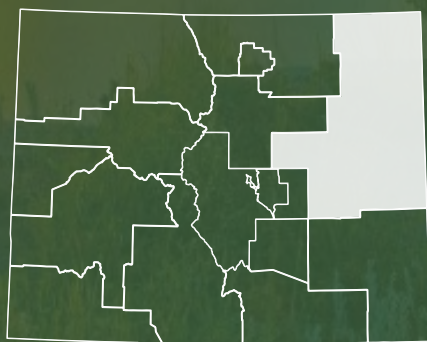

Eastern Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan

January 2026



Counties:
Cheyenne, Elbert,
Kit Carson,
Lincoln, Logan,
Phillips, Sedgwick,
Washington, and
Yuma

Above: The location of counties
in the Eastern Transportation
Planning Region.

Table of Contents

Regional Snapshot	6
What We Heard	8
Public Engagement Overview	9
Public Engagement Key Themes	10
Existing Providers and Coordination Activities	13
Interregional, Regional, and Local Transit Providers	16
5-Year Historic Operating Data	18
Transit Provider Service Performance Metrics	19
Human Services Transportation Providers	24
Private Transportation Providers	25
State of Good Repair	26
Regional Coordination Activities	26
Financial Snapshot	28
Historic Revenue Data	28

Regional Transit Revenue Trends	29
Annual Operating/Capital Projections	29
Funding Programs and Opportunities	31
Federal Transit Administration Funding Programs	32
Implementation Strategies	33
Priority Projects	34



Photo Credit: Explore Sterling

Eastern Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan

The Eastern (EA) Transportation Planning Region (TPR) includes Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma counties. The largest incorporated municipalities in the Region are Elizabeth, Burlington, Limon, Sterling, Holyoke, Julesburg, Akron, Yuma, and Wray. 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.



EA Transit Vision

In the Eastern TPR, the transit vision is to provide an efficient, safe, and accessible transit network that serves the needs of individual communities, while making future investment decisions to enhance the quality of life of Eastern Colorado residents.

EA Transit Goals

1. Increase the awareness of mobility services among elected officials, agencies, clients, and the public to encourage greater utilization of existing transit services.
2. Increase access to medical services within the Region and to larger service areas.
3. Expand transit services to meet identified needs.
4. Provide transit service for transit-dependent populations within the Region.
5. Maximize (maintain) existing transit services to meet current and future transit needs.

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 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 EA 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 EA 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.

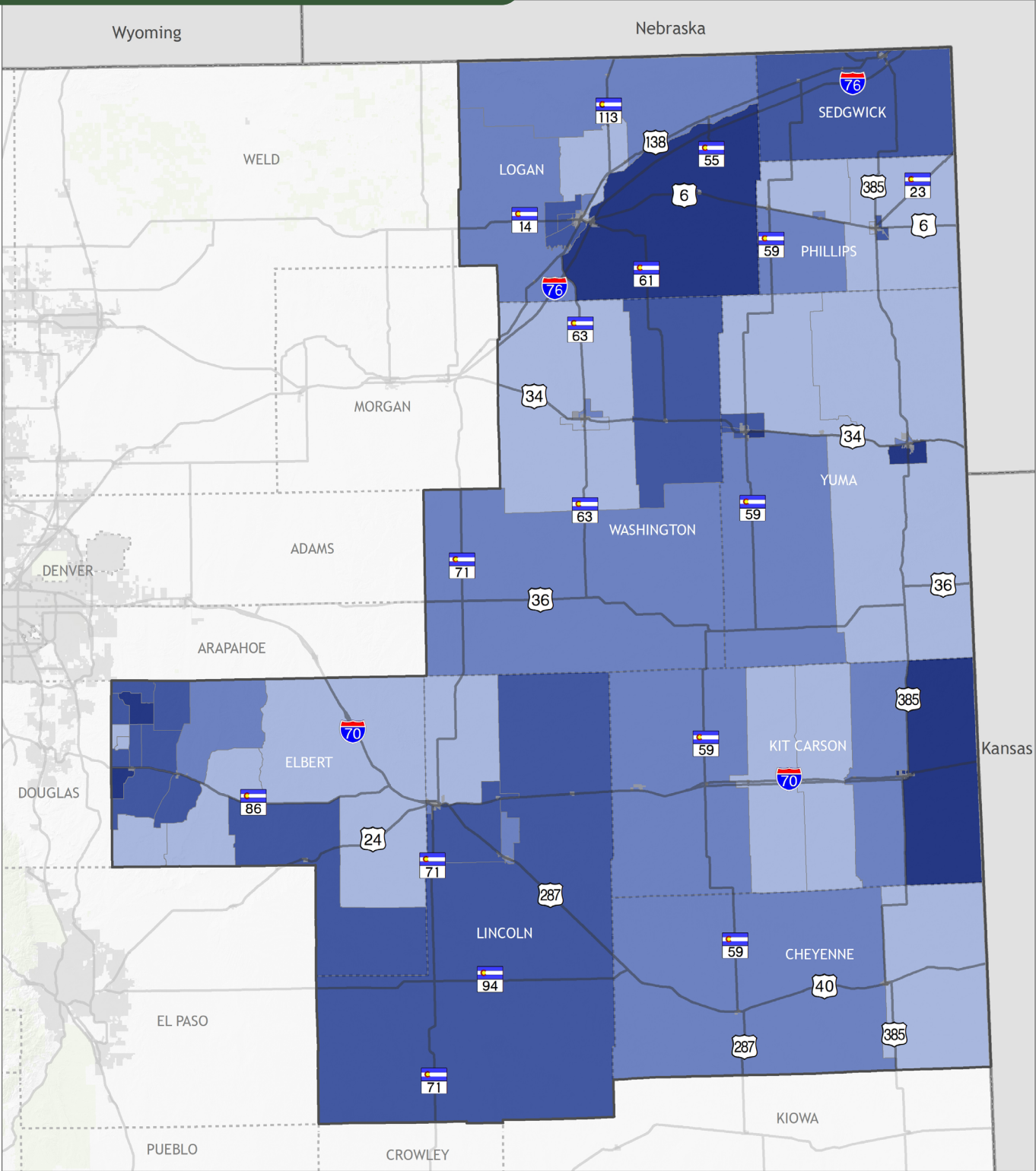
When considering the EA TPR’s mobility future, reviewing and analyzing available data helps uncover potential transportation network gaps and needs. Populations that often have a higher than average need for transit and/or have limited access to transportation services and facilities must be considered 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**
- Light blue: Low Transit Need
 - Medium-light blue: Low to Moderate Transit Need
 - Medium-dark blue: Moderate Transit Need
 - Dark blue: Moderate to High Transit Need
 - Darkest blue: High Transit Need

- Dark blue: Moderate Transit Need
- Medium-dark blue: Moderate to High Transit Need
- Darkest blue: High Transit Need

- Thick grey line: Interstate/Highways
- Thin grey line: City Boundaries
- Dashed grey line: County Boundaries

- Thick grey outline: Eastern 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 20 Miles

NORTH



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 EA TPR members and agencies is summarized below.



Support for Local Transit Operations

Need ongoing funding and resources to maintain reliable, frequent, and accessible local transit services.



Promote Regional Economic Vitality

Transit projects that support economic growth by improving access to jobs, businesses, and key destinations.



Connect Local, Regional, and Interregional Transit

Stronger coordination between local and regional transit systems to provide seamless, efficient travel across the Region.

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 Accessibility

- Expand basic public transportation services to support mobility for non-drivers, including older adults, people with disabilities, and those without access to private vehicles.
- Ensure equitable access to transportation for residents in remote areas who face long distances to essential services such as healthcare and employment.

