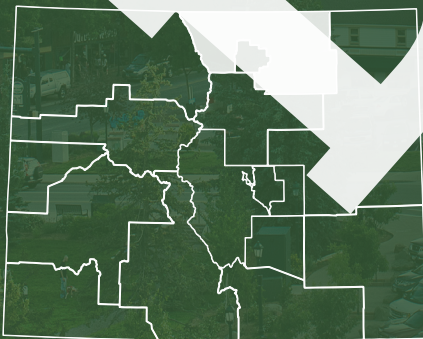


Upper Front Range Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan

August 2025



Counties:
Larimer, Morgan,
and Weld counties,
excluding the
urbanized areas in
Larimer and Weld
counties

Above: The location of counties
in the Upper Front Range
Transportation Planning Region.



Photo Credit:
Visit Estes Park

Table of Contents

Regional Snapshot	6	Annual Operating/Capital Projections	28
What We Heard	10	Funding Programs and Opportunities	30
Public Engagement Overview	11	Federal Transit Administration Funding Programs	31
Public Engagement Key Themes	12	Implementation Strategies	32
Existing Providers and Coordination Activities	15	Priority Projects	33
Interregional, Regional, and Local Transit Providers	18		
5-Year Historic Operating Data	20		
Transit Provider ServicePerformance Metrics	21		
Human Services Transportation Providers	24		
Private Transportation Providers	25		
State of Good Repair	26		
Regional Coordination Activities	26		
Historic Revenue Data	28		
Regional Transit Revenue Trends	28		



Photo Credit: Visit Estes Park

UFR Transit Vision

To improve regional mobility for all residents through effective coordination, planning, and delivery of transit services.

UFR Transit Goals

- 1. Preserve and expand the existing transit systems and infrastructure.
- 2. Provide regional connections.
- 3. Improve regional coordination.
- 4. Coordinate with rail.

Upper Front Range Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan

The Upper Front Range (UFR) Transportation Planning Region (TPR) includes Larimer, Morgan, and Weld counties, excluding the urbanized areas in Larimer and Weld counties. The Region includes more than 20 incorporated towns with Estes Park, Fort Morgan, Fort Lupton, and City of Brush! being the largest. Public transit and human services transportation play an integral role in the Region’s multimodal transportation network by providing mobility and promoting personal independence to residents in the Region. Transit improves quality of life and supports public health by providing access to jobs, schools, shopping, food, medical care, senior centers, social services, and recreation in the Region while also providing connectivity to goods and services in nearby major activity centers.

Every four to five years, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), in coordination with regional planning partners, refreshes the regional transit plans in all rural regions of the state. This 2025 plan refresh builds on the previous plan, completed in 2020, and focuses primarily on updating key components such as textual and data revisions to ensure continued alignment with evolving needs. While a larger overhaul of the Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plans will occur during the next full update in another four to five years, this refresh will ensure that the plan remains relevant and effective in addressing the mobility needs of Coloradans.

CDOT’s Division of Transit and Rail, in coordination with the UFR TPR members and transit agencies, gathered input from the general public to develop this plan in compliance with CDOT and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) planning requirements. The UFR TPR will use this refreshed plan to prioritize transit investments and work toward the long-term implementation of the Region’s unique transit vision and goals, while maintaining a framework for developing an integrated statewide transit system.

Regional Snapshot

Transportation—whether walking, 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 from where they come, results in communities that meet the mobility needs of all, encourage healthier lifestyle choices, and improve economic prosperity.

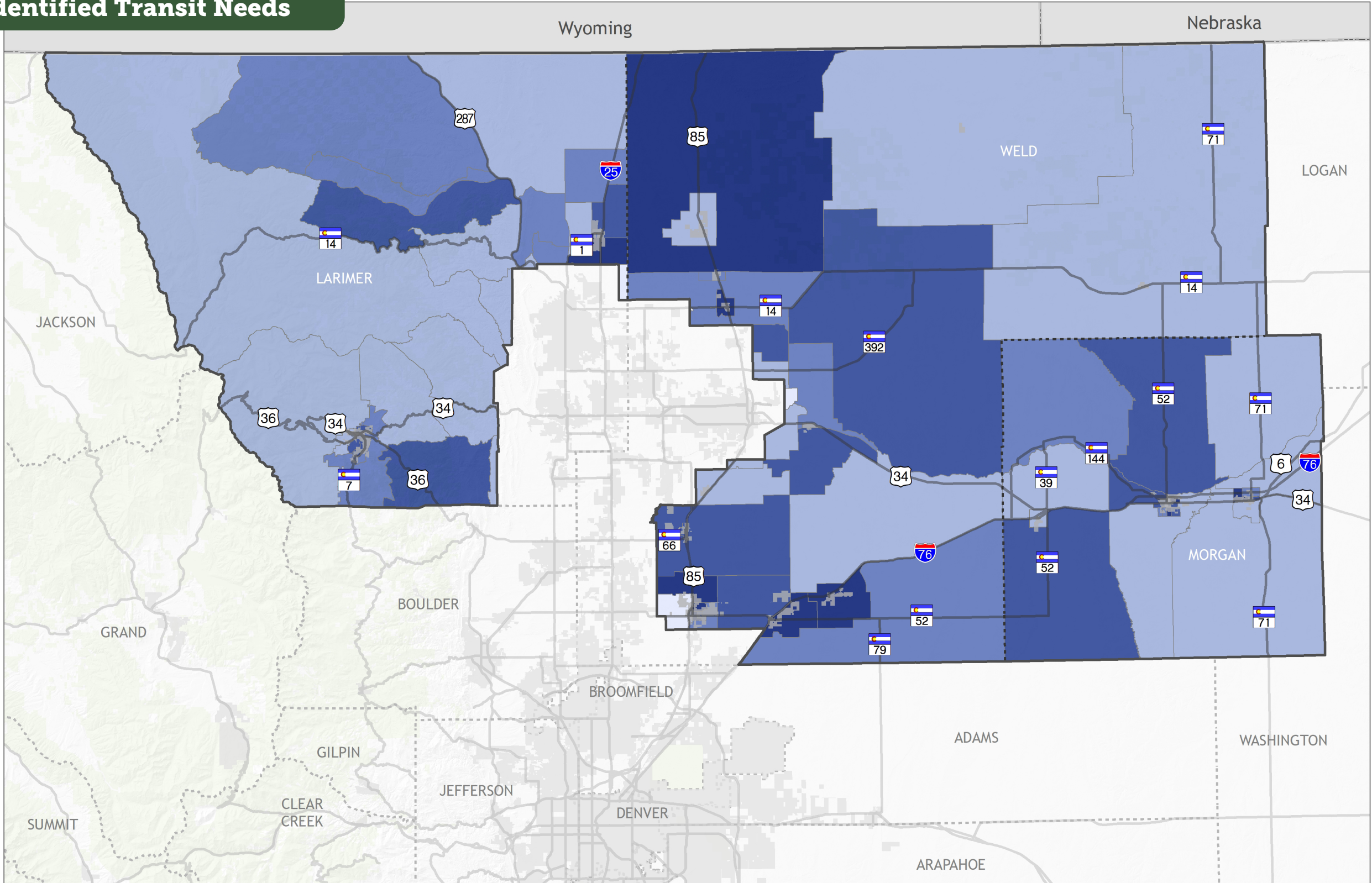
When considering the UFR TPR’s mobility future, reviewing and analyzing available data helps uncover potential transportation network gaps and needs. Populations that often have a higher than average need for transit and/or have limited access to transportation services and facilities must be considered as a part of any needs-focused assessment of transit access and connectivity.

Transit that Serves All Coloradans

Colorado’s statewide transit planning efforts consider the needs of all people. A strong transportation network that is conveniently located, easy to navigate, and serves everyone helps ensure reliable and affordable access to jobs, medical care, education, grocery stores, and social or recreational activities. This access creates opportunities that can positively affect personal health, employment, and overall quality of life.



Identified Transit Needs



Legend

Transit Propensity Index

- Low Transit Need
- Low to Moderate Transit Need

- Moderate Transit Need
- Moderate to High Transit Need
- High Transit Need

Interstate/Highways

City Boundaries

County Boundaries

Upper Front Range Transportation Planning Region 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).

