Transit Connections Study

July 2025

COLORADO
Department of Transportation

Transit Connections Study (TCS)

Summary

Colorado boasts a robust public transportation system, with local and regional networks linked by a statewide network that includes intercity bus lines, Amtrak passenger rail, and Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) Bustang interregional bus service. Building on this foundation and anticipating Colorado's evolving transportation needs, the Transit Connections Study (TCS) aims to strengthen this system by creating a strategic vision for a more integrated statewide transit network that enhances mobility and connectivity across Colorado. The TCS achieves this through examining stops, stations, regional and interregional service gaps, and opportunities to better connect Colorado's transit network. This involves a review of the current public transportation services, focusing on regional characteristics, opportunities, challenges, key corridors, demographics, and travel demand patterns across these regions and corridors. The primary objective is to identify and address service gaps in Colorado's regional and interregional public transportation network. Utilizing a prioritization matrix, the TCS identifies project types that enhance community access and statewide connectivity, ultimately creating a more integrated system that serves more people and provides greater transportation choices.

The key goals of the study include:

- **Enhance Accessibility and Connectivity of Colorado's Transit Network**: Connect rural and urban areas to Bustang, passenger rail, and local transit networks.
- **Foster Multimodal Integration:** Strengthen Colorado's statewide transit network.
- **Promote Sustainability:** Support modeshift and greenhouse gas reduction by increasing public transit use.

This study will inform CDOT's transit planning through its identification of gaps and needs in the public transportation network including Bustang service planning, statewide transit and transportation planning, and preparation for interregional passenger rail services. The TCS aims to support existing planning efforts and strengthen Colorado's public transportation system to better connect people, places, and opportunities. The study identifies opportunities for enhanced connectivity, accessibility, and integration; highlights network-level benefits; and prioritizes project types based on their ability to further develop the statewide transit network. The TCS is an informative, agency-agnostic document that does not have dedicated funding streams tied to its recommendations.

(1) Introduction & Vision

The purpose of the TCS is to provide an overview of Colorado's public transportation network, and how it can be better connected. This includes recommendations for connecting rural and urban transit networks, strengthening Colorado's statewide public transportation network,

and supporting modeshift and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction by increasing access to public transit. The TCS reviews the current network focusing on regional characteristics, challenges, key corridors, and travel demand to identify regional and interregional service gaps. The findings of this report are intended to be used by CDOT, public transportation providers, and other stakeholders to assist project development for a more interconnected statewide network.

Focusing on increasing mobility for Coloradans and visitors, the TCS examines the existing transit network and identifies regional and interregional service gaps based on travel demand, network needs and gaps, access, and equity. Each gap identified is assigned a project type to fill that gap (e.g. a new or existing transit corridor project, system optimization project, or improved stops and stations). Finally, each project is put through a prioritization process based on connectivity, accessibility, equity, and financial sustainability. This identifies the highest-leverage project types for improving the network's connectivity. These projects are listed by geographic area in the Connecting the State section.

This study prioritizes public and private non-profit transit agencies; identifies major specialized service providers; and excludes services like taxis, vanpools, and transportation network companies (TNCs). While extensive efforts were made to ensure the accuracy of the information presented, it may not fully capture the most recent service offerings.

(2) Why Transit?

Colorado's communities are increasingly connected to public transportation that links urban cities, mountain resorts, and rural areas across the state. This growing interconnectivity is driven by factors such as rising housing costs, an aging population, increasing tourism, increasing investments in public transportation, the increasing number of transit-oriented communities, GHG reduction goals, state and local policies, and more. It is essential that Coloradans have safe, convenient, and accessible transportation options. A connected public transportation network fosters economic vitality, promotes healthier communities, enhances safety, and ensures equitable access to opportunity.

Table 1: Impact of Transit on Statewide Goals

Goals	Public Transportation Benefits
Economic Opportunity	There is a strong connection between poverty and access to transportation. Limited access to transportation can impact what jobs are available to individuals. Unreliable transportation can be the difference between losing and keeping a job for many Coloradans.
Improving Safety	Public transportation is consistently shown to be safer than driving alone. Public transportation, in conjunction with other safety projects, creates safer streets for all road users.

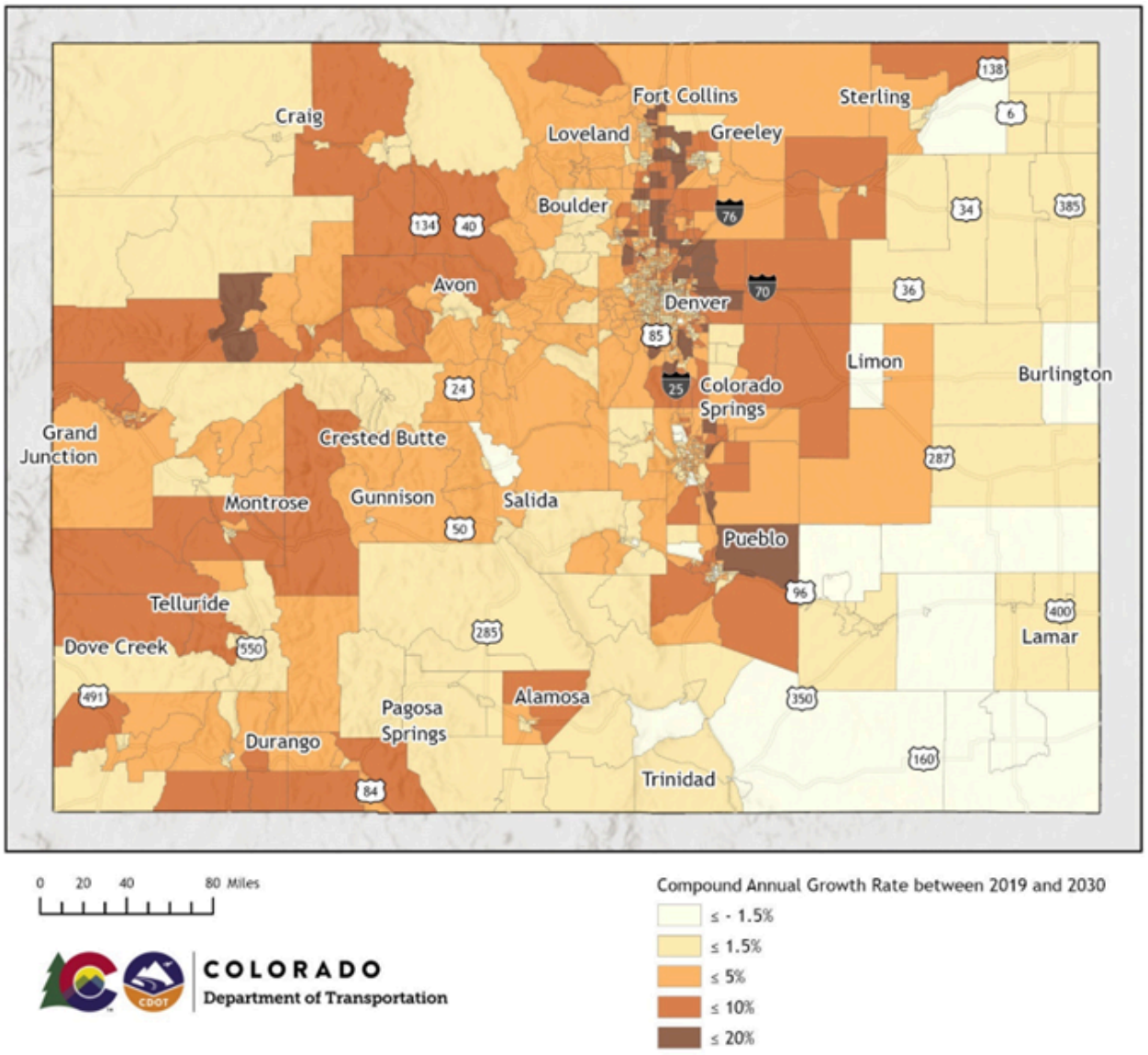
Access to Opportunity	Public transportation gives Coloradans a choice in how they move. In rural areas, where changing socioeconomic conditions, aging populations, and transportation deserts present transportation challenges, public transportation fills important gaps in networks and provides residents access to critical services.
Equity	In Colorado, transportation is one of the top household expenses after housing. In the Denver area, the average household spends over $14,000 on transportation.[1] This is in large part due to the cost of buying, maintaining, and operating a car. In contrast, public transportation is far less costly, and it provides Coloradans with an affordable alternative to driving. Public transportation provides vital mobility options and serves as a reliable way to access jobs and opportunities, especially for those with limited or no access to cars.
Community Access	Travel needs often extend beyond the boundaries of individual towns, regions, or public transportation service areas. Integrating public transportation and multimodal networks creates a more convenient and accessible transportation system. Connecting Colorado's robust public transportation network is a critical component to developing this transportation future and improving community access for all types of trips and travelers.

Understanding Colorado's Transportation Needs: A Demographic Overview

According to the Colorado State Demographer, the state is projected to grow to nearly six million residents by the latter half of the 2020s, with projections exceeding seven million by 2050 - a significant amount of this growth concentrated along the Front Range - our public transportation systems must adapt to this changing landscape.

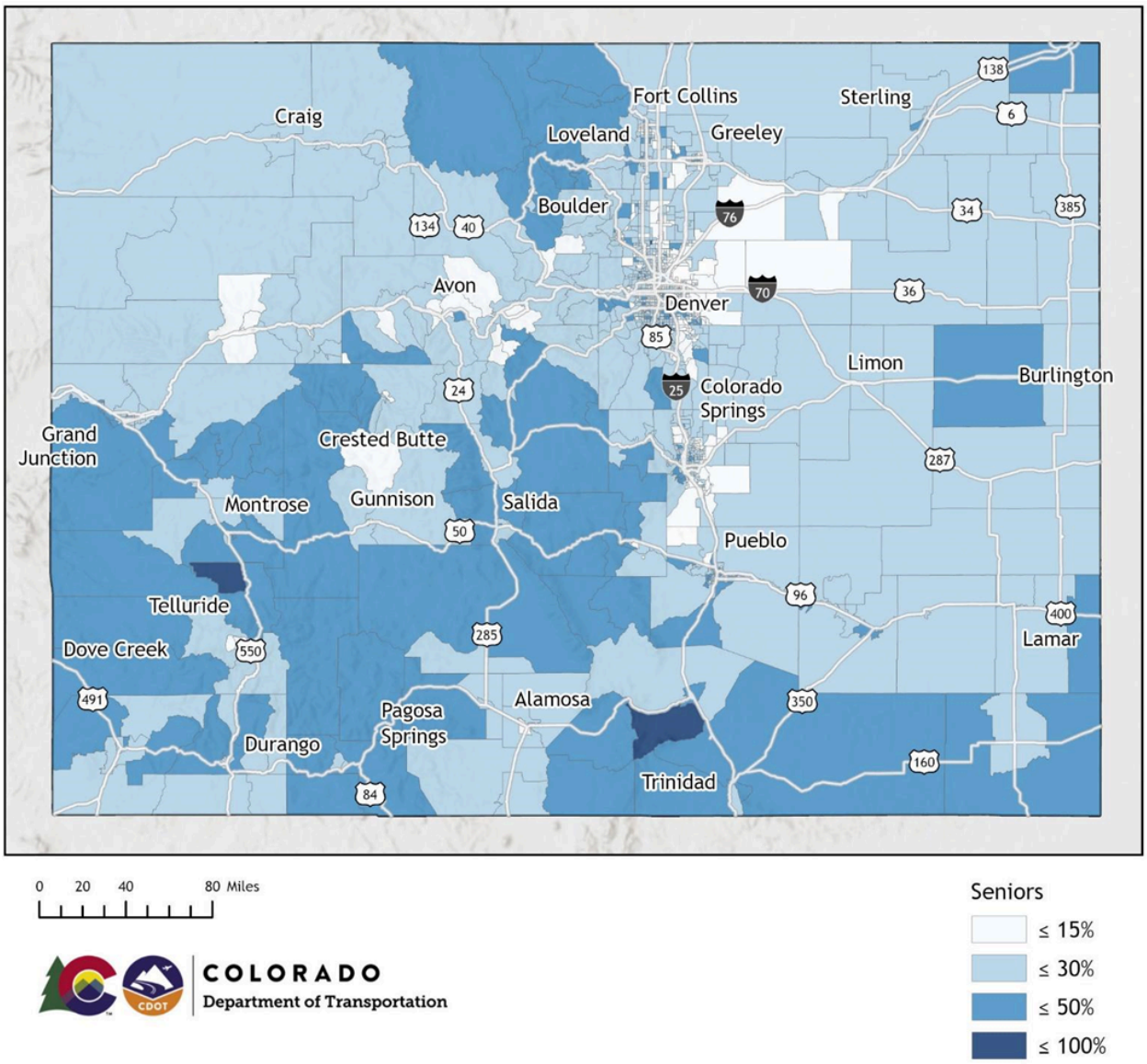
Figure X: Population Growth Rate by Census Tract

[1] https://htaindex.cnt.org/map/#



Simultaneously, many rural areas face an aging population as younger residents relocate to urban centers. These demographic shifts increase the need for adaptable public transportation solutions. The significant growth in the 65+ demographic foreshadows an increasing reliance on accessible transportation for healthcare, social inclusion, and maintaining independence.

Figure X Seniors



In addition to supporting seniors to maintain active and healthy lifestyles, public transit is a lifeline for many Coloradans living with disabilities. More than a million Coloradans live with some form of disability, and public transportation allows them to access services and community. All of the above underscore the need to increase accessibility and connectivity highlighted throughout the TCS.