2. Regional Connectivity

- Ensure that regional transit solutions, including potential future rail or bus links to connect rural communities to the Front Range and other service corridors.

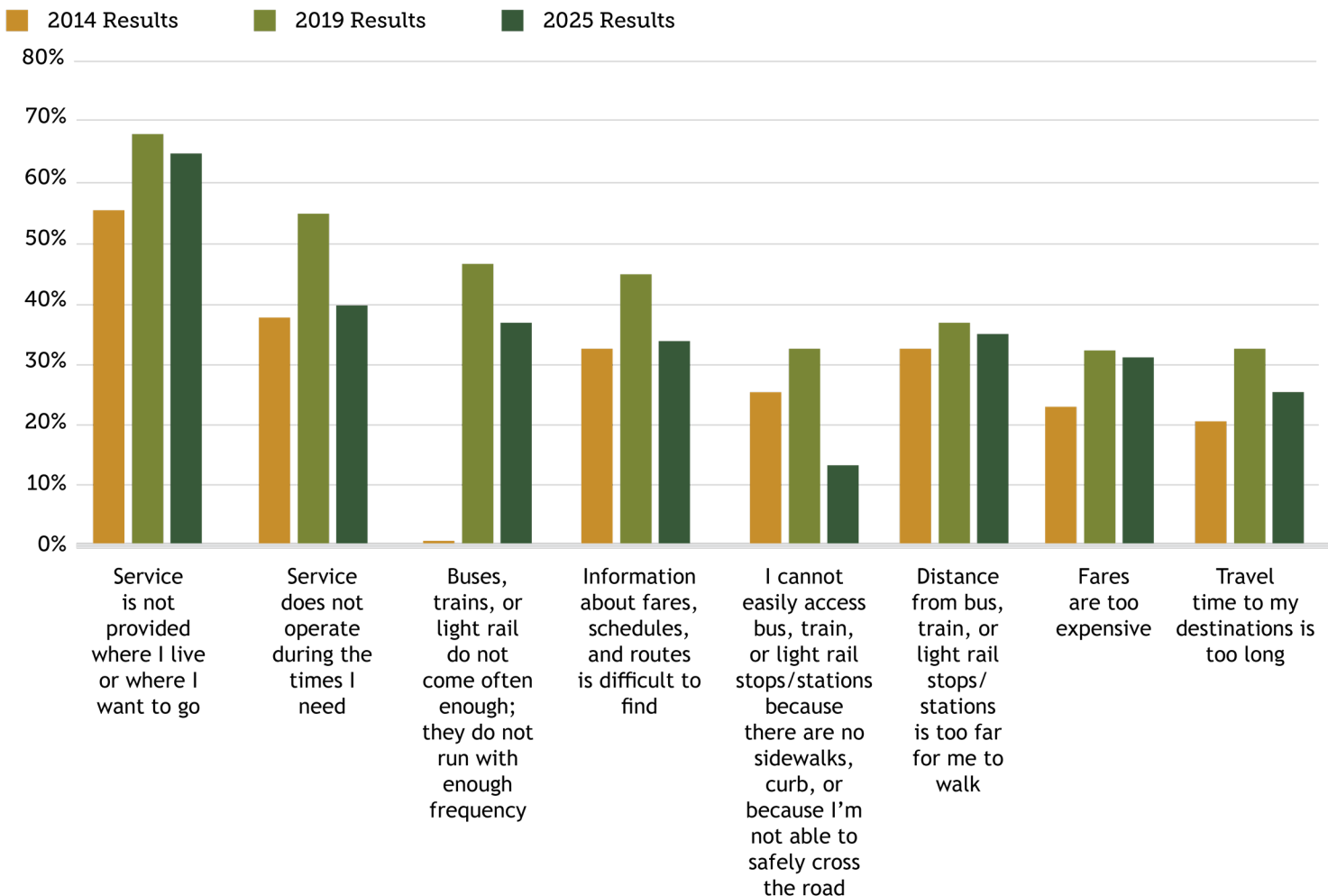


2025 Statewide Transit Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

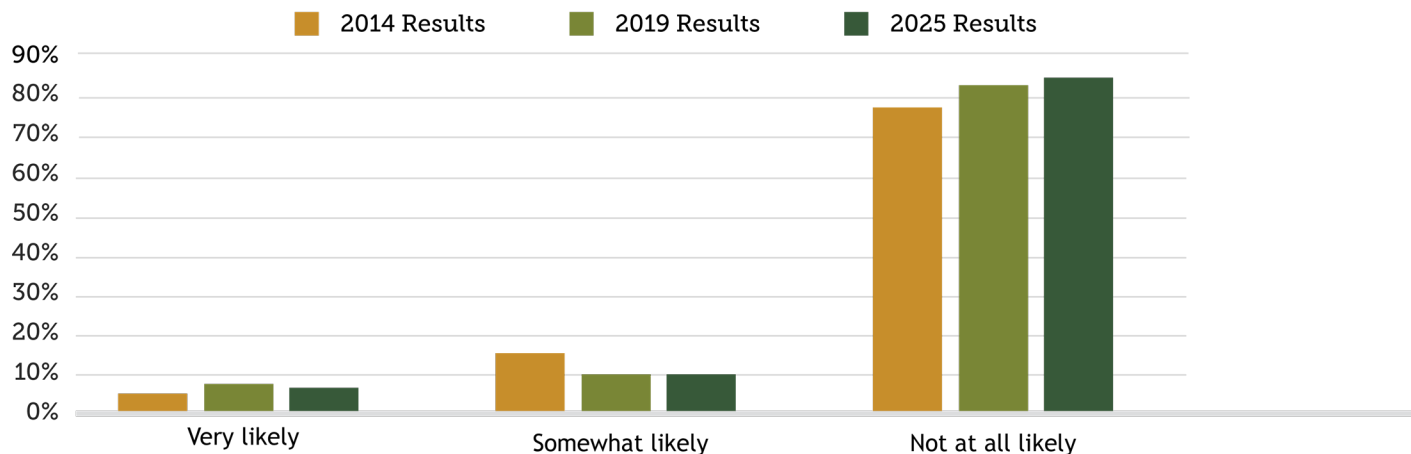
In 2014, CDOT conducted its first statistically valid statewide survey specifically targeting older adults and adults with disabilities. The goal of the survey was to better understand the unique travel behaviors and transportation needs of these populations, who often face distinct mobility challenges. 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 cited barrier was lack of service where respondents lived or wanted to go, increasing from 56 percent in 2014 to 69 percent in 2019, before improving to 65 percent in 2025. Concern about service not operating during needed times rose from 39 percent in 2014 to 54 percent in 2019, then decreased to 40 percent in 2025. Service frequency concerns followed a similar pattern, rising to 47 percent in 2019 before dropping to 37 percent in 2025. Difficulty accessing fare and schedule information peaked at 46 percent in 2019 and declined to 32 percent in 2025. Issues with sidewalk and curb accessibility increased from 25 percent in 2014 to 31 percent in 2019, then dropped significantly to 13 percent in 2025. Distance to transit stops remained a steady concern, with 25 percent in 2014, 31 percent in 2019, and a decline to 13 percent in 2025. Concerns about high fares and long travel times remained relatively stable. Fare issues rose from 24 percent in 2014 to 32 percent in 2019 and slightly decreased to 31 percent in 2025. Travel time concerns followed a similar arc, rising from 20 percent in 2014 to 32 percent in 2019 and then easing to 24 percent in 2025.