0 15 Miles





What We Heard

CDOT coordinated with each TPR to assess goals, priorities, and desired transit improvements for their communities, while also evaluating any changes since the last plan. What we heard from the UFR TPR members and agencies is summarized below.



Regional Transit Connectivity

The need for improved transit connections between Wellington and Wyoming, which requires a partnership with the Cheyenne Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to ensure seamless regional connectivity.

Residents have requested expanded transit services to and from Estes Park to improve regional access and mobility.



Community-Centered Transit Design

Sustainable public transit systems must be designed and implemented to effectively meet the specific needs and preferences of the local community.

Transit services in rural areas have distinct characteristics and challenges compared to those of urban areas, necessitating tailored approaches to planning and operations.



Accessibility and Equity

Individuals with disabilities in areas between Evans and Brighton require dependable transit connections to maintain their independence and access necessary facilities.

Community members expressed the need for transit options that enable travel to key destinations (e.g., the courthouse).

There is a critical public need for accessible and reliable transportation options to support mobility and to access essential services.



Project Prioritization

Transportation projects should be prioritized based on their alignment with roadway and pedestrian safety improvements to ensure comprehensive and safe mobility for all users.

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. Local and Intercity Transit Options

- Expand public transportation in rural communities, where services are currently limited and improve regional transit connections to larger urban centers and essential destinations along major corridors like I-25 and I-76.

2. Transit Accessibility

- Provide mobility options for people without access to personal vehicles, particularly older adults, low-income residents, and those in agricultural or remote areas.

3. Multimodal Integration

- Integrate transit service with walking and biking infrastructure, to improve first/last-mile connections and provide safer access to transit.

4. System Efficiency and Congestion Relief

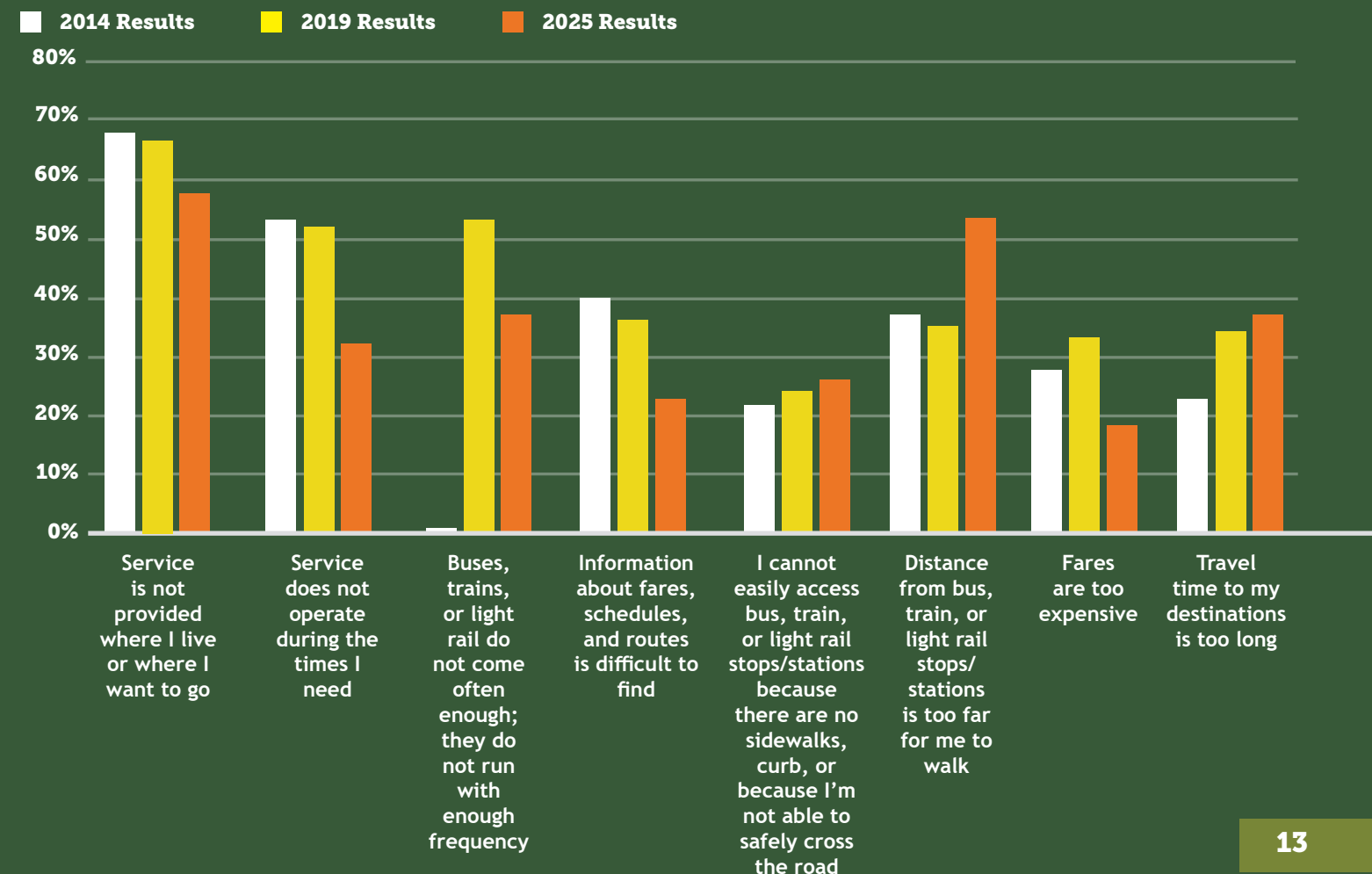
- Provide alternative mobility options as a strategy to manage congestion, particularly along heavily traveled highway corridors.

2025 Statewide Transit Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

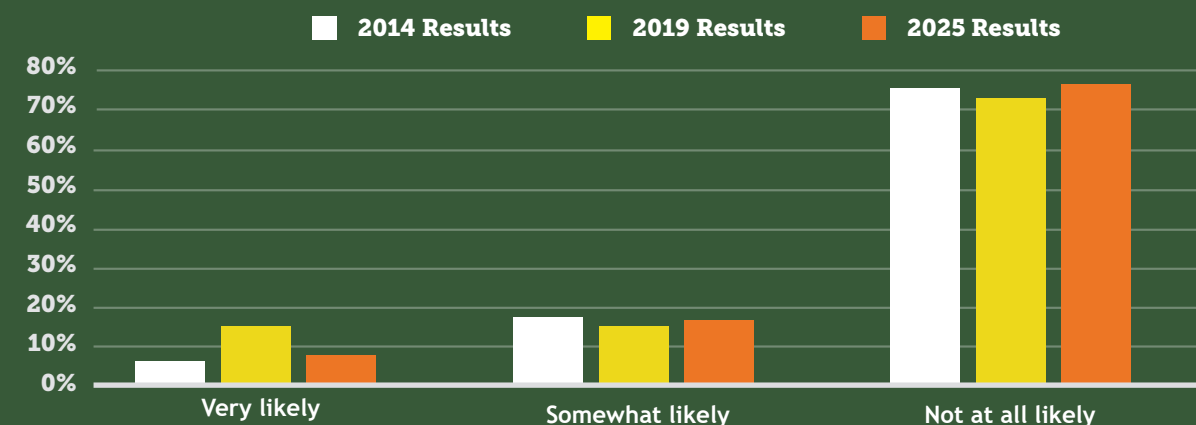
In 2014, CDOT conducted its first statistically valid statewide survey specifically targeting older adults and adults with disabilities. The goal of the survey was to better understand the unique travel behaviors and transportation needs of these populations, who often face distinct mobility challenges. CDOT conducted the survey in 2019 and again in 2025 to capture changes over time and provide insight into how shifting demographics, services, and infrastructure have impacted mobility.