Figure X Persons with a Disability

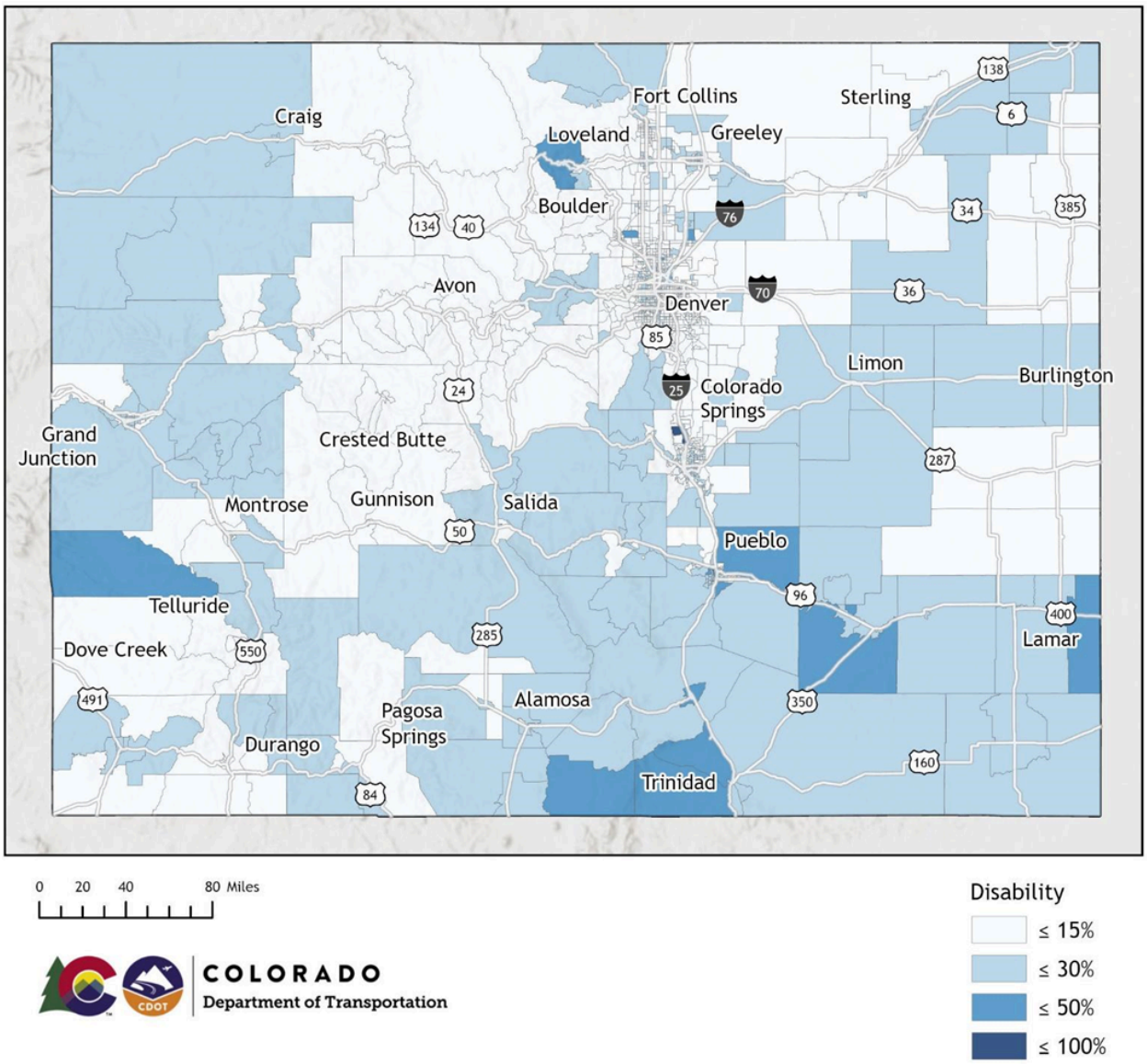
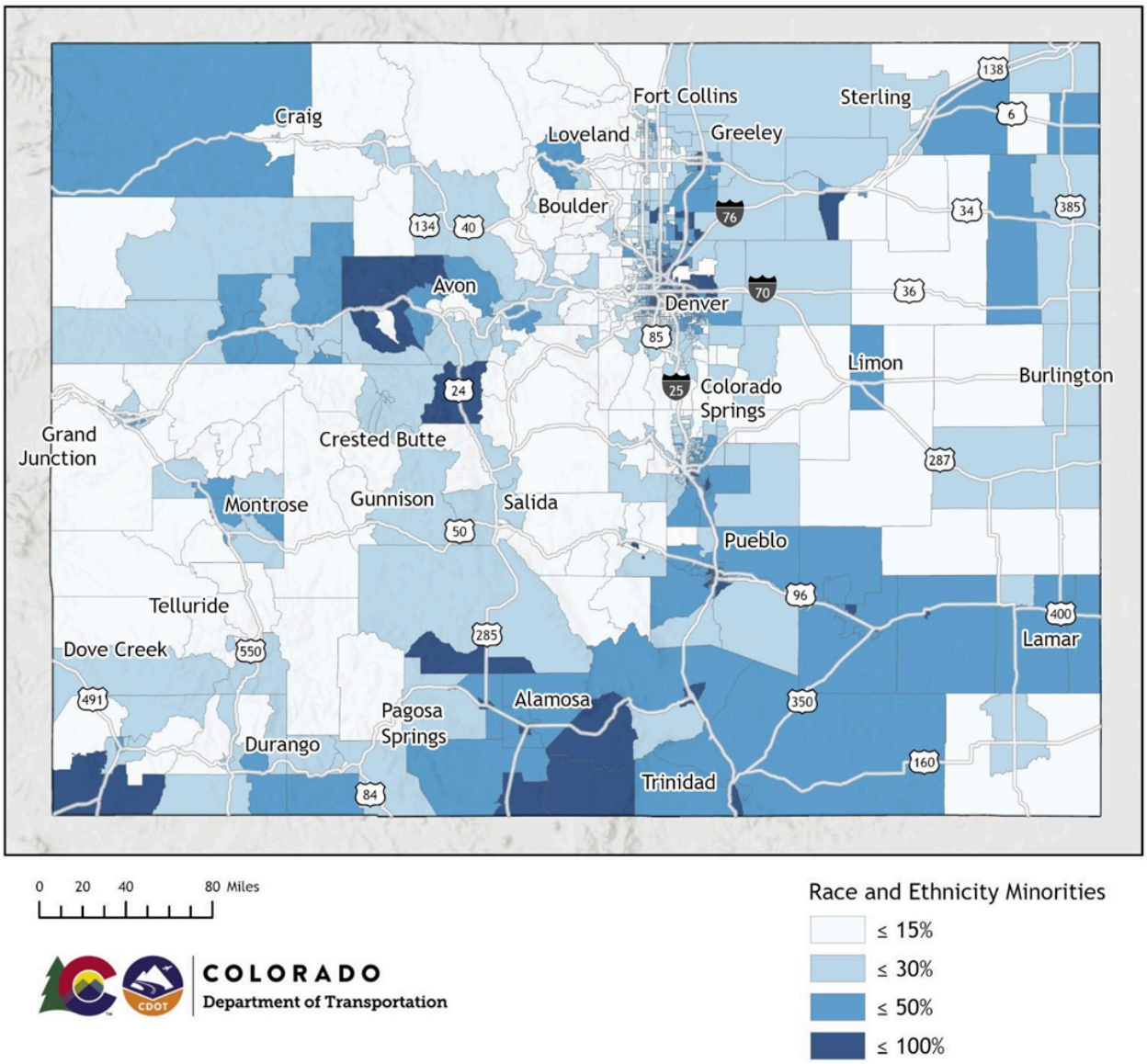


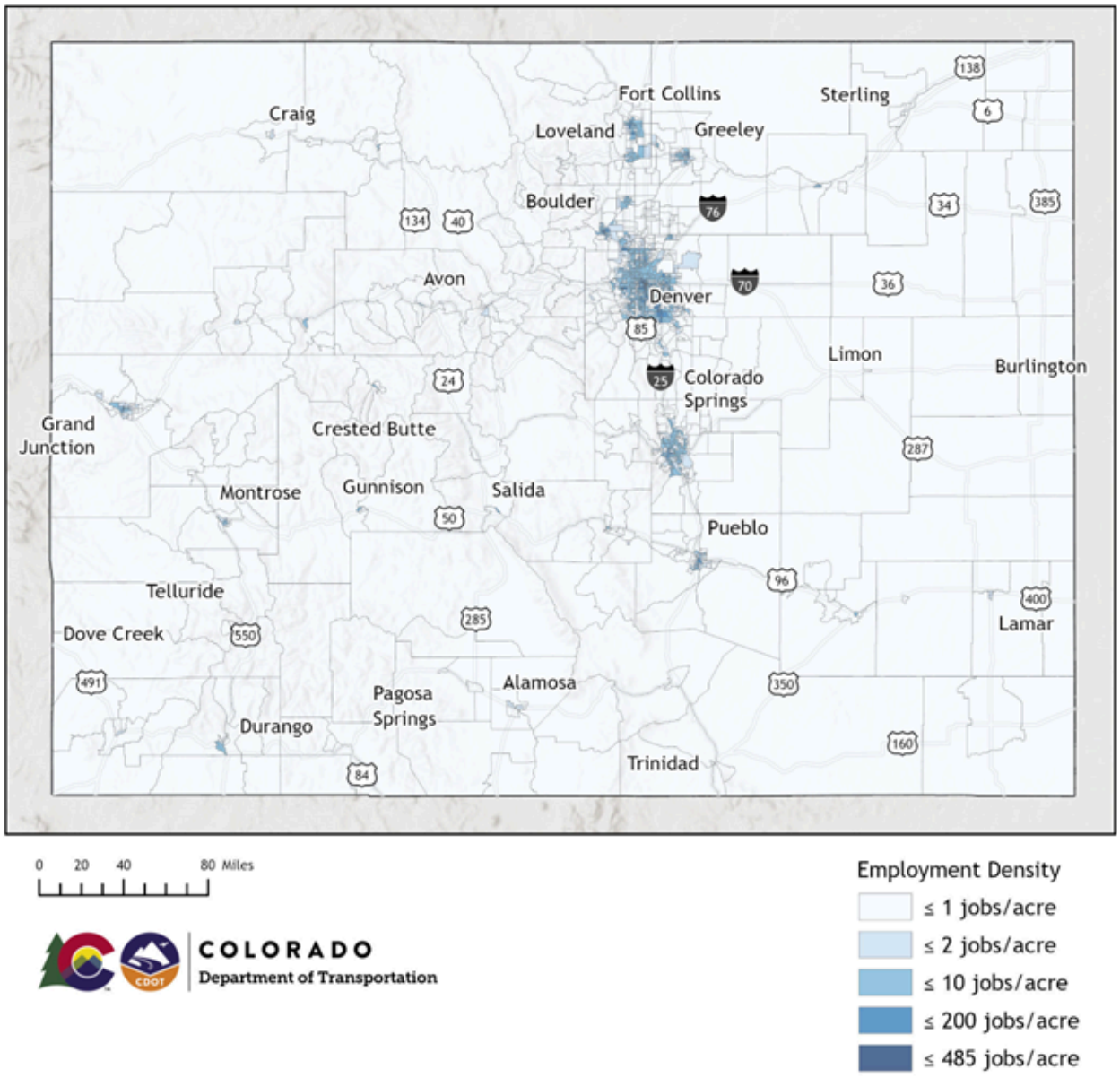
Figure X Race and Ethnicity

As Colorado grows, diversity is also increasing. Hispanic populations are amongst the fastest growing demographic in Colorado. Additionally, Hispanic and African Americans used public transportation more than other demographics.



There is a strong connection between employment and transportation access. Studies reveal that a lack of reliable transportation is a significant barrier to employment, particularly for low-income individuals. 42% of unhoused and low-income people reported being unable to accept a job due to lack of transportation. The cost of transportation represents a substantial financial burden for many Coloradans, especially lower-income households, who can spend up to 30% of their after-tax income on transportation. This is much higher than the national average of 15%. Affordable and reliable public transportation can help alleviate this strain.

