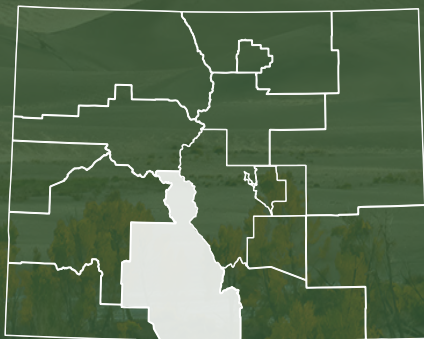

San Luis Valley Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan

November 2025



Counties:
Alamosa, Chaffee,
Conejos, Costilla,
Mineral, Rio
Grande, and
Saguache

Above: The location of counties in the San Luis
Valley Transportation Planning Region.



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Photo Credit: Great Sand Dunes National Park

San Luis Valley Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan

The San Luis Valley (SLV) Transportation Planning Region (TPR) includes Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties. The primary population centers are Alamosa, Buena Vista, Salida, Poncha Springs, Sanford, Manassa, Monte Vista, and Del Norte. 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.



SLV Transit Vision

Transportation services in the Region are coordinated, sustainable, and easily accessible for Valley residents and visitors.

SLV Transit Goals

1. **Education and Outreach:** Community members are aware of all transportation options and understand how to use them.
2. **Connectivity and Access:** Transportation services provide easy access to all local and regional destinations.
3. **Funding:** Funding levels for transit are maintained, and service operates in a state of good repair.
4. **Meet Community Needs:** Work to meet the ongoing and growing transit needs of the Region, effectively and efficiently coordinating services and connections, to serve all populations.

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 SLV 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 SLV 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.

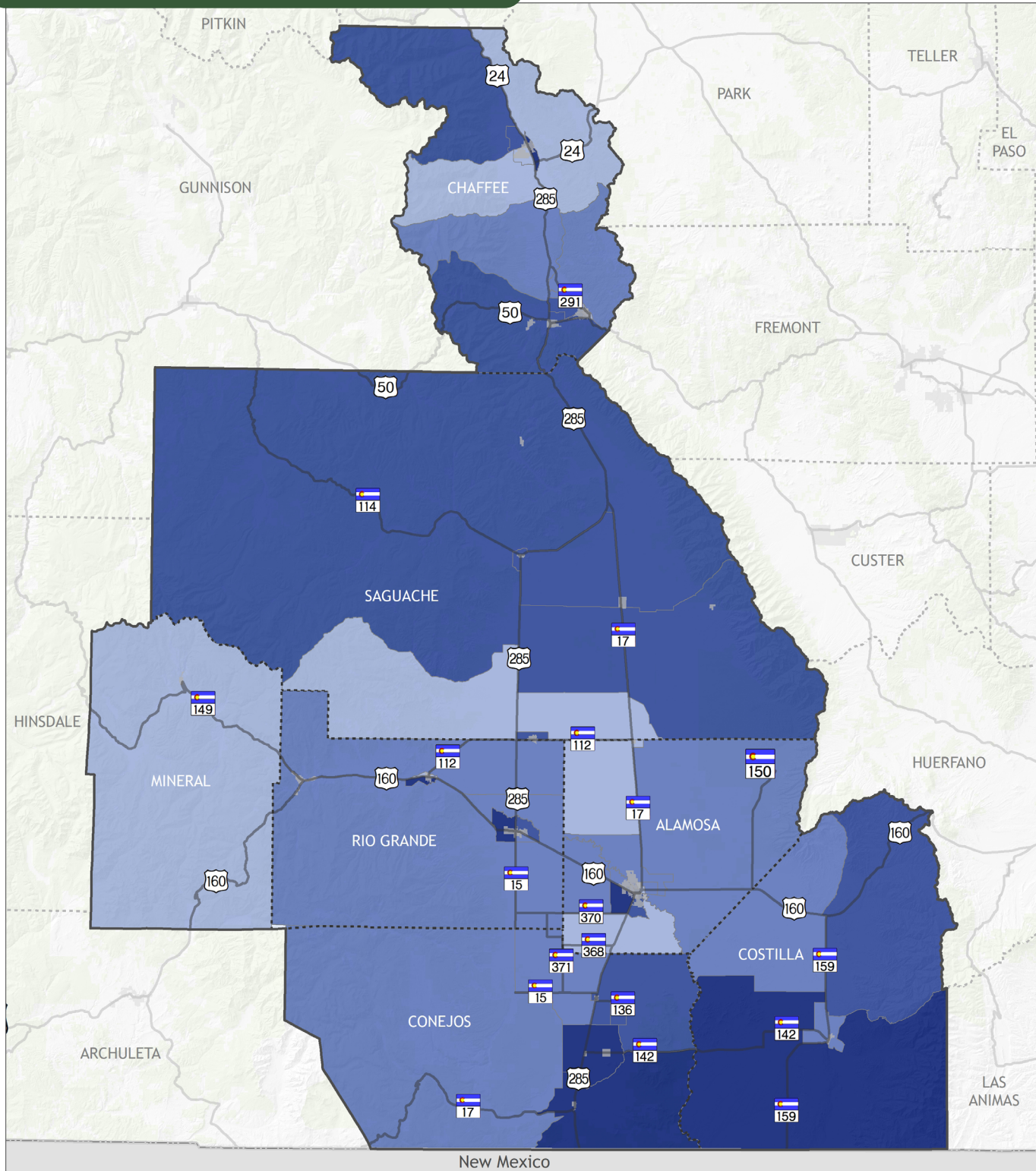
When considering the SLV TPR’s mobility future, reviewing and analyzing available data helps uncover potential transportation network gaps and needs. Populations that often have a higher than average need for transit and/or have limited access to transportation services and facilities must be considered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

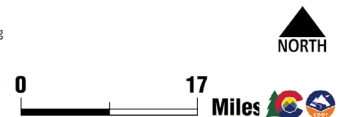
Transit Propensity Index
 Light Blue: Low Transit Need
 Medium Blue: Low to Moderate Transit Need
 Dark Blue: Moderate to High Transit Need
 Darkest Blue: High Transit Need

Dark Blue: Moderate Transit Need
 Darkest Blue: Moderate to High Transit Need
 Darkest Blue: High Transit Need

Thick Line: Interstate/Highways
 Thin Line: City Boundaries
 Dashed Line: County Boundaries

Thick Dashed Line: San Luis Valley 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).





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 SLV TPR members and agencies is summarized below.



New and Expanded Transit Service

- Expansion of the Crested Butte to Denver Bustang line to include stops in the San Luis Valley
- New service between Chaffee County (or the San Luis Valley, more broadly) and Colorado Springs (including a connection to the Colorado Springs Airport)
- New service between the Great Sand Dunes National Park and the San Luis Valley Regional Airport in Alamosa
- New Bustang Outrider service between Durango, Wolf Creek, Gunbarrel and Denver, with additional SLV regional stops
- New transit center to better serve residents, workers and visitors of the SLV TPR, and to better support provider operations



Transit Services to Tourist Destinations

Need for expanded transportation services to tourist destinations to help prevent and/or minimize congestion in high-visitor areas.



Additional and Upgraded Transit Amenities

Need for improved transit amenities—including additional and upgraded shelters—to ensure a safe, comfortable, and dignified experience for all riders.



