Greeley, Windsor, Fort Collins	NFRMPO
Mesa County (Grand Valley Transit)	○ Route 4 - Grand Junction to Palisade ○ Route 8 - Grand Junction and Fruita	GVMPO
Montezuma County Public Transportation	○ Cortez to Mancos, Dolores, Dove Creek, and Durango	SW
Mountain Valley Transit	○ Antonito to Alamosa ○ Creede to Alamosa ○ Saguache to Alamosa ○ Salida to Alamosa	SLV
North Front Range MPO (VanGo)	○ Vanpool - Northern Colorado, Longmont, Boulder, Golden, and Denver metro area	NFRMPO
Regional Transportation District (RTD)	○ Flatiron Flyer (FF1, FF2, FF3, FF5) - Westminster, Broomfield, Superior, Louisville, Boulder, Denver ○ Boulder/Longmont (BOLT) - Boulder and Longmont ○ Longmont/Denver (LD1/LD3) - Longmont, Boulder, Erie, Lafayette, Louisville ○ Nederland/Eldora (NB1/NB2) - Boulder, Nederland, Eldora ○ Pine Junction/Conifer/Denver (CV) - Pine Junction, Conifer, Aspen Park, Morrison ○ Evergreen/Denver (EV/ES) - Evergreen, Bergen Park, Genesee ○ Golden/Boulder (GS) - Golden, Boulder ○ Parker/Denver (PD) - Parker, Centennial, Aurora ○ Brighton/Denver Express (RX) - Brighton, Commerce City ○ South Simms Express (116X) - Littleton, Lakewood ○ Wagon Road/Thornton Express (120X) - Thornton, Northglenn ○ Brighton/Denver Airport (145X) - Brighton, Commerce City ○ Wagon Road/Denver Airport Limited (104L) - Thornton, Northglenn ○ Buckley/Tower DIA Limited (169L) - Aurora ○ Boulder/Denver Airport (AB1/AB2) - Boulder, Broomfield, Westminster ○ Arapahoe County/Denver Airport (AT/ATA) - Aurora, Centennial	DRCOG

## Regional Bus Service Providers (continued)

Providers	Route	TPR/ MPO
Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ VelociRFTA - Glenwood Springs, Carbondale, El Jebel, Basalt, Aspen</li> <li>○ Local Valley - Glenwood Springs, Carbondale, El Jebel, Willits, Basalt, Snowmass, Woody Creek, Aspen</li> </ul>	IM
SETran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A Line - Las Animas, La Junta, Rocky Ford</li> <li>○ B Line - Fort Lyon, Hasty, Lamar, Las Animas, La Junta</li> <li>○ C Line - Las Animas, La Junta, Fort Lyon, Hasty, Lamar, Rocky Ford</li> </ul>	SE
Southern Colorado Community Action Agency (Road Runner Transit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ignacio to Bayfield and Durango</li> </ul>	SW
Steamboat Springs Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Regional Service - Craig, Hayden, Milner, Steamboat Springs</li> </ul>	NW
Via Mobility Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Serving Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Denver, and Jefferson Counties</li> </ul>	DRCOG
Via Mobility Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Serving Larimer (Estes Park) and Weld Counties</li> </ul>	UFR

## Local Transit Providers

Approximately 60 local transit providers across Colorado focus exclusively on offering service within a city, town, or community. These localized providers are critical, as they provide opportunities to access key destinations for shopping, employment, services, and recreation. The TPR Coordinated Public Transit & Human Services Transportation Plans and MPO transportation planning documents provide details about local transit providers across the state.

### Three future providers were identified as a part of this Statewide Plan:

- Highlands Ranch Microtransit (DRCOG) - flexible, on-demand transportation within Highlands Ranch and surrounding areas to improve local mobility.
- Town of Erie (Erie Flex Ride) (DRCOG) - demand-responsive transit option connecting residents to regional RTD services and local destinations within Erie.
- Town of Fairplay (Fairplay Transit) (CFR) - localized public transportation that connects Alma and Fairplay in Park County.



## Existing Passenger Rail Service

Rail service in Colorado includes intercity passenger rail, light rail, and commuter rail. Amtrak, the only intercity passenger rail service provider in Colorado, operates three passenger rail lines. Denver's RTD rail system continues to record positive ridership numbers, and rail line expansion is planned in the coming years.

### Amtrak (Intercity Passenger Rail)

In Fiscal Year 2024, Amtrak operated an average of four intercity trains per day in Colorado. Service was provided across two year-round routes and one seasonal route. In total, 228,589 passengers boarded or alighted from Amtrak trains within the state. Regular service was offered through the following routes:

- The [California Zephyr](#) is a daily train operating between Chicago, Illinois, and San Francisco, California. Stops in Colorado include Fort Morgan, Denver, Fraser, Granby, Glenwood Springs, and Grand Junction.
- The [Southwest Chief](#) is a daily train operating between Chicago, Illinois, and Los Angeles, California. Stops in Colorado include Lamar, La Junta, and Trinidad.
- The [Winter Park Express](#) is a seasonal train between Denver and Winter Park Ski Resort. Efforts are underway to expand Amtrak's Winter Park Express seasonal service from three to five days per week during the ski season, with additional access to Fraser.





## **Upcoming Passenger Rail**

### **Front Range Passenger Rail**

Established in 2021, the Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) District represents 13 counties along Colorado’s Front Range. Its primary goal is to secure funding and long-term support for passenger rail service between Pueblo and Fort Collins. A major focus is the development of a comprehensive Service Development Plan, which includes modernizing rail infrastructure, enhancing grade crossing safety, and implementing systems such as Positive Train Control and siding improvements. In addition, Amtrak, regional stakeholders, and the FRPR District completed a Thru-Car Service Study to evaluate the feasibility of extending the Southwest Chief line into southeastern Colorado. Other early-stage efforts across the Front Range continue to focus on identifying a preferred alignment for FRPR. These efforts also prioritize infrastructure modernization and safety improvements, which are foundational steps toward building an interconnected passenger rail system that is anticipated to be operational by 2029.

### **Mountain Rail**

With growing interest in Mountain Passenger Rail, CDOT’s rail team has initiated planning for a potential future line extending from Denver to Craig. As part of this effort, CDOT has collaborated with local partners along the existing rail corridor to identify appropriate station locations. The agency is currently completing a Service Development Plan to assess and compare service alternatives, which will ultimately lead to the selection of a single Recommended Alternative. This preferred option will undergo more detailed analysis, including plans for a phased implementation. The initial phase of service is anticipated to launch in late 2026, likely operating between existing stations from Denver to Granby.



# RTD Rail System

RTD's rail system provides daily commuter and light rail service to nearly 90 stations in the Denver metro area.

## RTD Passenger Rail Services Summary (2023)

### 4 Commuter Rail Lines

- Nearly 9 million trips
- 13% of all RTD ridership
- 6.4 million vehicle revenue miles
- Nearly 300,000 vehicle revenue hours
- 54 miles of track
- \$112 million in operational costs to run services in 2023

### 6 Light Rail Lines

- Nearly 13 million trips
- 20% of all RTD ridership
- 8.4 million vehicle revenue miles
- Nearly 500,000 vehicle revenue hours
- 60 miles of track
- \$161 million in operational costs to run services in 2023

## RTD System Optimization Plan (SOP) Rail Improvements and Service Modifications

The SOP is a comprehensive assessment of travel patterns, demographics, and transit routes within the RTD. Designed to address the region's near-term mobility needs, the SOP recommends strategic route modifications that reflect current workforce capacity and financial limitations. The SOP includes the following recommendations:

#### Future Goals for Light Rail

- All W Line weekday trains will be extended to Jefferson County Government Center, resulting in 15-minute frequencies along the full line
- Improve the D, E, and H lines to 10-minute peak and midday frequencies
- Improve R Line frequencies to 15-minute frequencies and extend service to RidgeGate Parkway

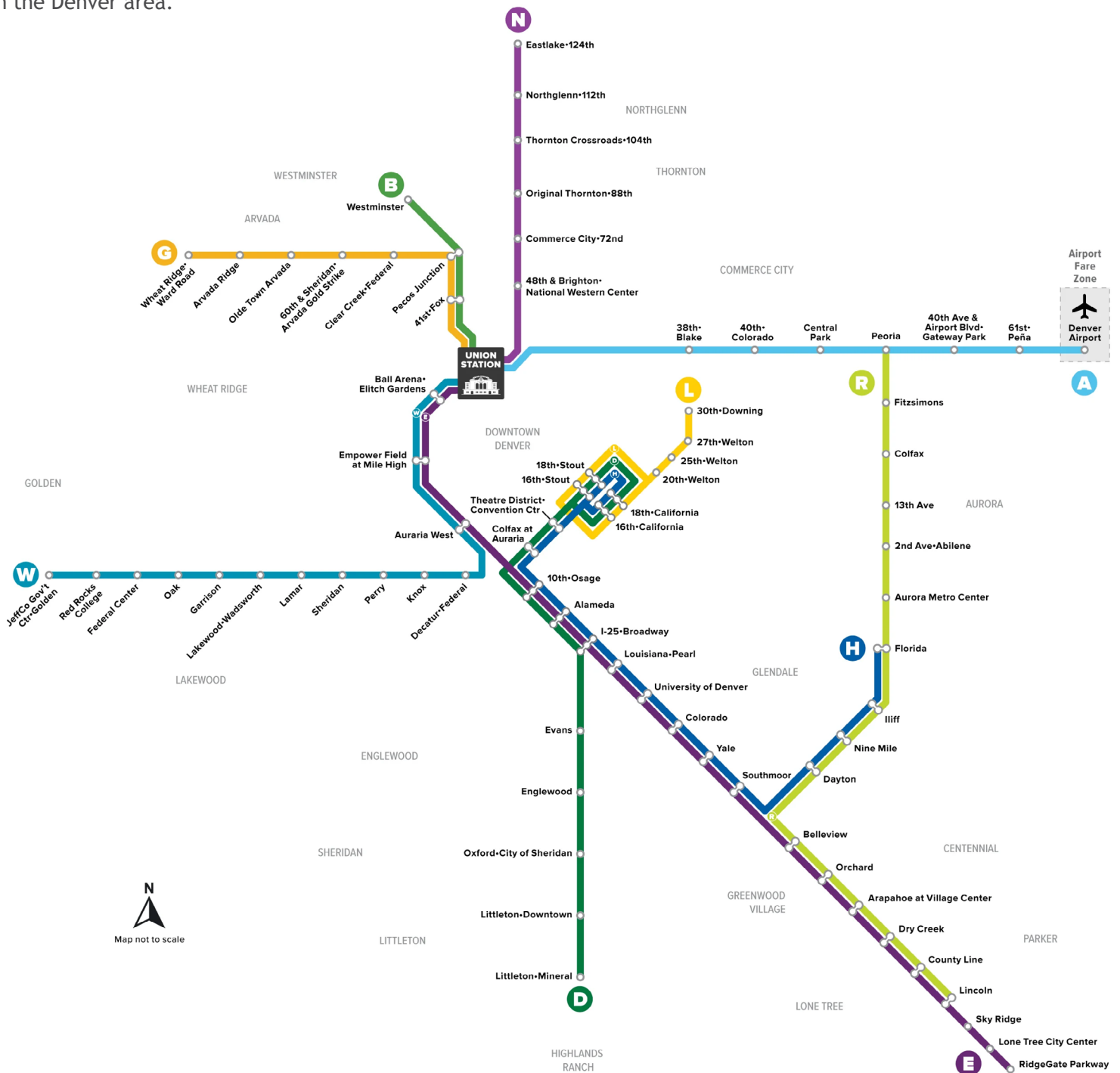
#### Commuter Rail

- G Line: Increased to 15-minute frequency (peak and midday)
- N Line: Frequencies remain at 30-minutes all-day
- B Line: Improved to 30-minute peak, 60-minute midday

Photo Credit: RTD Flickr

# RTD Rail System Map

The RTD Rail System Map shows the Denver metropolitan area’s light and commuter rail network, operated by RTD. The map features multiple color-coded lines, each labeled with a letter corresponding to its route: A (Airport), B (Westminster), D (Littleton-Mineral), E (RidgeGate Parkway), G (Wheat Ridge), H (Florida), L (30th-Downing), N (Eastlake-124th), R (Lincoln), and W (JeffCo-Golden). All lines converge at Union Station in downtown Denver, the central hub of the network. The map also highlights major destinations such as Denver International Airport (served by the A Line), the Town of Golden, Littleton, Aurora, Lone Tree, and Westminster. Stations are marked with circles along each line, and interconnections with other lines or key areas (such as the Convention Center, hospitals, or stadiums) are noted. Fare zones, including standard and airport fare zones, are indicated, and a legend at the bottom provides fare pricing and line designations. The map emphasizes connectivity across urban, suburban, and regional destinations in the Denver area.





# Rural Transportation Planning Region Summary



**47**

rural providers;  
3 additional transit  
providers operate  
in both rural and  
urban areas



**110+**

human services  
providers offer,  
fund, or support  
transportation  
services in rural  
communities



**50+**

private for-profit  
transportation  
providers



**15%**

of statewide  
ridership is made  
up of transit  
ridership in rural  
TPRs

Colorado is home to the most robust rural transit systems in the US. Colorado rural transit serves the greatest number of annual riders, and is home to the largest rural operator as well as the only rural BRT system in the nation.



# Rural Transportation Services and Providers

Public transit, human services transportation providers, and for-profit providers operate a wide variety of service types in rural areas of the state. Many of the human services transportation providers also offer their clients bus passes, vouchers, and reimbursements. The following map illustrates the types of transit service available in each TPR. The accompanying table provides details on transit service types, human services transportation, and private transportation options within each TPR.

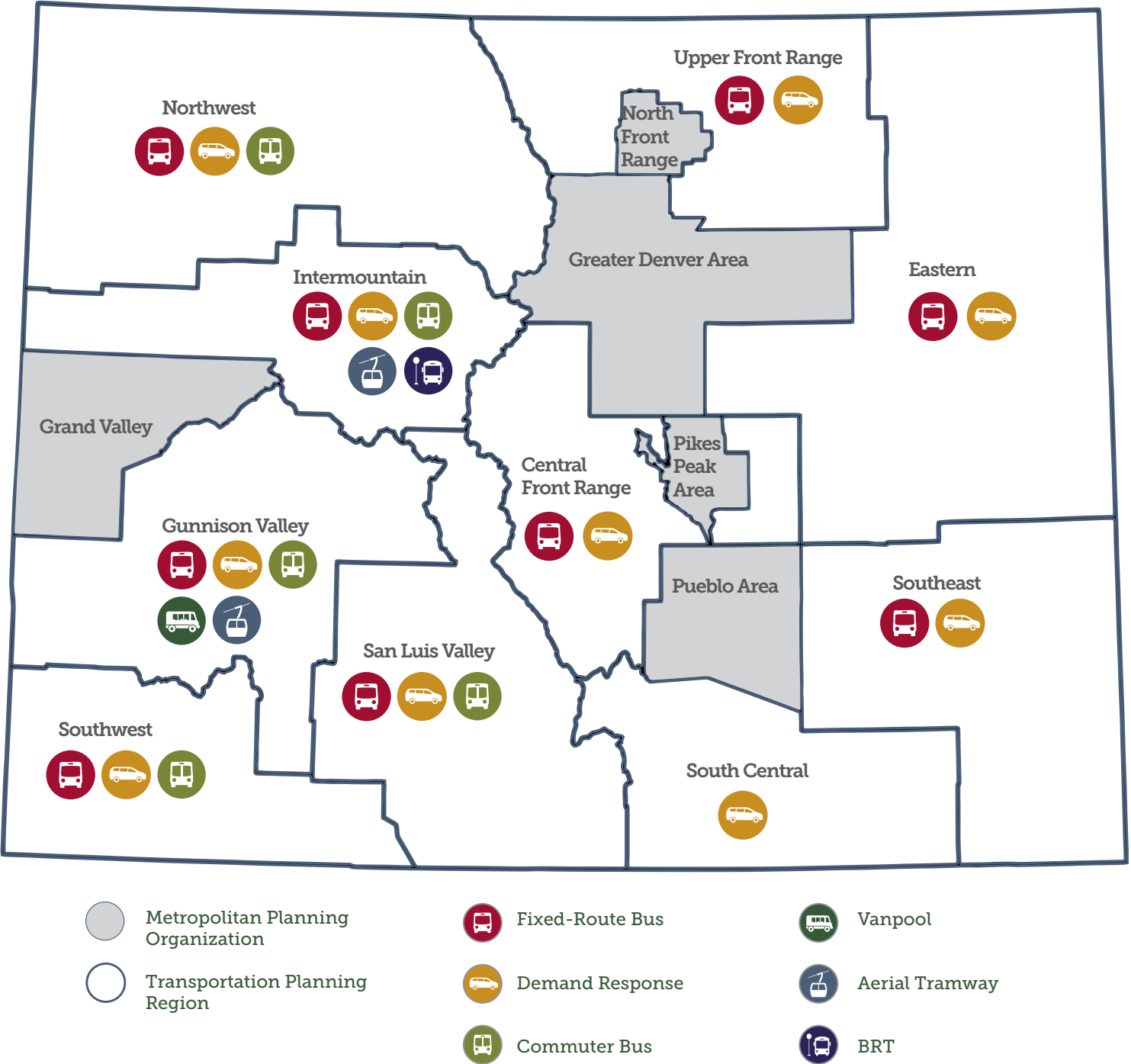






Photo Credit: SMART

## Rural Transportation Services and Providers

TPR	Transit Services	Human Services	Private Transportation
CFR	Demand response, fixed-route bus	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, bus passes or tickets, and coordination with other providers	Charter/tour bus, taxi, ridehailing, and private medical transportation
EA	Demand response, fixed-route bus	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, and coordination/contract with other providers	Charter/tour bus, airport shuttle, ridehailing, private medical transportation, and other private transportation
GV	Demand response, fixed-route bus, commuter bus, aerial tramway, vanpool	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, and coordination/contract with other providers	Charter/tour bus, taxi, resort transportation, airport shuttle, ridehailing, private medical transportation, and other private transportation
IM	Demand response, fixed-route bus, commuter bus, aerial tramway, BRT	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, coordination/contract with other providers	Charter/tour bus, taxi, resort transportation, airport shuttle, ridehailing, private medical transportation, and other private transportation
NW	Demand response, fixed-route bus, commuter bus	Demand response, demand response (medical), specialized services and vouchers or reimbursement	Charter/tour bus, taxi, resort transportation, airport shuttle, private medical transportation, and ridehailing