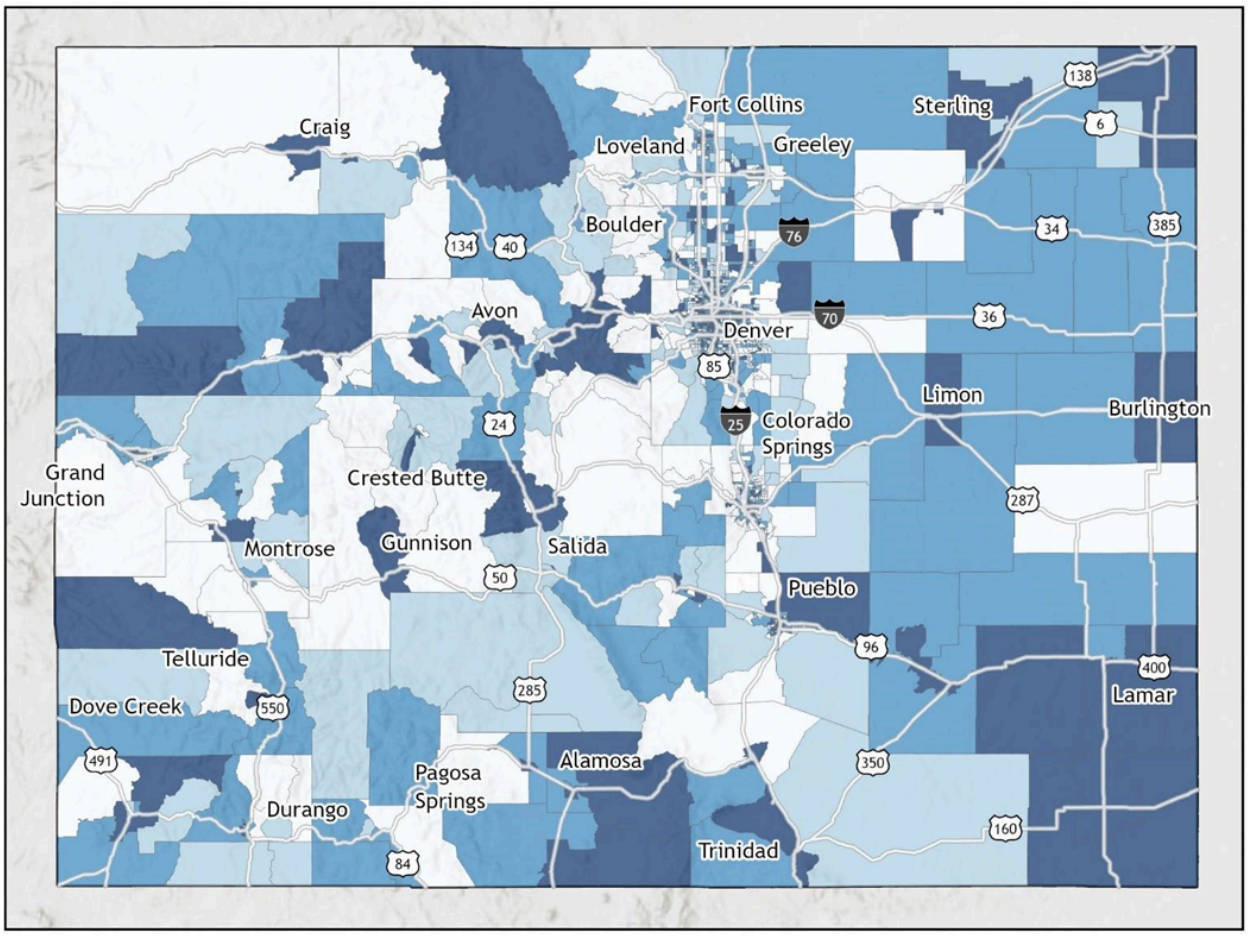
Figure X: Employment Density by Census Tract



With a notable 5% of Colorado's households being zero-car households and many more with limited vehicle access, the need for robust transit options is apparent.[2]

Figure X Zero Car Households

[2] Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, *Transportation Issues & Homelessness: Issue Brief 2024.*



While there are diverse demographics and unique public transportation needs across Colorado's communities, all Coloradans can benefit from a reliable, affordable, and connected public transportation system. Understanding these diverse needs and the role public transportation plays in addressing them underpins the planning and legislative environment that supports the development of the interconnected network.

(3) Advancing Multimodal Transportation in Colorado: Policy and Funding Landscape

The State of Colorado and CDOT prioritize a coordinated approach to transportation and land use. This approach enhances statewide public transportation services and

offers mode choice for Colorado's communities. This section highlights the goals, vision, and legislation already in place to support Colorado's transit system.

CDOT's Wildly Important Goals

At a state-level, CDOT has its own Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) for public transportation. These ambitious goals also align with the governor's key priorities and CDOT's strategic priorities in addition to guiding CDOT's 10-Year Transportation Plan investments. Progress on these WIGs can be tracked on CDOT's WIG Dashboard.[3]

CDOT's Wildly Important Goals (WIGs):

1. **Advancing Transportation Safety:** Protect the traveling public by reducing the number of traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries.
2. **Clean Transportation:** Decrease transportation sector emissions.
3. **Statewide Public Transportation:** Increase ridership for the Bustang Family of Services.
4. **Colorado Mountain Rail:** Implement daily Colorado Mountain Rail service from Denver to Granby.

The recommendations from this study will further support CDOT's WIGs through its identifications of existing gaps and project prioritization.

Governor's Transportation Vision

Governor Polis' *Colorado Transportation Vision 2035* highlights the need for high-quality, reliable, safe, affordable, and equitable transportation across the state. Expansion of public transportation services is a key component for achieving the necessary mode shift. As noted in the *Colorado Greenhouse Gas Roadmap*, Colorado cannot build its way out of congestion. Robust public transportation and multimodal networks are essential to reducing congestion and GHG emissions, while also improving air quality, safety, and preserving the life of the transportation system. Additionally, investments in public transportation will connect communities and provide greater economic opportunities.[4] Since taking office, the Polis administration and the state legislature secured $200 million in new public transportation and rail service funding annually.[5] CDOT, its partners, and the legislature are working in concert to provide a connected, efficient, and reliable local and interregional transportation system to achieve Colorado's aggressive climate goals. Support at all levels is essential to making these goals a reality.

Advancing Public Transportation at the State Legislature

The State of Colorado recognizes public transportation as essential to meeting GHG reduction targets and providing Coloradans and tourists alike the freedom to choose

[3] https://dashboard.colorado.gov/governors-dashboard/transportation
[4] Colorado Transportation Vision 2035, p. 15-16.
[5] Colorado Transportation Vision 2035, p. 12.

how they move around the state.[6] The State of Colorado passed several pieces of legislation and established several state enterprises that support public transportation. Table 2 presents a high-level summary of state enterprises and legislation, which reinforce Colorado's commitment to a multimodal, sustainable, and equitable transportation system, and the state's broader strategic vision.

[6] Colorado Transportation Vision 2035, p.3.

Table 2: Legislation and State Enterprises Supporting Public Transit

Name	Description	Strategic Alignment
Senate Bill (SB) 22-180: Programs to Reduce Ozone Through Increased Transit[7]	Provided $30 million to Bustang for a 3 year (2022-2025) pilot program to expand Bustang's main line services along I-25 and I-70.	Increase state ridership on state-run public transit.
Clean Transit Enterprise (CTE)[8]	Originally established to support public transit electrification efforts, the CTE business purpose was expanded in 2024 to also include general transit and passenger rail expansion.	Provides funding sources that can support the recommendations in this study.
Nonattainment Area Air Pollution Mitigation Enterprise (NAAPME)[9]	Mitigate the environmental and health impacts of increased air pollution from vehicle emissions in nonattainment areas.	Can reduce congestion and support transportation infrastructure, especially for multimodal transportation with a focus on disproportionately impacted (DI) communities
House Bill (HB) 24-1313: Housing in Transit-Oriented Communities[10]	Promotes denser development in transit-oriented communities (TOCs) around public transportation stations and corridors.	Governor's vision for transit-oriented communities

[7] SB22-180
[8] Clean Transit Enterprise
[9] NAAPME Program
[10] HB24-1313

HB24-1304: Minimum Parking Requirements[11]	Prohibits municipalities within a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) from enacting or enforcing minimum parking requirements for most multi-use and multifamily housing requirements.	Denser communities centered around multimodal nodes help people access essential services and economic opportunities
SB24-184: Support Surface Transportation Infrastructure Development[12]	Imposes a $3/day fee on rental cars to fund multimodal transportation projects that can reduce congestion and support transportation infrastructure.	Provides a funding source that can support the recommendations in this study
SB25-030: Increase Transportation Mode Choice Reduce Emissions[13]	Creates a framework for identifying and addressing gaps in public transit and active transportation infrastructure.	Supporting bridging network gaps provides mode choice targets and will drive the need for expanded services and transit connections.

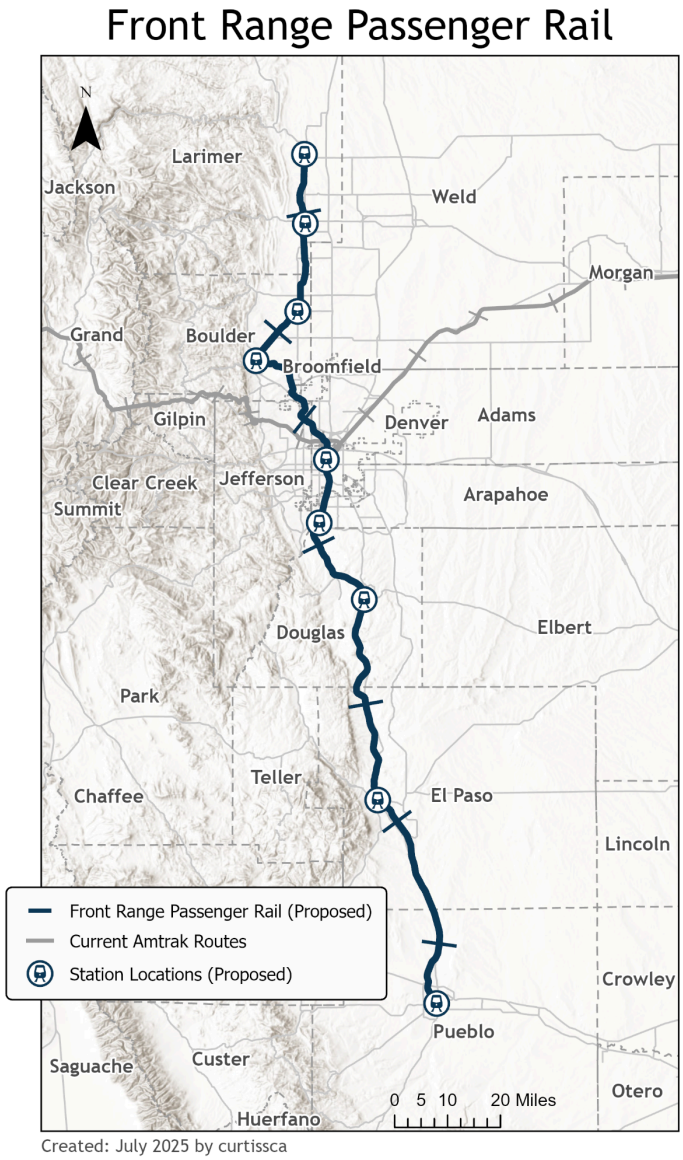
Planning for Passenger Rail

Colorado is advancing plans for two new passenger rail lines: Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR), proposed to connect Fort Collins and Pueblo, and Mountain Rail, with service from Denver to Craig. These projects offer an exciting opportunity to enhance connectivity across the state by utilizing existing rail corridors and providing Coloradans with another valuable travel option. FRPR is under the direction of the Front Range Passenger Rail District. The District is currently evaluating routes and could be operational before 2030. The Mountain Rail project is being developed by CDOT's Division of Transit and Rail with service projected to begin by Winter of 2026.

[11] HB24-1304
[12] SB24-184
[13] SB25-030

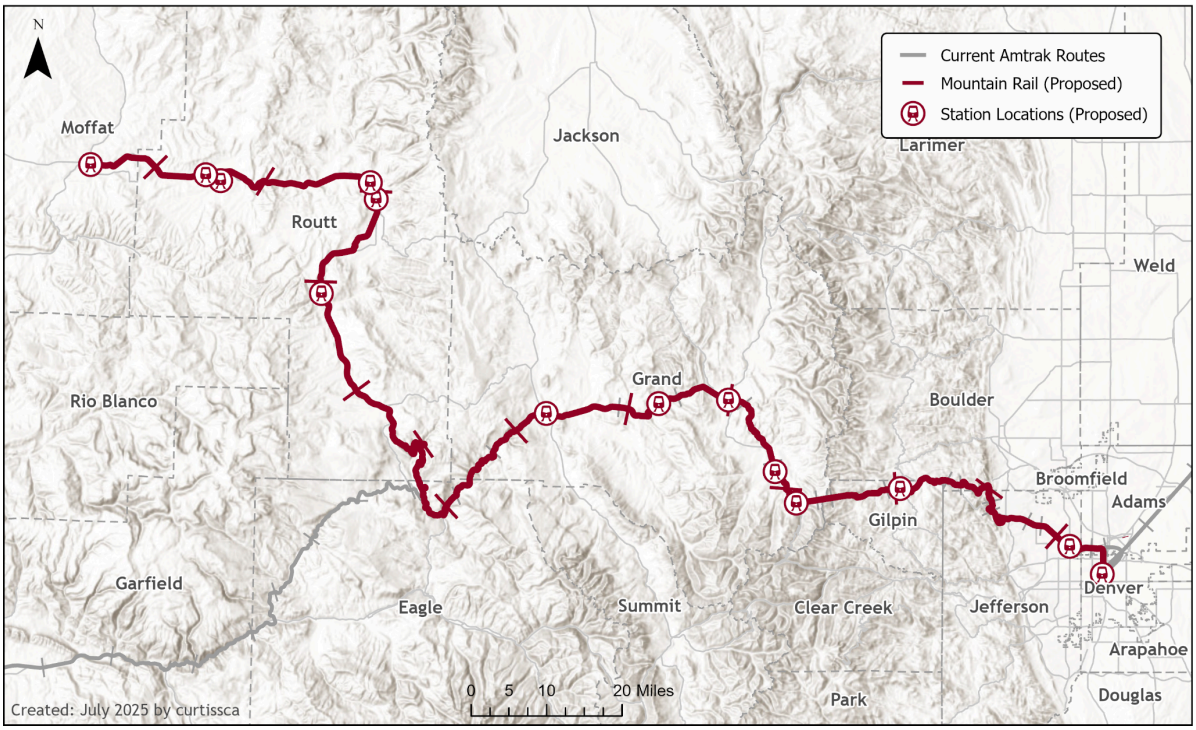
Front Range Passenger Rail

Figure 1: Proposed Route for Front Range Passenger Rail Service



Mountain Rail

Figure 2: Proposed Route for Mountain Rail Service



Colorado's Statewide Transportation Plan and CDOT's 10-Year Vision Plan

Colorado's Statewide Transportation Plan outlines a vision for what Colorado wants to achieve across the transportation system, including freight and passenger rail, public transportation, and active transportation. Over the past decade, significant investments, both by CDOT and local partners, have expanded access to public transportation across the state. The Statewide Transportation Plan guides the long range vision for a complete transportation network, including public transportation. The 10 Year Plan, a subset of the Statewide Plan that lists the state's priority projects, includes specific investments that contribute to the development of Colorado's public transportation network. CDOT is currently developing its next 10 Year Plan and Statewide Transportation Plan. Both are expected to be released by the end of 2025.