The most frequently reported issue across all years was that service is not provided where people live or want to go, though this concern slightly declined from 68 percent in 2014 to 66 percent in 2019 and 58 percent in 2025. Service availability during needed times also saw a marked drop, from 53 percent in 2014 and 51 percent in 2019 to 32 percent in 2025. A related concern, service not running frequently enough, was reported by 53 percent in 2019, decreasing to 37 percent by 2025. Meanwhile, difficulty accessing information about fares, schedules, and routes decreased consistently from 40 percent in 2014 to 23 percent in 2025. Accessibility-related barriers showed mixed trends. Difficulty accessing transit due to lack of sidewalks or curb ramps increased slightly from 21 percent in 2014 to 26 percent in 2025. Distance from transit stops became a growing issue, rising from 38 percent in 2014 to 51 percent in 2025. The affordability of transit, measured by concerns over high fares, peaked in 2019 at 32 percent, but dropped to 19 percent in 2025. Long travel times to destinations remained a concern, climbing from 22 percent in 2014 to 38 percent in 2019, then easing slightly to 30 percent in 2025.

Barriers to Using Public Transportation Services

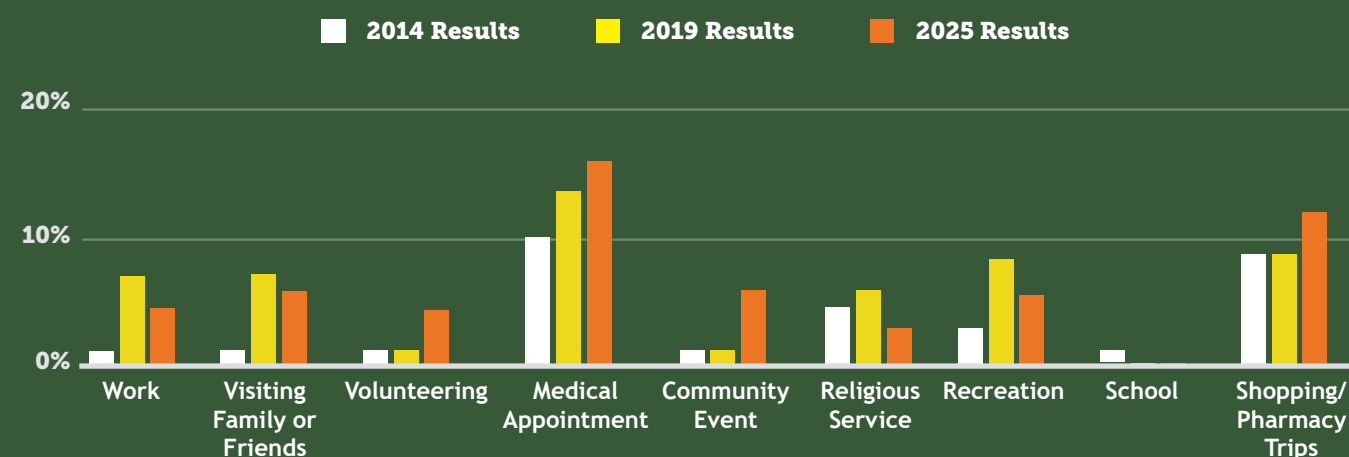


For the times you drive yourself, how likely would you be to use fixed route public transportation or demand-response transportation services instead of driving?



In 2014, only 6 percent of respondents said they were very likely to use public transportation in place of driving, and that number peaked modestly at 11 percent in 2019 before dropping to 7 percent in 2025. Similarly, those who were somewhat likely to make the switch ranged between 15 and 19 percent, ending at 17 percent in 2025. A substantial majority consistently reported they were not at all likely to use public transit services—75 percent in 2014, 74 percent in 2019, and 76 percent in 2025.

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



The data shows that respondents most frequently cited medical appointments as the trip type for which they needed transportation but had difficulty finding it. This concern rose from 10 percent in 2014 to 13 percent in 2019, and further to 15 percent in 2025, indicating a growing challenge in this area. Similarly, shopping or pharmacy trips saw a gradual increase, from 9 percent in 2014 and 2019 to 12 percent in 2025. Work-related transportation needs also rose, peaking at 6 percent in 2019 before slightly declining to 4 percent in 2025. Visiting family or friends and volunteering were reported by 1 percent in 2014, increasing to 6 percent and 1 percent respectively in 2019, and settling at 3 percent and 4 percent by 2025. Other types of trips such as recreation and religious service fluctuated in the 3 to 7 percent range, while school remained consistently low, only appearing in 2014 at 1 percent.

Existing Providers and Coordination Activities

All transit service provider information and associated data for the UFR TPR were collected from the 2023 National Transit Database, previous plans, CDOT's Division of Transit and Rail, tailored outreach to providers, and internet research. While extensive efforts were made to collect information about all providers, the information may not be comprehensive.

Bustang Outrider

Bustang, Colorado's statewide bus service, offers affordable and reliable transportation between major cities and regions. Bustang's mainlines serve I-70 and I-25 to connect Denver with destinations such as Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Vail, Glenwood Springs, and Grand Junction and to provide convenient options for travelers across the state. In addition, Outrider extends service to rural communities, to offer regional connections and enhance access to areas not covered by Bustang.

Bustang to Estes

Operated by Ace Express, Bustang to Estes Park runs from Memorial Day weekend through the last weekend in September, operating on Saturdays, Sundays, and select holidays. The route aims to alleviate single-occupancy vehicle congestion traveling to and from Estes Park, the gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park. Each service day includes two buses traveling westbound to Estes Park in the morning and two buses returning eastbound to Denver in the afternoon.

Upper Front Range stop: Estes Park

Sterling – Denver Outrider Route

Operated by Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG), the Outrider route connects the UFR with the Eastern TPR and the Denver metro area. It operates once daily, Monday through Friday, providing a morning service traveling from Sterling to Denver and an afternoon return service traveling from Denver back to Sterling.

Upper Front Range stops: Brush, Fort Morgan, Wiggins, Keenesburg

Greeley – Sterling Outrider Route

Operated by NECALG, the Outrider route connects the UFR with the Eastern TPR. It runs three times a week—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday—between Sterling and Greeley. Each service day includes a morning bus traveling to Greeley and an afternoon return trip back to Sterling.

Upper Front Range stops: Brush, Fort Morgan, Wiggins, Kersey

Transit Service Types

- Fixed-route: Transit service that operates on a defined route and schedule.
- Deviated Fixed-Route: Transit service that follows a defined route and schedule but will deviate off route within a defined area to pick up passengers upon request.
- Commuter Bus: Local fixed-route bus transportation primarily connecting outlying areas with a central city. Characterized by a motorcoach, multiple trip tickets and stops in outlying areas, limited stops in the central city, and at least 5 miles of closed-door service.
- Demand Response: Typically door-to-door service where riders call ahead to schedule a trip (e.g., Dial-a-Ride, Call-n-Ride, Access-a-Ride).
- Vanpools: Service organized in advance by a group of people who travel to and from similar locations at the same time.
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): Fixed-route bus systems that operate at least 50 percent of the service on a fixed guideway. These systems also have defined passenger stations, traffic signal priority or preemption, short headway bidirectional services for a substantial part of weekdays and weekend days, low-floor vehicles or level-platform boarding, and separate branding of the service.
- Aerial Tramway: Unpowered passenger vehicles suspended from a system of aerial cables and propelled by separate cables attached to the vehicle suspension system. Engines or motors at a central location, not onboard the vehicle, power the cable system.

Transit Service Categories

- Interstate Public: Open to the general public and connects one or more regions/TPRs to regions outside the state of Colorado.*
- Interregional Public: Open to the general public and connects one region/TPR of the state to another region/TPR.*
- Regional Transit Service: Open to the general public and connects communities and counties within a region/TPR.
- Local Transit: Open to the general public and operates primarily within a city, town, or community.
- Human Services Transportation: Provided by a human services agency that is typically for a specific population, such as older adults, people with disabilities, or veterans.
- Private For-Profit Transportation: Operated privately and includes taxis, resort transportation, ridehailing services (Uber, Lyft), etc.

* Interstate and interregional include intercity bus service as defined by the FTA in reference to the FTA's classification for Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus Funding eligibility



Interregional, Regional, and Local Transit Providers

The UFR TPR has a range of interregional, regional, and local public transit providers that operate fixed-route bus and on-demand services.

Note: Ridership, budget, revenue miles, and revenue hours include all service types.