Photo Credit: Mountain Valley Transit

## Rural Transportation Services and Providers

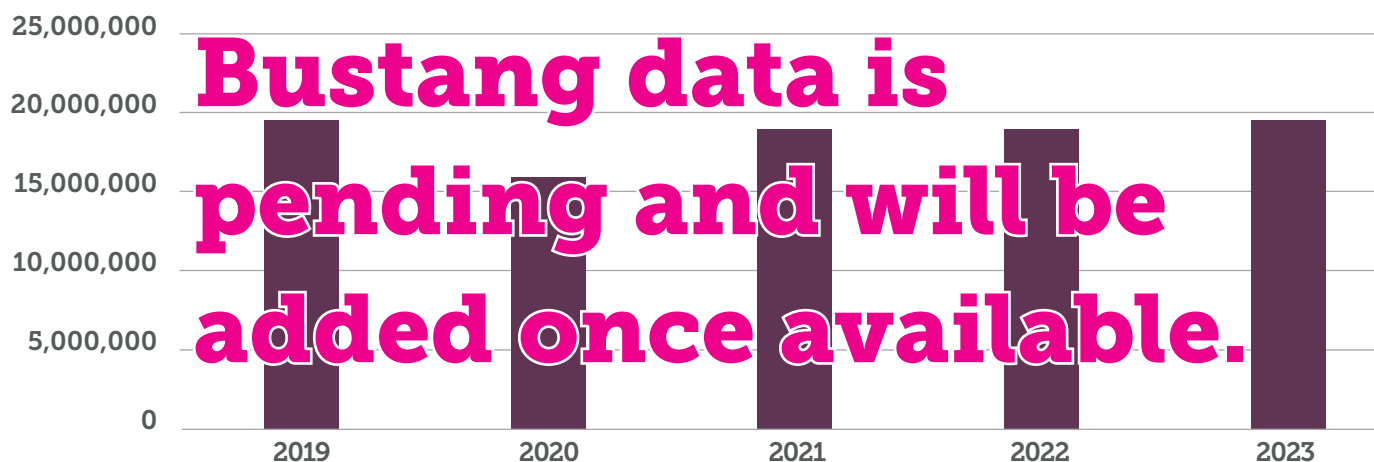
TPR	Transit Services	Human Services	Private Transportation
SC	Demand response	Demand response, demand response (medical), Specialized Services, and vouchers or reimbursement	Taxi, private medical transportation, and ridehailing
SE	Demand response, fixed-route bus	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, and bus passes or tickets	Taxi, private medical transportation, and ridehailing
SLV	Demand response, fixed-route bus, commuter bus	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, bus passes or tickets and coordination/contract with other providers	Taxi, airport shuttle, private medical transportation, and ridehailing
SW	Demand response, fixed-route bus, commuter bus	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, bus passes or tickets and coordination with other providers	Charter/tour bus, taxi, resort transportation, airport shuttle, private medical transportation, and ridehailing
UFR	Demand response, fixed-route bus	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, bus passes or tickets, and coordination/contract with other providers	Taxi, private medical transportation, and ridehailing



## Five-Year Historic Operating Data of Rural TPR Public Transit

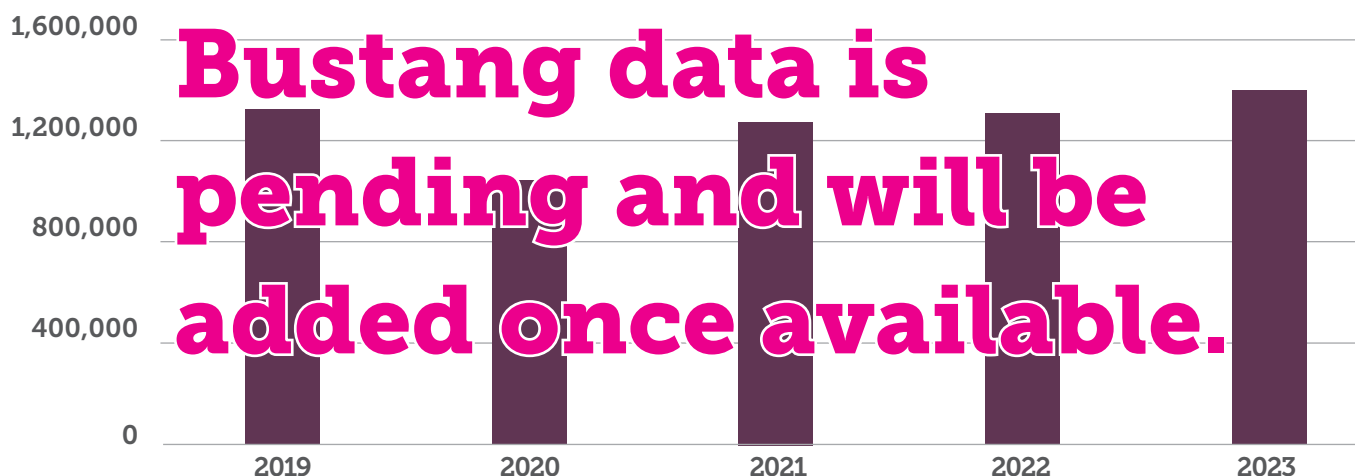
Five-year historic trends for key transit operating metrics (ridership, revenue miles, and revenue hours) are shown below. In 2019, rural transit providers (excluding Bustang Outrider) logged approximately 19.9 million vehicle miles. However, this total declined sharply to about 16.1 million miles in 2020, reflecting the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. From 2021 onward, there has been a steady recovery in rural transit providers' revenue miles, operating 18.8 million miles in 2021, 19.0 million miles in 2022, and nearly 19.8 million miles in 2023. While there was a 1 percent decline in revenue miles between 2019 and 2023, there has been a 23 percent increase since the sharp drop in 2020, indicating a strong rebound and gradual restoration of transit service over the five-year period.

### Vehicle Revenue Miles - All Modes (Rural Transit Providers Only)



In 2019, rural transit providers operated approximately 1.29 million revenue hours, but this dropped to around 1.04 million hours in 2020, reflecting the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. A recovery followed, with 1.24 million hours in 2021, 1.28 million hours in 2022, and a return to above pre-pandemic levels in 2023 at nearly 1.30 million hours. The data represents a 25 percent increase in revenue hours since the low point in 2020, and a slight 1 percent increase compared to 2019, indicating not only a recovery but modest growth in revenue hours over the five-year period.

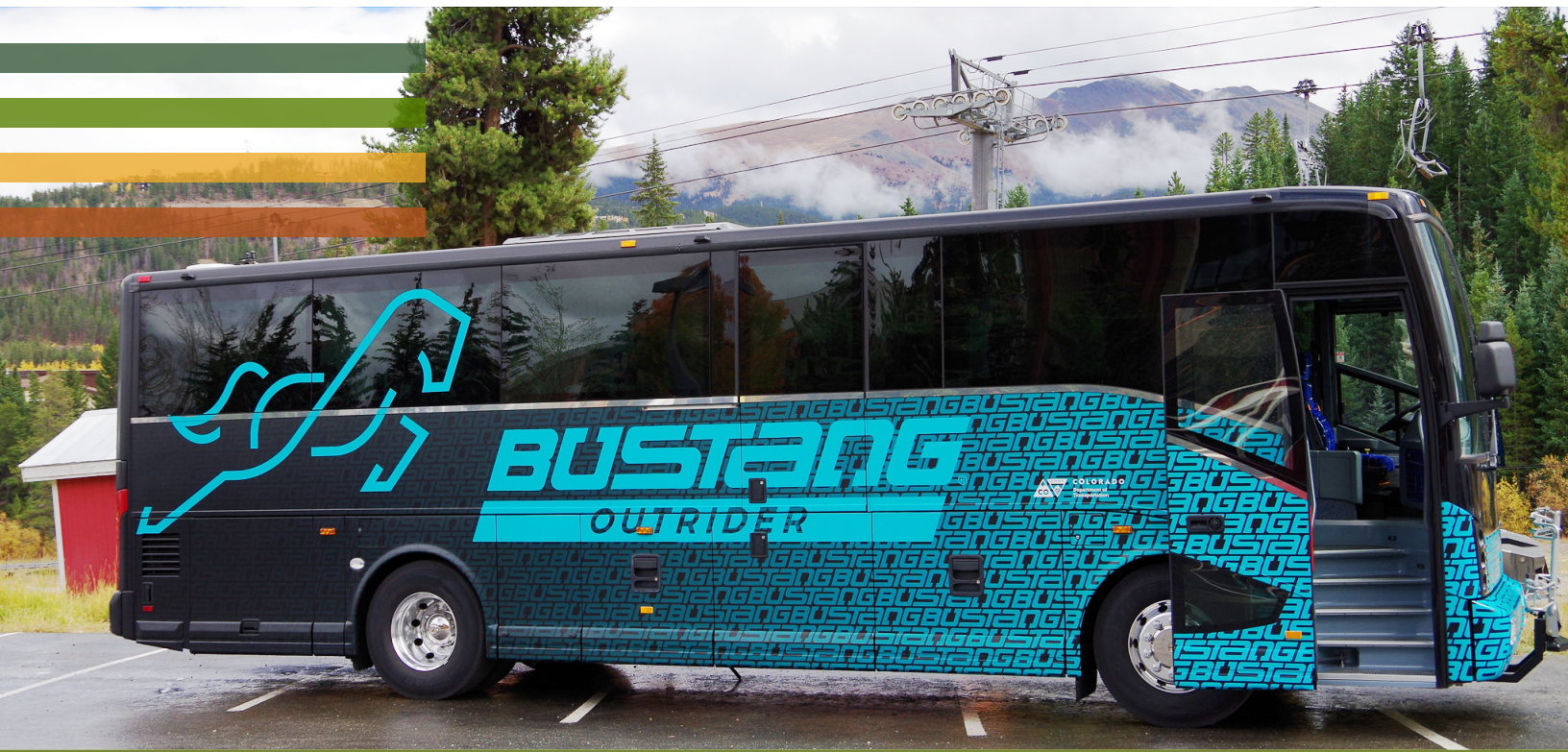
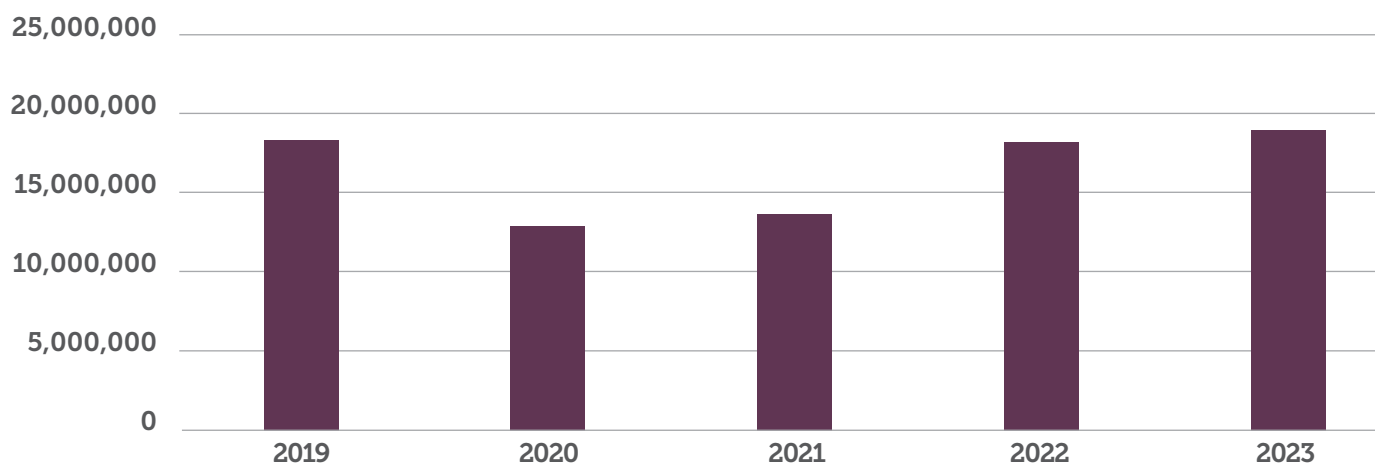
### Vehicle Revenue Hours - All Modes (Rural Transit Providers Only)



In 2019, rural provider transit ridership was approximately 17.9 million passengers, which dropped significantly in 2020 to around 12.3 million. Since then, ridership has steadily increased, reaching 13.1 million in 2021, 17.1 million in 2022, and surpassing pre-pandemic levels with 19.1 million in 2023. The data represents a 6 percent increase in transit ridership from 2019 to 2023 and a 55 percent increase since the lowest ridership numbers in 2020.

Bustang Outrider ridership followed a similar trend, starting at 27,240 riders in 2019, dropping to 11,299 in 2020, and rising each year to reach 42,919 in 2023. Bustang Outrider ridership has nearly doubled since the pandemic, likely due to the introduction of new routes and expanded services. The data highlights a strong recovery in public transit usage and growing demand for regional intercity transit options.

## Total Ridership and Outrider Ridership





# Urban Area Transit Summary



**28**  
urban  
providers



**90+**  
human services  
providers offer,  
fund, or support  
transportation  
services in urban  
communities



**140+**  
urban private for-  
profit transportation  
providers



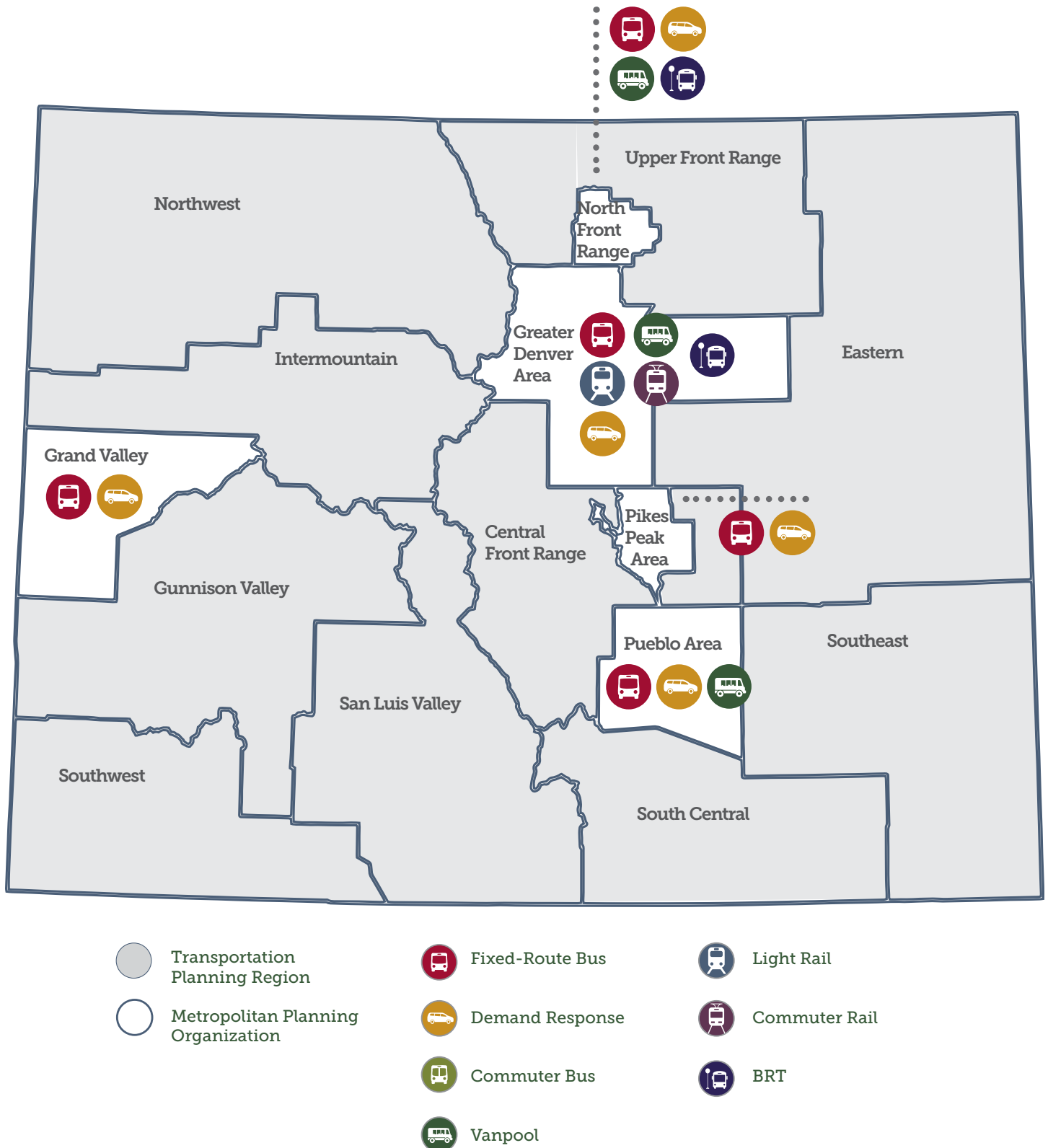
**85%**  
of ridership is  
made up of transit  
ridership in urban  
MPOs



Photo Credit: Grand Valley Transit

# Urban Area Transportation Services and Providers

The following map illustrates the types of transit service available in each MPO. The accompanying tables provides details on transit service types, human services transportation, and private transportation options within each MPO.