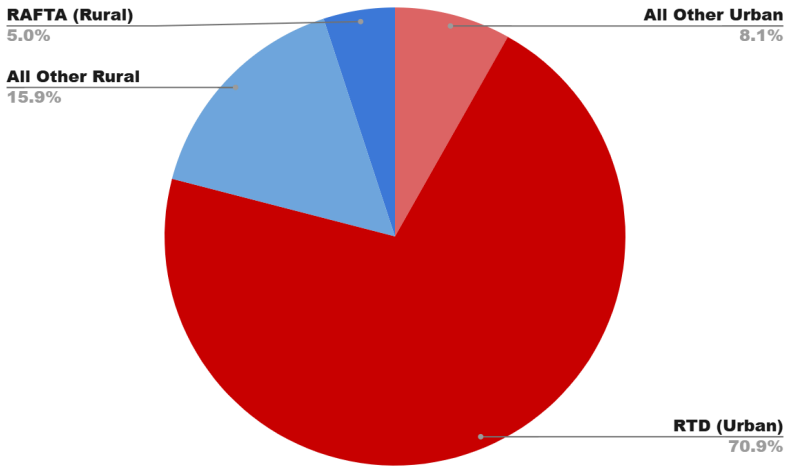
(4) Colorado's Transit Network

Colorado has a vast transit network with a variety of providers. This includes everything from RTD, the largest provider in the state, serving the Denver metro area, to rural on-demand carriers. There are a multitude of providers at different scales and with different governing structures. This includes private interstate carriers such as Greyhound to the 56 municipalities or counties identified as public transportation providers in Colorado. This section will highlight a few of the key elements of Colorado public transportation.

Statewide Transit Snapshot

In 2023, local and regional transportation provided over 91 million unlinked passenger trips, which was an 8% increase over the prior year. As shown in Figure 5, the vast majority of trips were provided by RTD (71% of all trips). Among rural transit providers, RFTA had the highest ridership in 2023 and, from a ridership perspective, is the largest rural provider in the nation.

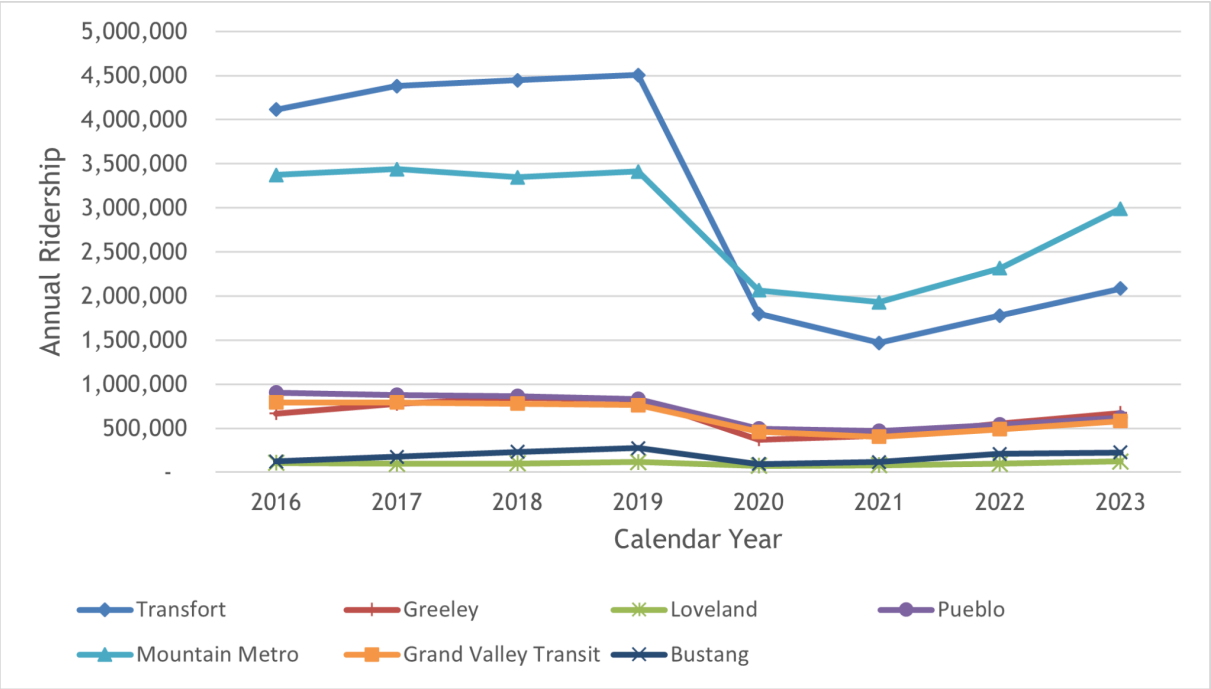
Figure X: Unlinked Passenger Trips by Area in 2023 (Urban & Rural)



Exclusive of RTD, the time series below shows the ridership trends of Colorado's major urban agencies and Bustang from 2016 to 2017. Cumulatively, these agencies saw a steady increase in ridership until 2020 when ridership dropped by 50% across the seven providers. Ridership fell another 9% in 2021. 2022 and 2023 have seen 23% and 22% increases in ridership, respectively. Only Loveland's COLT system has recovered above it's pre-pandemic ridership levels with 122,297 riders in 2023, above the agency's 2019 peak of 118,236 riders.

Figure X From CDOT's Unlinked Passenger Trips, Statewide and Major Urban Colorado Agencies[14]

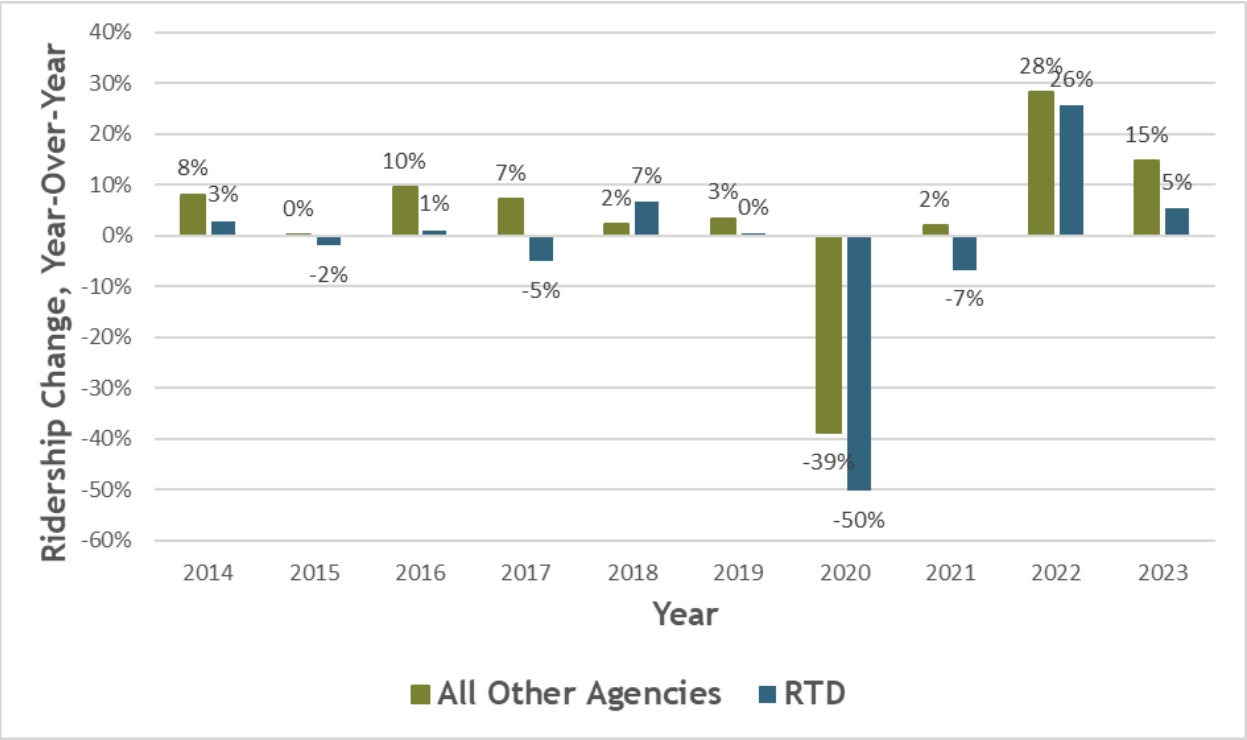
[14] 2023 NTD Report & CDOT Bustang Data



The figure below illustrates year over year change in ridership from 2014 through 2023. RTD's data has been excluded, as its ridership would otherwise skew the statewide trends. Notably, excluding RTD, Colorado's transit agencies surpassed national trends in 2021 with an increase in ridership. Much of which can be attributed to a rise in recreational trips and increased transit use within Colorado's mountain communities. In 2021 Colorado saw significant travel to recreational and outdoor destinations - Colorado state parks recorded a record number of visitations recording almost 20 millions visitors.[15]

Figure X: Yearly Change in Ridership by Agency: RTD and All Other Agencies

[15] Colorado Parks & Wildlife



RTD accounts for the majority of Colorado's transit vehicle revenue miles (VRM), with the rest of the state's urban and rural providers making up the remainder. VRMs provide a helpful indicator for the quantity of transit provided across the state and helps to determine future service levels and goals. Ridership and VRM, at a high level, provide indicators of transit usage and service levels.

Figure X: Yearly Vehicle Revenue Miles Traveled by Agency

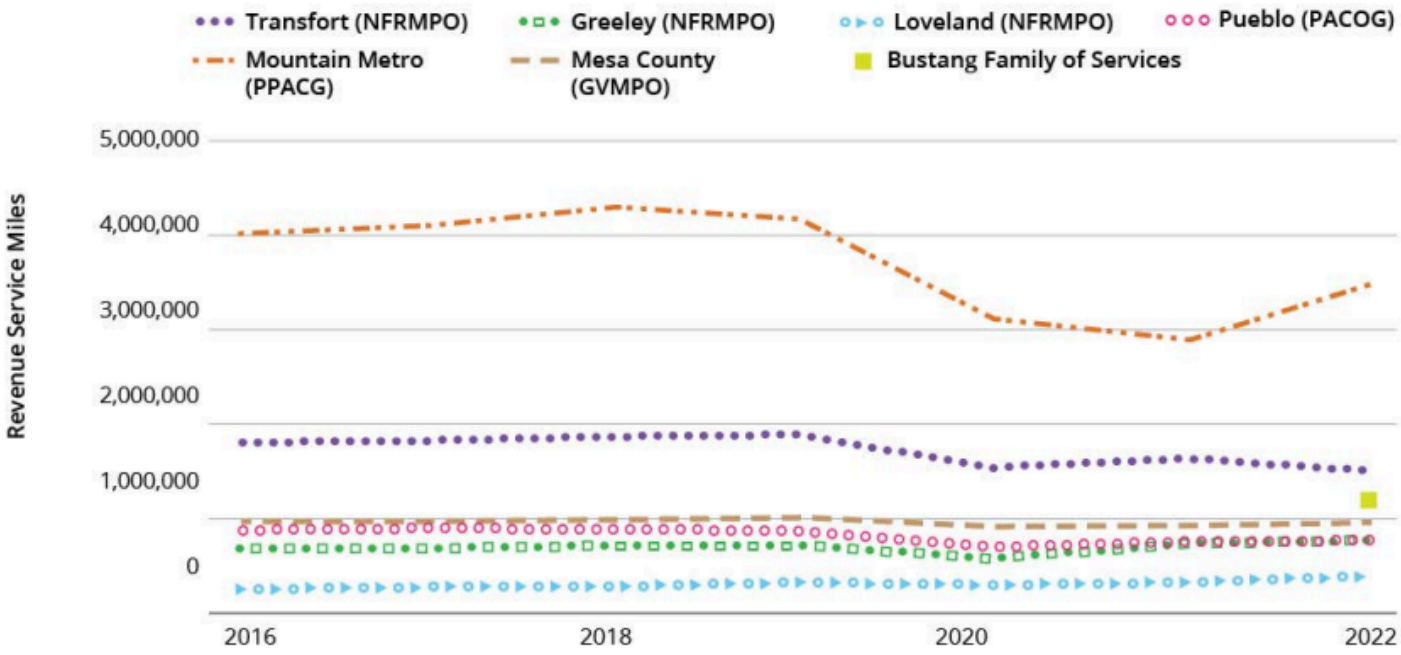


Table X: Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM), Change from Previous Year and 2016