Provider	Service Area	Type of Service	Span of Service	Fare	2023 Annual Rider-ship	2023 Ops and Admin Budget	2023 Vehicle Revenue Miles	2023 Vehicle Revenue Hours
Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments (County Express and Prairie Express)	Morgan, Logan, Sedgwick, Phillips, Washington, and Yuma counties	Demand Response, Fixed-route	Mon-Fri, 7am to 4:30pm	\$3 to \$40	91,037	\$1,703,628	554,755	32,295
Town of Estes Park (The Peak)	Estes Park	Fixed-route	Daily (Seasonal) 9am to 9pm	Free	99,472	\$548,532	70,992	5,652
Rocky Mountain National Park (Hiker Shuttle)	Estes Park, Rocky Mountain National Park	Fixed-route	Daily (May-Sept), Weekends (Sept-Oct) 8:30am to 6pm	\$2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: 2020 UFR Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan, Desktop Review



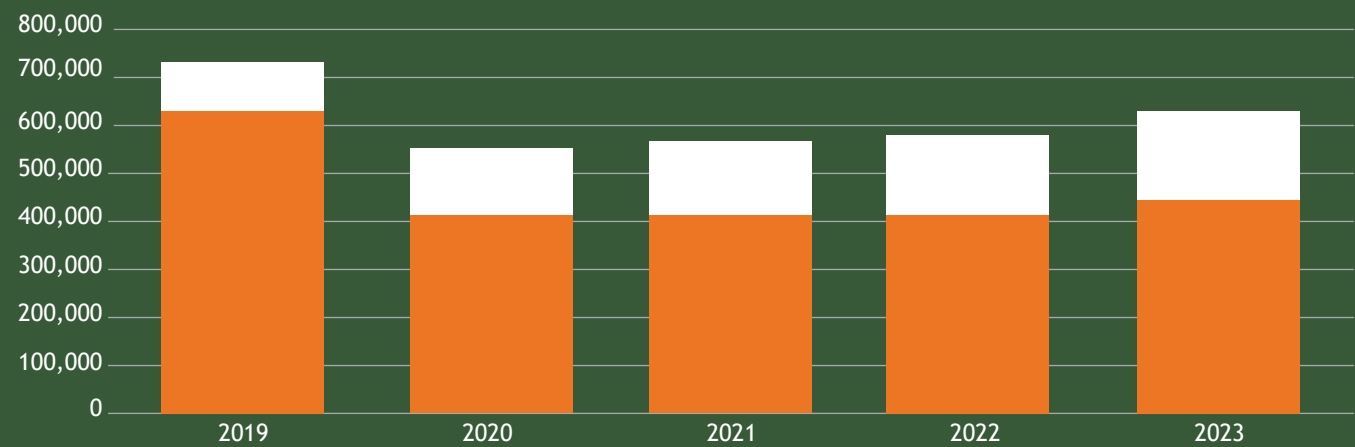
Photo Credit: Visit Estes Park



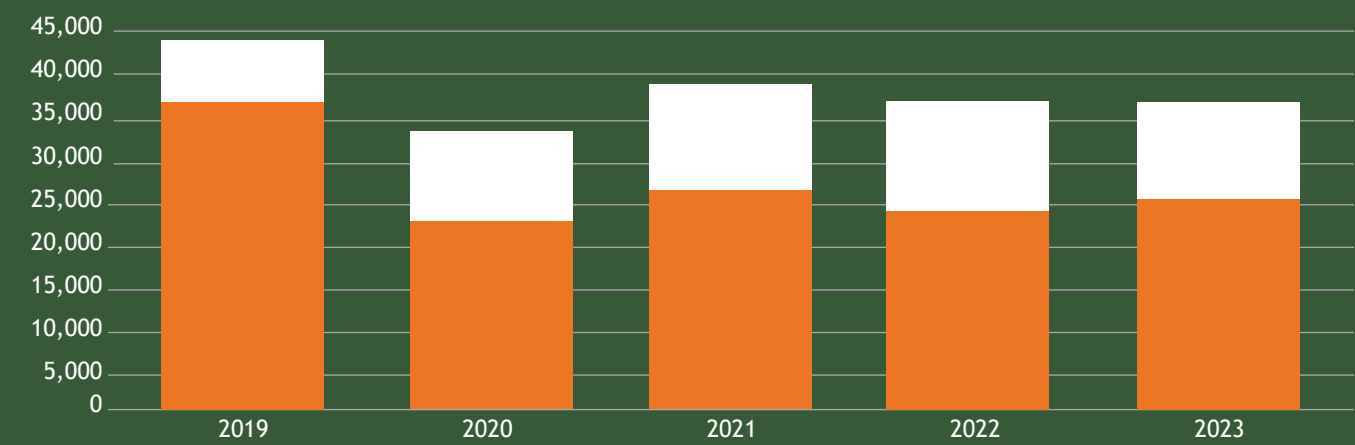
5-Year Historic Operating Data

Five-year historic trends for key transit operating metrics (ridership, revenue miles, and revenue hours) for all local and regional public transit service providers in the UFR TPR show that ridership dipped significantly between 2019 and 2020 due to COVID-19. However, fixed-route services have played a significant role in the Region’s transit recovery close to their 2019 ridership levels in 2021.

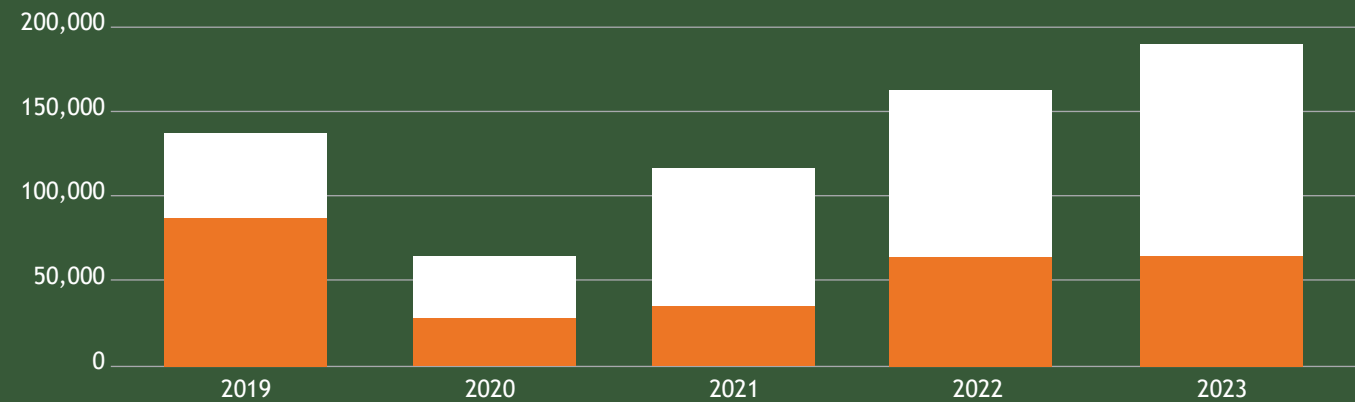
Total TPR Vehicle Revenue Miles



Total TPR Vehicle Revenue Hours



Total TPR Unlinked Passenger Trips



Fixed-route Demand Response

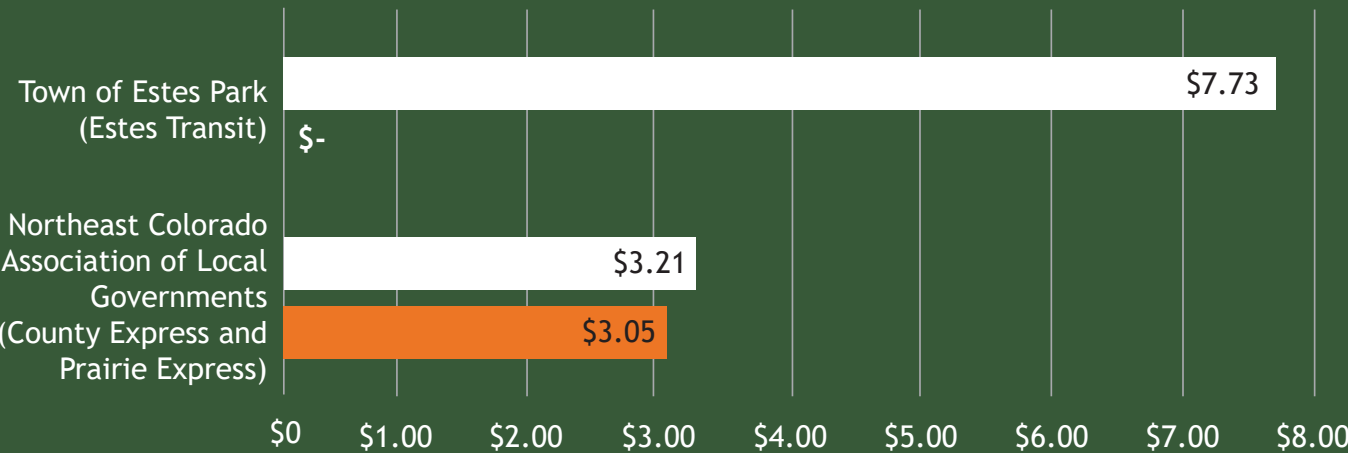


Transit Provider Service Performance Metrics

Key performance data indicate the efficiency of an agency’s service operations. UFR TPR cost per revenue mile, cost per revenue hour, and cost per trip are highlighted to identify performance across agencies.