Barriers to Using Public Transportation Services

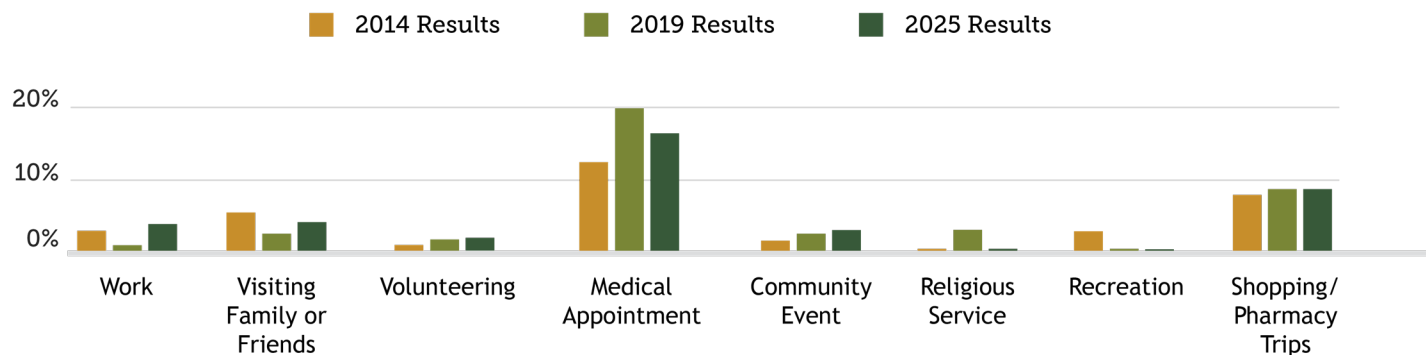


For the times you drive yourself, how likely would you be to use fixed route public transportation or demand-response transportation services instead of driving?



Across all three years, the majority of respondents reported being not at all likely to shift from personal driving to public transit. In 2014, 6 percent said they were very likely and 15 percent were somewhat likely to use public transportation, while 79 percent indicated they were not at all likely. This reluctance to switch increased in 2019, with 8 percent saying they were very likely, 10 percent somewhat likely, and 82 percent not at all likely to consider public transportation. By 2025, the share of respondents not at all likely grew slightly to 83 percent, while very likely and somewhat likely responses remained steady at 7 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

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



Between 2014 and 2025, respondents who reported trouble finding transportation most commonly cited medical appointments and shopping or pharmacy trips as the types of trips they struggled to access. Medical appointments remained the top concern, mentioned by 12 percent in 2014, rising to 20 percent in 2019, and slightly declining to 15 percent in 2025. Shopping and pharmacy trips followed closely, with 8 percent citing them in 2014 and 9 percent in both 2019 and 2025. Difficulty finding transportation for work-related trips decreased from 3 percent in 2014 to 0 percent in 2019 but rose again to 4 percent in 2025. Visiting family or friends dropped from 5 percent in 2014 to 2 percent in 2019, then increased slightly to 4 percent in 2025. Other trip types such as volunteering, community events, religious services, recreation, and school consistently received low response rates across all years, typically ranging between 0 and 3 percent.



Existing Providers and Coordination Activities

All transit service provider information and associated data for the EA 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.

Sterling - Denver Outrider Route

Outrider connects the EA TPR with the Upper Front Range and Denver metro area. Operated by Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG), the service runs once daily, Monday through Friday. A southbound bus departs Sterling for Denver each morning, while a northbound return trip from Denver to Sterling runs each afternoon.

Eastern stop: Sterling

Greeley - Sterling Outrider Route

Outrider connects the Eastern TPR with the Upper Front Range region. Operated by NECALG, service runs once daily on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between Sterling and Greeley. The morning trip heads west to Greeley, with a return trip to Sterling in the afternoon.

Eastern TPR stop: Sterling



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.

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 services, as defined in this plan, include intercity bus service. For more information on intercity bus services please refer to FTA's Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus Funding circular.



Interregional, Regional, and Local Transit Providers

The EA 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 Ridership	2023 Ops and Admin Budget	2023 Vehicle Revenue Miles	2023 Vehicle Revenue Hours
City of Burlington	Burlington	Demand Response	Mon-Fri, 7:30am to 5:30pm	\$0.25	10,634	\$59,686	13,917	1,411
East Central Council of Governments (ECCOG) (Outback Express)	Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, and Lincoln counties	Demand Response	Upon Request	\$0.11/ mile	1,264	\$96,669	24,406	1,340
Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG) (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 Limon	Limon	Demand Response	Tues and Thurs: 11am to 3pm; Fri: 10am to 3pm	\$2	4,544	\$30,666	7,439	1,122

Source: 2045 EA Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan, Desktop Review



Photo Credit: City of Wray

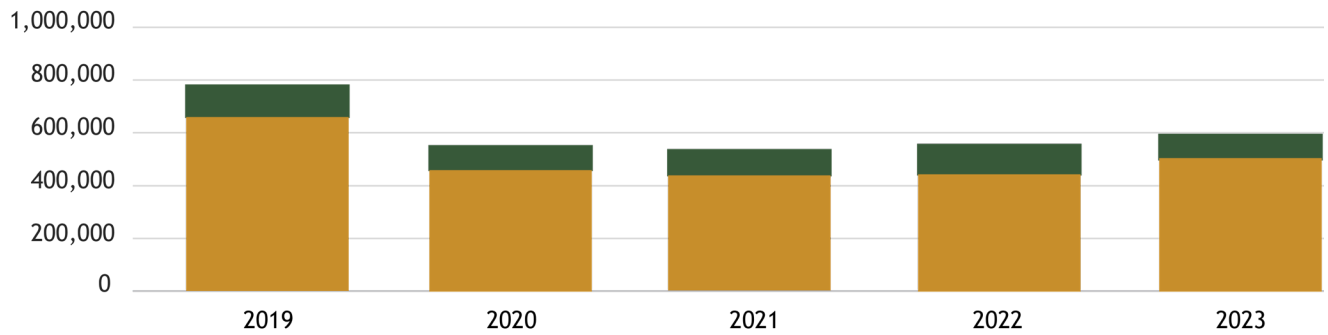


Photo Credit: Elizabeth Main Street Program

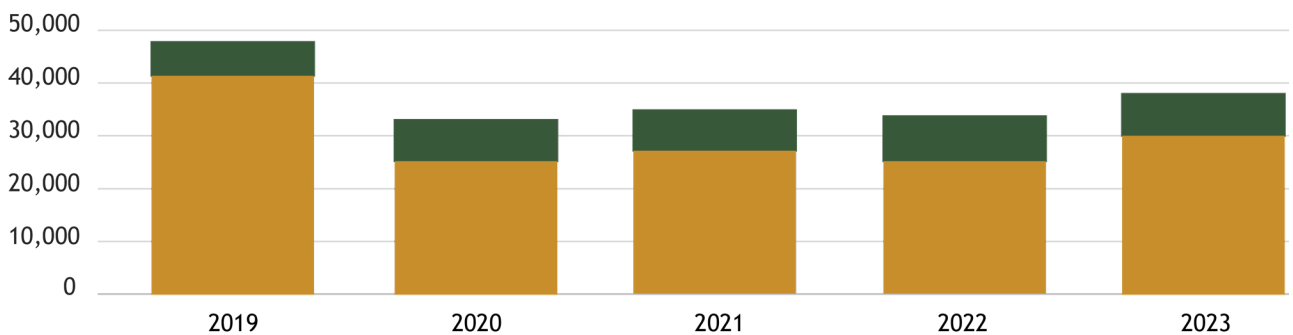
5-Year Historic Operating Data

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 EA TPR show that ridership dipped significantly between 2019 and 2020 due to COVID-19. While fixed-route bus operated by NECALG has made some recovery in terms of ridership, demand response services across the Region are still 40 percent lower than what they were in 2019.