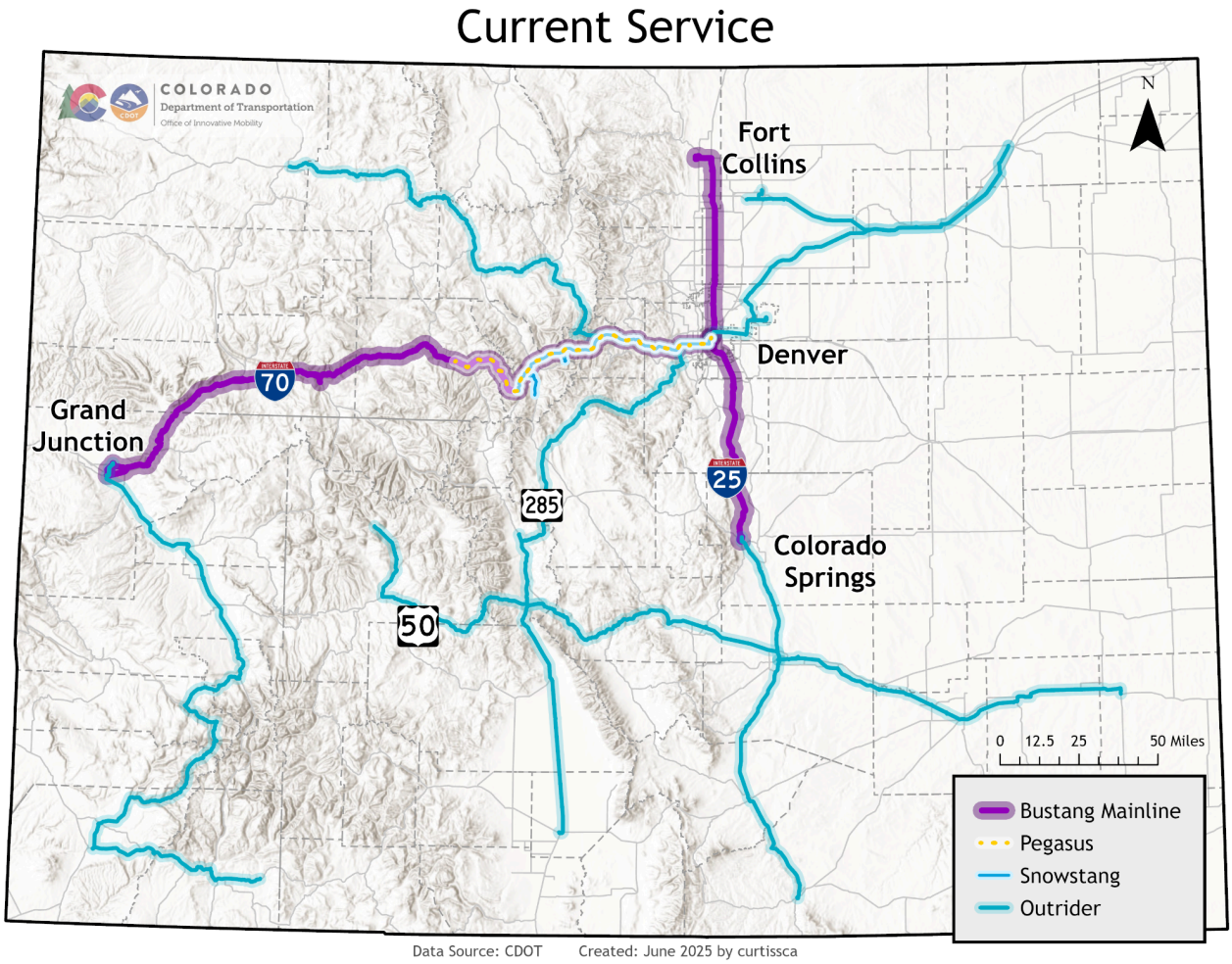
Geography	2022 VRM	% Change from 2021	% Change from 2016
Colorado	78,990,248	6.51%	-13.9%
RTD (DRCOG)	49,664,445	6.92%	-18.3%
Transfort (NFRMPO)	1,483,253	-8.24%	-18.1%
City of Greeley (NFRMPO)	751,257	6.97%	10.7%
Loveland Transit (NFRMPO)	361,862	13.27%	-51.9%
Mountain Metro (PPACG)	3,487,358	21.38%	-13.6%
Pueblo Transit (PACOG)	715,160	-2.8%	-18.0%
Mesa County (GVMPO)	925,833	-1.08%	-4.5%
Non-MPO Areas	20,313,534	-1.05%	-9.3%

Bustang	1,287,546	—	—

Interregional Transit

Interregional transit is a service running between regions within the state of Colorado. One unique feature of CDOT is that it is one of the few state departments of transportation that serves as a public transportation provider. CDOT currently provides interregional bus services (Bustang, Outrider, Pegasus, Snowstang), with plans to add interregional passenger rail (Mountain Rail) in the future. Additionally, the Front Range Passenger Rail (FRPR) project is currently planning to provide interregional service along the front range between Fort Collins and Pueblo.

Figure 11: Map of Bustang Services in Colorado

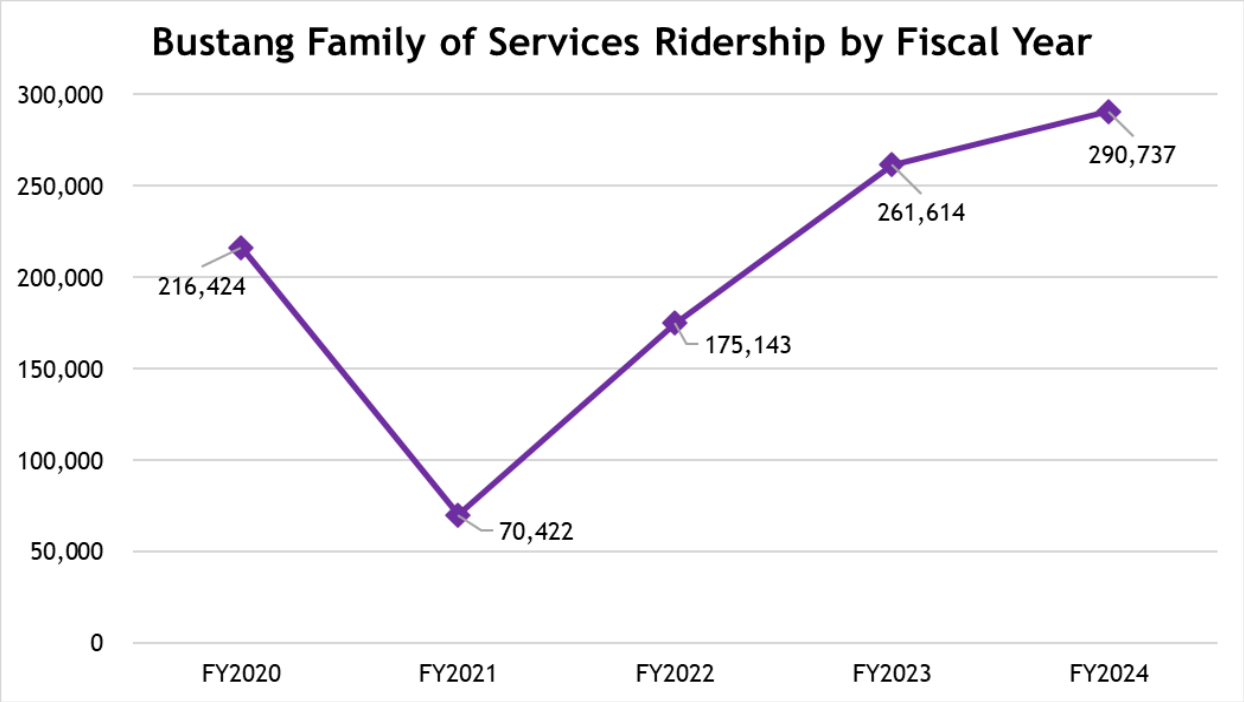


Bustang

CDOT launched the intercity Bustang service in 2015 along the I-25 and I-70 corridors. The core Bustang service was an immediate success and provided much needed public transportation services along these interstate corridors. The program has since expanded to include Outrider services in rural areas, along with Pegasus express shuttle service along I-70 from Denver to Avon. Bustang also offers seasonal services connecting Coloradans and visitors to winter ski resorts, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado State University, and more.

In 2022, the Colorado General Assembly provided funding through Senate Bill (SB) 22-180 for a 3-year pilot program, from 2022 to 2025, to expand Bustang's main line services (I-25 and I-70 corridors) with the goal of increasing ridership on state-run public transportation. Through the one-time $30-million pilot program, Bustang reached significantly higher levels of service along the state's major interstate corridors. This increased service gives riders greater flexibility and provides additional access to jobs and recreation, along with medical and social services. With substantial year-over-year growth in ridership during the pilot, Bustang continues to serve as a critical transportation provider along Colorado's two major interstate corridors and forms the backbone of the state's interregional public transportation system.

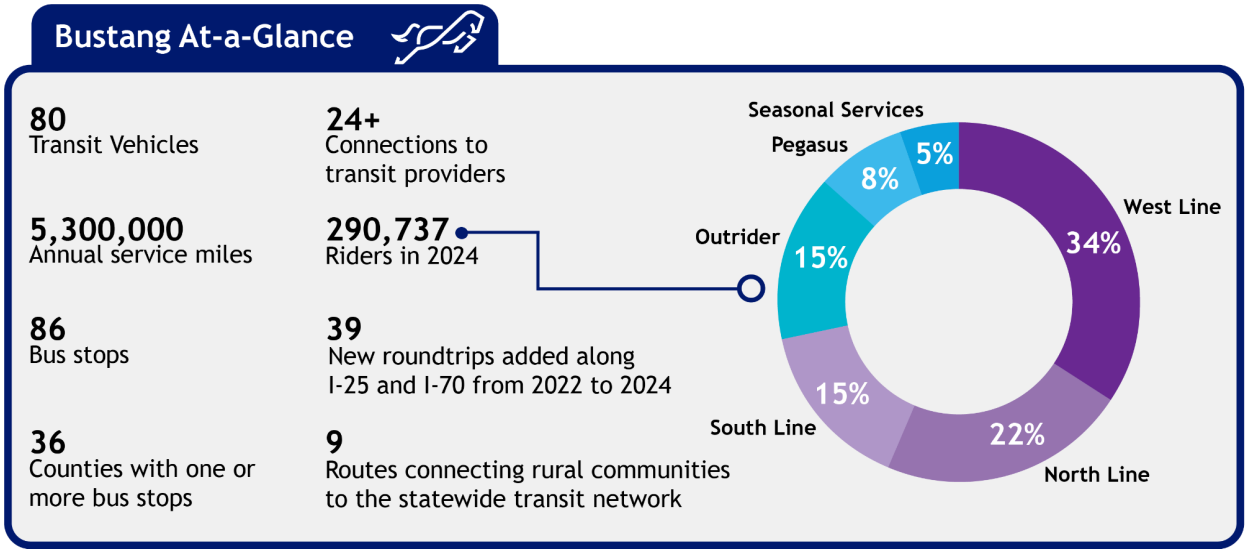
Figure 12: Ridership on Bustang by Year



In addition to expansion along Bustang's main lines, Bustang's rural service, Outrider, is growing as well. Outrider provides critical connections for rural communities to the statewide transportation network. Outrider recently added a connection to Denver International Airport

via its Sterling to Denver Route. Also, Outrider added a second round trip on its Crested Butte to Denver's service. Outrider has become a vital service for many rural Colorado communities.

Figure 13: Bustang Service Statistics



Bustang is celebrating 10 years of service in 2025. Building on the success of Bustang's expanded main line and Outrider services, CDOT looks to the future in determining next steps for further connecting the state through transit. In coordination with this study, CDOT is evaluating what service enhancements, optimizations and changes are next as Bustang continues to serve Coloradans and works towards achieving the state's climate and transportation goals.

Transportation Districts and Authorities

The Colorado legislature established two types of self-governing transportation districts in Colorado, the Regional Transportation District (RTD) and Regional Transportation Authorities (RTAs). RTD is not considered an RTA, as it was created as a separate statutory political subdivision. Both entities provide greater flexibility in addressing transportation needs, including funding mechanisms, like levying taxes to support transportation services and needs.

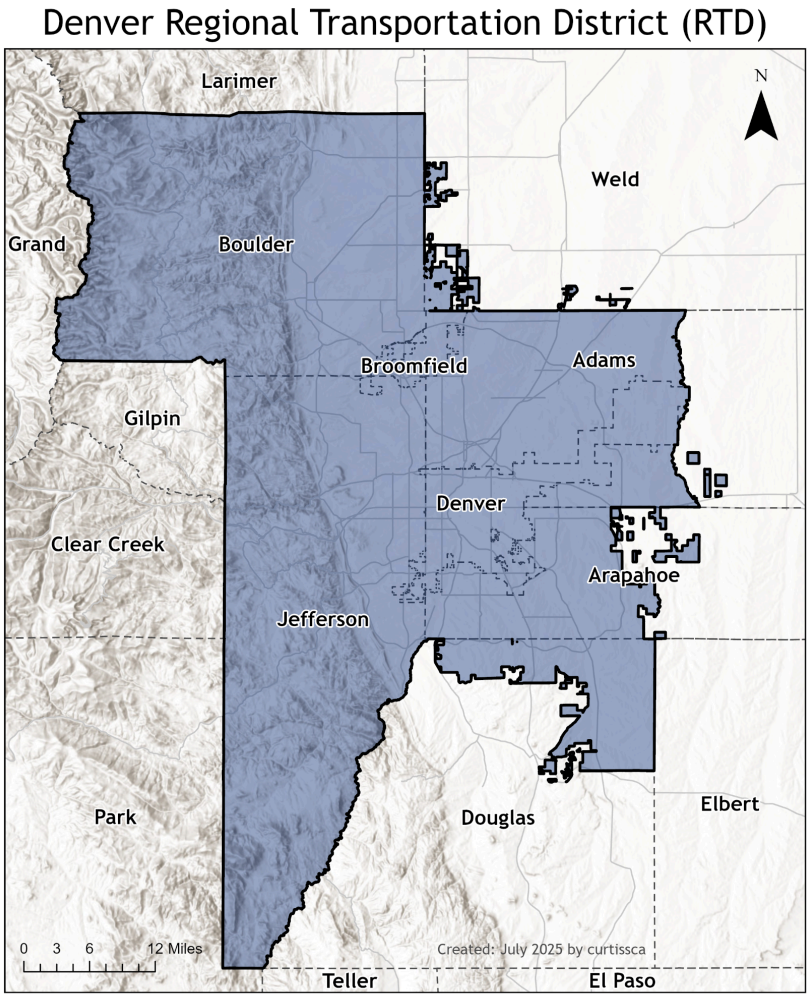
Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD)[16]

The Colorado General Assembly created the Regional Transportation District in 1969 as bus service to serve the Denver Metro area. It expanded over the years to include new commuter rail lines, light rail, bus services expansion, shuttles, FlexRide, paratransit services, special event services, and vanpools. RTD is the largest provider of public transportation in the state

[16] Image source https://www.rtd-denver.com/about-rtd/subregional-service-councils

spanning 2,342 square miles and 40 municipalities. It services over three million people annually.