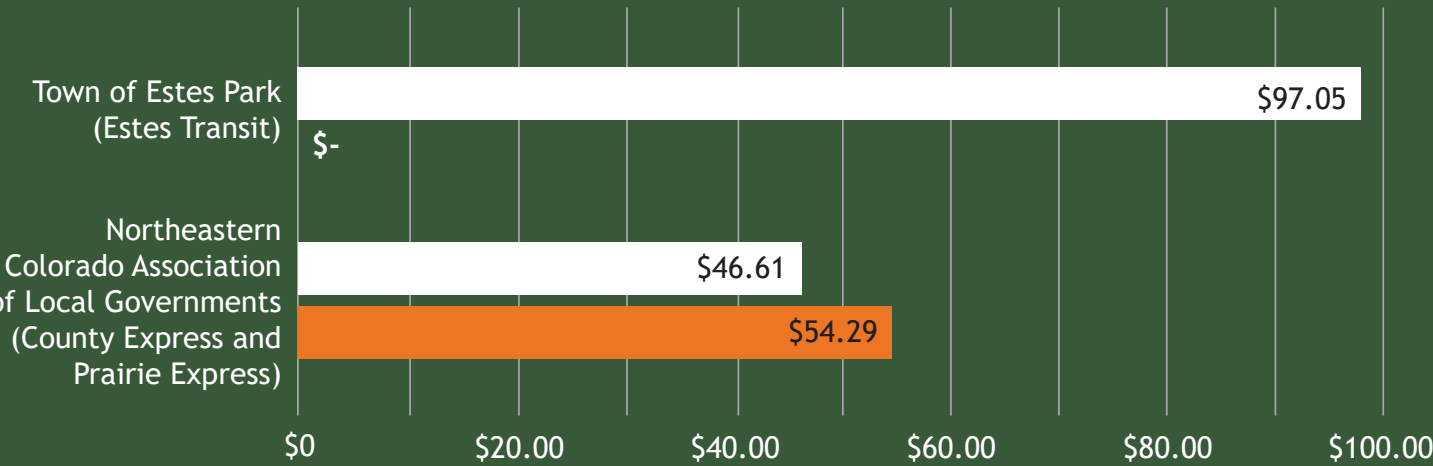
Cost per Mile

Estes Transit reported a cost per mile of \$7.73 for fixed-route service. County Express and Prairie Express reported the lowest cost per mile for demand response service, at \$3.05. In comparison, fixed-route service reflects a cost per mile of \$3.21.



Cost per Hour

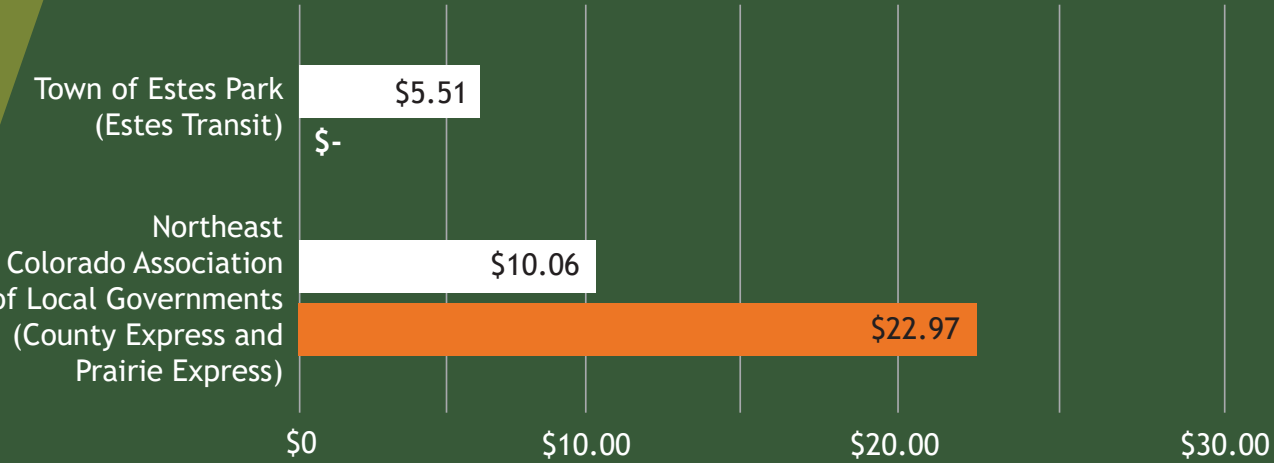
Estes Transit’s fixed-route service reported a cost per hour of \$97.05. In comparison, County Express and Prairie Express reported a cost per hour of \$46.61 for fixed-route service and \$54.29 for demand response service.



Source: 2019-2023 National Transit Database, Tailored Provider Surveys

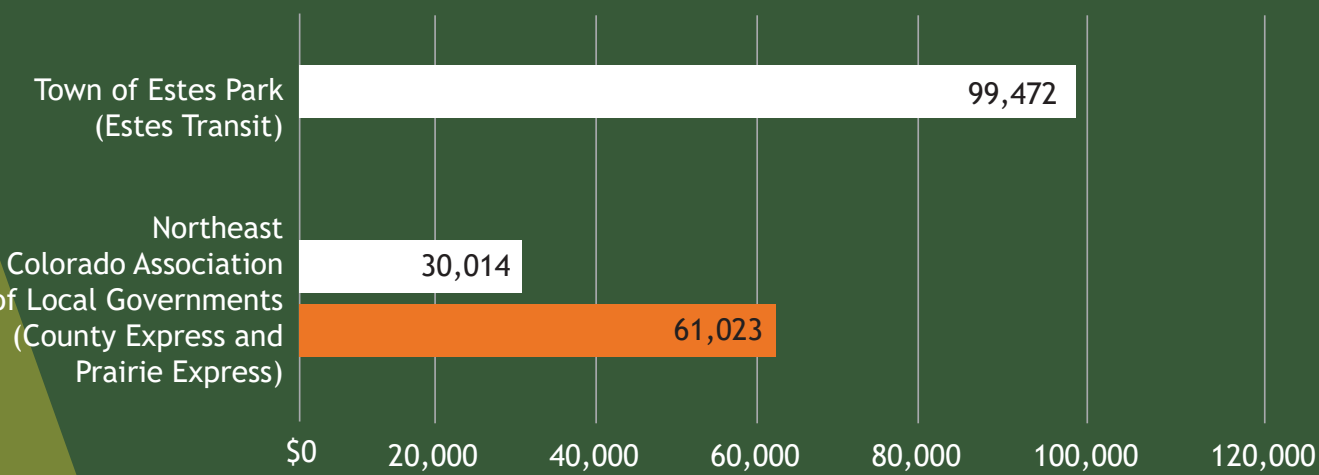
Cost per Ride

Estes Transit reported a cost per ride of \$5.51 for fixed-route service. County Express and Prairie Express reported a cost per ride of \$10.06 for fixed-route service and \$22.97 for demand response service.