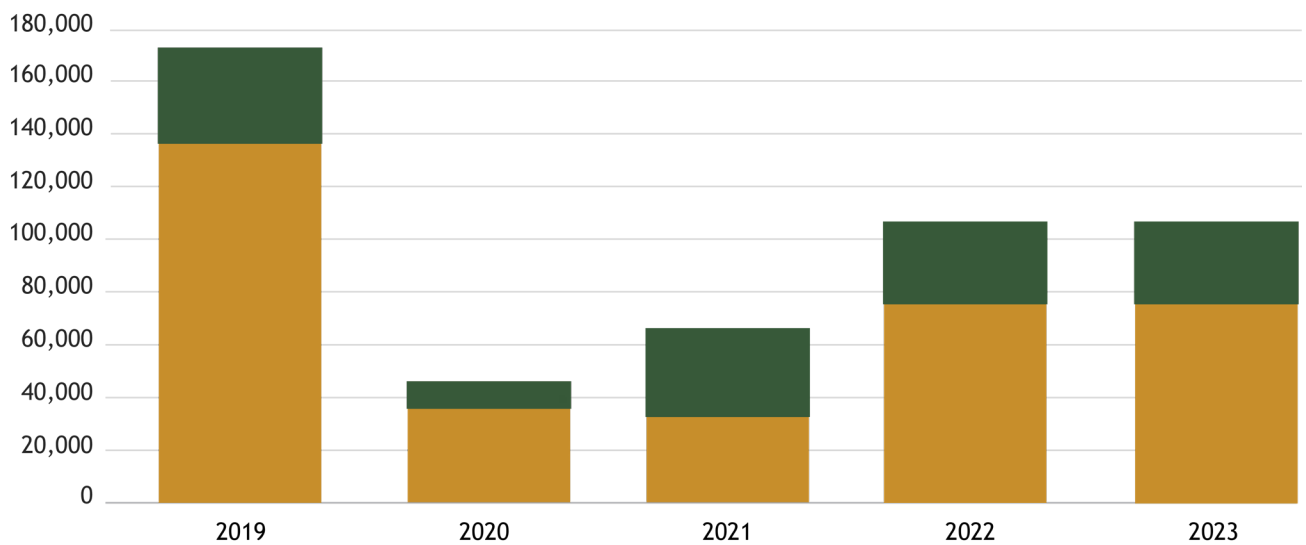
Total TPR Vehicle Revenue Miles



Total TPR Vehicle Revenue Hours



Total TPR Unlinked Passenger Trips



■ Fixed-route
 ■ Demand Response

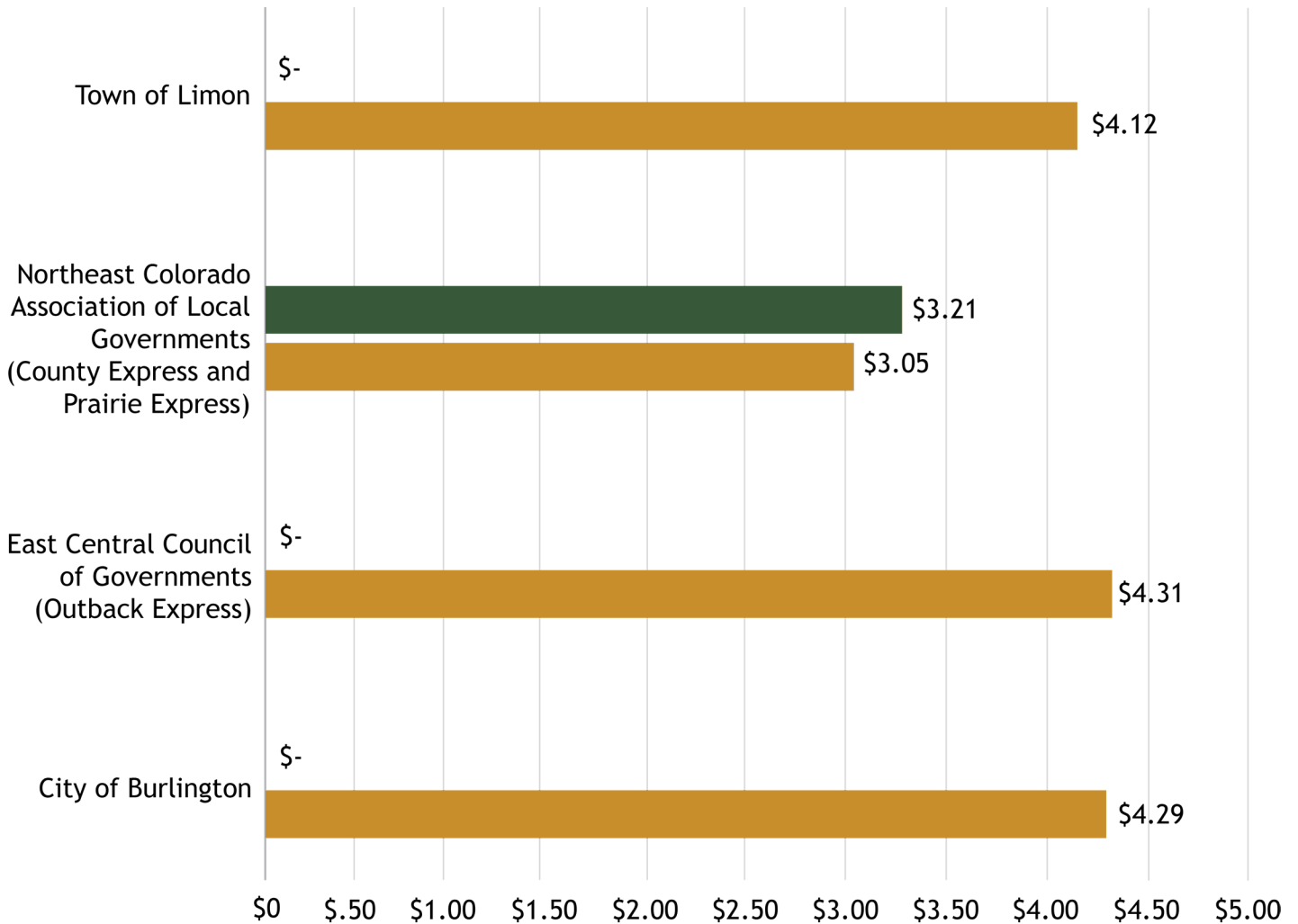


Transit Provider Service Performance Metrics

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

Cost per Mile

Outback Express reported the highest cost per mile at \$4.31, closely followed by City of Burlington at \$4.29, and Town of Limon at \$4.12. County Express and Prairie Express reported the lowest cost per mile for demand response service at \$3.05. Fixed-route service show a cost per mile of \$3.21.