Figure X: Boundaries of the Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD)



Regional Transportation Authorities (RTAs)

Under Colorado law, municipalities, counties, and special districts can join together to create an RTA to address transportation needs within a region. RTAs have the authority to finance, construct, operate, and maintain regional transportation systems within or outside their boundaries with the consent of the municipality or county that falls outside the RTA. State law authorizes RTAs to establish, collect, and increase or decrease tolls, levy sales taxes, impose an annual motor vehicle registration fee, levy a visitor benefit tax, impose a uniform mill levy, establish regional transportation activity enterprises, and issue bonds to finance transportation systems. There are six existing RTAs in Colorado.

Figure X: Regional Transportation Authorities (RTAs) in Colorado

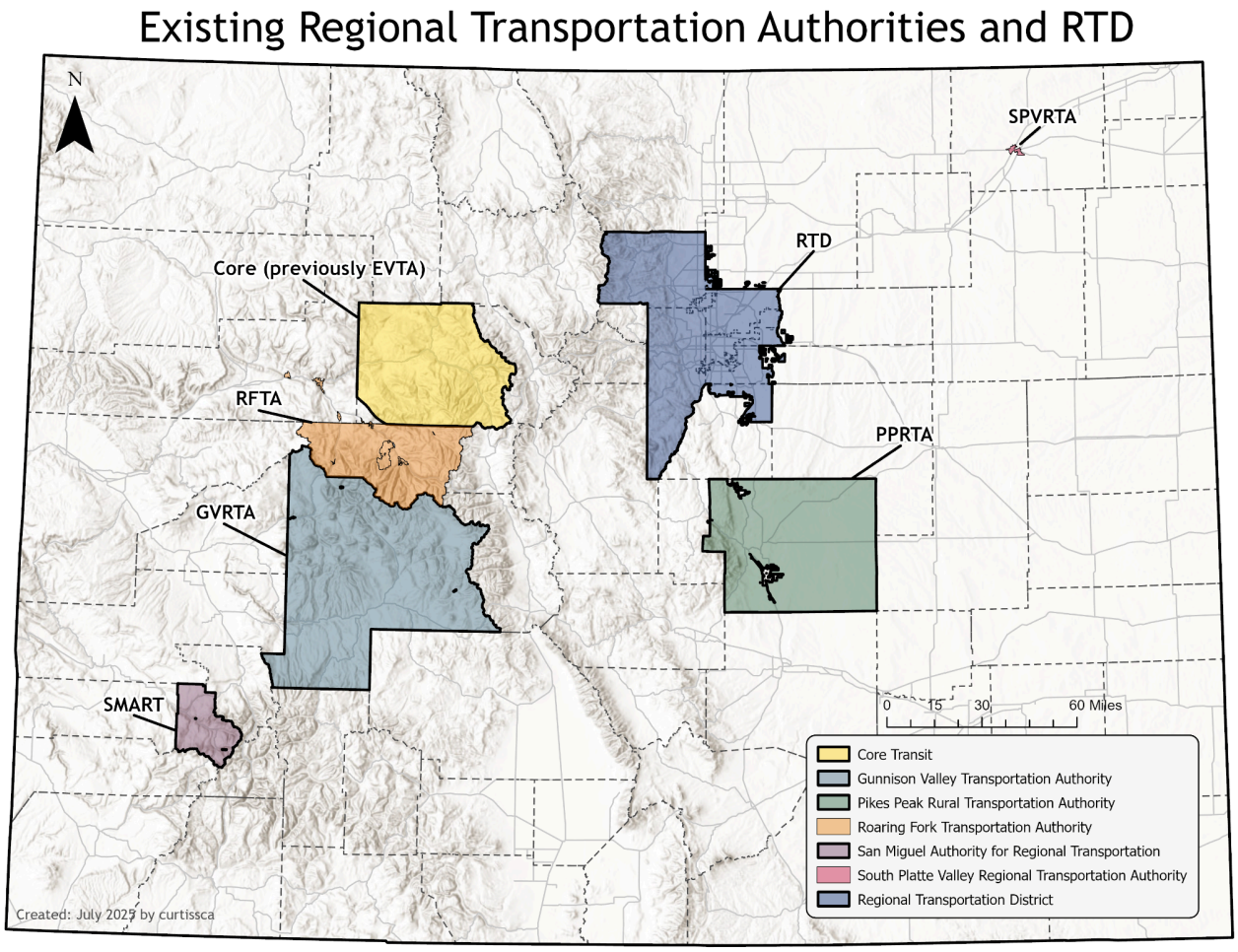


Table 4: Existing Regional Transportation Authorities (RTAs) in Colorado

Name	Member Municipalities & Counties	Characteristics
Gunnison Valley RTA	Gunnison County, excluding municipalities of Marble, Ohio, Pitkin, and Somerset	Provides public transit and human services transportation in Gunnison County
Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA)	Member governments include the cities of Colorado Springs and Manitou Springs, El Paso County, and the towns of Green Mountain Falls, Ramah and Calhan	Supports transportation capital projects and public transit in the El Paso Area

Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA)	Cities of Basalt, New Castle, Carbondale, Glenwood Springs, Aspen, and Snowmass Village Unincorporated Pitkin County Areas of unincorporated Eagle County in the El Jebel area and outside the city limits of Carbondale	Provides public transit to the Roaring Fork Valley
San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART)	City of Telluride and Eastern San Miguel County (excluding towns of Ophir and Sawpit)	SMART provides public transit in the San Miguel County area
South Platte Valley Rural Transportation Authority	City of Sterling	Provides funding for the North East Council of Government's Prairie Express service, which provides public transit in the Sterling area
Eagle County Regional Transportation Authority (ECRTA)	Member jurisdictions include: unincorporated Eagle County; the towns of Avon, Eagle, Minturn, Red Cliff and Vail; and Beaver Creek Metropolitan District	Operating as Core Transit, ECRTA provides public transit in the Eagle County Area

Proposed Yampa Valley RTA
A ballot measure is forthcoming proposing the formation of an RTA in the Yampa Valley. At this time, the proposed Yampa Valley Regional Transportation Authority would include Routt County, the City of Steamboat Springs, and the City of Craig. Other jurisdictions in the Yampa Valley, including the Town of Oak Creek, Town of Yampa, Town of Hayden, and Moffat County, were noted by the City of Steamboat Springs as additional communities of interest.

Urban Transit

Beyond RTD, there are several other urban transit agencies in Colorado, including agencies like Mountain Metro Transit (Colorado Springs), Transfort (Fort Collins), Greeley Evans Transit (GET), Grand Valley Transit (GVT), and Pueblo Transit. These agencies offer fixed-route bus services as well as other services such as paratransit in other urban areas in the state. Urban agencies have the largest impact in Colorado in terms of ridership and reach covering Colorado's most densely populated areas and connecting people to the state's largest cities and busiest corridors. Together, excluding RTD, these agencies provide 8.1% of unlinked transit trips throughout the state.

Rural Transit

In addition to urban systems, Colorado boasts a considerable number of rural transit providers. These services are a mix of either demand-response or fixed route options with some agencies offering both. An extensive network of local and regional transit options throughout rural parts of the state that play a critical role in connecting people in smaller communities to essential services, jobs, and recreational activities. While Bustang Outrider service links rural areas to larger urban centers, Colorado's local rural providers meet crucial local and regional needs, enhancing Bustang's viability, connecting residents and visitors to outdoor recreation, and providing access for populations with limited alternatives to driving.

Transit in rural Colorado can broadly be placed into two buckets: rural transit and rural resort transit. Primarily the difference between the two is that rural resort communities are a specific type of rural community with a tourism and outdoor recreation driven economy. While "rural resort" is not an official sub-term when defining agency types, similar designations and general categorizations are used to describe these area characteristics. Colorado's Division of Housing (DOH) uses an official designation under state law to classify Colorado counties as either urban, rural, or rural resort and the Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA) uses "Mountain Transit" to categorize rural resort transit as a system that provides "critical employment and recreational transportation to resorts." Key differences and information on rural transit in Colorado is provided below.

Rural Transit

Rural transit agencies are often small, offering demand response essential services to rural populations and connecting these communities to larger regional towns and cities. In some areas of the state, such as along and adjacent to the I-70 mountain corridor or in Southwest Colorado, rural agencies may experience spillover from tourism and recreation. However, this does not designate them as a "rural resort agency." For example, All Points Transit initially provided demand-response specialized transit but expanded to include fixed route services connecting Delta, Montrose, Ridgway, and Ouray to better meet the demand for job and recreation-based trips along the travel corridor. Other parts of the state, such as eastern I-70, have transportation services and needs aligned with what is characteristically rural. Rural agencies play an important role in providing transportation service to Coloradans, though their impact is not always as qualitatively visible in terms of metrics like ridership or emission reductions. As urban area populations, particularly along the Front Range, continue to grow and as residents in Colorado's rural communities continue to age, it is crucial to consider the balance of transportation needs and services across the state in future planning. Despite often lacking the funding or resources for quick service changes or expansion to meet community needs, these rural agencies are a critical component of the state's transit network and play an important role in shaping its future.

Rural Resort Transit

Many rural communities are closely tied to Colorado's outdoor recreational economy and resorts. Transportation trends are centered around resort centers and are critical for employment and recreational transportation needs. Although these agencies are categorized as "rural," they are characteristically more similar to small urban systems than their truly rural counterparts. Rural resort systems are often characterized by higher levels of ridership than their rural peers, frequent fixed-route service offerings, denser land use that is more friendly to transit, and variations in service to meet seasonal demand changes for transportation. Colorado's rural resort providers, also known as mountain transit systems, include places like Aspen, Vail, Snowmass Village, and more. Colorado has 9 out of the top 20 rural transit agencies in terms of ridership. All 9 of those agencies are in rural resort areas. The agencies include Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA) in Glenwood Springs, City of Steamboat Springs, Summit County, Eagle County, Town of Breckenridge, Mountain Express in Crested Butte, Town of Avon, and Town of Snowmass. Through fare free and frequent service focused on employment and recreational based trips, rural resort agencies outperform rural peers across the country in terms of ridership, reach, and efficiency. They play an important role, especially along I-70 west, in helping to relieve congestion and provide a competitive alternative to driving in resort communities.

Summary of Colorado Transportation

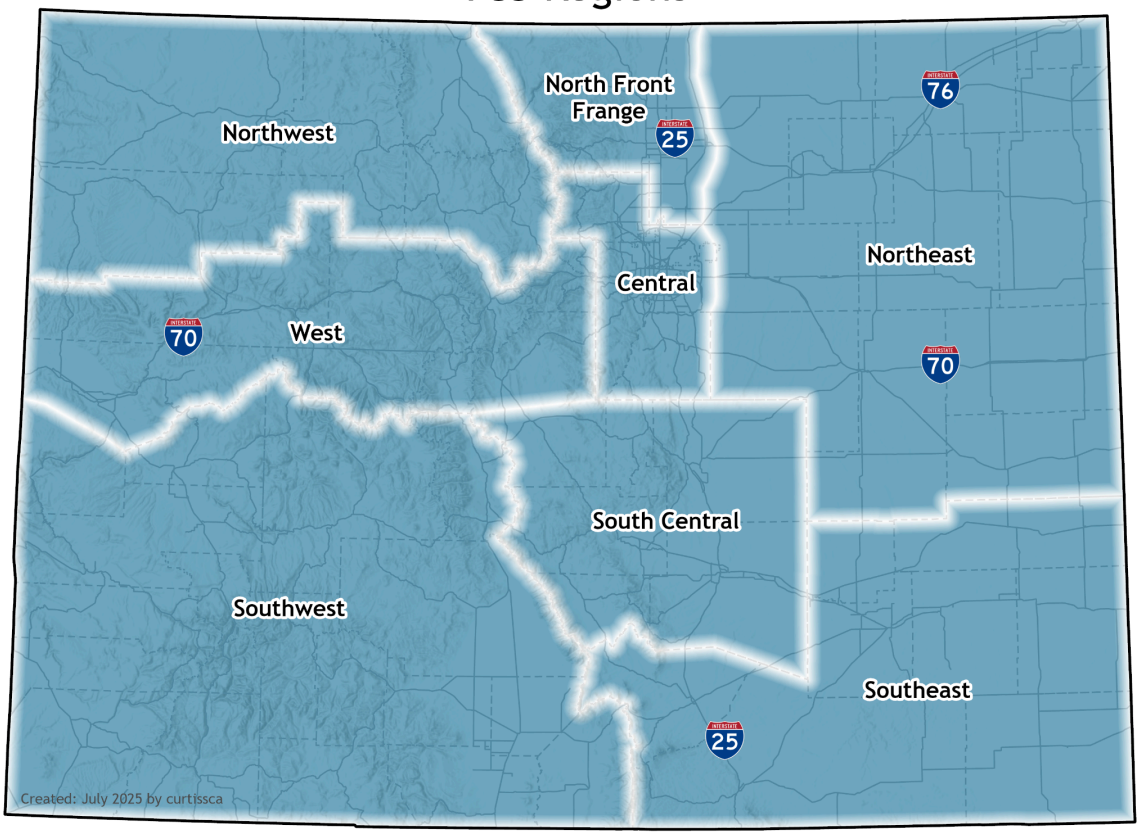
Colorado's transit system includes a variety of agencies. Each agency serves unique communities across the state, and each of those communities have their own needs, challenges, and successes when it comes to public transportation. The next section provides a snapshot of different regions in Colorado, and how they are served by the public transportation network.

(5) TCS Regions

Colorado is incredibly diverse in its geography. The Rocky Mountains, Colorado Plateau, and Great Plains define the ways in which Coloradans move and live throughout the state. In reflecting the geographical diversity of the state, the ways in which people move, and with consideration for existing transportation and planning regions, this study divides the state into eight geographic regions. The following section provides an overview of the eight TCS regions used in the TCS, including a brief description, a map of public transportation services, travel demand, and a list of corridors and counties.

Figure X: Public Transportation Regions in Colorado

TCS Regions



Statewide Origin-Destination Analysis

The table below illustrates the total number of trips taken in the state, and breaks down all the trips that originate, end, and occur in each region.