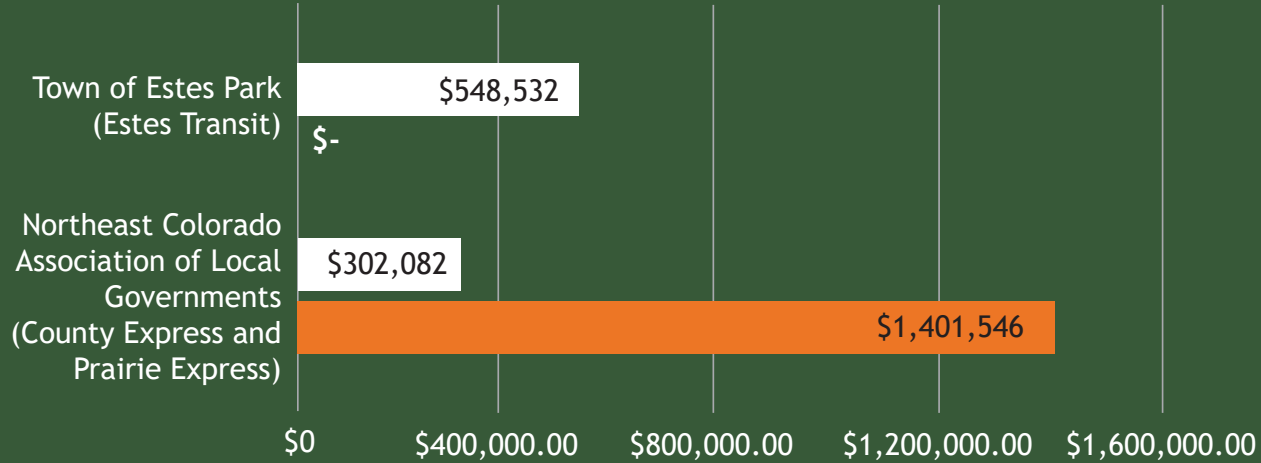
Annual Ridership

Estes Transit reported an annual ridership of 99,472 for fixed-route service. County Express and Prairie Express reported an annual ridership of 30,014 for fixed-route service and 61,023 for demand response service.



Annual Operating Costs

Estes Transit reported an annual operating cost of \$548,532 for fixed-route service. County Express and Prairie Express recorded an annual operating cost of \$302,082 for fixed-route service and \$1,401,546 for demand response service.



Human Services Transportation Providers

Several human services agencies in the UFR TPR offer transportation services, although transportation is just one of the many services they provide. The following table outlines the human services agencies in the Region that offer transportation, along with the populations they serve. The table lists providers from the 2020 UFR Coordinated Public Transit and Human Transportation Services Plan that were still operational in 2023, as well as additional providers identified through online research. As this list was compiled using available online information, it may not include all providers in the UFR TPR, especially those without websites.

Provider	Service Area (Within UFR)	Additional TPRs	Type of Service	Days of Service	Passenger Eligibility
A Little Help	Larimer and Weld counties	DRCOG, IM, NFRMPO	Demand Response	Upon request	Older adults (60+)
American Red Cross - Northern Colorado	Larimer, Morgan, and Weld counties	EA, NFRMPO	Demand Response	Upon request	Older adults and critically ill
Envida	Weld County	CFR, DRCOG, NFRMPO, PPACG	Demand Response, Vouchers or Reimbursement, Coordination with Other Providers	Daily	Open to all passengers requiring transportation services, with priority given to elderly, disabled, and low-income community members
Foothills Gateway	Larimer and Weld counties	NFRMPO	Demand Response, Contract with Other Providers, Coordination with Other Providers	Mon-Fri	People with developmental disabilities
Health of Northern Larimer County	Larimer County	NFRMPO	Specialized Services	Mon-Fri, 8am to 5pm	Residents within the Health District
Heart and Soul Paratransit	Larimer and Weld counties	NFRMPO	Demand Response	Daily	Older adults (65+) and people with disabilities, children
MedRide	Weld, Morgan, and Larimer counties	All of Colorado	Demand Response (Medical), Specialized Services	Mon-Fri, 6am to 6pm Sat-Sun, 6am to 5pm	Medicaid recipients requiring non-emergency medical transportation
Sara Transport	Morgan County	NFRMPO	Demand Response (Medical)	Upon request	Medicaid recipients
Senior Resource Services (60+ Ride)	Weld County	NFRMPO	Demand Response	Daily	Older adults (65+)
Sherman Early Childhood Center	Morgan County	NFRMPO	Fixed-route Bus	Mon-Fri	Students in Morgan County School District Re-3
Town of Platteville	Platteville	N/A	Demand Response	Upon request	Older adults (65+)

Provider	Service Area (Within UFR)	Additional TPRs	Type of Service	Days of Service	Passenger Eligibility
Triangle Cross Ranch	Weld County	NFRMPO	Demand Response	Upon request	Residents at assisted living center
Turning Point Center for Youth and Family Development	Morgan, Larimer, and Weld counties	NFRMPO	Demand Response, Vouchers or Reimbursement, Bus Passes or Tickets	Daily	Patients receiving mental health and substance abuse treatment at Turning Point Center
Via Mobility Services	Weld County	DRCOG, NFRMPO	Demand Response	Daily	Those elligible for paratransit services

Source: 2020 UFR Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan, Desktop Review

Other Human Services Agencies

Some human services providers do not offer direct transportation services but may fund transportation programs, offer transportation-related services, or coordinate with transportation providers in the Region. The following tabel lists providers from the 2020 UFR Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan that were still active in 2023, along with additional providers identified through online research. As this list was compiled through available online resources, it may not include all providers in the UFR TPR, especially those without websites.

Provider	Service Area (Within EA)	Additional TPRs	Type of Service	Days of Service	Passenger Eligibility
Connections for Independent Living	Weld County	EA, NFRMPO	Coordination with Other Providers	Upon request	People with disabilities, older adults (65+)
Salvation Army Emergency Assistance	Morgan County	N/A	Vouchers or Reimbursement	Upon request	Open to all passengers requiring transportation services
Weld County Area Agency on Aging	Weld County	NFRMPO	Contract with Other Providers	Upon request	People with disabilities, older adults (65+), Medicaid recipients

Source: 2020 UFR Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan, Desktop Review

Private Transportation Providers

Two private for-profit companies in the UFR TPR provide transportation services: High Mountain Taxi and Uber.

State of Good Repair

CDOT’s Division of Transit and Rail comprehensive Transit Asset Management Plan meets federal requirements and was last updated fall 2023. The plan evaluates the condition of assets funded with state or federal funds to help prioritize investments that ensure Colorado’s transit systems remain in a state of good repair. Currently, over one-third of CDOT tracked transit vehicles in the UFR TPR are beyond their state of good repair. The anticipated cost of this backlog is approximately \$171,000. The vehicle that is beyond a state of good repair is operated by Estes Transit.

Provider	Total Revenue Vehicles	Vehicles Beyond State of Good Repair	Percentage of Vehicles Beyond State of Good Repair	Cost of Backlog
Town of Estes Park (Estes Transit)	3	1	33.33%	\$171,251
NECALG (County Express and Prairie Express)	1	0	0.00%	\$0
TOTAL	4	1	33.33%	\$171,251.00

Source: 2023 Transit Asset Management Plan

Regional Coordination Activities

The Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA) has identified NECALG and Ride NoCo as the two local coordinating councils in the UFR TPR. While NECALG primarily serves counties in the EA TPR, the Association also serves Morgan County (in UFR TPR). Similarly, while Ride NoCo primarily serves the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO), Ride NoCo also works to enhance mobility throughout Weld and Larimer counties. NFRMPO through Ride NoCo collaborates with Weld County on transit-related communication. The NFRMPO also supports rural Larimer County as feasible. No coordination activities appear to be taking place in Morgan County.

Weld and Larimer counties previously had their own local coordinating councils. Today, those local coordinating councils appear to be folded into the NFRMPO’s Mobility Program, which works with the Larimer County Mobility Committee (LCMC) and the Weld County Mobility Committee (WCMC) as a forum for transit providers, human service agencies, and members of the public to discuss needs, to network, and to find creative solutions to mobility issues. Each committee meets individually and as a combined Northern Colorado Mobility Committee (NCMC) once per quarter, with all meetings are open to the public. The LCMC and WCMC both meet quarterly. In terms of rural transit, the LCMC currently focuses on identifying and addressing challenges such as intertown gaps, affordability, access for seniors and people with disabilities, and insufficient coordination among service providers. The WCMC currently focuses on filling rural transit gaps, improving accessibility, expanding coordination among providers, and increasing awareness of services.