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

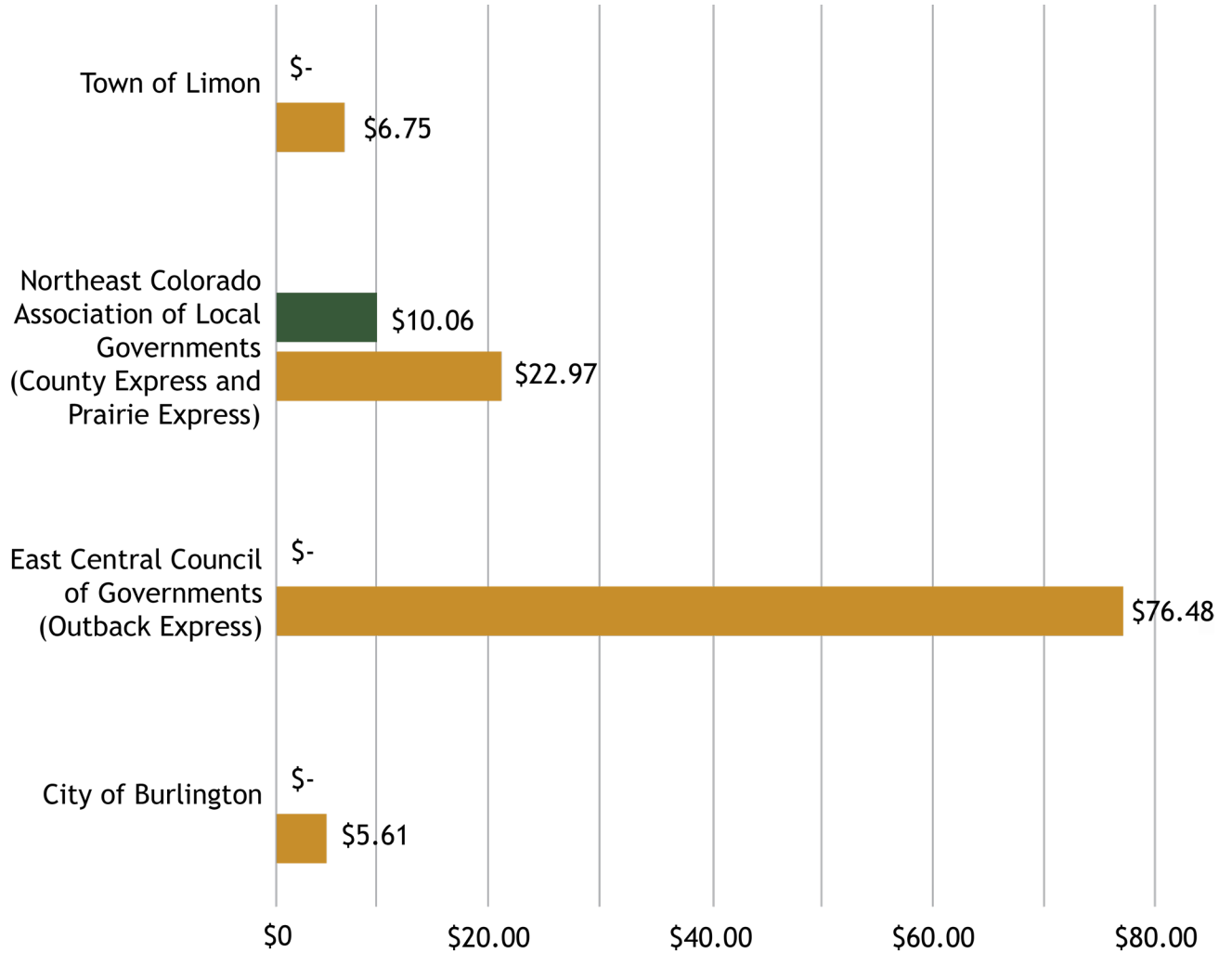
Cost per Hour

The fixed-route service provided by County Express and Prairie Express reports operating costs of \$46.61 per hour. For demand response services, the hourly costs were \$27.33 for the Town of Limon, \$54.29 for County Express and Prairie Express, \$72.14 for Outback Express, and \$42.30 for City of Burlington.



Cost per Ride

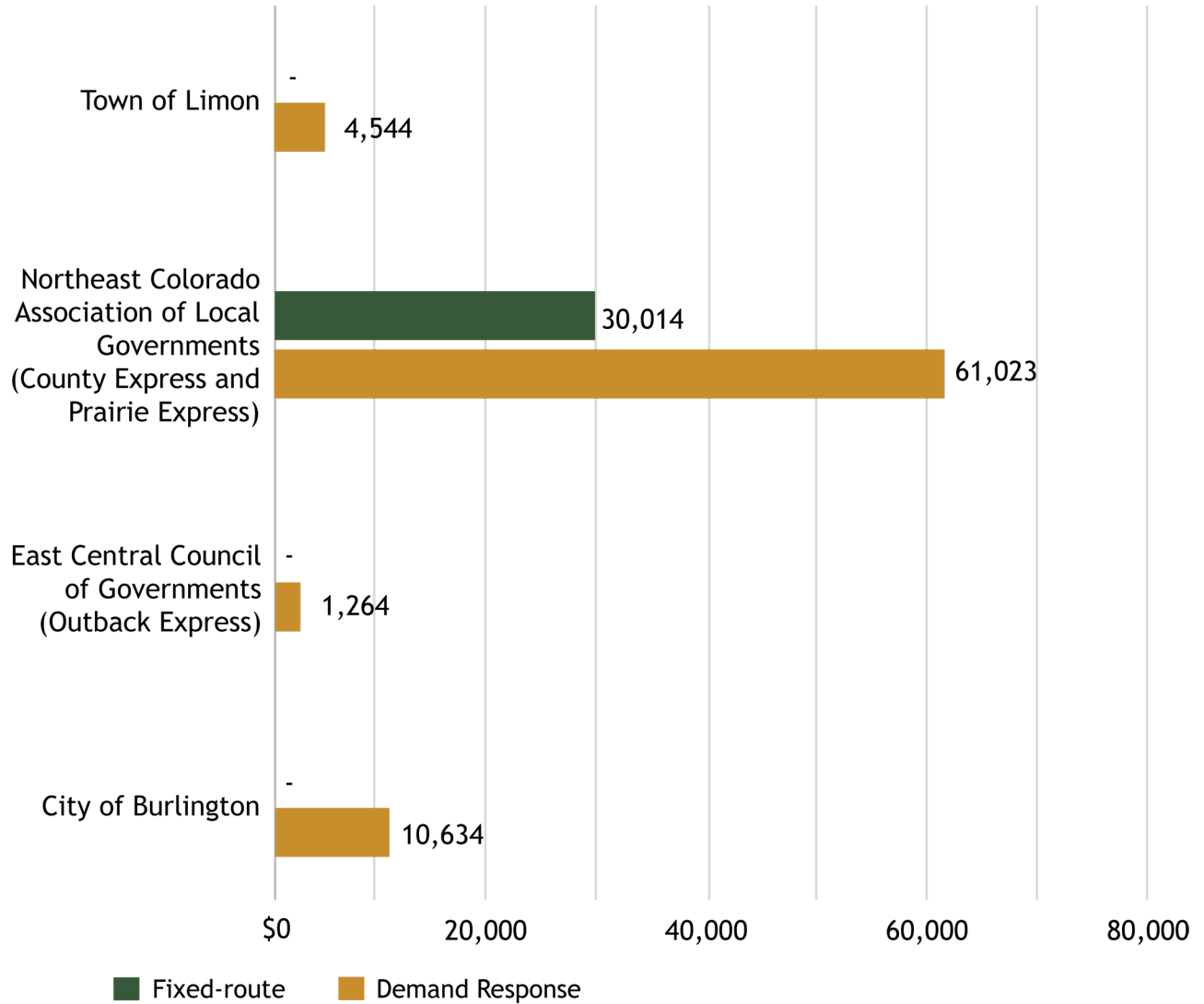
Outback Express reported the highest cost per ride at \$76.48 for demand response service. County Express and Prairie Express reported \$22.97 per ride for demand response and \$10.06 for fixed-route service. Town of Limon and City of Burlington reported lower demand response costs at \$6.75 and \$5.61 per ride, respectively.