## Urban Area Transportation Services and Providers

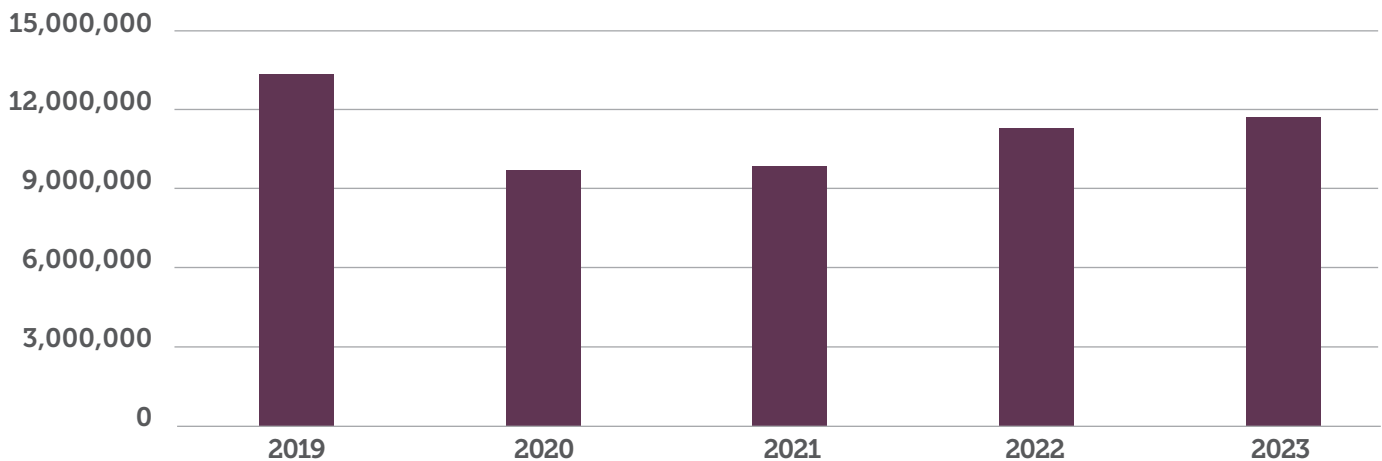
MPO	Transit Services	Human Services	Private Transportation
DRCOG	Demand response, fixed-route bus, commuter rail, light rail, BRT, vanpool	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, and bus passes or tickets, contract/coordination with other providers	Charter/tour bus, taxi, resort transportation, airport shuttle, ridehailing, private medical transportation, and limo
GVMPO	Demand response, fixed-route bus	Demand response, demand response (medical), specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, and contract/coordination with other providers	Charter/tour bus, taxi, resort transportation, airport shuttle, ridehailing, private medical transportation, and limo
NFRMPO	Demand response, fixed-route bus, BRT, vanpool	Demand response, demand response (medical), specialized services, bus passes or tickets, contract/coordination with other providers	Charter/tour bus, taxi, resort transportation, airport shuttle, ridehailing, private medical transportation, and limo
PACOG	Demand response, fixed-route bus	Demand response, demand response (medical), specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, bus passes or tickets, coordination with other providers	Charter/tour bus, taxi, resort/recreational transportation, airport shuttle, ridehailing, private medical transportation, and limo
PPACG	Demand response, fixed-route bus, vanpool	Demand response, demand response (medical), fixed-route bus, specialized services, vouchers or reimbursement, and bus passes or tickets, contract/coordination with other providers	Charter/tour bus, taxi, resort transportation, airport shuttle, ridehailing, private medical transportation, and limo

## Five-Year Historic Operating Data for Urban Public Transit

Five-year historic trends for key transit operating metrics (ridership, revenue service miles, and revenue service hours) are shown for public transit services in Colorado's five urban areas. Data excludes Bustang Outrider routes, but includes other specialized Bustang services such as RamsRoute, Bustang to Estes, Bustang to Broncos, Snowstang, and Pegasus. Trends are shown separately for RTD and non-RTD providers to present a clearer picture of statewide urban transit performance. Since 89 percent of urban transit ridership occurs on RTD services, this distinction helps highlight patterns beyond the Denver metro area.

In 2019, non-RTD services reported approximately 13.16 million vehicle revenue miles. A significant decline followed in 2020, with the total falling to 9.47 million, reflecting service reductions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Modest recovery began in 2021 with 9.63 million miles, followed by steady increases in 2022 and 2023; 11.06 million and 11.73 million miles, respectively. While 2023 figures have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, the data shows a 24 percent increase in vehicle revenue miles since the 2020 low point, indicating ongoing recovery and expansion of non-RTD transit services across urban areas of the state.

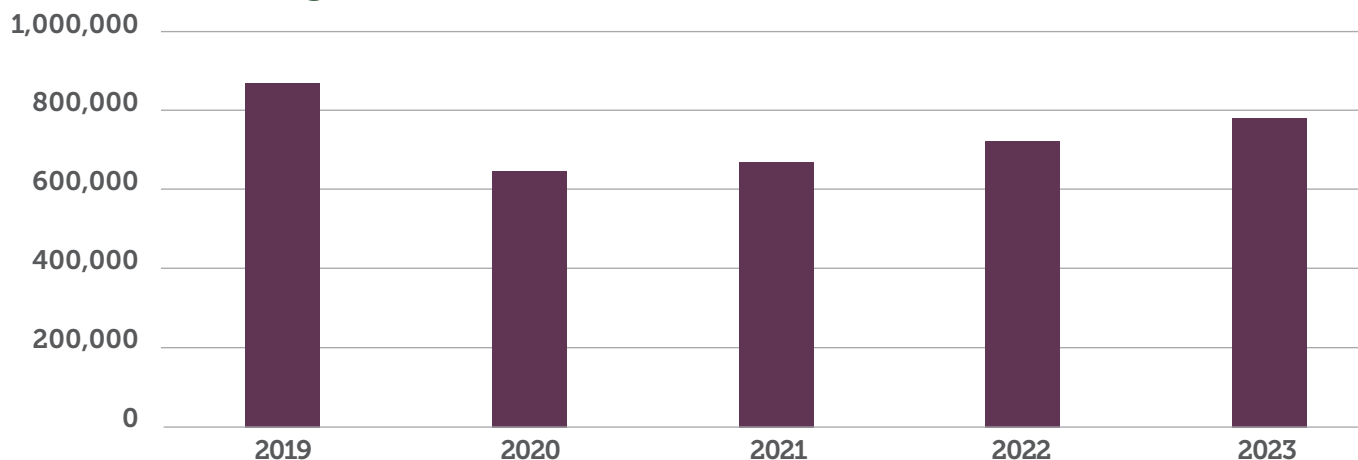
### Urban Area Vehicle Revenue Miles - All Modes (not including RTD)





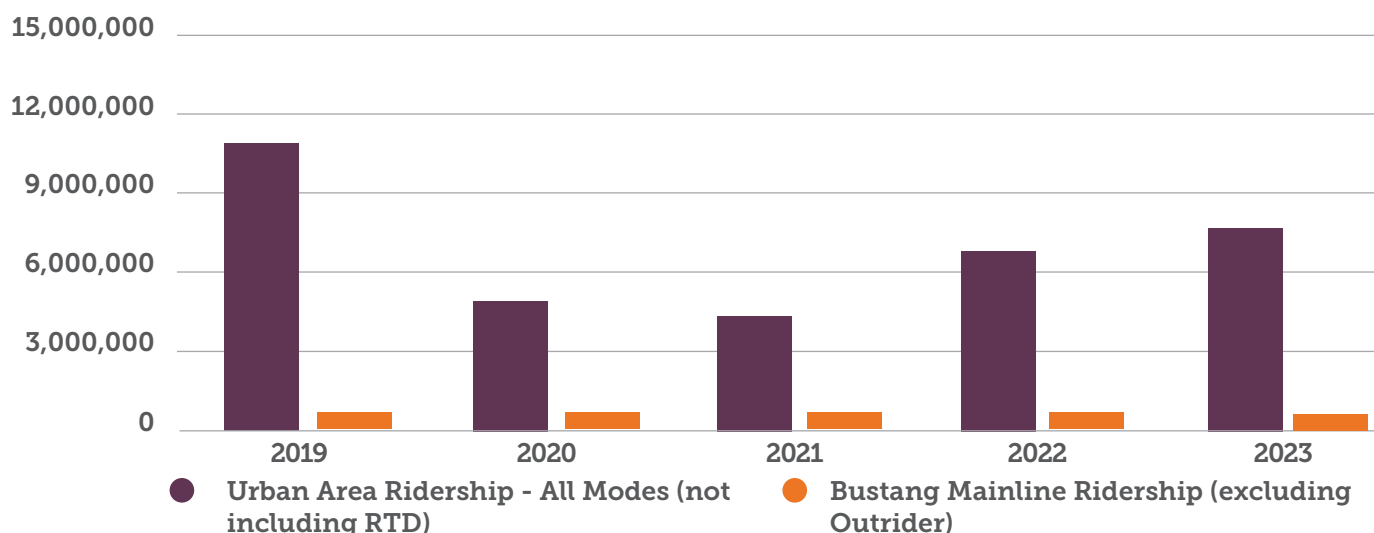
In 2019, non-RTD services operated approximately 817,434 revenue hours. That number declined significantly in 2020 to around 642,391 hours, reflecting service cutbacks during the COVID-19 pandemic. Modest gains followed in 2021 with 658,963 hours, and recovery continued in 2022 and 2023, reaching 725,865 and 774,266 revenue hours, respectively. While the 2023 total still falls slightly below 2019 levels, it represents a 21 percent increase since the pandemic low in 2020, highlighting a steady and ongoing rebound in service hours among urban area transit agencies (not including RTD).

## Urban Area Vehicle Revenue Hours - All Modes (not including RTD)



Non-RTD transit services in the urban areas saw more than 11.1 million riders in 2019, but ridership dropped sharply to 5.5 million in 2020. Ridership remained relatively flat in 2021 at 5.1 million before climbing to 6.3 million in 2022 and reaching 7.66 million in 2023. Data reflects a 31 percent decrease in ridership compared to 2019, but a 40 percent increase since the pandemic low in 2020, showing promising recovery in transit use across the state. In contrast, Bustang mainline ridership (excluding Outrider) declined from 255,890 riders in 2019 to 216,324 in 2023, marking a drop of over 15 percent. Despite statewide transit recovery, data suggests that Bustang's core services may still be facing post-pandemic ridership challenges, possibly due to shifting travel patterns or changes in service availability.

## Urban Area Annual Ridership - All Modes (not including RTD)





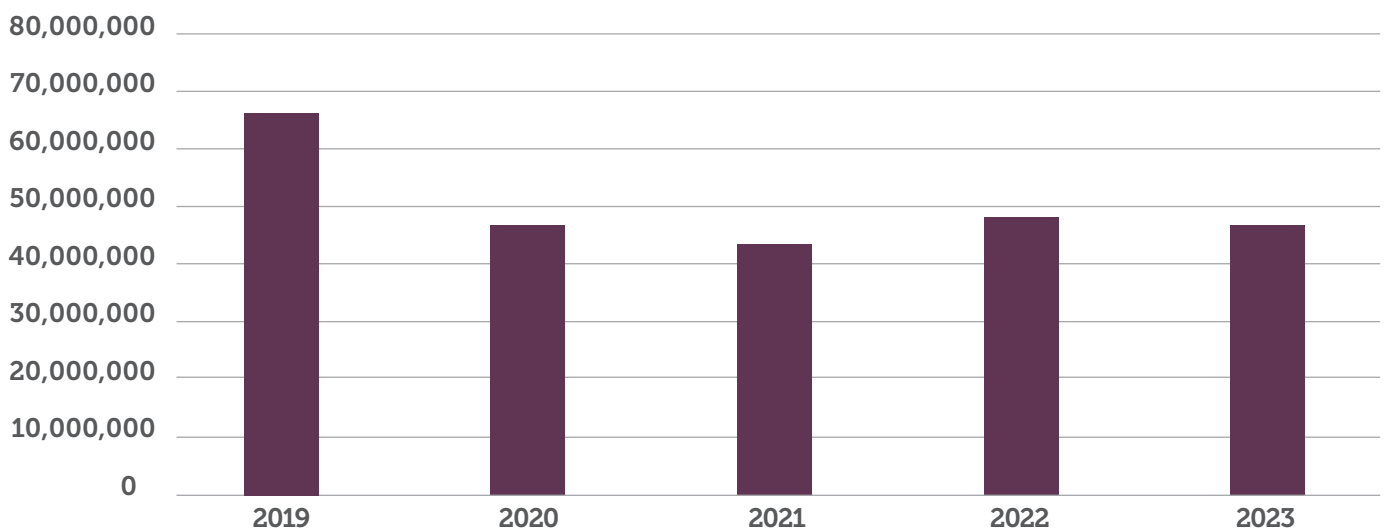
## Five-Year Historic Operating Data for RTD Transit Service

Five-year historical trend for key transit operating metrics (ridership, revenue service miles, and revenue service hours) for RTD services in the Greater Denver Area is shown below. RTD provides public transportation across eight counties, including all of Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, and Jefferson counties; portions of Adams, Arapahoe, and Douglas counties; and a small section of Weld County. Its service area spans more than 2,300 square miles and includes a range of services such as bus, rail, shuttles, ADA paratransit, demand response (e.g., FlexRide), and special event service.

Like many large urban transit systems across the country, RTD experienced a substantial decline in ridership due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with ridership down nearly 40 percent in 2023 compared to 2019 levels. Although ridership has shown signs of recovery, both vehicle revenue miles and hours remain below pre-pandemic levels and have not yet fully rebounded.

RTD services reached approximately 66.98 million revenue miles in 2019. However, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led to a sharp decline, with mileage dropping to 48.14 million, a reduction of nearly 28 percent. In 2021, vehicle revenue miles decreased slightly again to 46.45 million, before increasing modestly in 2022 to 49.66 million. By 2023, the total stood at 48.20 million, still well below pre-pandemic levels. Despite some recovery, RTD's vehicle revenue miles have remained relatively flat over the last three years and have not returned to 2019 levels, reflecting persistent service reductions or shifts in operational priorities post-pandemic.