Gaps between Fixed-route and On-Demand Services

Need to bridge the gap between on-demand and fixed-route transit services. An interest in the SLV TPR to working collaboratively to:

- Help community members reach their destinations efficiently and reliably
- Avoid duplication of efforts among transit providers
- Foster collaboration between non-profit and public transit providers

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. Rural Transit Access

- Increase public transportation options for interregional connections, such as more bus routes to Denver and Colorado Springs.
- Provide transit service that connects rural residents to healthcare, education, employment, and other services outside the valley.
- Support mobility options that serve residents without access to personal vehicles, including older adults, individuals with disabilities, and low-income households to provide greater independence and access for vulnerable populations.

2. Active Transportation Integration

- Provide safe and connected walking and biking infrastructure, to support access to transit and promote safe, non-motorized travel in small towns and rural communities.

3. Supporting Infrastructure and Safety

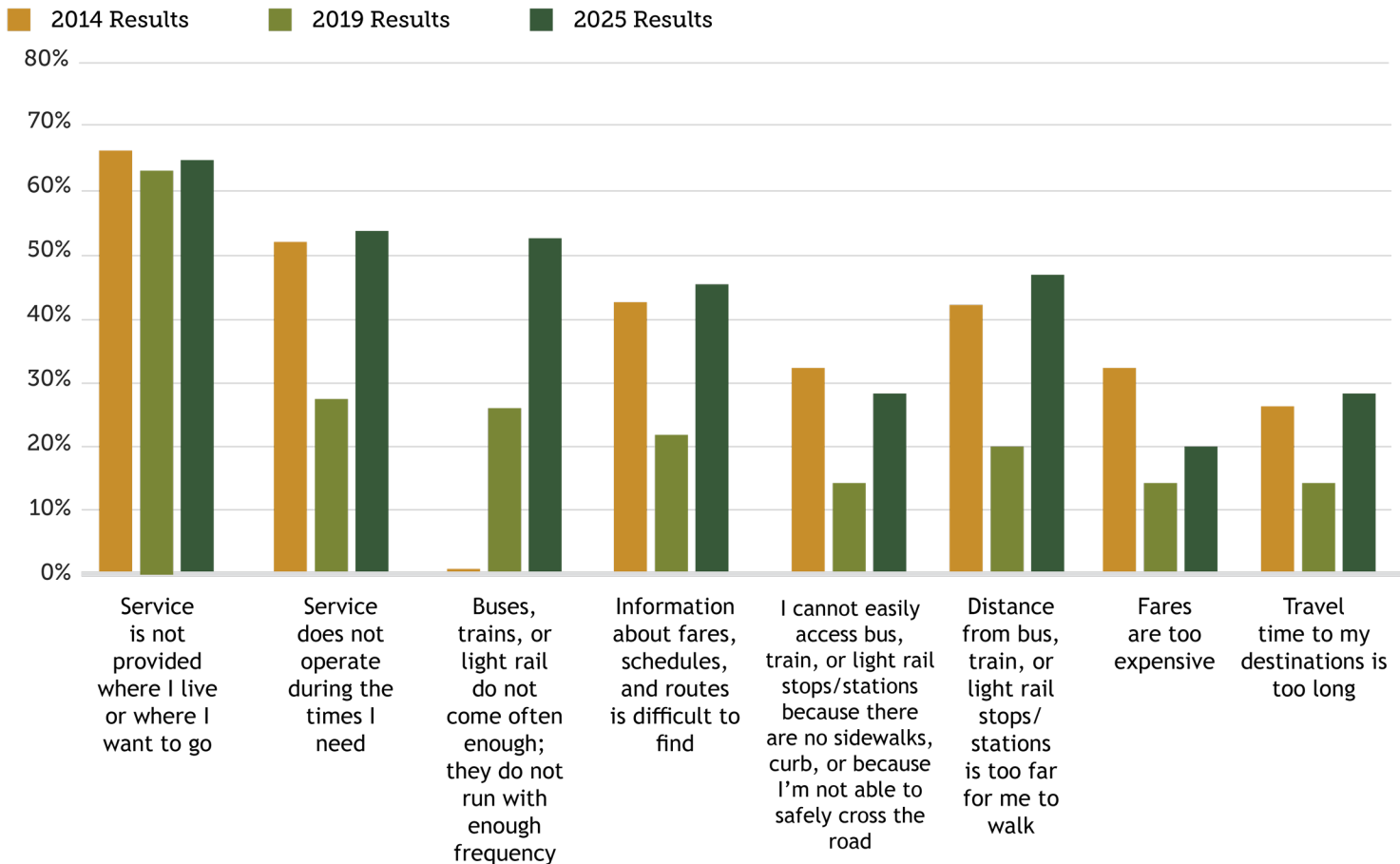
- Design and maintain transit infrastructure, such as stops, signage, and pedestrian crossings, to address broader transportation safety and access concerns.

2025 Statewide Transit Survey of Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

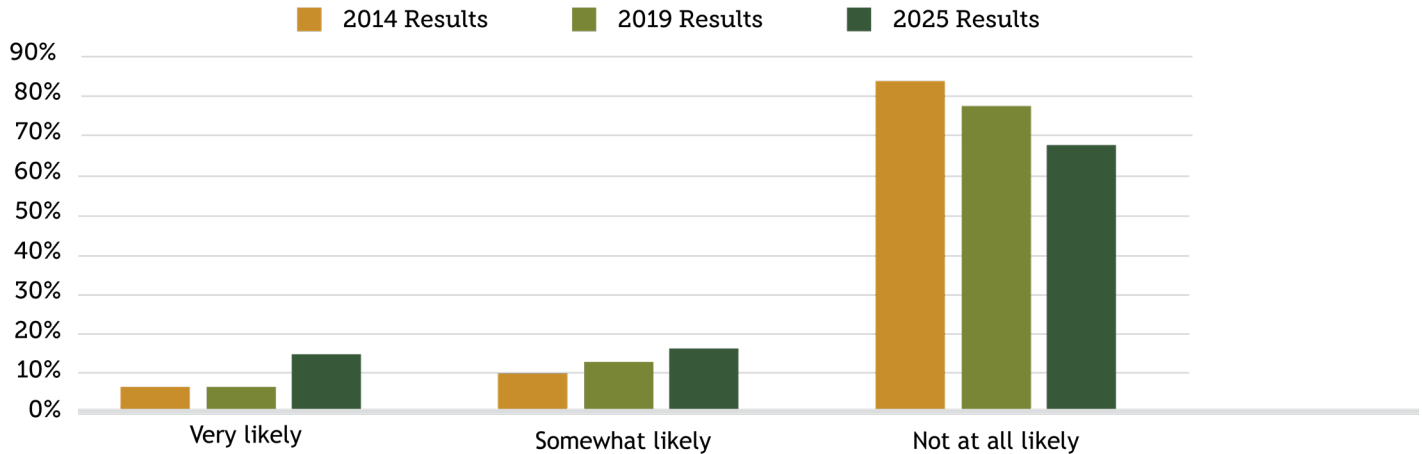
In 2014, CDOT conducted its first statistically valid statewide survey specifically targeting older adults and adults with disabilities. The goal of the survey was to better understand the unique travel behaviors and transportation needs of these populations, who often face distinct mobility challenges. 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.