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

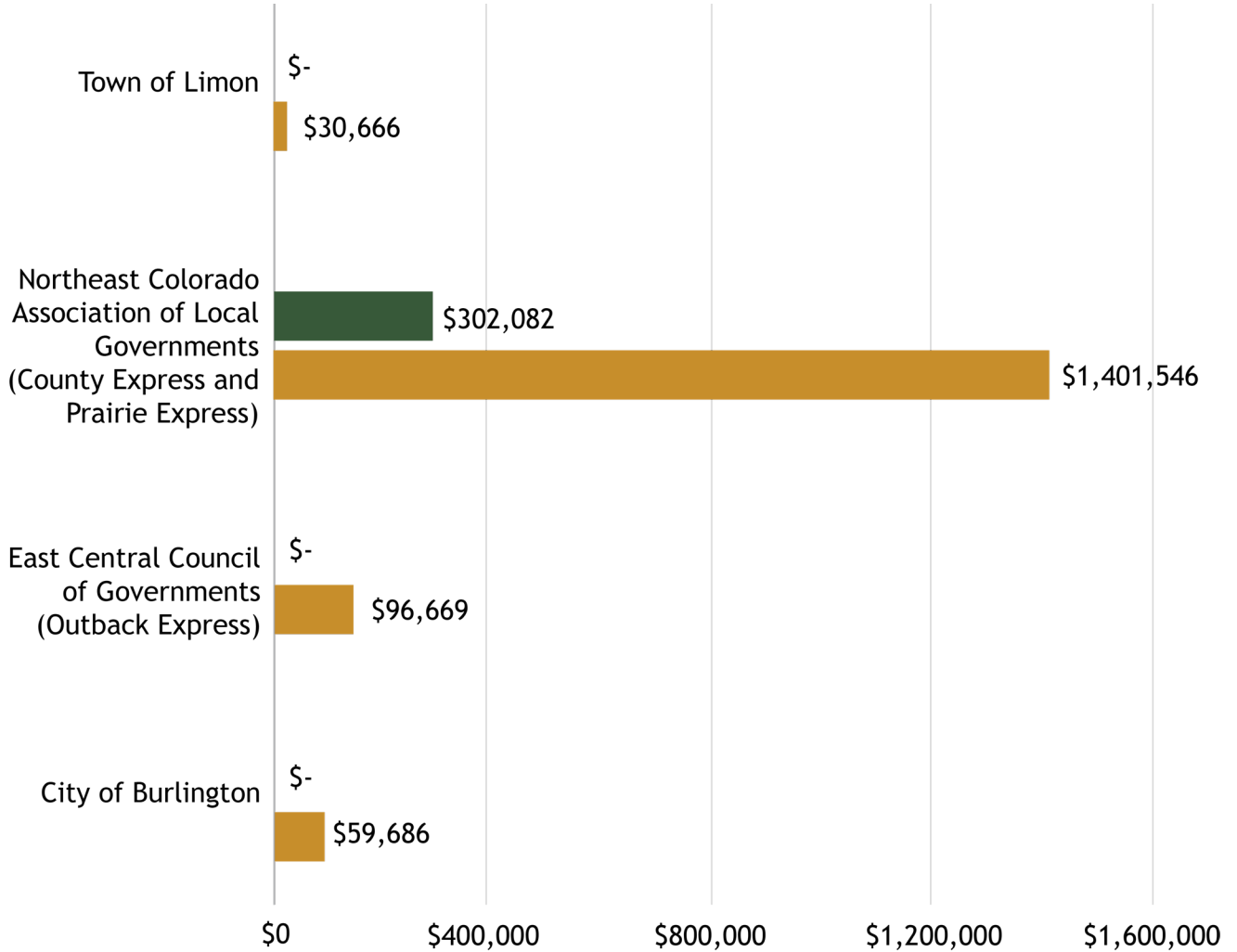
Annual Ridership

The fixed-route service, operated solely by the County Express and Prairie Express, recorded 30,014 riders annually. The demand response services showed the following annual ridership: 4,544 for the Town of Limon, 61,023 for County Express and Prairie Express, 1,264 for Outback Express, and 10,634 for the City of Burlington.



Annual Operating Costs

The fixed-route service, operated solely by County Express and Prairie Express reported an annual cost of \$302,082. In contrast, demand response services had the following annual costs: \$30,666 for the Town of Limon, \$1,401,546 for County Express and Prairie Express, \$96,669 for Outback Express, and \$59,686 for City of Burlington.



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



Human Services Transportation Providers

Many human services agencies in the EA 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 includes providers from the 2045 EA Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation 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 EA TPR, especially those without websites.

Provider	Service Area (Within EA)	Additional TPRs	Type of Service	Days of Service	Passenger Eligibility
American Red Cross - Northern Colorado	Cheyenne, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma counties	UFR, NFRMPO	Demand Response	Upon request	Older adults and critically ill
Barb's Transport "A Little Bit Of Sunshine"	Lincoln County	CFR, PPACG, PACOG, SE	Demand Response (Medical)	Daily	Must have a scheduled appointment and meet qualification criteria
Dynamic Dimensions	Burlington, Bethune	N/A	Demand Response, Coordination with Other Providers	Mon-Thurs, 7:30am to 6pm Fri-Sun, 9am to 6pm	People with developmental disabilities
NECALG	Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington and Yuma Counties	UFR	Demand Response	Upon Request	Open to all passengers requiring transportation services
MedRide	Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, and Yuma 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

Source: 2045 EA 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 table lists providers from the 2045 EA 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 EA TPR, especially those without websites.

Provider	Service Area (Within EA)	Additional TPRs	Type of Service	Days of Service	Passenger Eligibility
Connections for Independent Living	Logan, Sedgwick, and Yuma counties	UFR, NFRMPO	Coordination with Other Providers	Upon request	People with disabilities, older adults (65+)
Lincoln County Department of Human Services	Lincoln County	N/A	Coordination with Other Providers	Upon request	Individuals with disabilities, older adults (65+), low-income community members, abused/neglected children and adults, foster families
Sedgwick County Department of Human Services	Sedgwick County	N/A	Vouchers or Reimbursement, Contract with Other Providers	Upon request	Individuals with disabilities, older adults (65+), low-income community members, veterans, Medicaid recipients
The Independence Center	Cheyenne, Kit Carson, and Lincoln counties	CFR, DRCOG, PACOG, PPACG, SC	Vouchers or Reimbursement	Mon-Thurs, 8am to 4:30pm	People with disabilities, older adults (65+), low-income community members, veterans, Medicaid recipients
Washington County Department of Human Services	Washington County	EA	Vouchers or Reimbursement	Upon request	Individuals with disabilities, older adults (65+), low-income community members, Medicaid recipients

Source: 2045 EA Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan, Desktop Review

Private Transportation Providers

Three private for-profit companies in the EA TPR provide transportation services: Eastern Colorado Transportation Company, Elbert County Limo, Essential Transportation, Rocky Mountain Elite Transport, Stuffy’s Ride Service 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, nearly 60 percent of CDOT tracked transit vehicles in the EA TPR are beyond their state of good repair. The anticipated cost of this backlog is just over \$6 million, with NECALG requiring the most funding (\$4.6 million) to remediate their vehicle backlog.