### Vehicle Revenue Miles - RTD

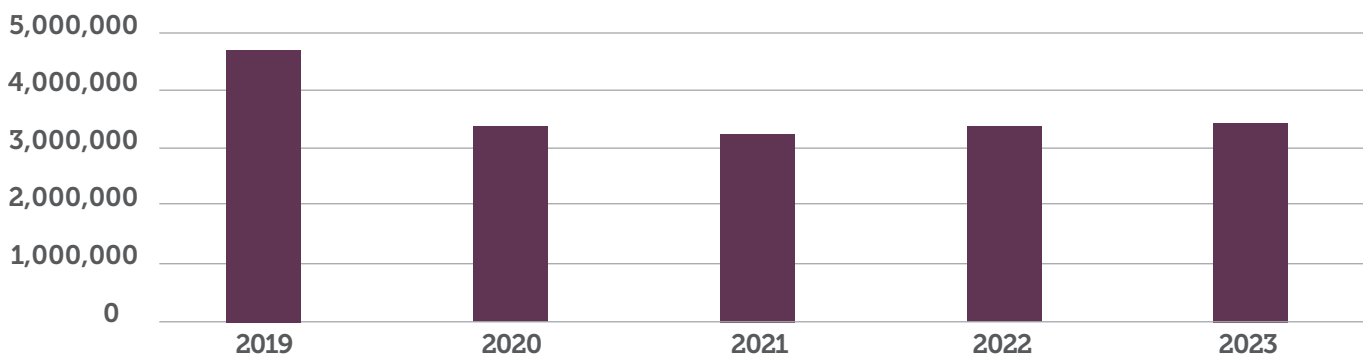






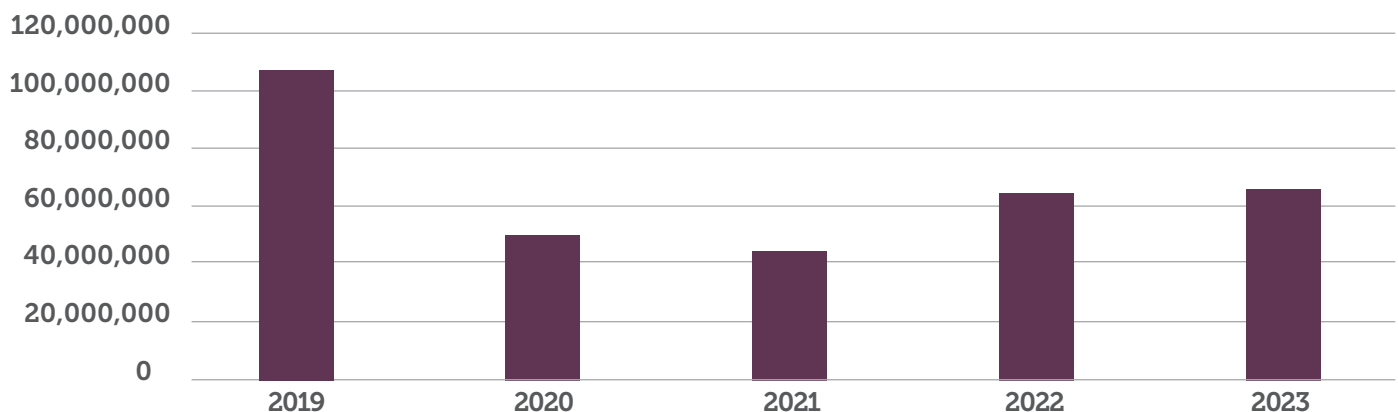
RTD operated approximately 4.52 million revenue hours in 2019, but service levels dropped sharply in 2020 to around 3.37 million hours. The decline continued slightly into 2021, reaching a low of 3.08 million hours. While there was a modest recovery in 2022 and 2023, with 3.33 million and 3.35 million hours, respectively, vehicle revenue hours have remained significantly below 2019 levels. Overall, the data reflects a sustained reduction in service hours across RTD operations, with only limited recovery in the years following the pandemic.

## Vehicle Revenue Hours - RTD



Ridership reached a high of more than 105 million trips in 2019. However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led to a steep decline, with ridership dropping to approximately 52.3 million—a nearly 50 percent reduction. Ridership continued to fall in 2021, reaching its lowest point in this five-year span at 48.8 million. A recovery began in 2022, with ridership increasing to 61.3 million, followed by a further rise to 64.5 million in 2023. Despite this rebound, ridership has remained nearly 39 percent below 2019 levels. The data reflects the significant impact of the pandemic on public transit use, as well as the gradual, ongoing recovery across RTD’s services.

## Annual Ridership - RTD



# Statewide Public Transit Overview

The table on the following page summarizes key 2023 transit provider operating metrics for both the urban and rural planning regions. Data includes all 47 urban, rural, and tribal providers that report to NTD. Additionally, the data includes five providers who changed, augmented, or provided additional data (Fremont County Transit, Mountain Valley Transit, SETran, Kiowa County Transit, and Town of Avon), as well as 24 providers that do not report to NTD, including:

- Basalt Connect
- Bent County (Golden Age Transportation Services)
- Carbondale Downtowner
- City and County of Denver (Denver Connector)
- City of Aspen
- City of Boulder Transit
- City of Broomfield (Broomfield Easy Ride)
- City of Englewood (Englewood Trolley)
- City of Fountain (Fountain Municipal Transit)
- City of Golden (Ore Cart Shuttle)
- City of Lafayette (Ride Free Lafayette)
- City of Lakewood (Lakewood Rides Transportation)

- City of Longmont (Ride Longmont)
- Eldo Shuttle
- Gold Hill Climb (operated by Via Mobility Services)
- Granby Connect
- Rocky Mountain National Park Hiker Shuttle
- Lone Tree Link On Demand
- Parachute Area Transit System
- SETran
- Town of Berthoud (Berthoud Area Transportation Services)
- Town of Leadville (Lake County)
- Town of Lyons (Lyons Flyer)
- Town of Nederland (Hessie Shuttle)

Providers may not have reported to NTD because they started services after 2023 (last year of data reported, such as Parachute Area Transit System), are funded by local or state funds rather than federal dollars (such as Granby Connect), or are operated by a partner that would provide data to NTD (such as the Gold Hill Climb, which is operated by Via Mobility).

Photo Credit: City of Boulder



Provider	# of Providers	Annual Ridership	Annual Operating Cost	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours
Bustang	1	216,324	XXXXX	XXXXX	XXXXX
Bustang Outrider	61	42,919	XXXXX	XXXXX	XXXXX
CFR	52	37,620	1,281,107	317,054	30,090
DRCOG	19	64,966,007	869,025,464	50,154,001	3,454,666
EA	43	107,479	1,890,648	600,517	36,168
GV	7 <sup>□</sup>	4,479,626	16,586,535	5,950,235	466,312
GVMPO	1	580,263	4,417,972	939,980	62,490
IM	12 <sup>□</sup>	12,028,007	99,877,704	8,299,204	567,542
NFRMPO	4 <sup>□</sup>	2,891,857	23,770,658	2,912,662	194,304
NW	3	1623340	8194017	1,052,600	75,177
PACOG	2	658811	6586629	1,248,669	75,963
PPACG	5	3097969	30605412	4,678,479	337,371
SC	1	15,017	522,296	105,535	6,304
SE	6	67,363	1,289,715	367,807	19,345
SLV	1	16,225	747,170	8,307	196,694
SW	7 <sup>□</sup>	463,917	5,816,983	1,055,154	54,535
UFR	3	99,472	548,532	70,992	5,652
Total Transit <sup>8</sup>	78	91,132,973	1,071,160,842	77,761,196	5,582,613
Total Statewide <sup>9</sup>	85	91,392,216	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX

1 Includes Ace Express, Alpine Express, NECALG, Pueblo SRDA, SCCOG, and SoCoCAA.

2 Teller County Senior operates in both PPACG and CFR. Numbers for Teller County Senior are included in CFR. Summit Stage operates the Park County Commuter in CFR. Numbers for Summit Stage are included in IM.

3 NECALG operates in both EA and UFR. Numbers for NECALG are included in EA.

□ SMART operates in both GV and SW. Numbers for SMART are included in GV.

□ Clear Creek County Transit operates in both DRCOG and IM. Numbers for Clear Creek County are included in IM.

□ Envida Cares (Disability Services) operates in both CFR and PPACG. Numbers for Envida Cares are included in PPACG.

□ Dolores County Senior Services operates in both SW and GV. Numbers for Dolores County Senior Services are included in SW.

<sup>8</sup> Does not include Bustang Services.



Photo Credit: RTD Flickr

# State of Good Repair Data

CDOT's comprehensive Group Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan meets federal requirements and was last updated in February 2023. The Plan identifies the condition of assets funded with state or federal funds to guide optimal prioritization of investments to keep transit systems in Colorado in a state of good repair. In 2023, 34 percent of CDOT-tracked transit vehicles in the state were beyond their state of good repair. Agencies that are larger, in urban areas, and/or meet the FTA's requirements for a Tier 1 agency, are not apart of CDOT's TAM Plan; therefore, the following data may not fully match the contents of the TAM Plan. Urban area providers that were not apart of the TAM Plan include RTD, City of Colorado Springs (MMT), City of Fort Collins (Transfort), Greeley Evans Transit, and Mesa County (Grand Valley Transit). Additionally, this data does not reflect smaller providers (including some rural providers) that operate with local funds only, and therefore, do not report to CDOT or NTD. In total, the state of good repair backlog totals nearly \$140 million. When combined with Tier 1 providers and their readily available data, the statewide total cost of backlog is over \$180 million.

Planning Region	Total Revenue Vehicles	Beyond SGR	% Beyond SGR	Cost of Backlog
CFR	27	6	22.22%	\$633,753
DRCOG	1736	91	5.24%	\$47,620,075
EA	95	56	58.95%	\$6,370,721
GV	145	52	35.86%	\$4,520,137
GVMPO*	19	3	13.80%	\$904,099
IM	311	76	24.44%	\$72,030,203
NFRMPO*	103	15	14.67%	\$5,791,746
NW	57	27	47.37%	\$27,282,974
PACOG	47	13	27.66%	\$6,607,506
PPACG*	180	29	16.15%	\$7,620,282
SC	17	10	58.82%	\$1,168,255
SE	18	6	33.33%	\$1,391,251
SLV	10	3	30.00%	\$410,502
SW	38	9	23.68	\$781,753
UFR	3	1	33.33%	\$171,251
<b>Total - Statewide**</b>	<b>2,806</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>14.14%</b>	<b>\$183,304,508</b>

\*Asset management data not readily available for vehicles for City of Colorado Springs (MMT), City of Fort Collins (Transfort), Greeley Evans Transit, or Mesa County (Grand Valley Transit). Total revenue vehicle data was downloaded from NTD 2023. Backlog estimate was based on the national backlog average of 13.80% (USDOT). Backlog was calculated based on the average cost of four vehicle types (cutaway, transit bus, ADA van, and non-ADA van) multiplied by the number of vehicles beyond state of good repair.

\*\* Includes data from both CDOT 2023 TAM Plan and readily available data online for Tier 1 providers



## Revenue Vehicles Summary (2023)

- **2,806** total revenue vehicles
- **11.3** average vehicle expected life cycle
- **88%** of vehicles needing replacement within 10 years
- **\$345,000** average vehicle replacement cost
- **34%** vehicles beyond state of good repair tracked in the TAM Plan
- **\$39,791,589** cost of backlog for vehicles tracked in the TAM Plan



Photo Credit: RFTA



# Coordination in Rural Transportation Planning Regions

## Local and Regional Coordinating Councils

### Central Front Range

The Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments previously served as the regional coordinating council through 2020. Today, Cripple Creek Transit, Teller Senior Coalition, and Teller County jointly function as the local coordinating council. A mobility manager was designated in 2017 to support coordination.

### Eastern

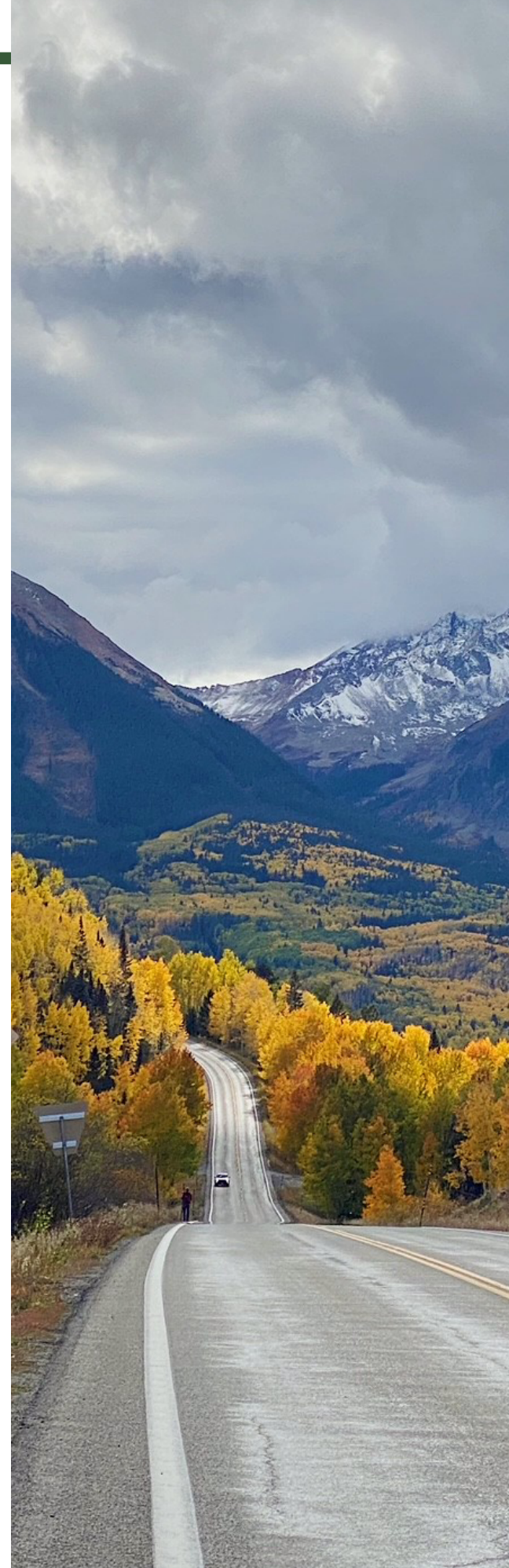
In the EA TPR, East Central Council of Governments and NECALG coordinate transportation services and act as the AAAs for their respective areas. NECALG's AAA facilitates coordination among County Express, Prairie Express, medical providers, educational institutions, employers, and county human services departments.

### Gunnison Valley

The Three Rivers Regional Transit Coordination Council managed coordination in the Gunnison Valley (GV) TPR until 2019. Region 10 and All Points Transit now lead coordination efforts, with All Points Transit also providing mobility management.

### Intermountain

The Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) serves as the Regional Transportation Coordinating Council (RTCC) for both the Northwest (NW) and IM TPRs. NWCCOG works with jurisdictions and transit providers to promote regional collaboration and reduce service duplication. While no formal local coordinating councils exist, the IM TPR functions as the local coordination body for capital projects. RFTA coordinates funding and services with smaller providers, and Pitkin County's elected officials coordinate improvements with Snowmass and Aspen. RFTA's First Last Mile Mobility FLMM program enhances coordination across Garfield, Eagle, and Pitkin Counties.







## **Northwest**

The NWCCOG serves as the RTCC for both the IM and NW TPRs. NWCCOG collaborates with several key partners, including Vintage (formerly Alpine AAA), Routt County Council on Aging, Older Americans Transportation Service, Jackson County Council on Aging, and Grand Seniors/Mountain Family Center. Additionally, the Winter Park Transit Advisory Committee coordinates transit services between Winter Park and Fraser. The cities of Steamboat Springs, Craig, Granby, and Winter Park also work with CDOT DTR on planning for future mountain passenger rail service. NWCCOG staff currently serve as the mobility manager for the NW TPR.

## **San Luis Valley**

The San Luis Valley Development Resource Group previously led regional transit coordination but now plays a more limited role. In its place, the chair of Mountain Valley Transit has taken on a mobility coordination function. Mountain Valley Transit also works with the “Navigators” program, which connects community members to representatives from key human service and medical agencies to support access and mobility.

## **South Central**

SCCOG serves as the sole transit provider and coordinator within the South Central TPR. It works in partnership with various regional entities, including the South Central Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Bustang, Las Animas County Rehabilitation Center, Southern Colorado Developmental Disabilities Services, Mt. San Rafael Hospital, and others. Currently, no designated mobility manager has been identified for the SC TPR.

## **Southeast**

The Southeast Colorado Enterprise Development, Inc. leads regional coordination through SETran, which organizes regular meetings and coordinates among transit providers, veterans’ transportation services, the Lower Arkansas Valley AAA, Southeast Developmental Services, and others. SETran also provides mobility management staffing.

## **Southwest**

The Southwest Colorado Regional Transit Coordinating Council, facilitated by the Region 9 Economic Development District, coordinates transit efforts across the five counties in the SW TPR. SoCoCAA supports regional coordination by distributing bus passes and linking transportation with human services and community resources. Region 9 currently lacks a dedicated mobility manager. In the interim, a Region 9 project manager is performing mobility coordination duties.

## **Upper Front Range**

Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA) identifies NECALG and Ride NoCo as the two primary coordinating councils in the UFR TPR. Ride NoCo partners with Weld County on transit communication, while the NFRMPO supports rural transit in Larimer County. Previously independent councils in Weld and Larimer Counties have largely been integrated into NFRMPO’s Mobility Program, working with the Larimer and Weld County Mobility Committees.