In 2025, concerns about inadequate service availability increased again to 64 percent, comparable to 66 percent in 2014, after a slight decline to 63 percent in 2019. Notably, the concern about service not operating during needed times more than doubled from 27 percent in 2019 to 54 percent in 2025, almost returning to 2014's level of 52 percent. Perceptions of infrequent service changed dramatically, rising from 26 percent in 2019 to 52 percent in 2025. Similarly, difficulty accessing fare and schedule information rebounded sharply to 45 percent in 2025 after dipping to 21 percent in 2019, nearing the 2014 level of 43 percent. Difficulty accessing stops due to sidewalk or safety issues rose from 15 percent in 2019 to 29 percent in 2025, while distance from stops as a barrier increased significantly from 20 percent to 46 percent, exceeding the 2014 rate of 41 percent. Cost and travel time concerns followed a similar trajectory. The belief that fares are too expensive grew from 13 percent in 2019 to 20 percent in 2025, though it remained below the 2014 figure of 32 percent. Travel time concerns also rose from 13 percent in 2019 to 29 percent in 2025, just above 2014's 26 percent.

Barriers to Using Public Transportation Services

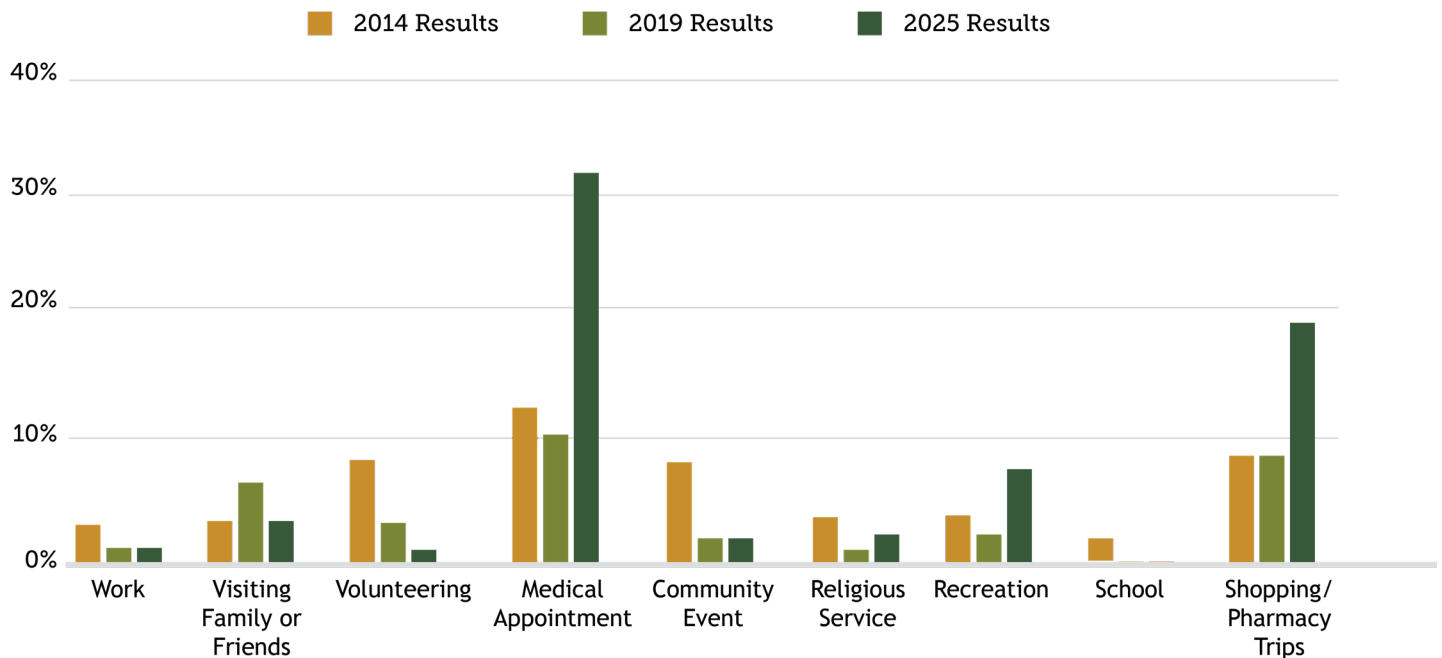


For the times you drive yourself, how likely would you be to use fixed route public transportation or demand-response transportation services instead of driving?



In 2014 and 2019, the share of respondents who were very likely to consider these alternatives remained steady at 8 percent. However, by 2025, that number increased to 13 percent, indicating growing interest in non-driving transportation options. Similarly, the proportion of those somewhat likely to consider alternatives rose from 10 percent in 2014 to 12 percent in 2019, and then to 18 percent in 2025. At the same time, the share of respondents who were not at all likely to switch from driving decreased from 82 percent in 2014 to 79 percent in 2019 and further to 69 percent in 2025.

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



Medical appointments consistently ranked among the top categories, increasing significantly from 12 percent in 2014 and 10 percent in 2019 to 32 percent in 2025. Similarly, difficulty securing transportation for shopping or pharmacy trips more than doubled over time, rising from 9 percent in both 2014 and 2019 to 19 percent in 2025. In contrast, the percentage of respondents struggling to find transportation for work-related trips remained low and steady—3 percent in 2014, and just 1 percent in both 2019 and 2025. Other categories, such as visiting family or friends, volunteering, community events, religious services, recreation, and school, showed relatively low percentages across all three years, generally fluctuating between 0 and 8 percent.

Existing Providers and Coordination Activities

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

Crested Butte – Denver Outrider Route

Operated by Alpine Express, this Outrider route connects the SLV TPR to the Gunnison Valley, the Central Front Range, and the Denver metropolitan area. It runs twice daily in each direction, departing Crested Butte in the morning and afternoon.

San Luis Valley stops: Monarch Mountain, Salida, Buena Vista

Alamosa – Pueblo Outrider Route

Operated by the Senior Resource Development Agency out of Pueblo, this Outrider route connects the SLV with the Central Front Range and Pueblo area. The service provides one run daily from Alamosa to Pueblo in the morning and Pueblo to Alamosa in the afternoon.

San Luis Valley stops: Alamosa, Moffat, Poncha Springs, Salida



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 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 SLV TPR has one public transit provider that operates interregional, regional, and local public 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
Mountain Valley Transit	Antonito, Alamosa, Creede, Saguache, Moffat, Crestone, Salida, Buena Vista Multicounty: Conejos, Costilla, Rio Grande, Alamosa, Mineral, Saguache, and Chaffee counties	Fixed-route, Demand Response	Mon-Fri (route dependent), 5:45am to 5:45pm	Free (donation-based)	16,225	\$747,170	196,694	8,307