Provider	Total Revenue Vehicles	Vehicles Beyond State of Good Repair	Percentage of Vehicles Beyond State of Good Repair	Cost of Backlog
City of Burlington	1	1	100.00%	\$171,251
NECALG (County Express and Prairie Express)	75	42	56.00%	\$4,629,462
East Central Council of Governments (ECCOG) (Outback Express)	18	13	72.22%	\$1,570,008
Town of Limon	1	0	0.00%	\$0
TOTAL	95	56	58.95%	\$6,370,721

Source: 2023 Transit Asset Management Plan

Regional Coordination Activities

Two entities—ECCOG and NECALG—coordinate transportation services within the EA TPR. Both organizations, established in the 1970s, serve the rural communities of northeastern Colorado. In addition to their transportation roles, each agency serves as the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for its respective region, helping to coordinate essential services for the Region’s aging population.

ECCOG’s AAA provides transportation services for seniors in the Central Plains Region, ensuring access to medical care, nutrition services, and long-distance destinations such as Denver and Colorado Springs. NECALG’s AAA coordinates services among County Express and Prairie Express, educational institutions, employers, medical providers, and county human services departments. These transportation services also support older adults by providing rides to and from AAA-sponsored community meal sites.

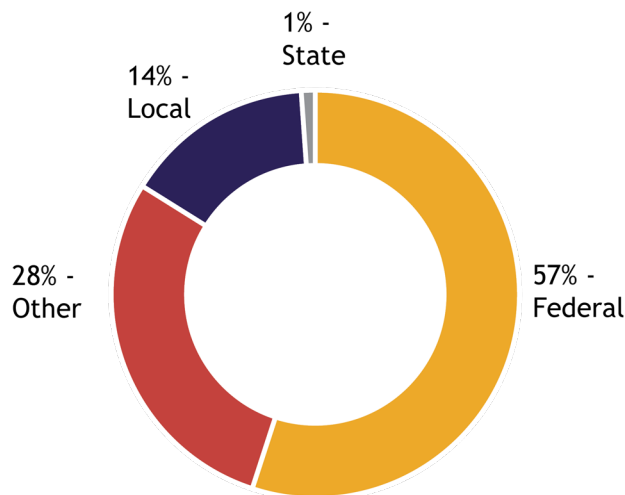
Mobility Management

Mobility management continues to emerge as an innovative approach to managing and delivering coordinated transportation services to customers. Mobility management focuses on meeting individual customer needs through a wide range of transportation options and service providers. NECALG is currently working on bringing on a full time regional mobility manager. The primary responsibility of that staff will be to help EA TPR community members get around using transit.

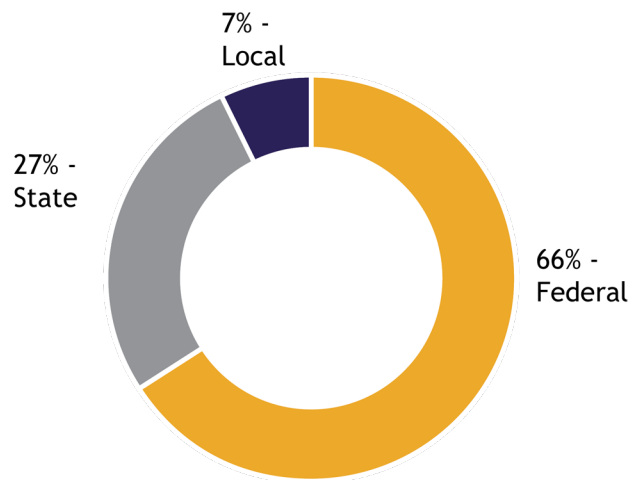
Financial Snapshot

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, 57 percent comes from federal sources. This is followed by 28 percent from other sources, 14 percent from local sources, and only 1 percent from the state, indicating a limited state role in day-to-day operational funding. In contrast, Capital Revenue Sources rely more heavily on federal support at 66 percent. State contributions are more prominent here, making up 27 percent of capital revenue, while local sources account for the remaining 7 percent. This distribution highlights the significant role of federal and state funding in supporting long-term capital investments such as infrastructure and fleet purchases.

Operating Revenue Sources



Capital Revenue Sources

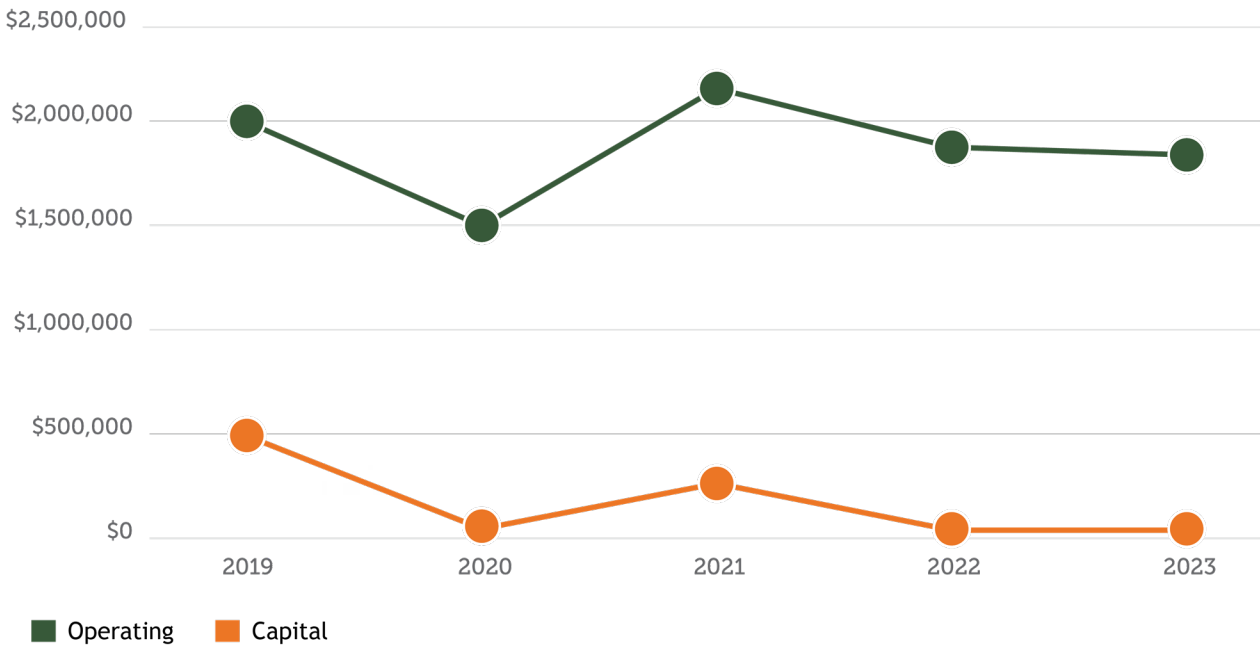


Source: 2023 National Transit Database, Tailored Provider Surveys



Historic Revenue Data

The following chart shows five-year EA TPR operating and capital funding trends. Operating funds have ranged from \$1.5 to more than \$2 million over the last few years, with peak funding reaching \$2.2 million in 2021. The EA TPR has not received capital funding since 2021.



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

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 on 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.