Coordinating Services

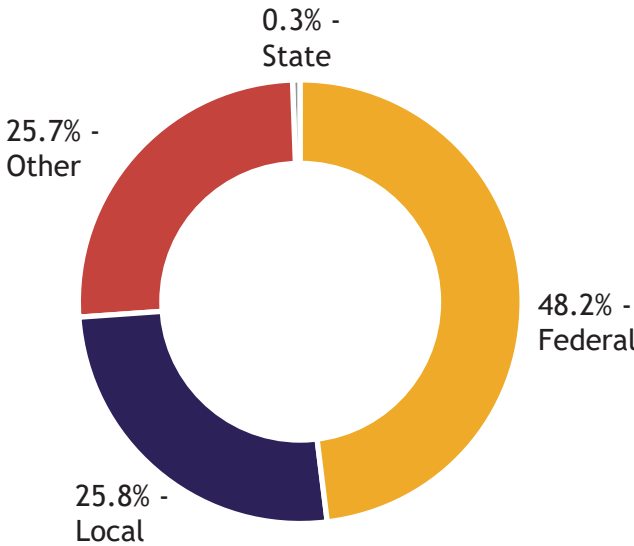
Via Mobility Services is a significant stakeholder in the UFR TPR coordination efforts. Via Mobility promotes coordination by providing travel training services to agencies to help ensure clients of human services agencies across the Region can access the various transportation services. They also provide group travel training, mobility options information, referrals, and individual travel planning services.

Via Mobility also provides paratransit trips in Weld and Larimer counties Monday through Friday. This service enhances mobility for residents, especially older adults and individuals with disabilities, and provides transportation to grocery stores, healthcare facilities, work locations, social outings, and more. Via Mobility collaborated closely with Weld County Board of County Commissioners, NFRMPO, and UFR TPR partners to ensure coordination and communication about this new service. Beyond paratransit services, Via Mobility offers mileage reimbursement for family and friends of those in need of transportation services. Via Mobility also collaborates with other human services providers to prevent duplicative efforts.

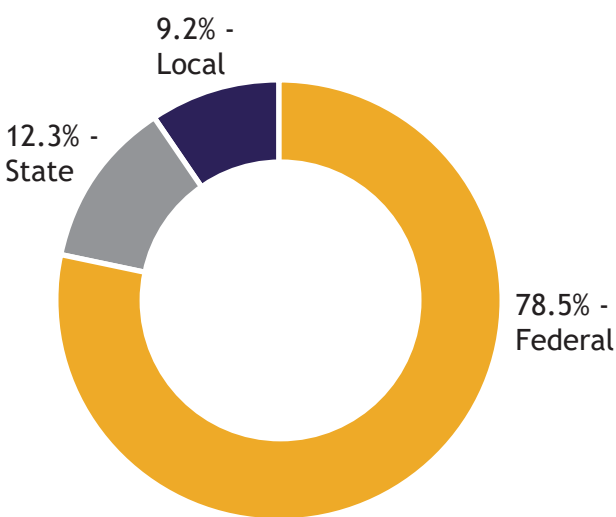
Financial Snapshot

Because transit funding is complex, Colorado providers typically use a patchwork funding approach that includes federal, state, local fares, donations, and/or tax revenues. Public funds are primarily used to support transit and transportation services in rural parts of Colorado, with most agencies relying on federal funds from FTA. For Operating Revenue Sources, funding is relatively balanced among three main categories: federal sources provide the largest share at 48.2 percent, while local and other sources contribute nearly equally at 25.8 percent and 25.7 percent, respectively. State support is minimal, representing just 0.3 percent of operating funds. For Capital Revenue, the chart highlights a strong reliance on federal funding, which accounts for 78.5 percent of total capital revenues. The remaining capital funds come from state sources (12.3 percent) and local sources (9.2 percent). This reflects the crucial role of federal investment in supporting infrastructure improvements and long-term capital projects.

Operating Revenue Sources



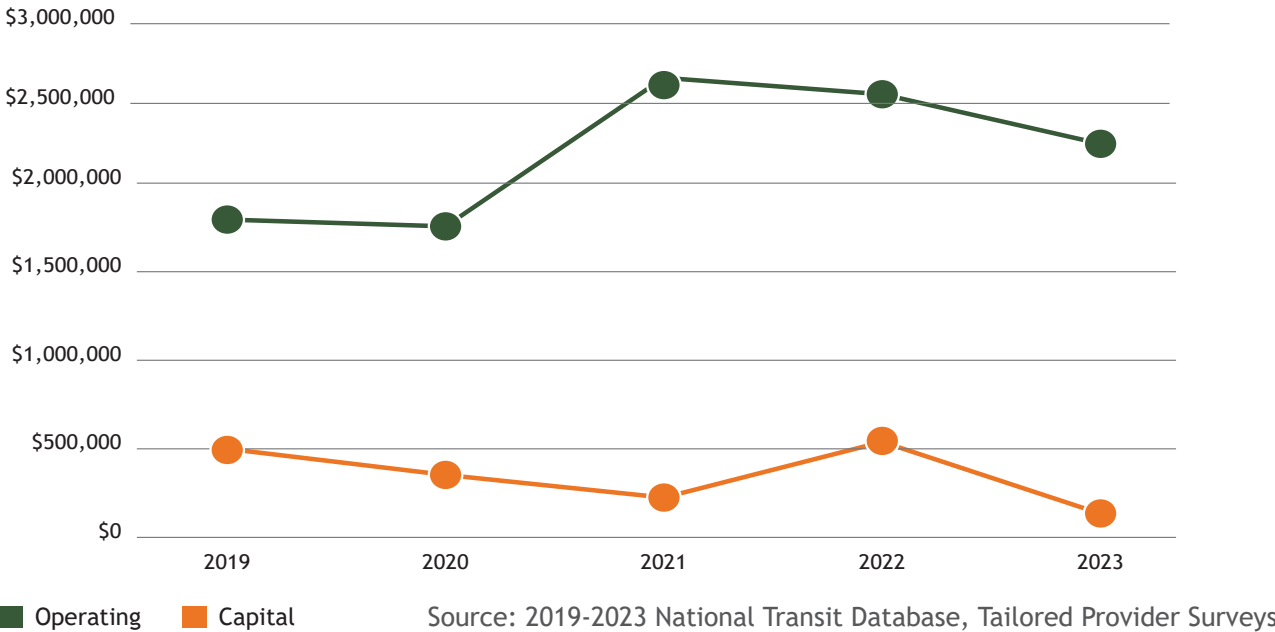
Capital Revenue Sources



Source: 2023 National Transit Database, Tailored Provider Surveys

Historic Revenue Data

The following chart shows five-year UFR TPR operating and capital funding trends. Operating funds increased by 30 percent since 2019, although funds peaked in 2021 at \$2.6 million. Capital funding has fallen from just under \$500,000 in 2019 and 2022 to less than \$20,000 in 2023.



Regional Transit Revenue Trends

Annual Operating/Capital Projections

Regional 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 information from the 2023 TAM Plan data and 2023 NTD data to outline projected capital and operating needs through 2050. 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 highlights the scale of need across a region 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 transit services over the coming decades.