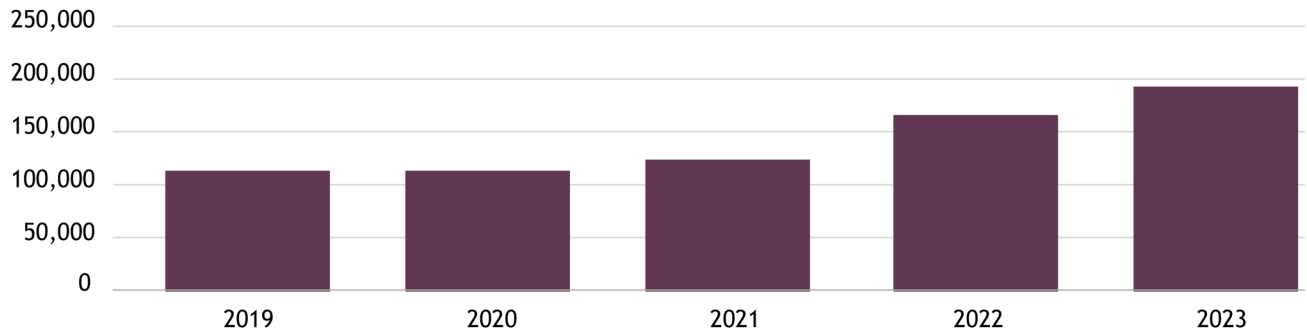




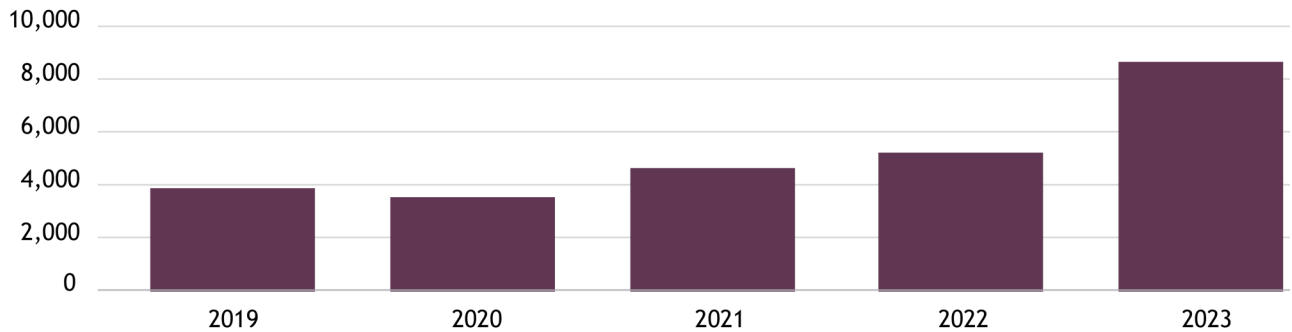
5-Year Historic Operating Data

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 SLV TPR show that ridership dipped significantly between 2019 and 2020 due to COVID-19. However, as residents, workers, and visitors began to resume normal life in late 2021 and 2022, numbers began to climb again in the SLV TPR. It should be noted that growth between 2020 and 2023 was likely in part to Mountain Valley Transit's expansion of services, including new routes. Please note that in the following charts, 2023 data is disaggregated by demand response and fixed-route service for cost per mile, annual ridership, and annual operating costs. However, this level of detail is not available for other key performance metrics or for data from previous years.

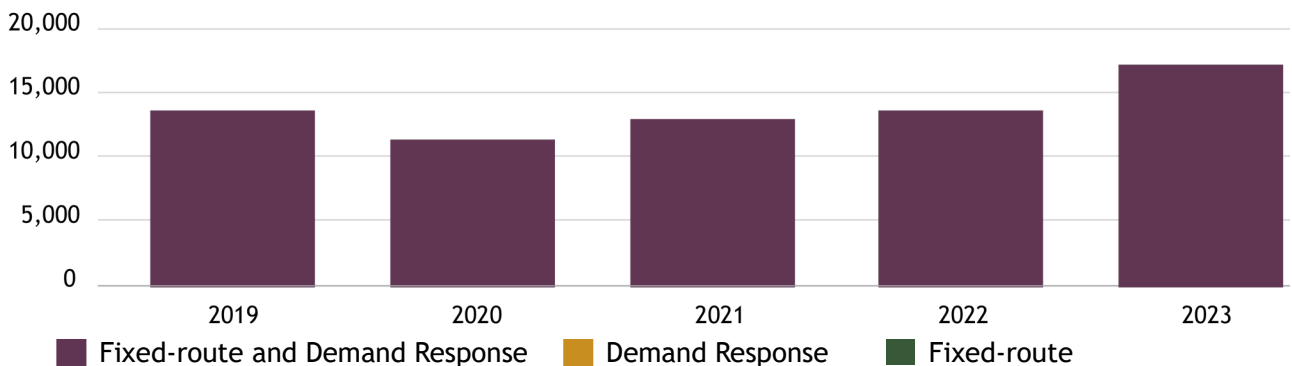
Total TPR Vehicle Revenue Miles



Total TPR Vehicle Revenue Hours



Total TPR Unlinked Passenger Trips

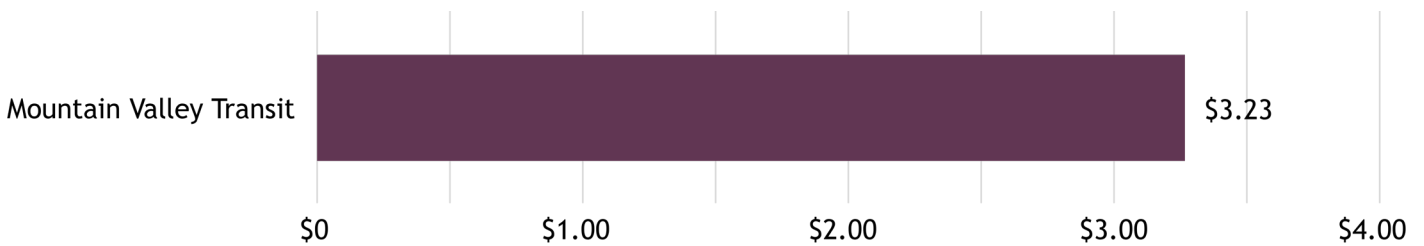


Transit Provider Service Performance Metrics

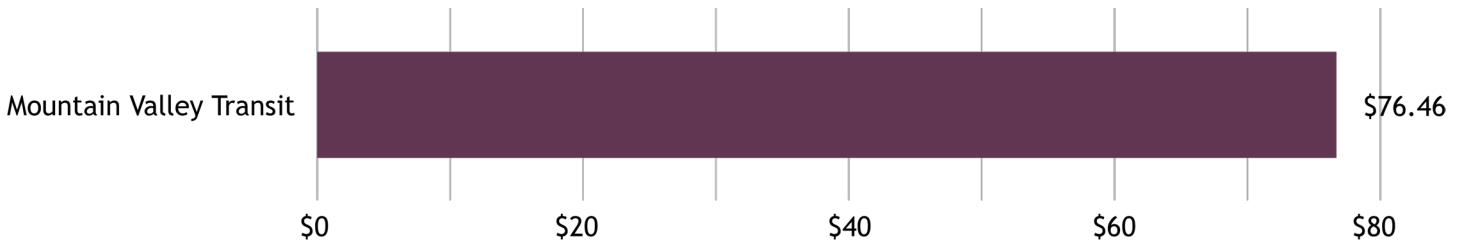
Key performance data indicate the efficiency of an agency’s service operations. SLV TPR cost per trip, cost per revenue hour, and cost per revenue mile are highlighted to identify performance across agencies.

Mountain Valley Transit reports a cost per mile of \$3.23 and a cost per hour of \$76.46. Cost per ride varies by service type, with fixed-route service at \$54.04 and demand response service at \$44.88. Annual operating costs totaled \$112,027 for fixed-route service and \$635,143 for demand response. Annual ridership numbers show 2,073 individuals used the fixed-route service, while 14,152 riders used the demand response service.