## Statewide Support for Coordination

All 10 TPRs emphasize interagency coordination as essential to improving transit access, especially for older adults, people with disabilities, and those in rural areas. Transit plans across the State uniformly frame coordination as a key strategy to expand service, avoid duplication, and improve rider experience. Regions such as the SLV, EA, and SE TPRs specifically call out the need to collaborate among local, county, and nonprofit providers to strengthen service delivery. In tourism-heavy and rapidly growing regions, such as the IM, NW, and GV TPRs, coordination is also viewed as a way to balance seasonal surges and limited resources.

## Connectivity Priorities

Multiple TPRs highlight priority corridors for regional and interregional connectivity that require cross-jurisdictional collaboration. CFR and transit partners noted a need for improved transit along US-24 between Colorado Springs and rural mountain towns. UFR providers noted that coordination is needed with the Cheyenne MPO to improve service from northern Colorado into Wyoming. The SLV and GV TPRs both identified the need for stronger ties to Bustang and Outrider routes. IM providers and the RTCC (via NWCCOG) emphasize strengthening relationships across the IM TPR and I-70 corridor to enhance local mobility and minimize duplication of service. Finally, both SE and SW TPRs noted that because their regions are so large, communication and partnership between agencies across their respective regions is vital in ensuring community members can reach their destinations. These priorities underscore the critical need for planning frameworks that go beyond county or regional boundaries.

## Current Limitations

Despite widespread support for coordination, many regions face structural and operational limitations that constrain progress. Most rural TPRs lack dedicated funding or staff capacity to lead and sustain coordination efforts beyond the planning phase. Where mobility managers exist, they are often funded through short-term grants or split across multiple responsibilities, limiting their ability to convene partners or implement integrated services. Additionally, the absence of formalized, statewide mechanisms to support joint service planning across TPR boundaries results in missed opportunities for route alignment, cost-sharing, and pooled procurement.



A scenic view of a bridge spanning a deep canyon with a waterfall. The bridge is a multi-lane concrete structure with a metal railing, crossing a deep, rocky gorge. A waterfall cascades down the left side of the gorge. The surrounding landscape is rugged, with steep, rocky cliffs and patches of green vegetation. In the background, a forest of evergreen trees covers the upper slopes of the canyon. The sky is overcast, and the overall atmosphere is serene and majestic.

# Statewide Transit Focus Areas

Transit in Colorado, both now and into the future, must serve a diverse range of users, including residents, employees, tourists, and vulnerable populations. While maintaining and expanding existing transit services remains a top priority for CDOT, it is equally critical to anticipate and plan for emerging technologies, shifting demographics, and evolving mobility needs. As travel behaviors change and communities grow, forward-thinking investments and strategic planning are essential to ensure a resilient and inclusive transportation system.

This Plan outlines several focus areas that reflect the dynamic nature of transportation in Colorado and CDOT's commitment to innovation and equity. Focus areas include continued investment in the Bustang Family of Services, long-term planning for FRPR and Mountain Passenger Rail, and the development of Mobility Hubs that enhance regional connectivity. Additional priorities include the advancement of the Clean Transit Enterprise (CTE), fleet electrification, connected vehicle (CV) infrastructure, and COTransit. CDOT is also addressing broader issues through initiatives such as the Transit Connections Study. Together, these efforts represent critical components of a modern, adaptive transit network that will help Colorado meet the mobility needs of all community members, today and well into the future.



# Bustang and Bustang Outrider

CDOT is committed to delivering accessible and reliable intercity bus service through Bustang and its family of services, including Outrider, Snowstang, Pegasus, Bustang to Estes, RamsRoute, and Bustang to Broncos. In 2023, a revised Service Plan proposed phased improvements to Bustang's North, South, and West lines to better connect rural and urban areas and expand access to key destinations. Stakeholder input and data-driven analysis shaped the Service Plan, although no changes have been proposed for Outrider or other supplemental services at this time.

## Network Expansion and Enhanced Mobility Goals

Building on the 2019 Bustang Outrider Expansion Plan, CDOT has already addressed many of the previously identified service gaps. CDOT has since launched new routes between Trinidad-Pueblo, Sterling-Greeley, Sterling-Denver, Telluride-Grand Junction, and Craig-Denver. Additional proposed routes include Montrose-Gunnison, Craig-Frisco, and Durango-Pagosa Springs. Beyond regional connections, CDOT continues to offer seasonal and event-based transit options such as Snowstang (to ski areas), Pegasus (I-70 corridor microtransit), Bustang to Broncos (Fort Collins to Empower Field at Mile High), Bustang to Estes, and RamsRoute (Denver-Fort Collins).

Looking ahead, CDOT is working toward a long-term goal of providing hourly service every day on the I-25 and I-70 corridors. Providing this type of service would dramatically improve frequency and connectivity among major urban areas such as Denver, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Pueblo, and Grand Junction, while also serving the mobility needs of residents in mountain and rural communities traveling to urban centers—and vice versa.



**Bustang, CDOT's interregional bus service, provided over 2.2 million revenue service miles in fiscal year 2023.**





# Strategic Focus Areas

**Connectivity:** CDOT aims to better connect regions across the state through increased frequency, making intercity travel more convenient and efficient.

**Service Expansion:** As the transit service network grows, more Coloradans will gain access to intercity transit. Expansion efforts also include the gradual integration of passenger amenities such as bus shelters, enhanced stops, and first-/last-mile infrastructure.

**Capital and Infrastructure Improvements:** CDOT is advancing the following strategic capital investments across the transit network:

- Bus storage and maintenance facilities
- New or expanded mobility hubs and park-n-rides
- Transit stations and operations centers
- BRT infrastructure
- Improved passenger facilities, such as shelters and signage

Together, these investments will strengthen Colorado's intercity and regional bus network, lay the groundwork for future integration with passenger rail, and support the state's broader goals for sustainable, equitable, and multimodal transportation.

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## Phase 1 – Bustang Service Changes

- Bustang's Phase 1 Service Plan prioritized a major expansion of routes and service frequency, with a focus on enhancing interregional connectivity along the I-70 and I-25 corridors.

## Phase 2 – Bustang Service Changes

- I-25 North Line: 2 round trips weekends, 8 round trips weekdays
- I-25 South Line: 2 round trips weekends, 8 round trips weekdays
- I-70 West Line: 3 round trips between Grand Junction-Denver, 2 round trips between Glenwood Springs-Denver

## Phase 3 – Bustang Service Changes

- I-25 North Line: 4 round trips weekend, 10 round trips weekday
- I-25 South Line: 4 round trips weekend, 10 round trips weekday
- I-70 West Line: 9 to 10 round trips between Grand Junction-Denver



Photo Credit:  
Bustang



# Planning for Front Range Passenger Rail

Colorado continues to advance efforts to bring FRPR service to communities between Fort Collins and Pueblo, with the potential future extensions to Wyoming and New Mexico. Ongoing efforts continue to be led by the FRPR District, which oversees the planning, funding, and implementation of rail along the Front Range. In early 2024, the FRPR District submitted a Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP) application to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), seeking federal support to develop a detailed service plan for the corridor. The FRA approved the corridor for entry into the CIDP in April 2024, allowing the District to access funding and technical assistance to complete service development planning. Since then, the FRPR District has focused on assessing alternatives and engaging the public and stakeholders.

## Alternatives Analysis

To identify the most successful route for implementation, the [March 2025 Alternatives Analysis Report](#) analyzed five preliminary alternatives. Alternatives varied by speed (79 miles per hour [mph] or 90 mph) and frequency (6, 10, or 12 daily round trips), but all followed the same general route from Fort Collins to Pueblo. The analysis concluded that Alternative 3, offering 10 round trips per day at 79 mph, would strike the best balance among cost, ridership, feasibility, and scalability. Alternative 3 emerged as the most promising option for moving into the planning and design phases. Key operational considerations showed that increasing frequency, more than increasing speed, is the strongest driver of ridership, and that the northern section of the corridor between Denver and Fort Collins has the highest projected demand.





From a financial perspective, increasing service frequency naturally raises capital and operating costs, but it also yields a more substantial rise in ridership and revenue. Alternatives that included 12 round trips or 90 mph operations would offer only marginal travel time or ridership improvements, but would incur significantly higher costs and more complex infrastructure requirements. These insights, combined with strong interest from local, regional, and federal stakeholders, affirmed that 10 daily round trips at 79 mph would be a pragmatic yet forward-looking service level to pursue for future FRPR.

## Engagement

To ensure community and stakeholder voices were incorporated into the evaluation process, an Alternatives Analysis Online Open House was held between May and June 2025. This public engagement period provided opportunities for community members, local leaders, and partner agencies to review and comment on the proposed alternatives. Feedback gathered during this phase further informed the selection of the preferred alternative and will shape future components of the Service Development Plan, including station area planning, capital phasing, and refined cost projections.

Ultimately, FRPR represents a transformative investment in multimodal mobility for Colorado's Front Range, addressing pressing needs related to congestion, equity, environmental sustainability, and long-term economic vitality. The selected alternative offers a solid foundation for advancing toward implementation while remaining responsive to future growth, evolving travel patterns, and community aspiration.

## Next Steps

These current efforts, focused on identifying a preferred alternative, while also emphasizing infrastructure modernization and safety enhancements, are key foundational steps toward launching an interconnected passenger rail system by 2029.



Photo Credit: RTD Flickr



# Clean Transit Enterprise

To advance public transit and clean transportation across Colorado, the state has taken significant legislative action over the past few years. A major outcome of this effort was the creation of the CTE in 2021, established through Senate Bill 260 (SB-260). Funded by the Retail Delivery Fee, the CTE supports zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) transition efforts by providing financial assistance for electrification planning, fleet vehicle replacements, facility upgrades, and installation of charging and fueling infrastructure. To date, the CTE has awarded more than \$15.5 million in competitive grants to local transit agencies across the state.

A nine-member board governs CTE to ensure transparent and equitable implementation of funding programs. The CTE also supports the state's broader climate goals, including the Governor's objective of deploying 1,000 electric transit vehicles statewide by 2030 and 100 percent fleet transition by 2050. All CTE-funded initiatives align with the broader push for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction and an increased transportation mode shift. Building on the foundation laid by the CTE, Senate Bill 230 (SB-230), passed in 2024, establishes an Oil & Gas Production Fee. This Oil & Gas Production Fee creates a significant new revenue stream for transit and rail investment. SB-230 legislation introduces three new funding programs:

- 1. Local Transit Operations Formula Grant**
- 2. Local Transit Competitive Grant Program**
- 3. Rail Funding Program**

SB-230 also allocates 70 percent (approximately \$80 million) of available funds to competitive grants that prioritize GHG reduction and transportation mode shift. An additional 10 percent (roughly \$12 million) is reserved for discretionary funding, which may support Rural Transportation Authorities or innovative multimodal center initiatives. The remaining portion of funding is directed to passenger rail development. The new funding programs are expected to be implemented beginning January 2026, with the first Notice of Funding Availability anticipated in summer 2025.

It is important to note that SB-230 funding is intended to support a wide range of efforts to provide increased transit services and may include both zero-emission and traditional transit vehicle approaches. There is also a strong interest in ensuring projects align with broader statewide planning efforts, such as the 10-Year Plan or Regional Transit Plans.





# Mobility Hubs

Colorado's growing population, rising GHG emissions, and evolving transportation challenges underscore the need for expanded mobility options. As demand increases along corridors like I-25 and I-70, mobility hubs offer a key solution—connecting transit, biking, walking, ride-sharing, and micro-mobility in one place. Mobility hubs enhance connectivity, reduce dependence on single-occupancy vehicles, and improve access to flexible, sustainable travel choices.

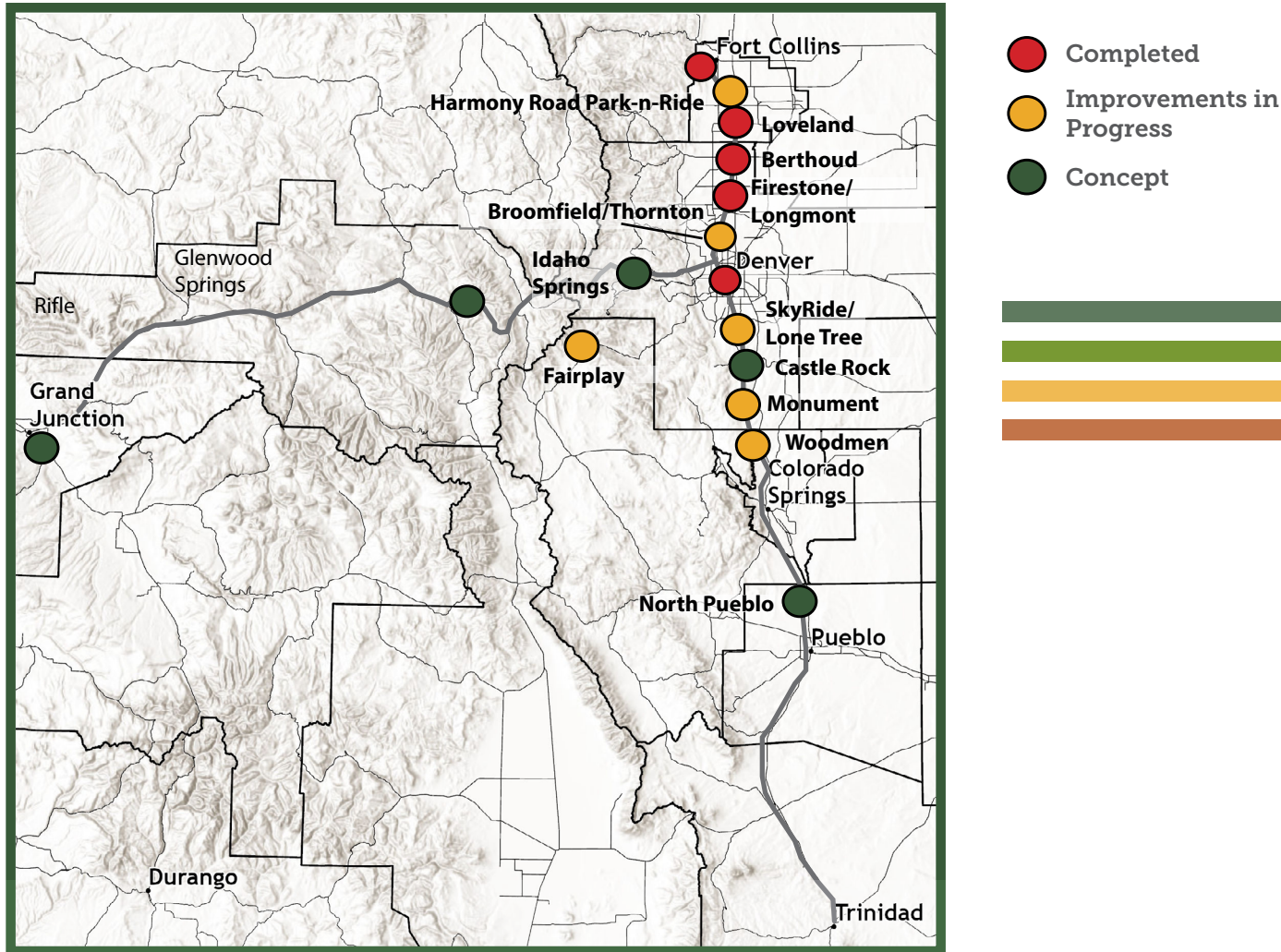
Ongoing efforts are focused on enhancing connectivity to existing intercity transit services, such as Bustang and Bustang Outrider, through strategic placement of mobility hubs along high-demand corridors. These hubs are being planned and implemented in coordination with broader infrastructure improvements, including new or expanded transit stations, park-n-rides, BRT projects, and transit-oriented development. To ensure their effectiveness, mobility hubs must be seamlessly linked to first- and last-mile infrastructure—safe and accessible sidewalks, bike facilities, and shared mobility services that allow users to complete their journeys efficiently.

CDOT has used established criteria for strategic transit projects to evaluate and prioritize mobility hub locations to ensure that investments align with broader goals for equity, sustainability, and regional access. In addition to existing transit stations, several new locations have been approved for design and/or construction, while others have been identified as future candidate projects.



Photo Credit: Bustang

## Bustang Mobility Hub Network



This map illustrates the current Bustang Mobility Hub network across key corridors in Colorado, highlighting a mix of completed, in-progress, and conceptual projects. The hubs, strategically located along the I-25 and I-70 corridors, connect rural and urban communities through enhanced multimodal infrastructure. Color-coded by development status, the map shows:

- Completed hubs are located in Fort Collins, Loveland, Berthoud, Firestone/Longmont and Denver Union Station
- Improvements are in progress at the SkyRidge/Lone Tree, Broomfield/Thornton, Fairplay, Monument, and Woodmen hubs, and the Harmony Road Park-n-Ride
- Concept hubs are currently being planned in Grand Junction, Idaho Springs, Castle Rock, and North Pueblo

Together, these mobility hubs will improve first- and last-mile connectivity, integrate travel modes, and support Bustang and Bustang Outrider services with user-friendly infrastructure that helps meet Colorado's growing mobility needs.