Capital and Operating Costs

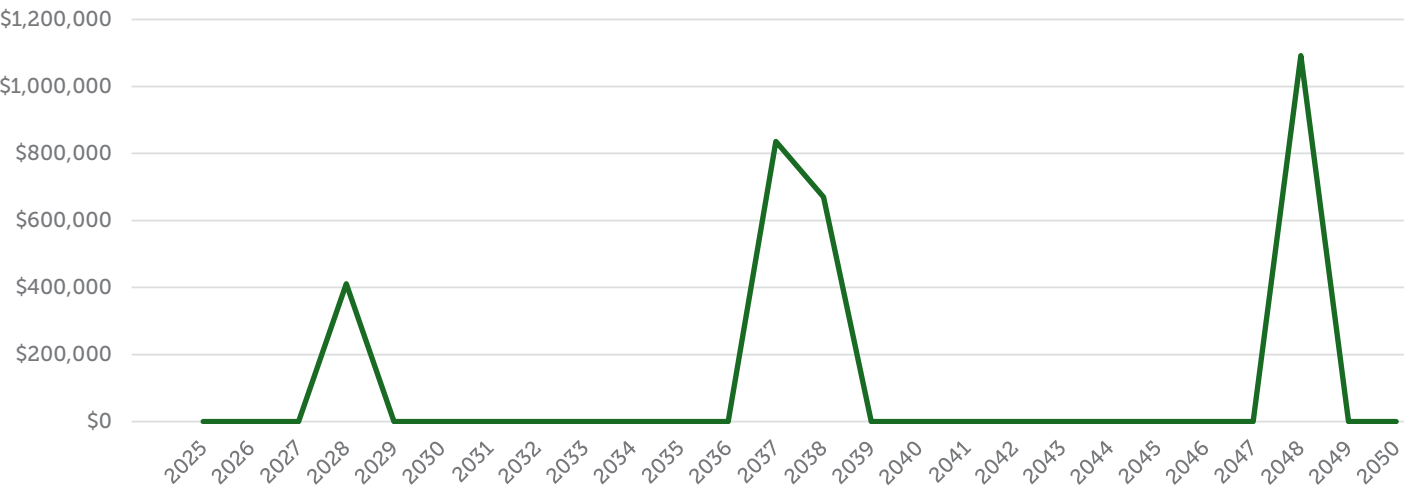
The 2023 TAM Plan uses a four-year planning horizon (2023-2026), consistent with FTA requirements, and identifies asset conditions, anticipated replacement needs, and capital costs necessary to maintain a state of good repair over that period.

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 UFR TPR 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 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 transit agencies. To project future costs, these baseline figures were escalated using county-level population growth forecasts. This approach reflects anticipated increases in service demand driven by demographic changes.

Similarly, the following chart illustrates projected operating expenditures for 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.

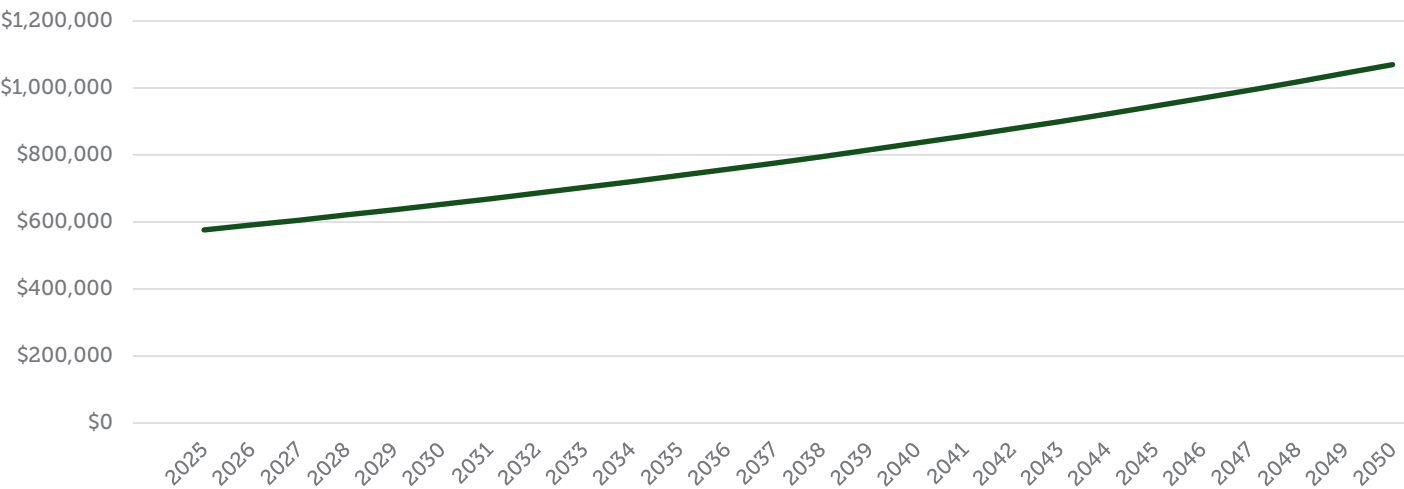




Photo Credit: City of Fort Lupton

Funding Programs and Opportunities

Federal funding is the primary source of revenue for transit and human services providers in Colorado, supporting both operating and capital projects. CDOT serves as the designated recipient for rural transit funds, allocating Grants for Rural Areas (5311) funding based on a Colorado-specific rural funding methodology. Additionally, CDOT distributes Bus and Bus Facilities (5339) and Planning (5304) funds through an annual competitive grant application process open to rural providers across the state.

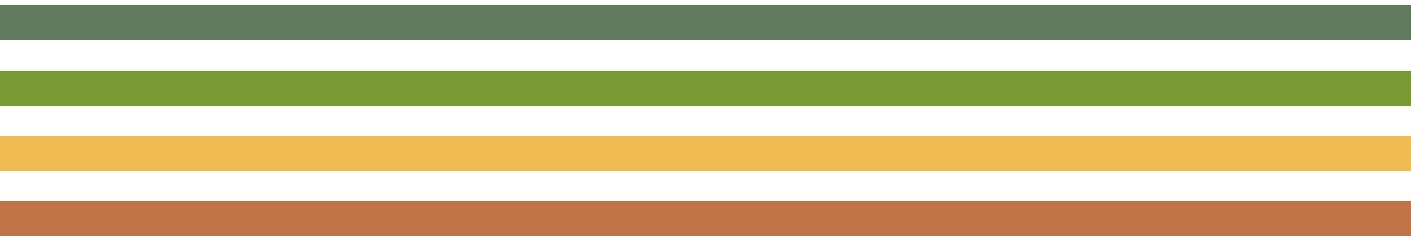
Historically, funding for both operating and capital transit needs has been limited. In the previous planning cycle, strategic funds from sources like Senate Bill (SB)-267 and others were allocated for transit capital projects over four years. Recently, the Clean Transit Enterprise, established through House Bill (HB) 21-260, created a Retail Delivery Fee to provide competitive funding for zero-emission transit planning, facilities, charging infrastructure, and bus replacement projects. Furthermore, SB 24-230 introduces an “Oil and Gas Production Fee” to fund future transit and rail projects, with implementation expected in January 2026. This bill allocates fees from oil and gas companies to fund a Formula Local Transit Operations Grant Program (70 percent), Competitive Local Transit Grant Program (10 percent), and Rail Funding Program (20 percent).

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 Enterprise Funding

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 and Bus Facilities - 5339(a)
- Grants for Rural Areas - 5311
- Human Resources and 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 and Standards Development - 5314(a)



Implementation Strategies

Implementation actions are meant to be near-term, practicable measures related to the TPR’s transit vision and goals and to support the implementation of identified transit projects in the Region.

- Advocate for stable funding to maintain the operation of existing transit services
- Advocate for full funding of TPR identified transit capital, operating, and planning projects
- Maintain all assets in a state of good repair and seek funding for storage and maintenance facilities to extend the useful life of vehicles
- Advocate for interregional transit service north of Fort Collins, potentially providing connections to Wyoming
- Advocate for regional transit service along US 34 connecting Estes Park with I-25
- Maximize existing and seek new funding sources to expand local and regional services to include additional days, hours, and geographic coverage
- Improve transit amenities in the Region, through increased signage and shelters, and street design that accomdates all needs and modes
- Consider ways to integrate transit and improve access to transit for residents, employees, and visitors
- Consider integrating pedestrian safety to projects

Photo Credit: Visit Estes Park

Priority Projects

Based on findings from public input, data about gaps and needs, and input from stakeholders, UFR TPR members prioritized their operating and capital projects for the Region. If projects were added after the TPR prioritization process, those projects are identified as “unranked.” It is important to note that while projects are ranked, priorities may change based on available funding, grant opportunities, agency needs, etc.

Rank	Planning Project ID	Project Name	Project Description	Capital Cost (\$M)	10-Year Operating Cost (\$M)	Project Benefits

Priority projects are currently under review. An updated list of projects will be included in the final Regional Transit Plan