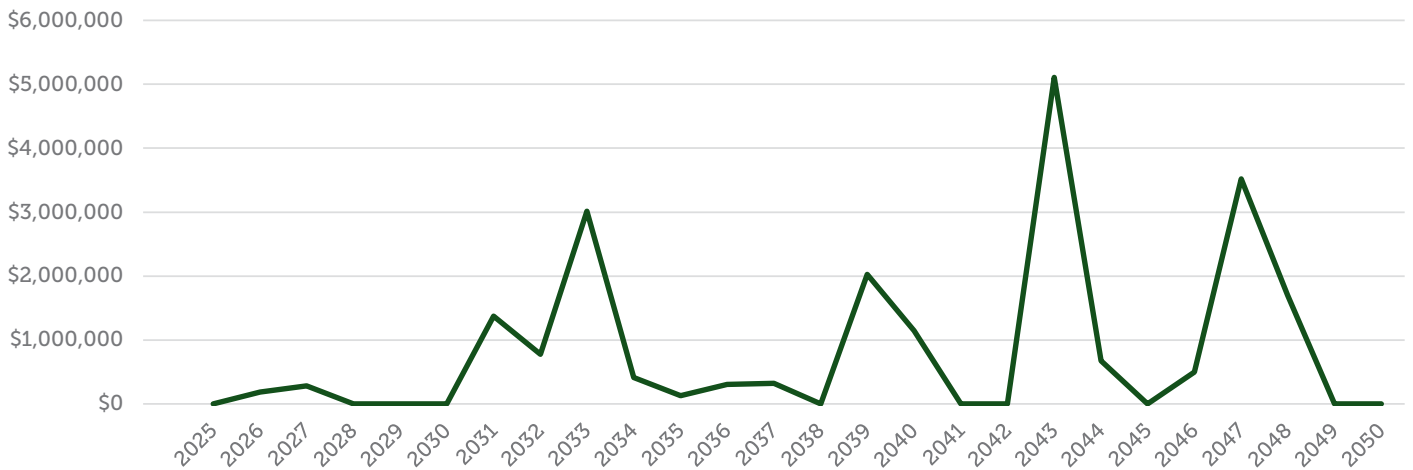
Capital and Operating Costs

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 2045 Statewide Transit Plan. This comparison helped reconcile discrepancies between the two sources by accounting for vehicles that were identified for replacement in the 2045 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 EA 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

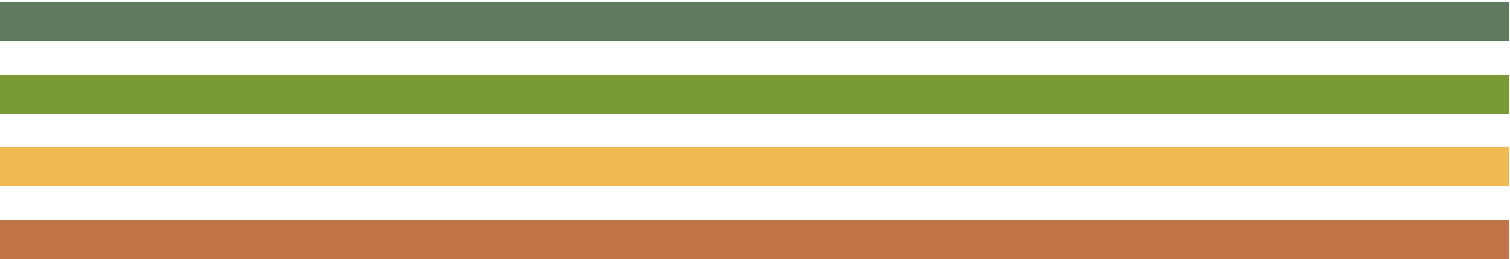
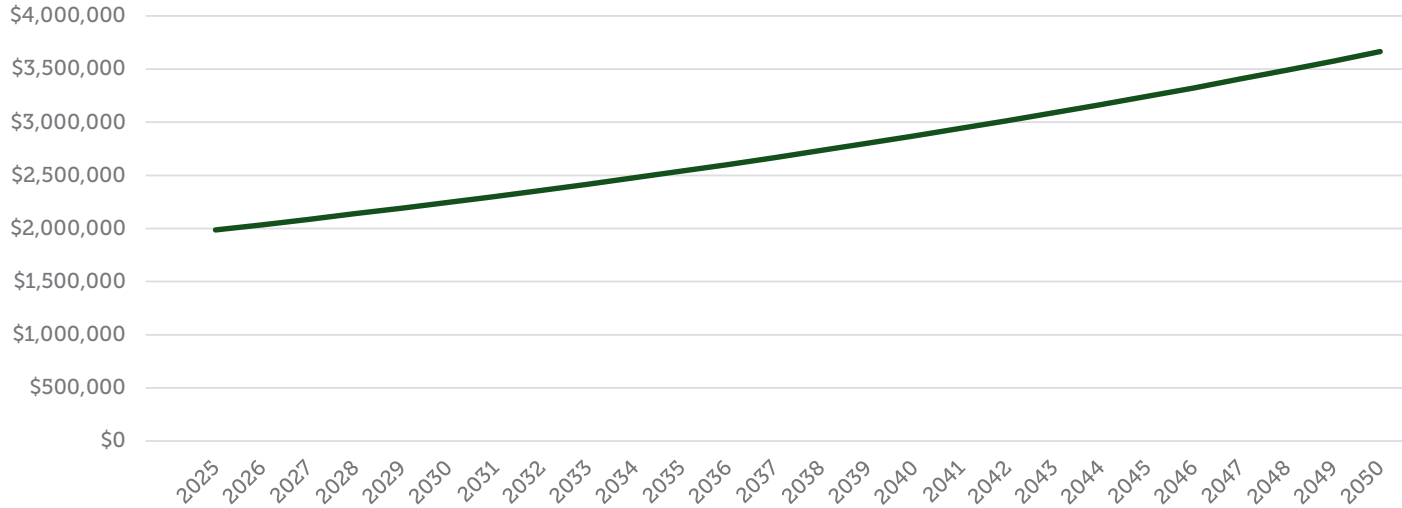


Operating cost estimates were developed using 2023 NTD data reported by transit agencies. To project future costs, these baseline figures were escalated using county-level population growth forecasts. This approach reflects anticipated increases in service demand driven by demographic changes.

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.

Anticipated Operating Expenditure Forecasts

(To Maintain Current Operations)





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. 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. FTA also awards 5339 funds through a competitive process.

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. Current funding sources for the EA TPR include property and sales and use taxes. Potential alternative funding sources to support local and regional transit services include:

- General funds
- Lodging taxes
- Parking fees
- Public-private partnerships
- Rural transportation authorities
- Sponsorships/donations
- Tourism taxes
- Utility taxes/fees
- Vehicle fees
- CDOT’s Office of Innovative Mobility Enterprise Funding



Federal Transit Administration Funding Programs

- 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
- Low or No Emission Vehicle Program - 5339(c)
- Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning - 20005(b)
- Planning Grants - 5304
- Rural Transportation Assistance Program - 5311(b)(3)
- State of Good Repair Grants - 5337





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
- Maintain all assets in a state of good repair
- Advocate for full funding of TPR identified transit capital and operating projects
- Maximize existing and seek new funding sources to expand local and regional services to include additional days, hours, and geographic coverage
- Expand interregional transit service to provide access to goods and services in major activity centers, while enhancing quality of life for historically disadvantaged populations
- Ensure greater service connectivity between transit options in the Region



Priority Projects

Based on findings from public input, data about gaps and needs, and input from stakeholders, TPR members prioritized their projects for the Region. It is important to note that priorities may change based on available funding, grant opportunities, agency needs, etc.

Project ID	Project Name	Project Total
1016	New Essential Bus Service between Limon and Denver	\$1,242,000
1019	Essential Bus Service between Sterling and Fort Morgan and Greeley (Proposed Outrider Service)	\$2,576,000
1094	Essential Bus Service between Burlington and Denver	\$2,783,000
2491	Outrider Improvements at Sterling	\$80,000



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