# Fleet Electrification

Colorado continues to advance its commitment to improving air quality and reducing GHG emissions by investing in ZEVs, particularly within the public transit sector. The state has implemented several initiatives and funding programs to support the transition to cleaner transportation options.

## Volkswagen Settlement Trust Investments

Colorado received approximately \$68 million from the Volkswagen (VW) Settlement Trust. A significant portion of these funds has been allocated to support the electrification of transit fleets across Colorado. As of 2024, the state has awarded more than \$30.8 million from the VW Settlement Trust to fund electric transit buses and associated charging infrastructure. These investments have facilitated the acquisition of new electric buses for various municipalities, including Breckenridge, Winter Park, Telluride, Avon, Fort Collins, and Boulder.

## CTE Initiatives

The CTE aims to reduce emissions by supporting the transition to electric transit vehicles. In 2024, CTE approved \$15 million in grants for new vehicles and infrastructure improvements, complementing the VW Settlement funds. These combined efforts underscore Colorado's dedication to expanding clean transit options statewide.



# Fleet Electrification Challenges and Strategies

Transitioning to electric transit fleets presents several challenges, including higher upfront vehicle costs, the need for infrastructure upgrades, specialized maintenance training, and operational adjustments for varying conditions. To address these, Colorado's 2023 Electric Vehicle (EV) Plan outlines strategies such as:

- Developing a comprehensive policy framework to guide electrification efforts
- Providing educational resources and training workshops for transit agencies
- Supporting the creation and implementation of transit agency EV plans
- Offering financial assistance through programs like the VW Settlement Trust and CTE
- Establishing statewide master purchasing contracts to streamline procurement processes

Collaboration among state departments, transit agencies, and stakeholders is crucial to ensure a fiscally viable and equitable transition to electric transit fleets. Groups such as the Colorado Electric Vehicle Coalition, CASTA, and the Public Utilities Commission's EV Working Group play instrumental roles in these efforts.



**Colorado aims to have at least 1,000 zero emission transit vehicles on the road by 2030 and achieve a fully zero emission transit fleet by 2050.**



Photo Credit: Visit Estes Park



# Connected Vehicle Infrastructure

The rapid advancement of transportation technologies has prompted transportation departments to actively prepare for the future of mobility. In 2017, CDOT launched a program dedicated to the deployment and strategic planning of connected and autonomous vehicle technologies. This initiative focuses on Colorado's approach to advanced vehicle systems, connected vehicle (CV) infrastructure, data integration, and vehicle automation. Key efforts include the deployment of CV infrastructure on more than 400 miles of roadway across the state, the evaluation of transportation data, and ongoing partnerships with local jurisdictions to support statewide implementation.

CDOT also leads the Autonomous Mobility Task Force, which is responsible for reviewing the safe deployment of autonomous vehicles (AVs), particularly those that fall outside existing federal, state, or local regulatory frameworks. To date, the Task Force has used this process to review six AV deployments, including the EasyMile autonomous transit shuttles and CDOT's autonomous truck-mounted attenuators used in roadway maintenance. These efforts represent substantial progress from the two AV deployments completed in 2020. CDOT continues to explore opportunities to expand pilot programs and partnerships. The Task Force will remain central to ensuring the safe, strategic, and innovative rollout of autonomous technologies in Colorado moving forward.





# Connected and Autonomous Vehicle Program Initiatives

- **Connected vehicles:** Deploys infrastructure statewide, building on the I-70 CV pilot testbed. CDOT has deployed more than 400 miles of CV infrastructure across Colorado's interstate network.
- **Data:** Evaluate the robustness, reliability, and opportunities in CDOT's CV data. Partnerships will feature local jurisdictions, private industry, academic partners, and others. CDOT's CV data will be publicly available to enable data sharing and work toward data interoperability.
- **Collaboration:** Host peer exchanges and fund collaborative research opportunities with other jurisdictions. Work closely with regional communities within the state such as Greeley, Castle Rock and City and County of Denver, as well as those in communities bordering Colorado in Wyoming and Utah. Collaboratively develop templates for data collection to enable interoperability and data sharing.
- **Regulation:** Continue to chair the Autonomous Mobility Task Force in Colorado. The task force reviews the safe deployment of AVs that do not comply with federal, state, and local regulations. To date, six AV deployments have gone through the Task Force process (EasyMile transit buses and CDOT's maintenance vehicles—autonomous truck mounted attenuators).
- **CDOT equipment automation:** Building on the success of CDOT's autonomous attenuator, explore other opportunities to introduce automation into CDOT vehicles. Use active implementation tools to install after-market advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) for CDOT-operated buses that will have near-term safety improvements, such as lane keeping assistance, collision avoidance, automatic emergency braking, and others. Work with the academic community to test and validate the systems on a pilot bus and deploy upon successful testing. ADAS technologies can serve as the foundation to evaluate bus platooning and higher levels of vehicle automation, all while improving the safety of overall bus operation.



Photo Credit: RTD Flickr



# COTransit

CDOT actively monitors emerging technologies and explores opportunities to improve transit system integration across Colorado. One key initiative underway is COTransit (formerly known as Connected Colorado), a collaborative project with transit providers statewide. The goal of COTransit is to use General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) data to streamline transit information, enabling features such as real-time arrival and departure updates, integrating fare collection, and improving the accessibility of service information for riders across multiple agencies.

In 2020, CDOT surveyed transit providers about the COTransit concept, and agencies expressed strong support for integrated technology infrastructure, particularly the use of GTFS to standardize data collection and sharing statewide. Building on this momentum, CDOT engaged a vendor to collect, organize, and publish transit service data in a consistent format. DTR is currently providing targeted support to agencies and will continue to gather feedback to inform and shape future technology integration efforts.

## Statewide Transit Pass Exploratory Committee

Established by Senate Bill 24-032 and led by CDOT, the Statewide Transit Pass Exploratory Committee is developing a viable proposal for the creation, implementation, and administration of a statewide transit pass that could be used across multiple transit systems in Colorado.

As part of its charge, the committee must consider a range of specified policy, operational, and technical issues and actively solicit input from subject matter experts, transit stakeholders, and interested parties from across the state. The goal is to create a unified pass that expands transit accessibility and streamlines rider experience across regional and local services. The committee consists of 16 members. Through this committee, CDOT is leading a collaborative and inclusive approach to explore statewide transit fare integration and improve mobility for riders across Colorado.



Photo Credit: Grand Valley Transit



# Transit Connections Study

The Transit Connection Study (TCS) is a DTR-led study aimed at providing a strategic vision for a statewide interconnected multimodal transit system. This includes improving and expanding Bustang, preparing for the addition of passenger rail service through the Front Range Passenger Rail and Mountain Rail programs, identifying gaps and transit needs across the state, and fostering connections with intercity, regional and local transit/mobility providers. The TCS will inform CDOT planning and decision making processes to further enhance mobility for residents and visitors by working to improve access and transit connections across the state.

The Study includes the following components:

- Current State of Transit: Statewide existing conditions report of transit systems, services and supporting data and information. Includes an assessment of transportation services operated in Colorado as well as state-supported transportation, including:
  - Bustang Family of Services
  - Mountain Rail
  - Front Range Passenger Rail
  - Local & Regional Transit Providers
  - Intercity Bus Providers
  - Intercity Rail (Amtrak)
- Gaps Analysis: Statewide analysis of transit gaps and needs including a focused analysis on state-supported transportation systems
- Outcomes & Recommendations
- Final Report



Photo Credit: Bustang



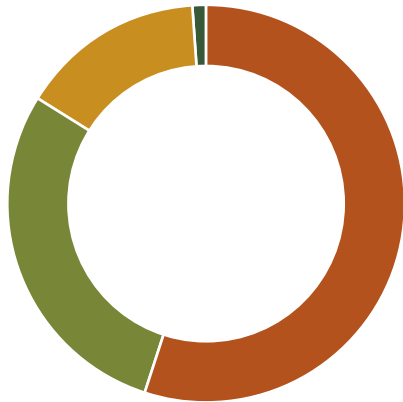
# Financial Snapshot



Photo Credit: Winter Park

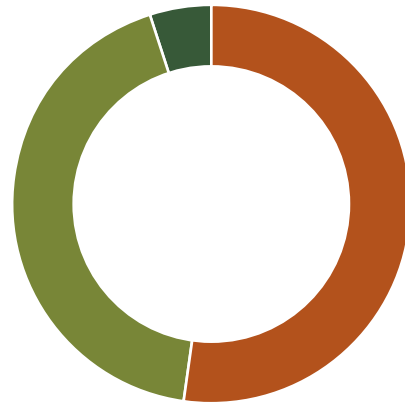
Transit services are costly to operate and maintain, whether in rural areas where extensive routes cover large geographic areas with limited infrastructure, in resort economies with high labor costs, or in major metropolitan areas where significant infrastructure investment and extensive fleet maintenance are needed to support service. Additionally, transit funding is complex, and Colorado providers typically use a patchwork funding approach that includes federal funds, state funds, local fares, donations, and/or tax revenues (e.g., lodging tax, sales tax, property tax). Public funds are primarily used to support transit and transportation services in Colorado, with most agencies relying on local and federal funds as available state funding is limited. This section provides a snapshot of current statewide funding levels and trends for Colorado's urban and rural providers.

## Statewide Operating Revenue Sources



- 55% Local
- 29% - Federal
- 15% - Other
- 1% - State

## Statewide Capital Revenue Sources



- 55% Local
- 40% - Federal
- 5% - State

# Five-Year Historic Capital and Operating Revenues

(Including RTD, Major Urban, and Rural Providers)

Operating funds increased by about 8 percent over the five-year period, although operating funds jumped by about 30 percent between 2021 and 2022. Capital funding has decreased by about 50 percent since 2019, although capital funding increased by more than 200 percent between 2022 and 2023.

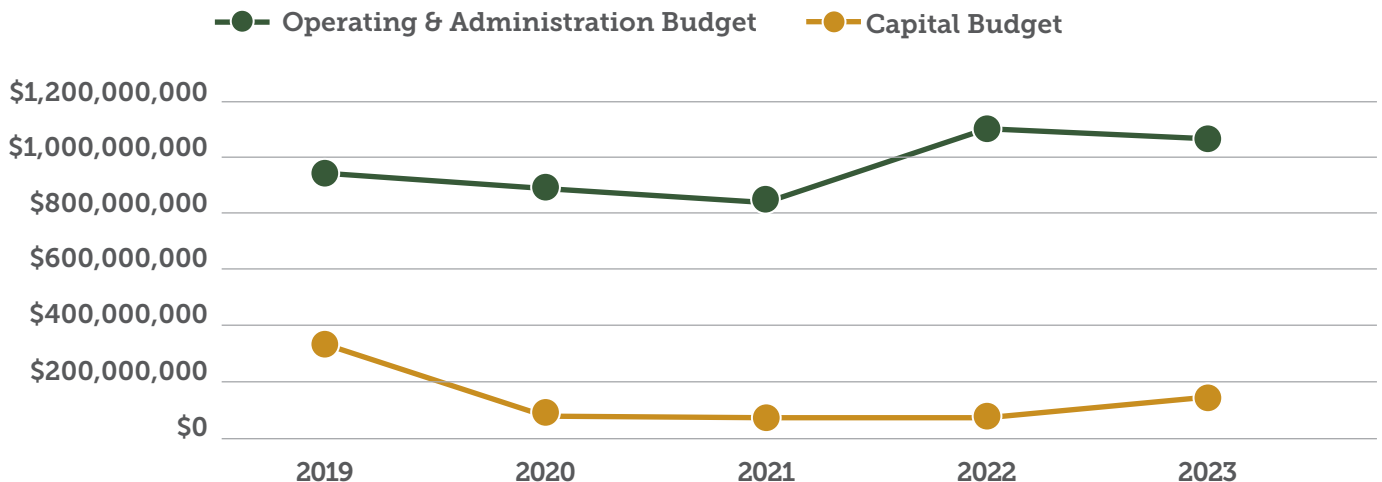




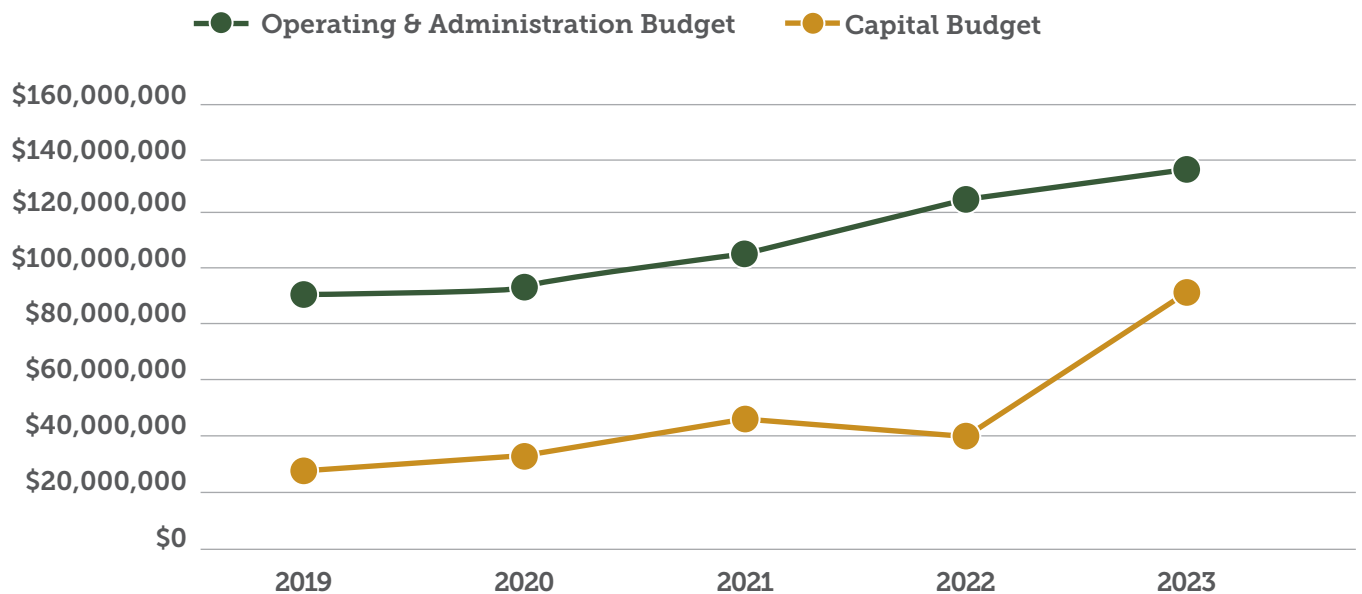


Photo Credit: Summit County

# Five-Year Historic Capital and Operating Revenues

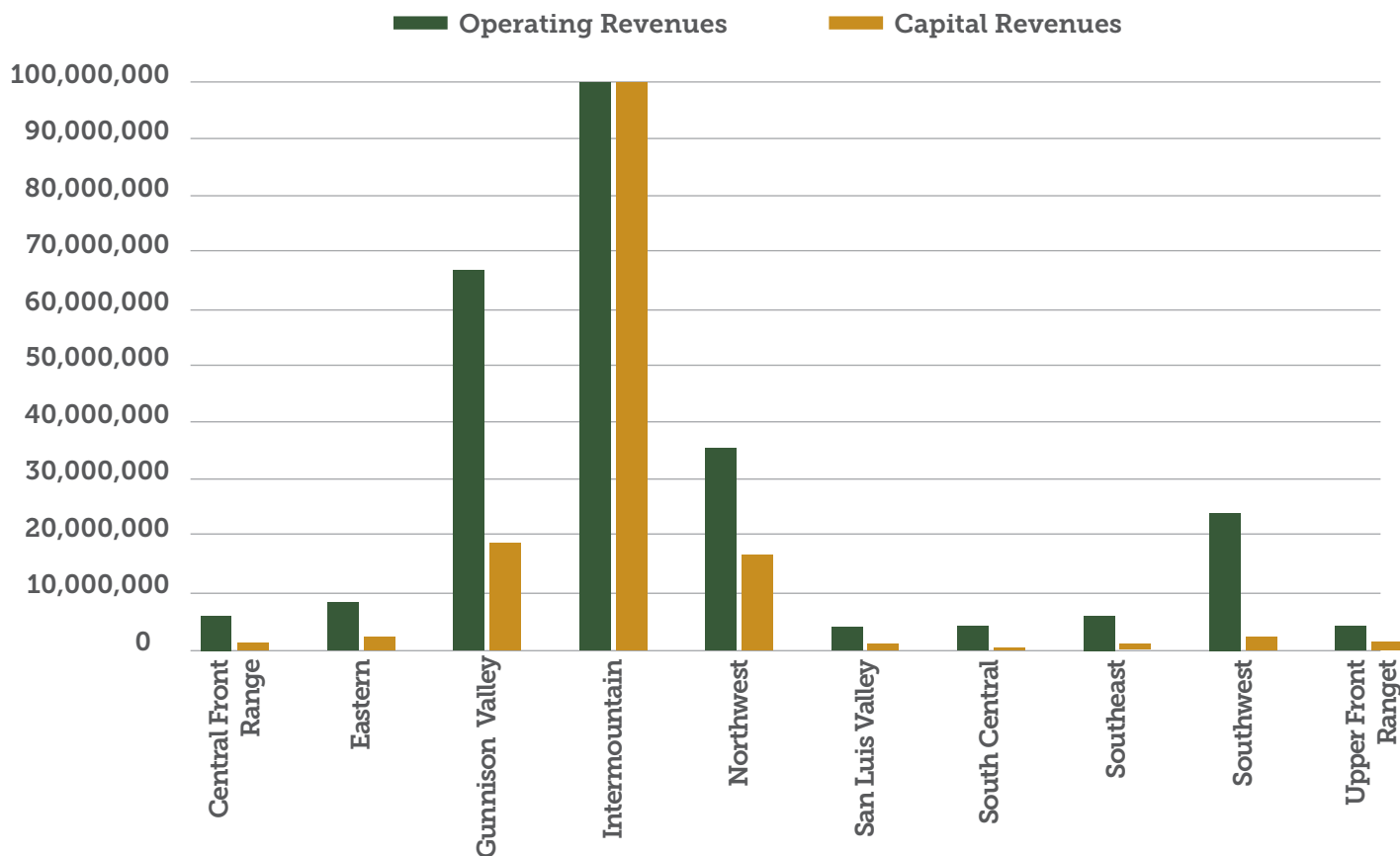
(Excluding RTD and Major Urban Providers)

Rural areas have experienced tremendous funding growth since 2019. Operating funds have increased 50 percent since 2019, while capital funds have increased by an astounding 251 percent. This may be due to the infusion of funds into transit systems from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act, a bill that allocates over \$100 billion for transit needs. The bill was signed into law in 2021, which could explain the capital funding jump of 146 percent between 2022 and 2023.