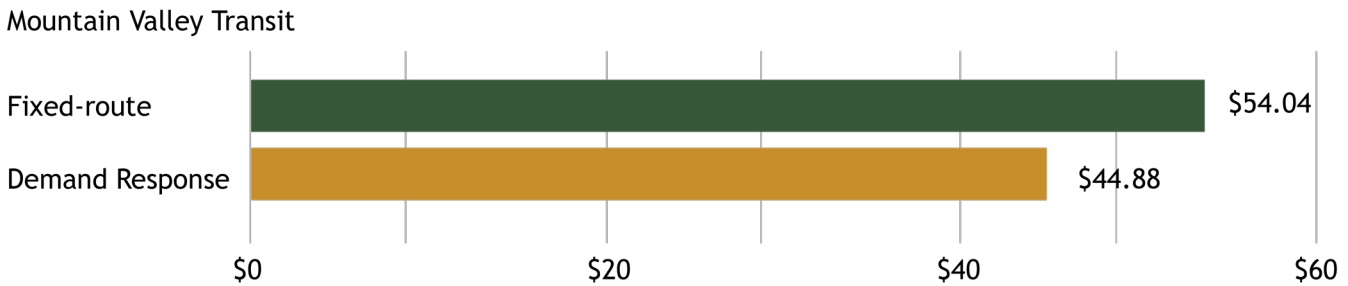
Cost per Mile



Cost per Hour



Cost per Ride*

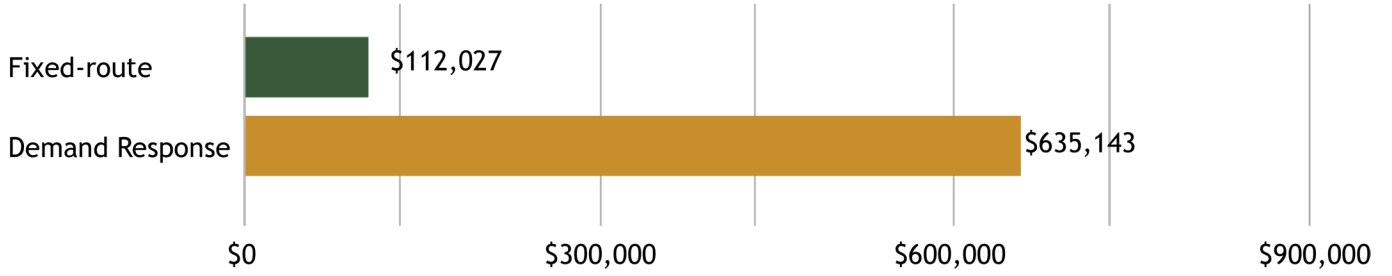


*Data for 2023 is disaggregated by demand response and fixed-route service for cost per mile, annual ridership, and annual operating costs; however, this level of detail is not available for other key performance measures or for data from previous years.

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

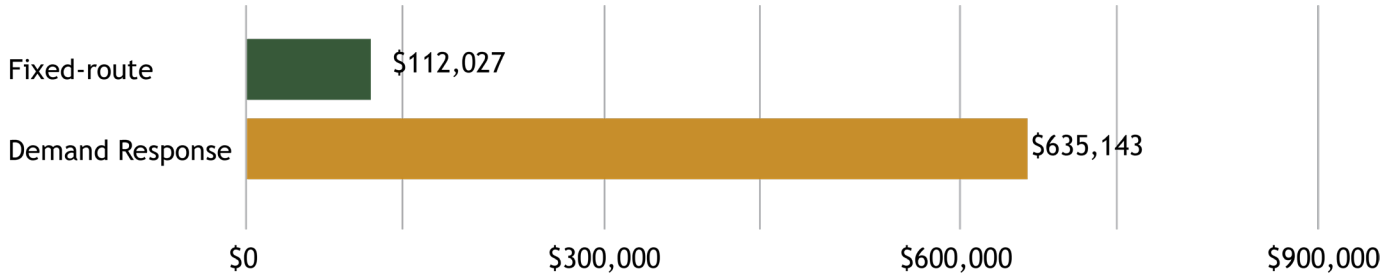
Annual Operating Costs

Mountain Valley Transit



Annual Ridership

Mountain Valley Transit



■ Demand Response ■ Fixed-route

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



Photo Credit: Visit Alamosa



Human Services Transportation Providers

Several human services agencies in the SLV 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 2045 SLV 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 SLV TPR, especially those without websites.

Provider	Service Area (Within SLV)	Additional TPRs	Type of Service	Days of Service	Passenger Eligibility
Alamosa Veterans Transportation County	Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties	N/A	Demand Response	Upon request	Veterans
American Red Cross - Western Colorado	Alamosa, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties	GV, GVMPO, IM, NW, SW	Demand Response	Upon request	Older adults and critically ill
Aponi Transport	Alamosa County	CFR, Eastern, SC, SE, PPACG	Demand Response	Mon-Fri, 7:30am to 5pm	Open to all passengers requiring transportation services
Axel Medical Transportation	Costilla County	CFR, IM, PACOG, PPACG, SC, SE, SW	Demand Response (Medical)	Mon-Fri, 7:30am to 5pm	Medicaid beneficiaries in need of non-emergency medical transportation
Blue Peaks Developmental Services	Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties	N/A	Demand Response	Daily	Individuals with developmental disabilities
Cheyenne Village	Conejos County	CFR, PPACG	Fixed-route Bus, Demand Response, Coordination with Other Providers	Fixed-route: Mon-Thurs Demand Response: Tues	Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities
Conejos County Department of Social Services	Conejos County	N/A	Contract with Other Providers, Demand Response, Coordination with Other Providers	Upon request	Individuals with disabilities, older adults (65+), low-income community members, veterans, Medicaid recipients
Freedom Wagon	Alamosa County	N/A	Fixed Route	Mon-Fri, 8am to 4pm	Open to all passengers requiring transportation services

Human Services Transportation Providers (continued)

Provider	Service Area (Within SLV)	Additional TPRs	Type of Service	Days of Service	Passenger Eligibility
Maguy Medical Transport	Alamosa County	CFR, GV, IM, PACOG, PPACG, SC, SE	Demand Response (Medical)	Upon request	Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) members and individuals needing non-emergency medical transportation
MedRide	Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache 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
Mercy Medical Angels	Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties	GVMPO, SW	Demand Response (Medical), Vouchers or Reimbursement, Bus Passes or Tickets	Upon Request	Open to all passengers requiring transportation services
Red Willows (SLV Transportation)	Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties	N/A	Demand Response	Upon Request	Medicaid recipients
Retired Senior and Volunteer Program	Alamosa County	SC, SW	Specialized Services, Demand Response, Reimbursement	Mon-Fri	Older adults (65+), low-income community members, veterans, Medicaid recipients
Sunshine Rides	Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties	CFR, DRCOG, Eastern, GV, GVMPO, IM, NW, PPACG, SE, SW	Demand Response	Daily	Open to all passengers requiring transportation services
Valley Wide Health	Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties	SE	Demand Response, Vouchers or Reimbursement, Bus Passes or Tickets	Mon-Fri	Older adults (65+), individuals with disabilities, low-income community members, veterans, Medicaid recipients

Source: 2045 SLV 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 SLV 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 SLV TPR, especially those without websites.