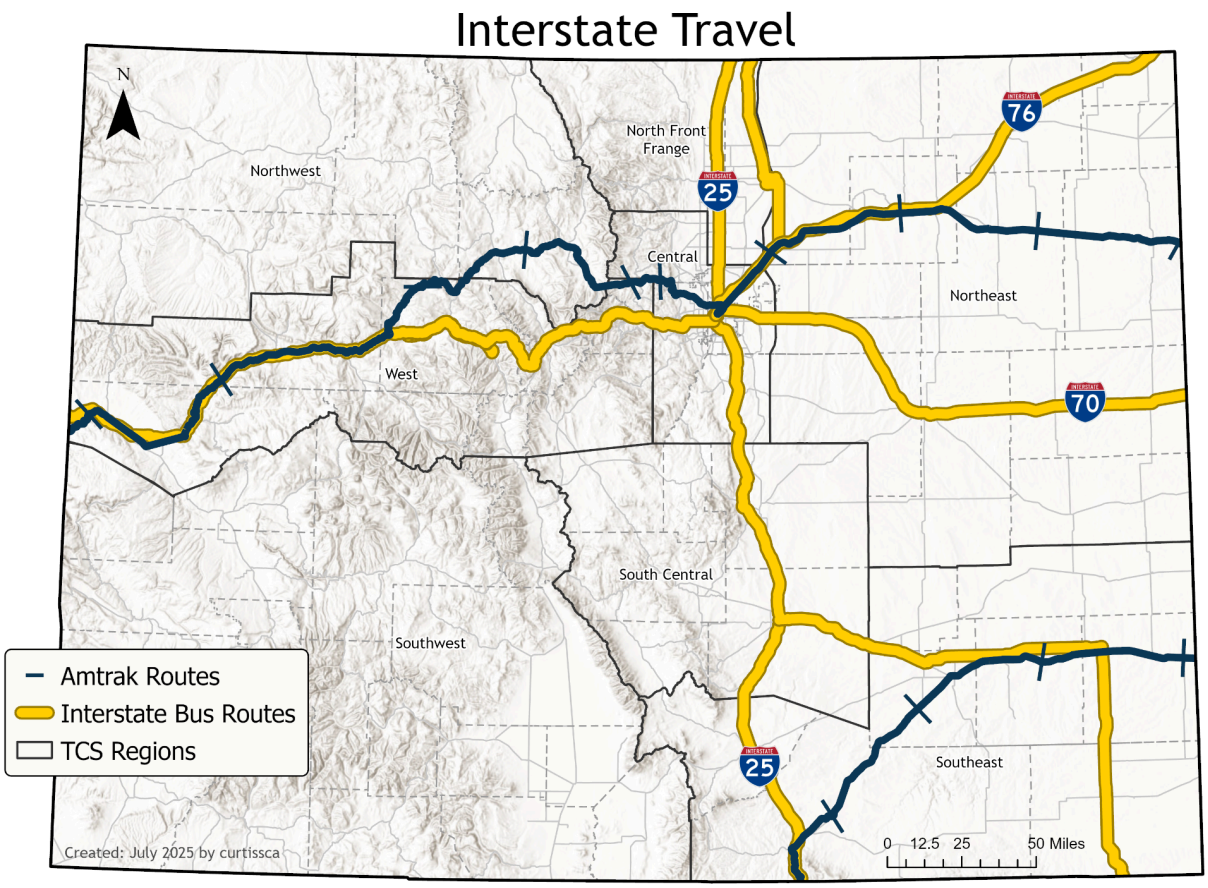
Region	Percent of all Trips
Central	42%
South Central	16%
Northern Front Range	14%
West	12%
Southwest	7%
Northeast	4%
Southeast	3%

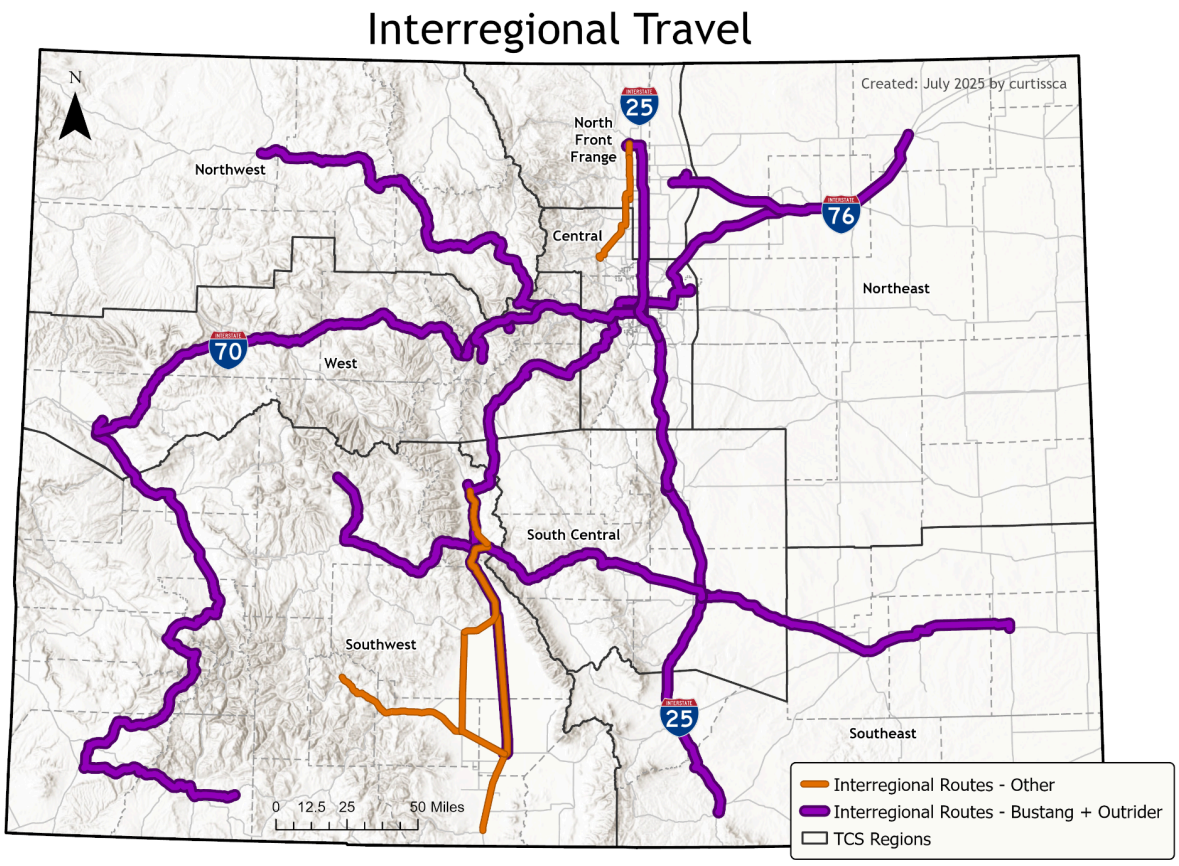
Northwest	2%

In the table below, each row depicts the total number of trips taken per region. Each column breaks down the percentage of interregional-origin trips, interregional-destination trips, and intraregional trips. Interregional-origin trips are trips that begin in the region and end elsewhere. Interregional-destination trips are trips that begin outside the region and end inside the region. Lastly, intraregional trips are trips that begin and end inside the region. The following sections provide a more detailed breakdown of each region's origin, destination, and intraregional travel patterns.

Region	% of Interregional Trips Originating in the Region	% of Interregional Trips Ending in the Region	% of Trips that are Intraregional Trips
Northwest	35%	36%	29%
West	31%	31%	38%
Southwest	25%	25%	49%
Northern Front Range	39%	39%	22%
Central	28%	29%	43%
South Central	33%	33%	34%
Northeast	36%	34%	30%
Southeast	28%	26%	46%

Statewide Transit Overview

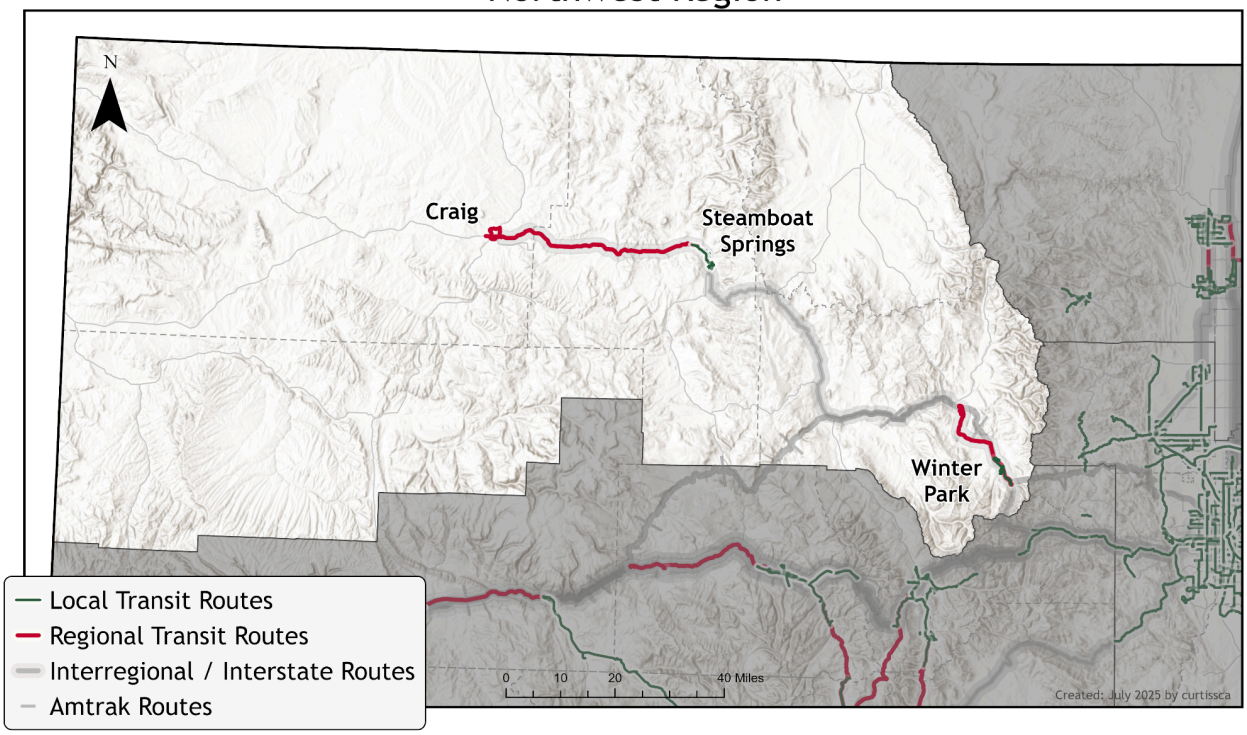




Northwest Region

Figure X: Map of Existing Transit Services in the Northwest Region

Northwest Region



The Northwest Region contains convenient access to major ski resorts via US 40, connections to four scenic byways, and proximity to the western entrance of Rocky Mountain National Park, the region has become a key destination for year-round activities.

Counties	Travel Corridors
• Moffat • Routt • Jackson • Grand County • Rio Blanco County	• US 40: Craig to I-70 (Primary) • US 34: Winter Park to Grand Lake (Secondary) • SH 13: Craig to I-70 (Connecting) • SH 131: Steamboat Springs to I-70 (Connecting) • SH 9: Kremmling to I-70 (Connecting)

Origin-Destination Analysis

Origin-Destination data is shown below

Northwest Origin - Destination (Interregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Fraser	Denver	2,647	3,592	5,558	50%
2	Granby Area	Denver	735	1,134	1,781	15%
3	Steamboat Springs	Denver	799	834	1,401	14%
4	Grand Lake	Denver	671	942	1,401	13%
5	Kremmling Area	Silverthorne-Keystone	576	594	480	9%

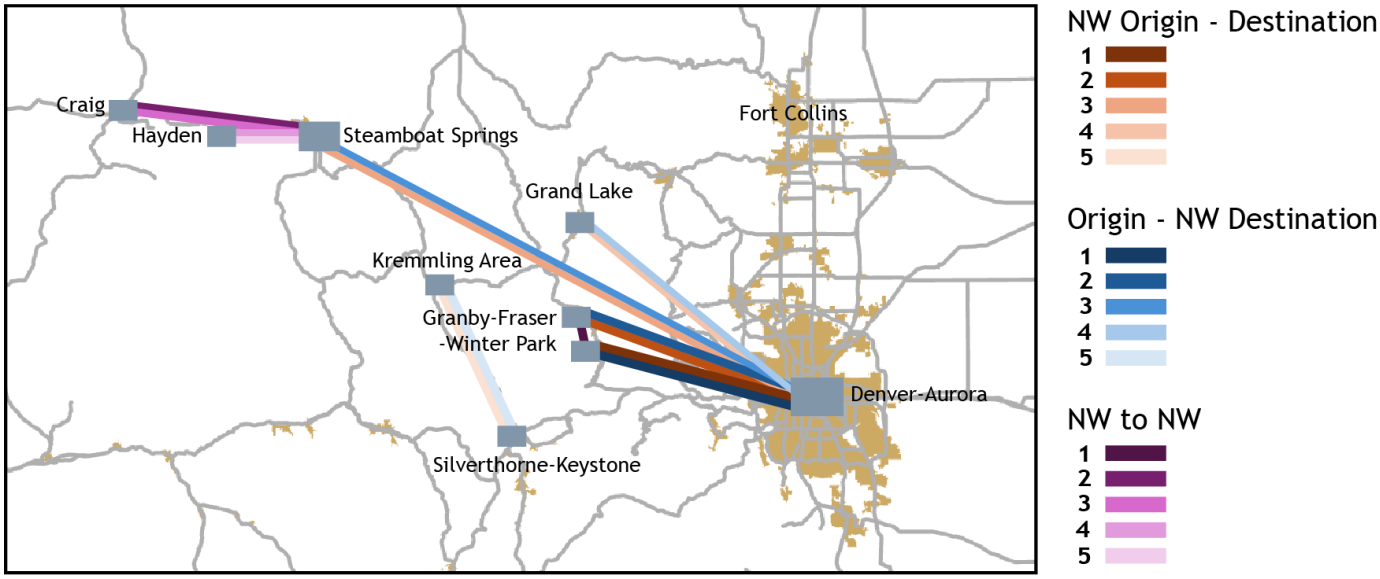
Origin - Northwest Destination (Interregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Denver	Fraser	3,161	4,300	3,742	51%
2	Denver	Granby Area	923	1,154	1,025	14%
3	Denver	Steamboat	956	1,017	863	14%
4	Denver	Grand Lake	797	1,068	866	13%
5	Silverthorne-Keystone	Kremmling Area	561	581	479	8%