# Rural TPR Operating and Capital Revenues

When looking at overall statewide transit capital and operating revenues, extracting rural data is important, as proportionally, urban areas have extremely high revenues compared to those of rural areas. The following chart provides a snapshot of revenues by TPR based on 2019-2023 budget data. Over the last five years, IM, GV, and NW TPRs received the highest portion of capital and operating revenues, which is largely attributed to the presence of large resorts and tourism-based transit service.





# Statewide Per Capita Transit Funding

Per capita transit funding, as measured by NTD reporting, varies greatly across Colorado’s urban and rural regions. As shown, the Greater Denver Area and the IM TPR have the highest per capita spending - due in large part to the expansive regional transit system funded by sales tax in the Denver metropolitan area and the funding of resort transit systems by local municipalities, regional transportation authorities, and sales and property taxes. Areas with the lowest per capita transit spending are the UFR, SLV, and CFR TPRs.

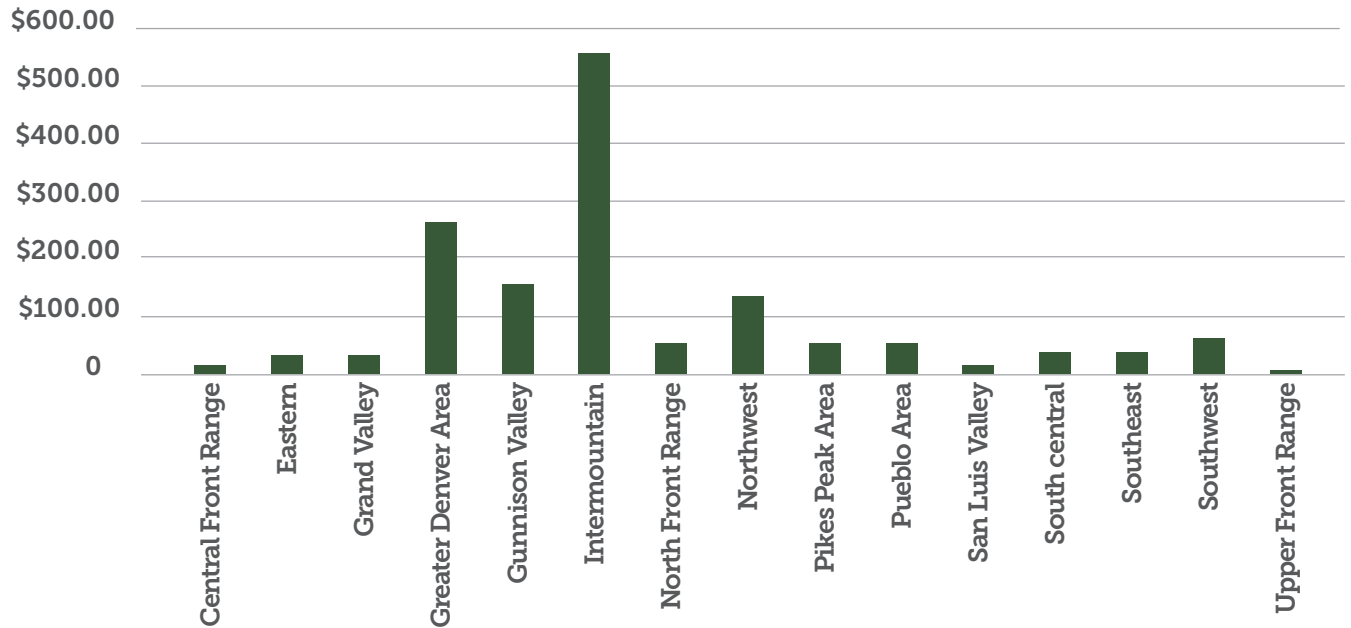


Photo Credit: Winter Park Resort



# Statewide Transit Financial Projections

Statewide transit funding projections provide a framework for transit planning in the future. However, while these projections are informative, many factors can significantly impact the accuracy of forecasts, including the availability and allocation of funding, economic volatility, and the rate of inflation. As part of this plan refresh, this financial snapshot section focuses exclusively on rural transit providers, incorporating information from the 2023 TAM Plan data and 2023 NTD data to outline projected capital and operating needs through 2050. The next full plan update will include both urban and rural provider data.

*Note: This Plan Refresh did not conduct a new Statewide Transit Provider Survey. Data reflects existing reporting and asset management records only for rural providers.*

This financial snapshot is intended to provide a high-level understanding of the magnitude of projected capital and operating expenses relative to anticipated revenue streams. It does not attempt to predict exact funding outcomes but rather highlights the scale of need across rural transit providers and identifies the funding gaps that must be addressed. These gaps will require a combination of local investment, competitive state and federal grant awards, and potentially new or currently unidentified funding sources to sustain and expand rural transit services over the coming decades.

## Capital and Operating Costs

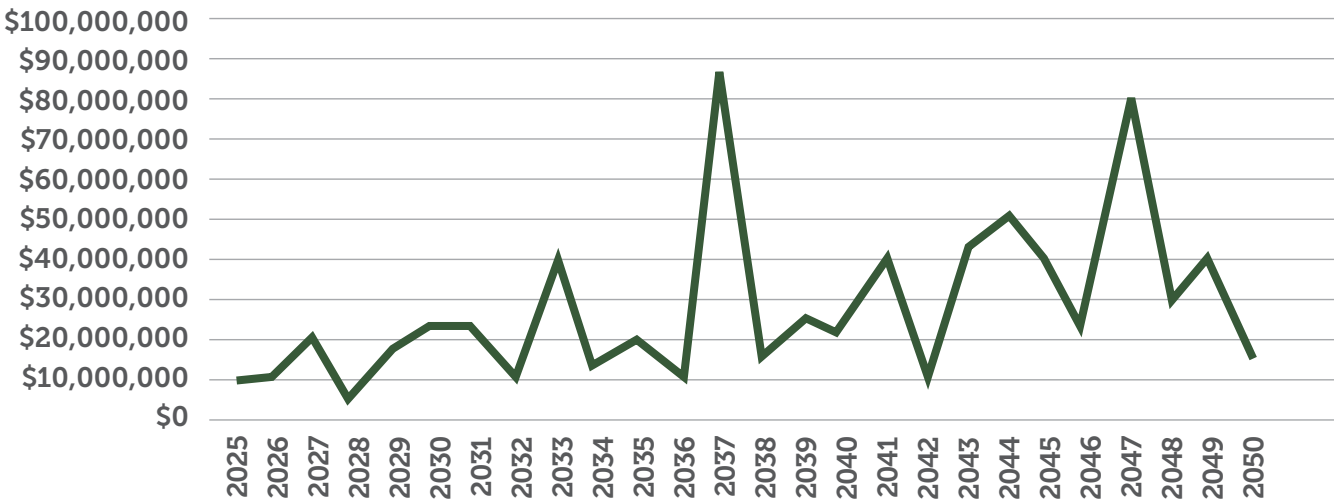
The 2023 TAM Plan uses a four-year planning horizon (2023-2026), consistent with FTA requirements, and identifies asset conditions, anticipated replacement needs, and capital costs necessary to maintain a state of good repair over that period.

To develop a more complete picture of rolling stock replacement needs, data from the 2023 TAM Plan was compared against fleet replacement projections from the 2020 Statewide Transit Plan. This comparison helped reconcile discrepancies between the two sources by accounting for vehicles that were identified for replacement in the 2020 Plan but had not yet been procured as of 2023. It also allowed the inclusion of vehicles expected to reach the end of their useful life just beyond the TAM Plan's four-year horizon (2023-2026), ensuring that the analysis captures both deferred procurements and emerging replacement needs through the full planning period. This combined approach supports a more realistic estimate of total capital costs over the long term.



The chart below shows projected capital expenditures for rolling stock replacement among rural transit providers from 2025 through 2050. Year-to-year cost fluctuations reflect the cyclical nature of vehicle replacement, influenced by fleet sizes, staggered procurement schedules, and vehicle life cycles. This forecast highlights the timing and scale of capital needs required to keep rural fleets in a state of good repair, assuming replacements only—without expanding fleet capacity—over the 25-year planning horizon.

### Capital Expenditures to Maintain State of Good Repair

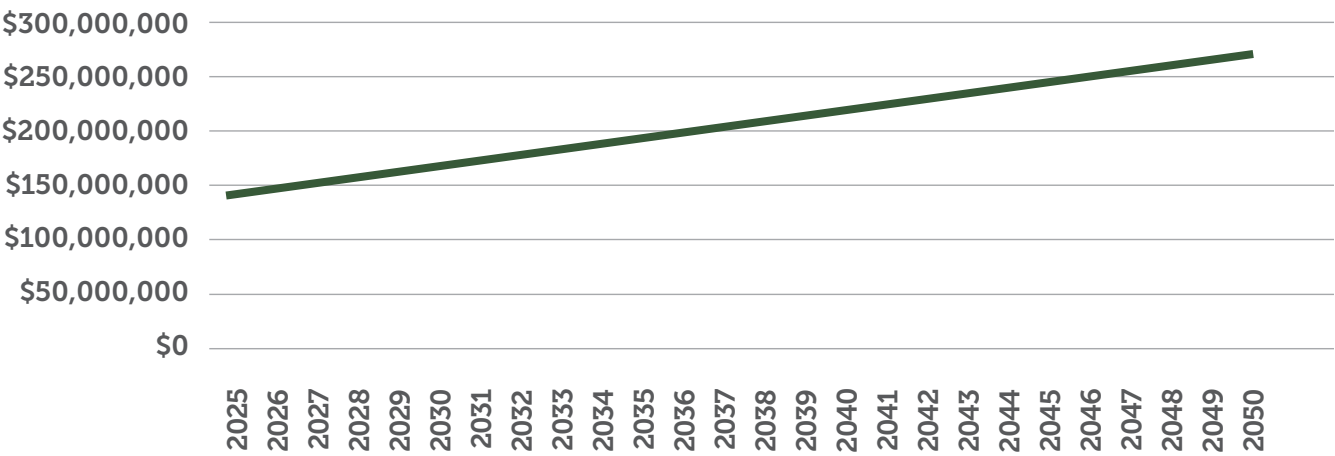



Operating cost estimates were developed using 2023 NTD data reported by rural transit agencies. To project future costs, these baseline figures were escalated using county-level population growth forecasts, which were aligned with each TPR and subsequently mapped to the service areas of individual transit providers. This approach reflects anticipated increases in service demand driven by demographic changes.

Similarly, the chart below illustrates projected operating expenditures for rural transit providers from 2025 through 2050. The forecast assumes continuation of existing service levels and does not account for major changes in service, such as new routes or significant expansions. As such, the analysis provides an estimate of future operating needs, useful for identifying long-term funding requirements under a steady-state service scenario.

### Anticipated Operating Expenditure Forecasts

(To Maintain Current Operations)





Both rolling stock vehicle replacement costs and operating costs were adjusted using an annual inflation rate of 2.5 percent, based on historic Consumer Price Index (CPI) data for the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood region. This inflation factor ensures that future cost projections reflect realistic year-over-year increases in labor, fuel, parts, and procurement expenses.

## Revenue Forecasts

Revenue projections were developed using 2023 NTD data, which reports detailed funding source categories for each transit agency. These include fares and other directly generated revenues, taxes and fees levied by transit agencies, and financial assistance from local, state, and federal sources.

### Fare Revenue Projections

Existing and projected fare revenue from rural transit agencies, where applicable, is used to support both operating and capital expenditures. While fare revenues play a modest role in the overall funding landscape, they remain an important local contribution toward maintaining service and fleet sustainability. Based on current reporting and future projections, rural fare revenue is expected to cover approximately 4 to 6 percent of the combined capital (rolling stock) and operating expenses through 2050.

### Other Directly Generated Revenue Projections

Other directly generated revenues, not including fare revenues, represent a diverse set of income sources that are generated or received directly by the transit agency. These include revenues from park-and-ride facilities, concessions, advertising, and a range of


other sources such as investment earnings, vehicle and facility rentals, parking fees from non-park-and-ride locations, donations, private foundation grants, and development fees. For this analysis, 2023 values reported to the NTD were projected to grow using a flat 2 percent annual growth rate, consistent with the methodology applied in the 2020 Statewide Transit Plan. These revenues are assumed to support both operating and capital expenses and are projected to account for approximately 7 to 10 percent of the combined rural transit capital and operating costs through 2050. This revenue category provides a flexible source of funding but varies significantly by agency based on local opportunities and policy structures.

### Federal Funding Projections

Federal funding data reported in NTD includes a mix of formula-based allocations and competitive grant awards. For the purposes of this analysis, which focuses solely on rural transit agencies, only funding from the FTA's Section 5311 Rural Program was included. Other federal programs, such as discretionary or urbanized formula funds, were excluded to maintain consistency with the rural agency scope and focus on more consistent revenue streams.

The FTA Section 5311 Rural Program provides financial assistance for operating and capital expenses to support public transportation in areas with populations less than 50,000. These funds are distributed to states by formula based on rural population, land area, and transit service factors, and are then allocated to local transit providers. Section 5311 funding may be used for a variety of purposes, including vehicle replacement, operating support, planning, and mobility management.





For projection purposes, 2023 NTD-reported 5311 funding levels were grown at an annual rate of 2 percent, consistent with the methodology used in the 2020 Statewide Transit Plan. These values were further normalized based on county-level population forecasts aligned with each TPR allowing the projections to reflect anticipated demographic growth in each rural service area. Over the planning horizon, 5311 funding is projected to account for approximately 5 to 8 percent of combined capital and operating expenditures for rural providers.

## Local Funding Considerations

Local funding data reported in NTD includes financial assistance provided by local governments to support transit operations and capital investment. For most rural transit agencies in Colorado, which are classified as reduced reporters under NTD guidelines, these revenues are reported in a consolidated format without detailed breakout by source. As a result, the local funding category may include a wide range of contributions such as dedicated transit sales taxes, vehicle registration fees, general fund transfers, local match for federal and state grants, or in-kind contributions of services and facilities.

While some rural agencies benefit from stable, voter-approved taxes or fee-based revenue streams, many rely on less predictable sources, such as one-time general fund allocations or end-of-year transfers. These ad hoc sources reflect the financial pressures local governments face when attempting to maintain transit service without dedicated funding mechanisms. This variability often results in transit agencies scaling service and/or capital investments to match available funds, rather than planning to meet demand.

Given the inconsistencies in how local revenues are reported and the variability in how they are allocated year to year, this analysis does not attempt to quantify or project the contribution of local funding sources. However, it recognizes that local funds remain a critical component of the rural transit funding framework. They are essential for providing the local match required for federal and state programs and for filling shortfalls in both operating and capital budgets when other sources fall short.

## State Funding Considerations

State funding for rural transit in Colorado is shaped by a mix of legislative initiatives, dedicated programs, and competitive grant opportunities. While state support has grown in recent years, it remains constrained by several structural limitations and the need for local match, which many rural agencies struggle to provide.