Provider	Service Area (Within SLV)	Additional TPRs	Types of Service	Days of Service	Passenger Eligibility
Costilla County Department of Social Services	Costilla County	N/A	Contract with Other Providers, Vouchers or Reimbursement	Upon request	Individuals with disabilities, older adults (65+), low income populations, veterans, Medicaid recipients
San Luis Valley Community Mental Health Center	Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties	N/A	Demand Response	Upon Request	Those who are Medicaid recipients or individuals in need of mental health support. Specific requirements may vary depending on the service being requested
San Luis Valley Area Agency on Aging	Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache counties	N/A	Vouchers or Reimbursement	Upon request	Older adults
Starpoint	Salida, Buena Vista	CFR	Demand Response	Daily	People with disabilities
Upper Arkansas Area Agency on Aging	Chaffee County	CFR, IM	Vouchers or Reimbursement	Mon-Fri	Older adults (60+)

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

Private Transportation Providers

Six private for-profit companies in the SLV TPR provide transportation services: City Cab, High Mountain Taxi, Little Stinkers Taxi, Rocky Mountain Taxi Service, Rocky Rides, 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, 30 percent of CDOT tracked transit vehicles in the SLV TPR are beyond their state of good repair. The anticipated cost of this backlog is just over \$400,000.

Provider	Total Revenue Vehicles	Vehicles Beyond State of Good Repair	Percentage of Vehicles Beyond State of Good Repair	Cost of Backlog
Mountain Valley Transit	10	3	30.00%	\$410,502
Total	10	3	30.00%	\$410,502

Source: 2023 Transit Asset Management Plan

Regional Coordination Activities

The Regional Transit Council (RTC) of the SLV TPR was established in 2020 as a subcommittee of the SLV TPR, with the intent to serve as the local transit coordinating council for a seven-county rural area of Colorado, including Alamosa, Chaffee, Conejos, Costilla, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache Counties. The purpose of the RTC is to promote regional transit in the San Luis Valley, to inform community members of available transportation options, and to promote expansion of needed transit services. The RTC prioritizes efforts to coordinate all transit and transportation services for the benefit of community members. While the RTC was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the loss of key leadership members in 2024, efforts are underway to complete the reorganization of the Council by the end of 2025. These efforts are led by Mountain Valley Transit, in coordination with the designated Transit Representative to the TPR.

Ongoing Activities & Programs

Mountain Valley Transit received a Regional Mobility Grant from CDOT to assist with communication and coordination efforts to grow awareness about regional transportation options, including existing transit provided by Mountain Valley Transit, Bustang Outrider and health and human service organizations providing transportation. The initial grant research discovered that there are a number of unofficial coordination activities taking place around transportation needs in the SLV TPR. Several churches and homeless support organizations maintain resources that list a wide variety of transportation options, from volunteer drivers and informal driving organizations to fixed-route public transportation, including local, regional and interregional options.

In addition, there are more formal efforts to connect individuals, particularly those experiencing homelessness or poverty to key human services and medical agencies through the Navigators program. The program helps individuals access connect to services like healthcare, housing, and mental health support. While the Navigators program does not provide transportation, program volunteers work closely with local transportation providers and nonprofits to maintain up-to-date information on transportation options and other community resources. The Navigators program acts as a vital link in guiding clients to the care they need across a rural region with limited access to public services.

Identified Barriers

Interviews with regional transit representatives identified a few key barriers. One participant noted that not all transportation providers in the region seem willing to coordinate, noting that some providers feel the need to protect their client base and related funding they may receive from Health First Colorado/Medicaid.

Another participant noted that within the broader community, members increasingly perceive regional transit services as unreliable. Through the Regional Mobility grant, Mountain Valley Transit, working with a revitalized Regional Transit Council, will work to improve trust and coordination of services between the public and non-public transportation providers in the SLV TPR. The participant noted that it will take trust amongst the providers to improve efficiency of connectivity in the region and to boost ridership. By developing regular and transparent communications and service coordination between transportation providers, the RTC hopes to rebuild this trust with the public. New initiatives will require a visible presence through media outreach and advertisements placed in high-traffic community locations such as grocery stores, post offices, and other local gathering places, as well as the use of local social media tools specific to the communities of the San Luis Valley.

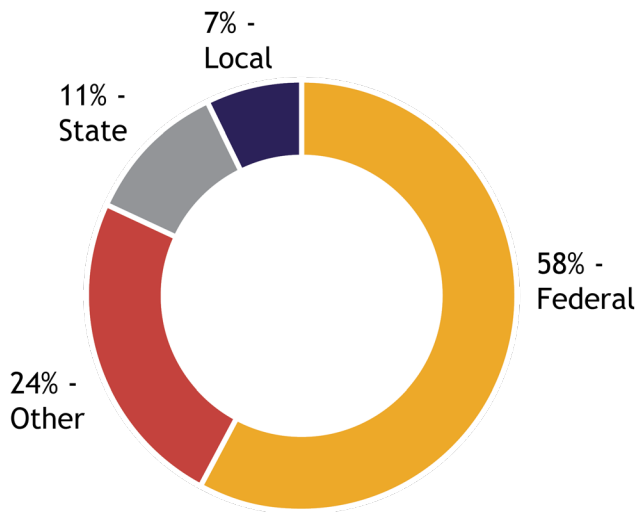


Photo Credit: Colorado Mountain College

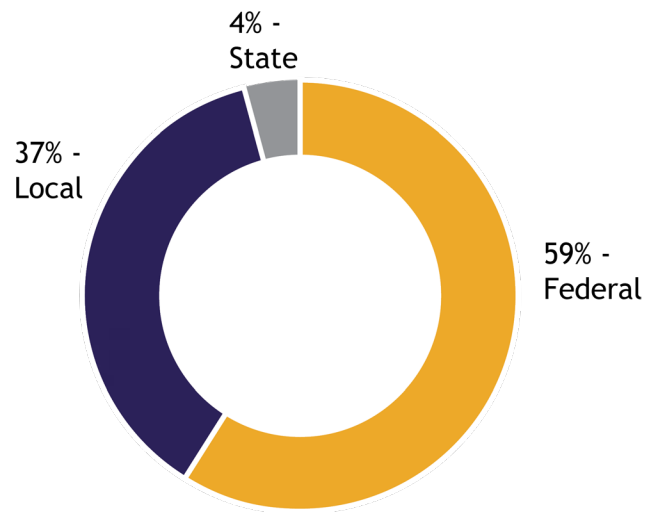
Financial Snapshot

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, federal funds contribute the largest share at 58 percent. Other sources follow at 24 percent, while state funding represents 11 percent and local funding accounts for just 7 percent. This indicates a relatively low contribution from local sources toward operational costs. The Capital Revenue Sources chart also highlights a federal majority at 59 percent. Local sources make up a significant 37 percent, while state funding is minimal at 4 percent. This distribution emphasizes the crucial role of federal and local funding in supporting capital projects such as infrastructure, vehicles, and facilities.

Operating Revenue Sources



Capital Revenue Sources

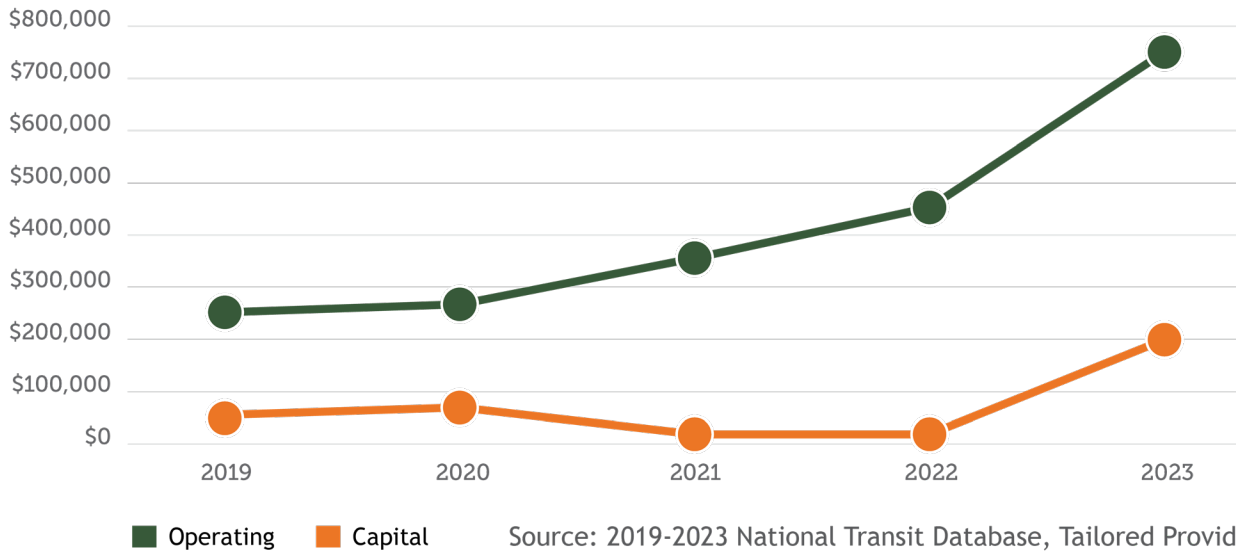


Source: 2023 National Transit Database, Tailored Provider Surveys



Historic Revenue Data

The following chart shows five-year SLV TPR operating and capital funding trends. Operating funds have grown significantly since 2019, with over 200 percent growth in operating funds over the five-year period. Capital funding remained under \$100,000 until 2023, when Mountain Valley Transit received nearly \$200,000 in local and federal funding.





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

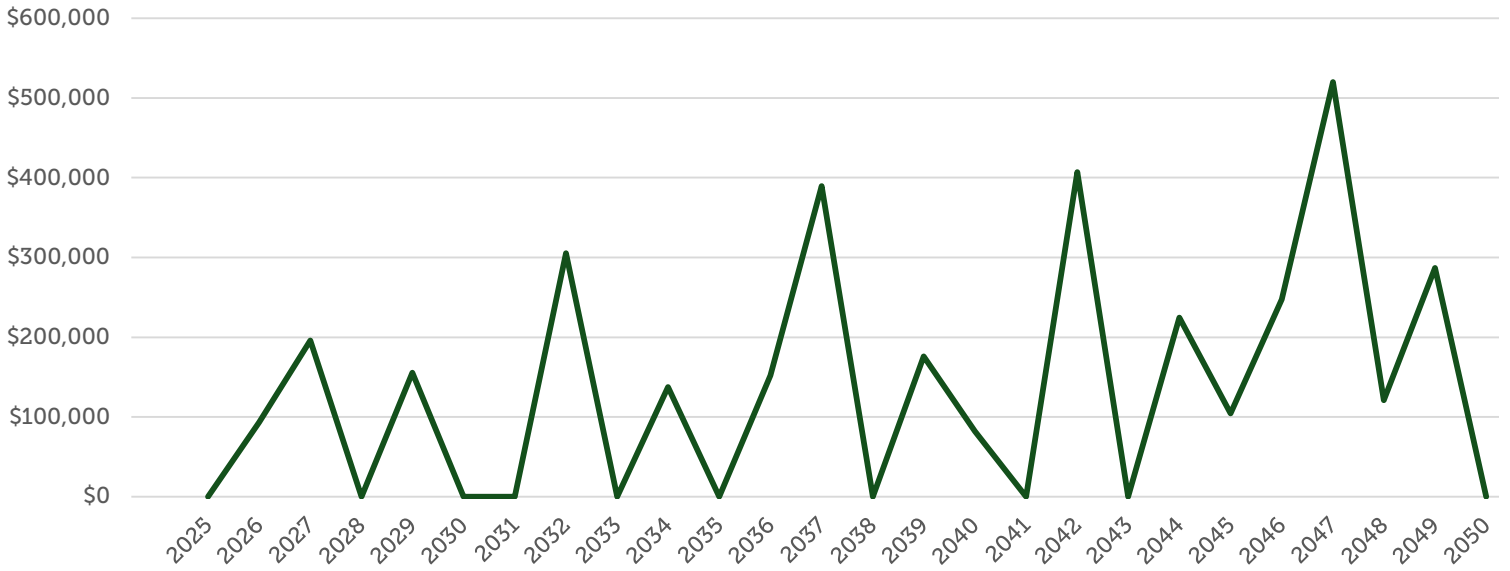
The 2023 TAM Plan uses a four-year planning horizon (2023-2026), consistent with FTA requirements, and identifies asset conditions, anticipated replacement needs, and capital costs necessary to maintain a state of good repair over that period.

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 following chart shows projected capital expenditures for rolling stock replacement among SLV 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

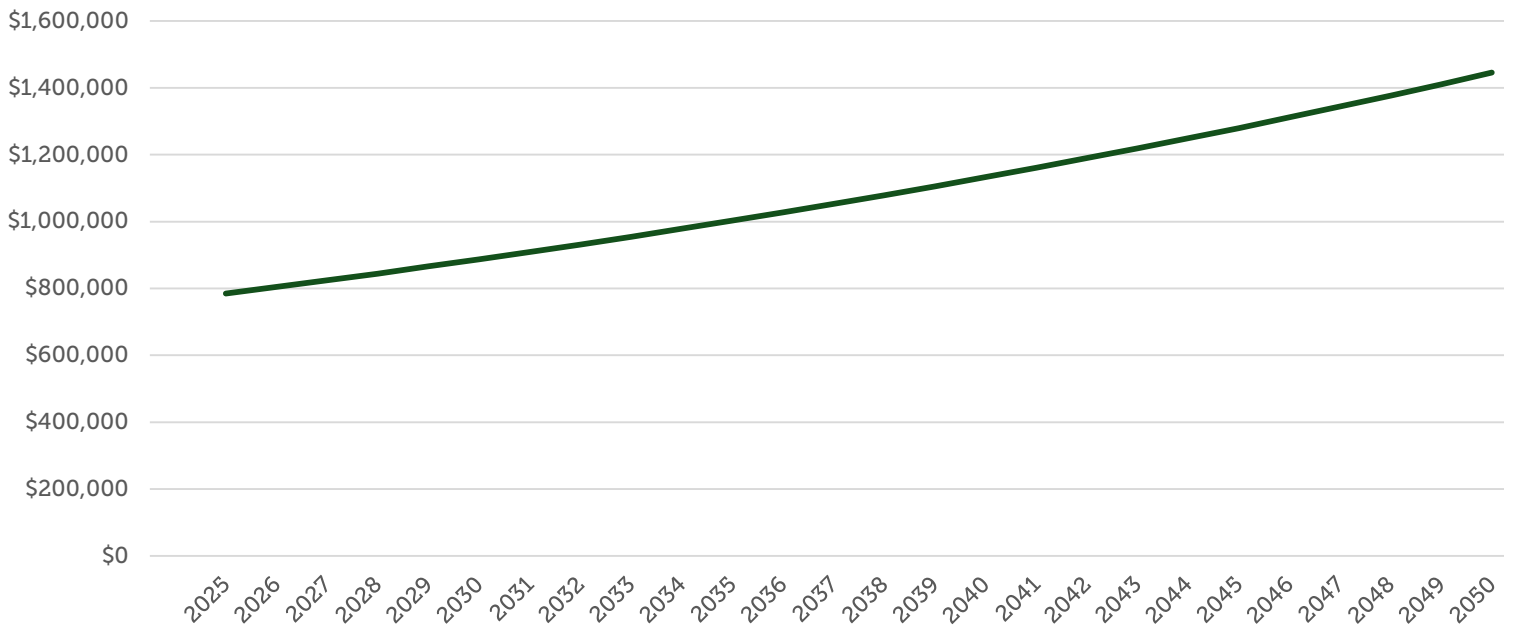


Operating cost estimates were developed using 2023 NTD data reported by transit agencies. To project future costs, these baseline figures were escalated using county-level population growth forecasts. This approach reflects anticipated increases in service demand driven by demographic changes.