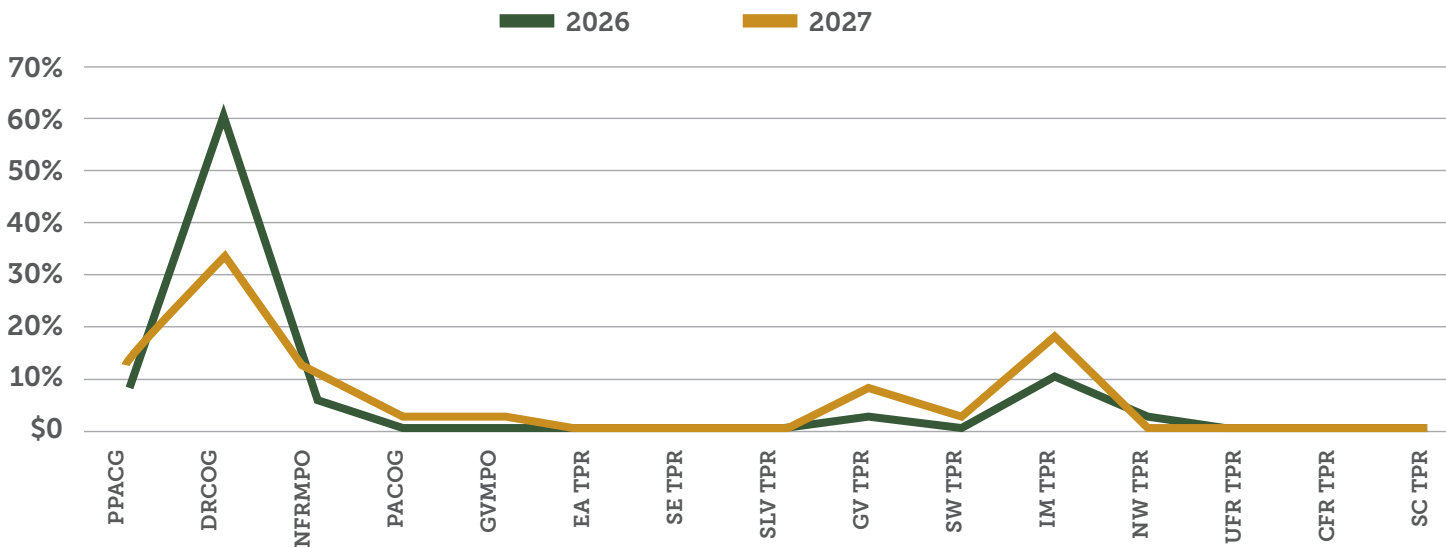
Historically, capital funding was significantly bolstered by Colorado Senate Bill 17-267, which allocated approximately \$180 million over five fiscal years beginning in 2018 for transit capital projects. These funds supported major investments in vehicles, facilities, and system expansion but did not provide any support for ongoing operations. With the expiration of SB 17-267, rural agencies now rely primarily on the Clean Transit Enterprise (CTE), established through SB 21-260. CTE is funded by the Retail Delivery Fee and provides competitive grants focused exclusively on zero-emission transit investments, including planning, bus replacement, charging infrastructure, and facility upgrades. To date, CTE has conducted two rounds of zero-emission transit planning grants and one round of capital grants. While this funding stream is valuable, it is limited to specific project types and does not address general capital needs beyond electrification.

For operating support, Colorado Senate Bill 24-230 introduces a new funding mechanism through an oil and gas production fee, estimated to generate between \$100 and \$138 million annually. Of this amount, 70 percent is allocated to the Local Transit Operations Fund to expand or initiate new transit service in both the urban and rural areas. The funds will be allocated based on the formula program approved by the CTE Board of Directors, which includes three distinct funding categories:

- RTD - a uniquely large and distinct urban area organization
- Large entities with over 30,000 annual passengers
- Small entities with ridership under 30,000

However, because this fund is limited to supporting new or enhanced service and does not fund existing operations, it has not been included in this financial assessment. Preliminary projections indicate the Local Transit Operations Fund will total approximately \$34-\$37 million statewide in 2026, with funding expected to increase to nearly \$70-\$80 million in 2027 and beyond. While not quantified in this analysis, these funds represent an important opportunity for rural and urban providers looking to expand service. The first notice of funding availability for the Local Transit Operations Fund was released in mid-July 2025 and local agencies are coordinating with CTE to develop implementation plans to track and monitor the impacts of the program over time, including GHG emissions, unlinked passenger trips, vehicle revenue miles, and vehicle revenue hours.

### CTE Local Transit Operations Fund Allocations (%)




### Dedicated State Transit Funding through Senate Bill 24-230

This landmark law creates Colorado’s first-ever ongoing, dedicated statewide funding for transit. It imposes a new production fee on oil and gas—expected to generate \$100 million to \$138 million annually—that funds public transit, passenger rail, and community grants.

- 70% Local Transit Operations Fund
- 20% Passenger Rail Projects
- 10% Competitive public transit grants





An additional 10 percent will fund competitive public transportation grants, and 20 percent is allocated to passenger rail projects. Unlike previous legislation, this bill allows for a broader use of funds, including operations, planning, electrification, and fleet upgrades. It offers rural providers new opportunities to secure recurring support for service enhancement and emissions reduction, though allocation processes and eligibility are in development.

Colorado also continues to support transit through the FASTER program, established under SB 09-108. While its primary focus is on road and bridge safety, FASTER allocates approximately \$15 million annually to transit projects with a portion going to fund Bustang and Outrider services. These funds can be used for multimodal improvements such as park-and-ride facilities and transit lanes. However, FASTER funding is not indexed to inflation, which reduces its purchasing power over time and limits its ability to meet growing transit needs.

Additional state dollars are distributed to TPRs based on population and measures of transit need. However, access to these funds is often limited by local match requirements, and some regions report that state highway investments consistently outpace transit allocations. For many rural agencies, budget constraints and lack of flexible local revenue make it difficult to leverage available state dollars, particularly for large-scale capital or service expansion projects.

Due to the variability in program eligibility, allocation methods, and the inability of many rural providers to meet match requirements, this analysis does not quantify the projected contribution of state funding to future capital and operating expenses. Nonetheless, state support plays a critical role in maintaining rural transit services and will continue to influence the scale and scope of future investments, especially with

the introduction of ongoing capital and rolling stock investments available through SB 24-230.

## Other Federal Funding Considerations

Federal funding remains the primary source of financial support for both capital and operating expenses for rural transit providers in Colorado. Administered through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), these funds are critical to maintaining service levels, replacing vehicles, and supporting long-term planning and system development. CDOT serves as the designated recipient for rural federal transit funding and allocates Section 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas according to a state-defined methodology. In addition to 5311 funds, CDOT also distributes Section 5304 Planning, and Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities grants through a competitive process for eligible rural and small urban providers. Additionally, CDOT submits Section 5339(b) and 5339(c) competitive grant awards to rural providers.

While this analysis focuses solely on Section 5311 funding, which supports both operating and capital needs for rural providers, other FTA programs such as Section 5307 and 5337 also contribute significantly to the broader statewide transit system. These programs were strengthened under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which temporarily increased funding levels across the board. However, these enhancements are set to expire in September 2026 unless reauthorized by Congress. Reauthorization will be essential to maintain funding levels for key programs such as 5310, 5311, 5339, and 5309, which collectively support fleet replacement, system expansion, maintenance, and accessibility improvements.

Federal support also included pandemic relief funding through the CARES Act, which provided approximately \$30 million in 100 percent federally funded aid to rural Colorado agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds required no local match and helped maintain service continuity, preserve staffing, and support essential mobility functions. Although some agencies may still be spending down remaining balances, most CARES Act transit funds were required to be obligated by September 30, 2023. These funds provided critical temporary relief but are not assumed in long-term financial forecasts.

Despite the importance of federal funding, long-term challenges remain. The Highway Trust Fund (HTF), which supports transit through its Mass Transit Account, faces structural deficits due to declining fuel tax revenues and the lack of inflation indexing. These issues threaten the sustainability of federal transit programs, particularly for rural providers that rely heavily on predictable federal allocations. Without legislative action to stabilize or expand the HTF, transit agencies across the country may face growing uncertainty in future appropriations. Federal support will remain a critical pillar of rural transit finance, but future stability depends on reauthorization of key programs and long-term solvency of federal transportation funding sources.

Due to limited state funding, many transit agencies in Colorado rely heavily on local funding, especially for operational costs. Alternative funding sources to support local and regional transit services include:

- General funds
- Lodging taxes
- Parking fees
- Property taxes
- Public-private partnerships
- Rural transportation authorities
- Sales and use taxes
- Sponsorships/donations

- Tourism taxes
- Utility taxes/fees
- Vehicle fees
- CDOT's Office of Innovative Mobility (OIM)
- Enterprise Funding

## Conclusion

This financial snapshot provides a high-level assessment of the long-term funding outlook for rural transit providers in Colorado. It reflects current data sources, inflation assumptions, and growth projections to estimate capital and operating needs through 2050. Over the 25-year planning horizon, projected rural transit expenditures (including both rolling stock capital replacement and operating costs) total nearly \$6 billion. On the revenue side, the analysis includes fare revenue, other directly generated revenue, and Section 5311 federal funding, which together are projected to contribute between 17 and 24 percent of the total funding need. State and local contributions are not quantified due to reporting variability and funding uncertainty, but their importance in securing federal match and supporting day-to-day operations is acknowledged throughout the analysis.

While some revenue sources offer consistent support, others remain uncertain, inflexible, or subject to competitive processes and local match constraints. The projections highlight a persistent gap between anticipated needs and available resources, underscoring the importance of coordinated local, state, and federal investment to sustain existing service and accommodate future demand. Without new or expanded funding mechanisms, rural transit agencies will continue to face significant challenges in maintaining fleets, supporting operations, and meeting mobility needs in the communities they serve. This analysis offers a foundation for identifying where policy, funding, and planning efforts must focus to ensure rural transit remains viable and responsive over the coming decades.



## Federal Transit Administration Funding Programs

- Accelerating Innovative Mobility - 5310
- Access and Mobility Partnerships - 5310
- Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Program -5339(b)
- Capital Investment Grant - 5309
- Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities - 5310
- Grants for Buses & Bus Facilities - 5339(a)
- Grants for Rural Areas - 5311
- Human Resources & Training - 5314
- Integrated Mobility Innovation - 5310
- Low or No Emission Vehicle Program - 5339(c)
- Mobility for All Pilot Program Grants - 5310
- Mobility on Demand (MOD) Sandbox Demonstration Program - 5312
- Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning - 20005(b)
- Planning Grants - 5304
- Public Transportation Innovation - 5312
- Rural Transportation Assistance Program - 5311(b)(3)
- State of Good Repair Grants - 5337
- Technical Assistance & Standards Development - 5314(a)
- Tribal Transit Funding - 5311(c)
- Urban Area Formula Funding - 5307



Photo Credit: Summit Daily



# Statewide Transit Goals, Strategies, and Performance Measures



Photo Credit: RFTA

The goals of the Statewide Transit Plan are closely aligned with the broader objectives of the Statewide Transportation Plan, as outlined in PD 14. Alignment with PD 14 ensures consistency and coordination across Colorado’s major statewide planning efforts, including Your Transportation Plan and the Statewide Active Transportation Plan. CDOT’s three core priority areas—Sustainably Increase Transportation Choice, Advance Transportation Safety, and Fix Our Roads—informed the development of measurable performance targets that reflect the values and concerns of communities across the state. Each transit-related goal includes specific implementation strategies and outlines how progress will be tracked through performance measurement.





# Sustainably Increase Transportation Choice

CDOT continually works with its partners to provide transportation options that allow people to get where they need to go. Mobility choices provide commuters with options in areas with congestion; allow those who do not have a car or cannot drive to access jobs, goods, and services; and support visitor trips and access to recreation across the state. Colorado's population, employment, and older adult population projections show significant growth over the next 25 years. This growth means that more reliable and accessible travel options will be needed. Additionally, the future of technology, air quality concerns, the need for improved physical health outcomes, and the continued rise of vehicle miles traveled in Colorado call for solutions that think beyond the single occupancy vehicle.

## Service Enhancements and Expansion

- Maximize existing and seek new funding sources to expand interregional services to support the needs of residents, employees, and visitors.
- Increase Bustang service frequency on I-70 and I-25 to support ridership demands.
- Implement planned Outrider expansion routes; phase in other priority Outrider routes as funding allows.
- Monitor outcomes from the Transit Connections Study to guide sustainable growth of the Bustang Family of Services, support growing demand, and strengthen existing partnerships.
- Support the transportation needs identified through the Survey for Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities, as well as insights gathered from broader public outreach efforts.
- Monitor progress on the FRPR and Mountain Passenger Rail Service Development Plans and Alternatives Analyses; as funding becomes available, advance additional planning, design, and implementation efforts to establish service from Pueblo to Fort Collins.
- Pursue a policy-driven approach to ensure capital and operating funds are allocated effectively, prioritizing the needs of existing rural transit services while supporting strategic service expansion.



## Coordination and Partnerships

- Support transit and human services agencies in rural areas to expand local and regional coordinating council activity.
- Encourage coordination of services to enhance system efficiency.
- Inform the public about transit opportunities locally, regionally, and statewide
- Develop and leverage private sector investments.
- Encourage planning coordination with CDOT's Colorado Transportation Investment Office to incorporate transit use in managed lanes.

## Connectivity

- Implement mobility hub networks in urban and rural areas as funding allows.
- Focus on bus stop and park-n-ride improvements in rural areas to support Outrider service.
- Partner with local and regional agencies to integrate land use and transit into existing and future development.
- Integrate bicycle and pedestrian/ADA improvements in all projects to improve access to transit.
- Capitalize on roadway improvement projects by integrating transit infrastructure improvements simultaneously.
- Implement COTransit efforts to provide greater connectivity between transit providers.

## Technology

- Invest in transit facility infrastructure improvements to increase the appeal and efficiency of transit (e.g., park-n-rides, bus stops, signage).
- Coordinate with regional partners to enhance and expand transit centers and mobility hubs across the state, increasing connectivity across networks.
- Coordinate with CDOT's OIM and the CTE to support the transition to electric/alternative fuel transit fleets.
- Coordinate with CDOT's OIM to test connected/autonomous vehicle technology with existing transit services.
- Support transit agencies across the state as they plan for and prepare for the transition to electric/alternative fuel fleets.





## Technology (continued)

- Invest in technological improvements to support demand response services in the state, such as One-Call & One-Click Centers.
- Implement COTransit efforts to streamline information between providers to make data more readily available to the traveling public.
- Improve the dissemination of transit information using new technology.
- Work to implement universal ticketing across multiple public and private providers.

## Performance Measures

- Ridership on local, regional, and CDOT transit networks
- Total revenue miles for Bustang and Outrider service
- Public feedback from outreach and survey results



# Advancing Transportation Safety

Safety is CDOT's number one priority, and getting people where they need to go via transit is no exception. Safety for transit means safe behavior of users and operators and ensuring vehicles and equipment are well maintained and operating in a state of good repair. CDOT's safety goals and performance measures align with FTA's National Public Transportation Safety Plan to improve the safety of public transportation systems in Colorado.

## Safety Implementation Strategies

- Help transit agencies maintain safe fleets, facilities, and services.
- Provide guidance on safety and security measures for transit systems.
- Track safety performance data per FTA guidelines to achieve the highest practicable level of transit safety.
- Invest in emergency response and preparedness measures to create a more resilient transportation system and address emerging concerns such as environmental concerns and pandemics, which have historically impacted transit and people who rely on transit.
- Incorporate safety considerations into land use and facility design, such as lighting, pedestrian access, and station placement to improve rider comfort and reduce risk.

## Performance Measures

- Track safety performance data per FTA guidelines to achieve the highest practicable level of transit safety
- Number of Bustang and Outrider preventable crashes
- Track safety performance data of connected and autonomous vehicles





# Fix Our Roads

Although DTR is not involved in fixing roads, asset management is a priority with transit in Colorado and is continually monitored through the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan. DTR works to ensure vehicles and other transit assets, owned by both CDOT and transit agencies, are maintained in a state of good repair. This effort involves analyzing assets from the perspective of financial sustainability, as well as their quality of performance on the roads.

## Asset Management Implementation Strategies

- Adhere to asset management metrics related to the TAM Plan.
- Use the TAM Plan to bring the state's transit fleet to a state of good repair.
- Partner with local and regional agencies to improve existing and/or build new bus storage and maintenance facilities.
- Maintain the Bustang and Outrider fleet in a state of good repair.
- Support local and regional agencies in the development/update of their TAM Plans.
- Allocate resources toward both maintaining and preserving existing facilities.
- Preserve existing infrastructure and protect future infrastructure and rights-of-way to support future bus and rail transit service.
- Integrate climate resiliency considerations into asset management planning, including evaluating vulnerability to extreme weather, wildfire, or flooding.
- Support transit-oriented development planning that considers long-term preservation of transit infrastructure and prioritizes access to key hubs.

## Performance Measures

- Revenue vehicles operating in a state of good repair (based on transit fleet tracked in the TAM Plan)
- Condition of service vehicles in a state of good repair (based on transit fleet tracked in the TAM Plan)
- Condition of Bustang and Outrider vehicles in a state of good repair



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