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)





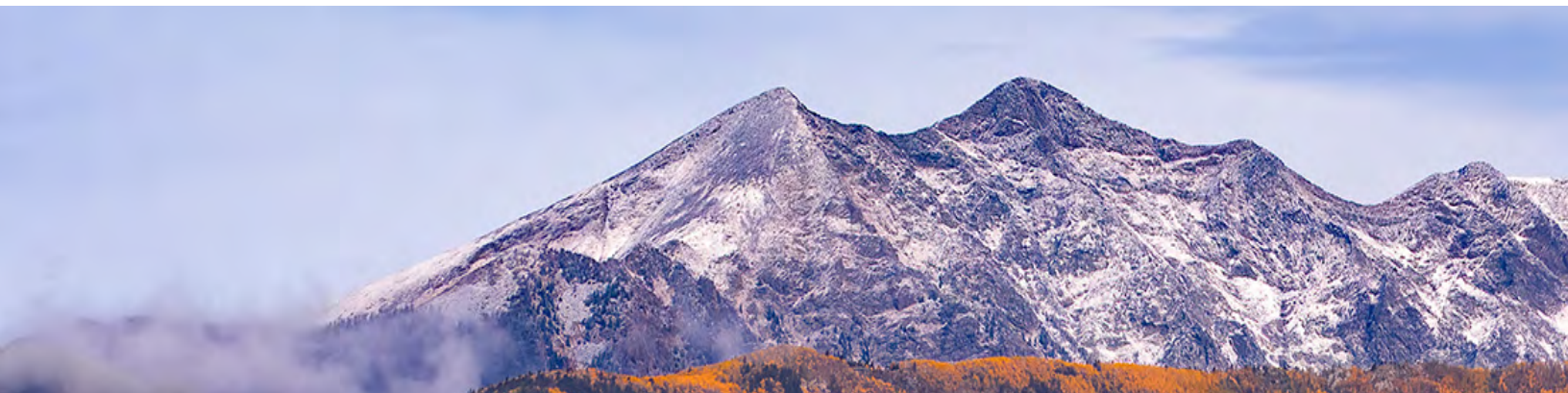
Funding Programs and Opportunities

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. Alternative funding sources to support local and regional transit services include:

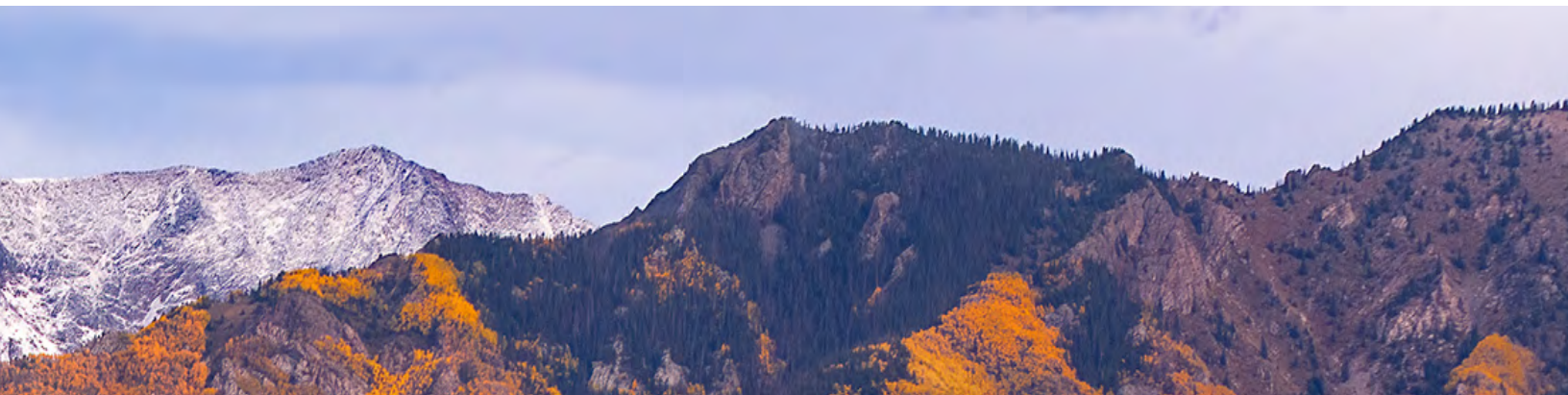
- General funds
- Lodging taxes
- Parking fees
- Property taxes
- Public-private partnerships
- Rural transportation authorities
- Sales and use taxes
- Sponsorships/donations
- Tourism taxes
- Utility taxes/fees
- Vehicle fees
- CDOT’s Office of Innovative Mobility Enterprise Funding





Federal Transit Administration Funding Programs

- 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 SLV 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
- 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
- Coordinate with CDOT and regional partners to fund and construct transit centers and Park-n-Rides in the Region
- Advocate for increased coordination efforts among Mountain Valley Transit, coordinating council, local governments, other transit providers, and CDOT
- Partner and collaborate with CDOT and local agencies to increase coordination on marketing, outreach, and human services
- Work towards the successful implementation of a One-Call/OneClick Call Center for the Region
- Work to coordinate and establish fixed-route and demand response transit services to serve populations on corridors
- Expand interregional transit service to increase mobility for residents, employees, and visitors 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
1319	Poncha Springs Crossroads Welcome Center Improvements	\$800,000
2531	Formalize Regional Transit Council, Regional Transit Route Plan, One-Stop Shop for Transit in SLV	\$1,500,000
2535	New Essential Bus Service from Durango to Denver	TBD
2484	Operational Costs for Service between Buena Vista and Salida Commuter	\$2,500,000
1307	Park and Ride and Bus Shelter in Monte Vista	TBD
2532	Northeast San Luis Valley Transit Service	\$600,000
2047	SH 112 Demand Response	\$3,600,000
2537	Creede Eagle Intersect	\$2,200,000
2035	Southern SLV Demand Response	\$800,000
2538	Center Park-n-Ride	\$800,000
1308	New Alamosa General Public Demand Response Service	\$2,200,000
1055	New Regional Fixed-Route Service between Alamosa and Saguache	\$600,000
2541	Increase in Eagle Line's Service Hours and/or Days	\$400,000
2533	Service Along Southern Portion of US 285	\$2,200,000
2539	Saguache Park-n-Ride	\$800,000
2540	Saguache Transit Center	\$6,500,000
1300	Salida Park-n-Ride and Bus Pullouts	\$600,000
2706	Local Route Circulators in Buena Vista, Poncha Springs, Salida	TBD
2709	Chaffee Shuttle Additional buses and replacement buses	TBD
3291	Daily Circular to Saguache County towns	TBD

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