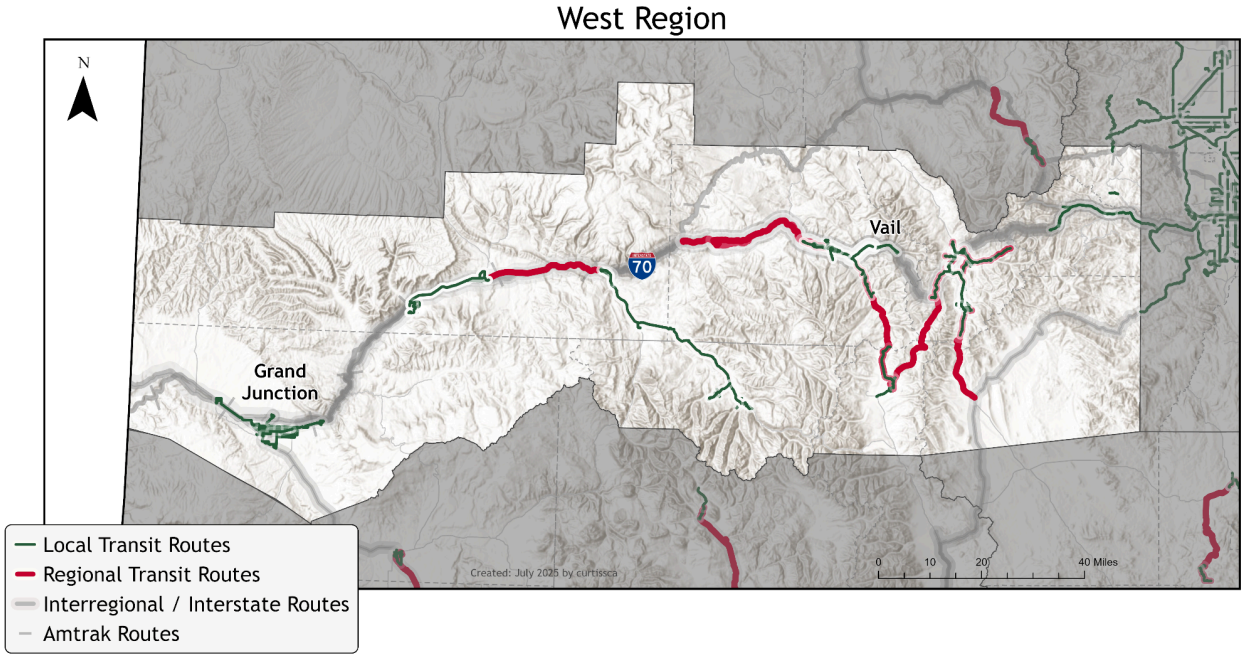
Northwest Origin - Northwest Destination (Intraregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Fraser Area	Fraser Area	2,598	2,670	2,583	39%
2	Craig	Steamboat Springs	1,283	803	584	17%
3	Steamboat Springs	Craig	1,283	827	597	16%
4	Steamboat Springs	Hayden	1,005	959	765	14%

5	Hayden	Steamboat Springs	1,030	921	647	14%



West Region



The West Region consists of the I-70 mountain corridor from Denver to Grand Junction. The region experiences seasonal fluctuations in public transportation ridership and demand. The commuter and recreational travel patterns are similar to other areas of the state with significant outdoor recreation and tourism. The region is characterized by unique

geographical constraints and significant future growth projections in population and employment. The Denver to Grand Junction corridor has a high concentration of "Rural Resort" public transportation providers, not surprising given that this area is home to the largest concentration of ski resorts in the United States. See the Rural Resort section above for characteristics.

The I-70 mountain corridor faces significant challenges. Winter weather and congestion, particularly between Denver and Vail, intensifies during peak travel times, weekends, and holiday seasons. The Grand Junction to Glenwood Springs corridor is experiencing growth as people relocate to the area.

Counties	Travel Corridors
• Clear Creek • Eagle • Garfield • Gilpin • Lake • Mesa • Park • Pitkin • Summit	• I-70 West (Primary) • US 82 Glenwood Springs to Aspen (Secondary) • CO 9 Fairplay to I-70 (Connecting)

Origin-Destination Analysis

West Origin - Destination (Interregional)

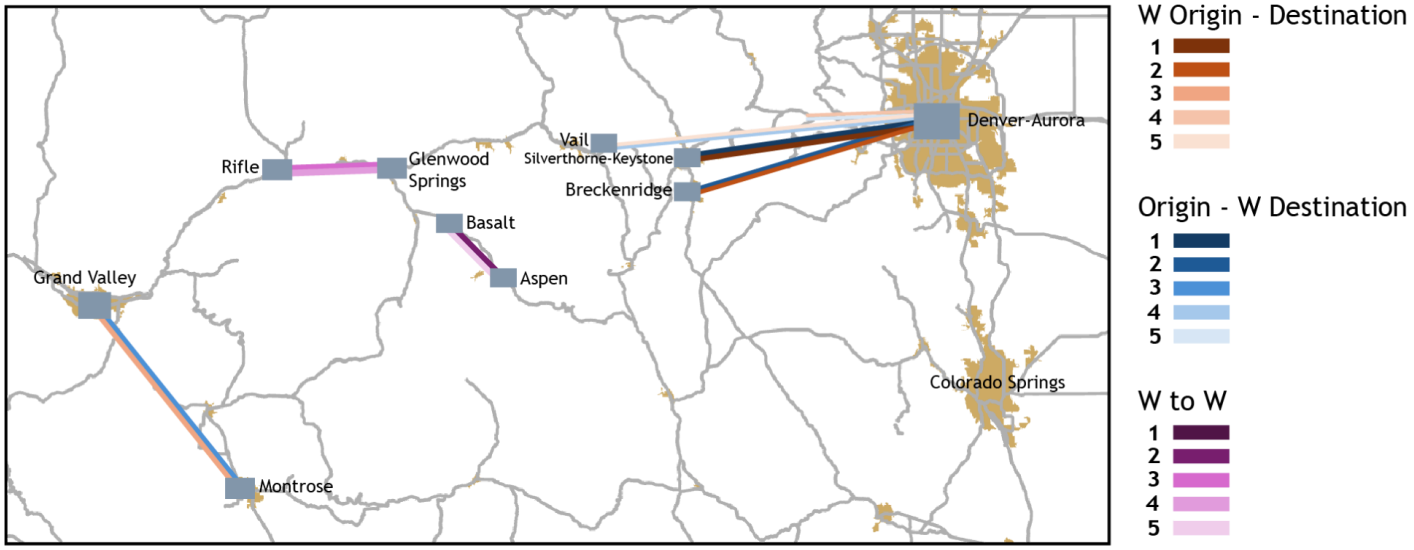
	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Silverthorne/Keystone	Denver	4,582	5,315	8,095	30%
2	Breckenridge	Denver	4,265	5,563	7,864	29%
3	Grand Junction	Montrose	2,696	2,880	2,701	16%
4	Vail	Denver	1,773	2,688	3,581	13%
5	Georgetown/ Silver Plume	Denver	1,969	2,675	3,089	13%

Origin - West Destination (Interregional)

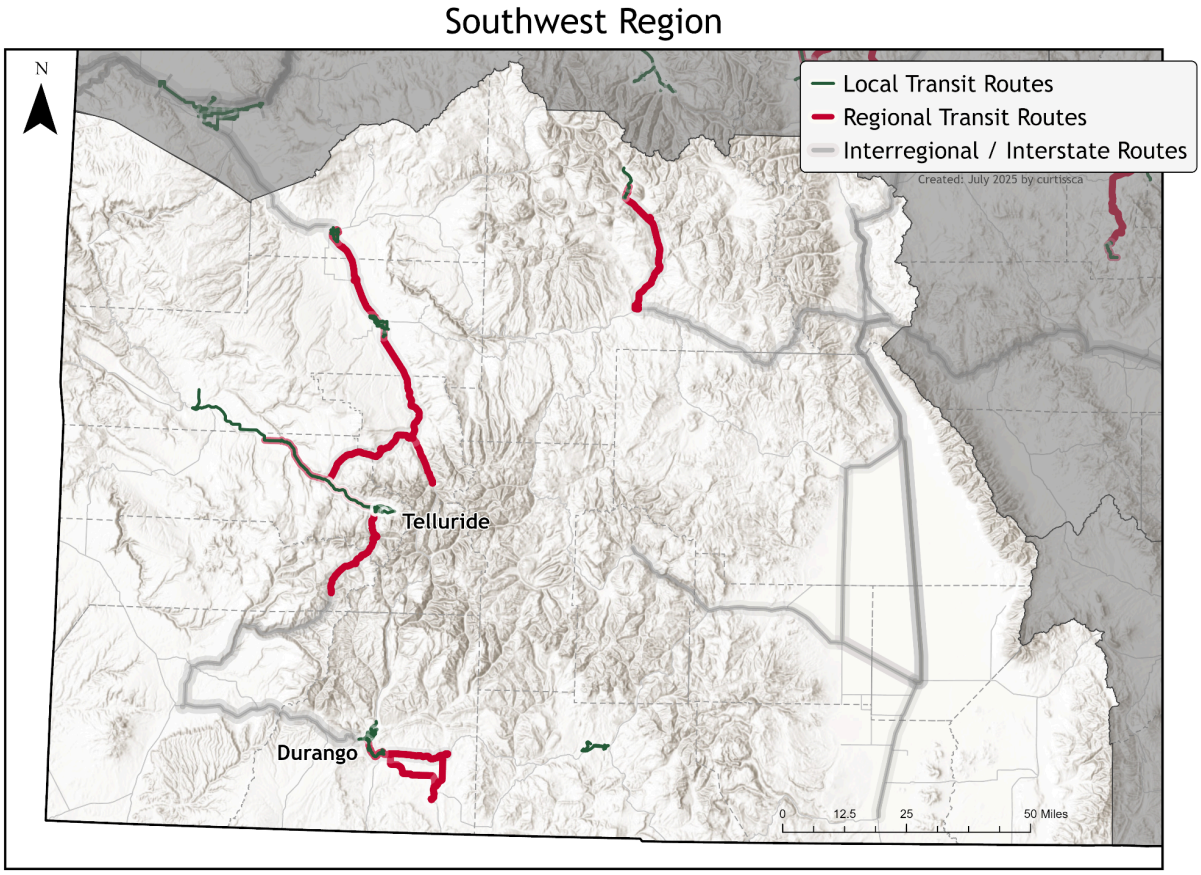
	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Denver	Silverthorne/ Keystone	5,061	6,214	6,523	31%
2	Denver	Breckenridge	4,626	6,396	6,097	29%
3	Montrose	Grand Junction	2,613	2,804	2,709	15%
4	Denver	Georgetown/ Silver Plume	2,111	2,666	3,101	13%
5	Denver	Vail	1,973	2,687	2,514	12%

West Origin - West Destination (Intraregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Grand Junction	Grand Junction	4,255	4,025	3,926	26%
2	Basalt	Aspen	3,530	2,549	2,372	20%
3	Rifle	Glenwood Springs	3,278	2,637	2,095	19%
4	Glenwood Springs	Rifle	3,034	2,664	1,987	18%
5	Aspen	Basalt	3,116	2,038	2,038	18%



Southwest Region



The Southwest region of Colorado includes the Sangre de Cristos and San Juan Mountains, most of the San Luis and Gunnison Valleys, and a large portion of the Western Slope. This

region is also the home of the Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute tribal lands. The region shares borders with Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. The landscape is marked with high mountain peaks, rolling plains, ski resorts, and rural communities. The low-density nature of the region can make servicing the area with transit difficult, since accessing employment or other services may be far away.

The Southwest region has been experiencing an increase in both population and tourism in recent years, driven by the abundant recreational opportunities, high quality of life, and beautiful scenery. Major recreational destinations include Mesa Verde National Park, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Four Corners Monument, Great Sand Dunes National Park and the Rio Grande River, along with the resorts of Crested Butte and Telluride, and many Scenic Byways.

Counties	Travel Corridors
• Alamosa • Archuleta • Baca • Chaffee • Conejos • Costilla • Delta • Dolores • Gunnison • Hinsdale • La Plata • Mineral • Montezuma • Montrose • Ouray • Rio Grande • Saguache • San Juan • San Miguel	• US 50 Grand Junction to Montrose • US 550 Montrose to Durango • US 50 Gunnison to Pueblo • US 285 Denver to Buena Vista • US 285 Buena Vista to Pagosa Springs • US 160 Cortez to Walsenberg • US 50 Montrose to Gunnison

Due to the size of the Southwest region, this section is split into three sub-regions (Gunnison Valley, Four Corners, and the San Luis Valley) to provide a more accurate depiction of travel patterns for the region.

Origin-Destination Analysis

Southwest Origin-Destination (Interregional Gunnison Valley)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Montrose	Grand Junction	2,613	2,804	2,709	46%
2	Delta	Grand Junction	2,034	2,174	1,840	35%
3	Orchard City/ Cedaredge	Grand Junction	505	473	420	9%

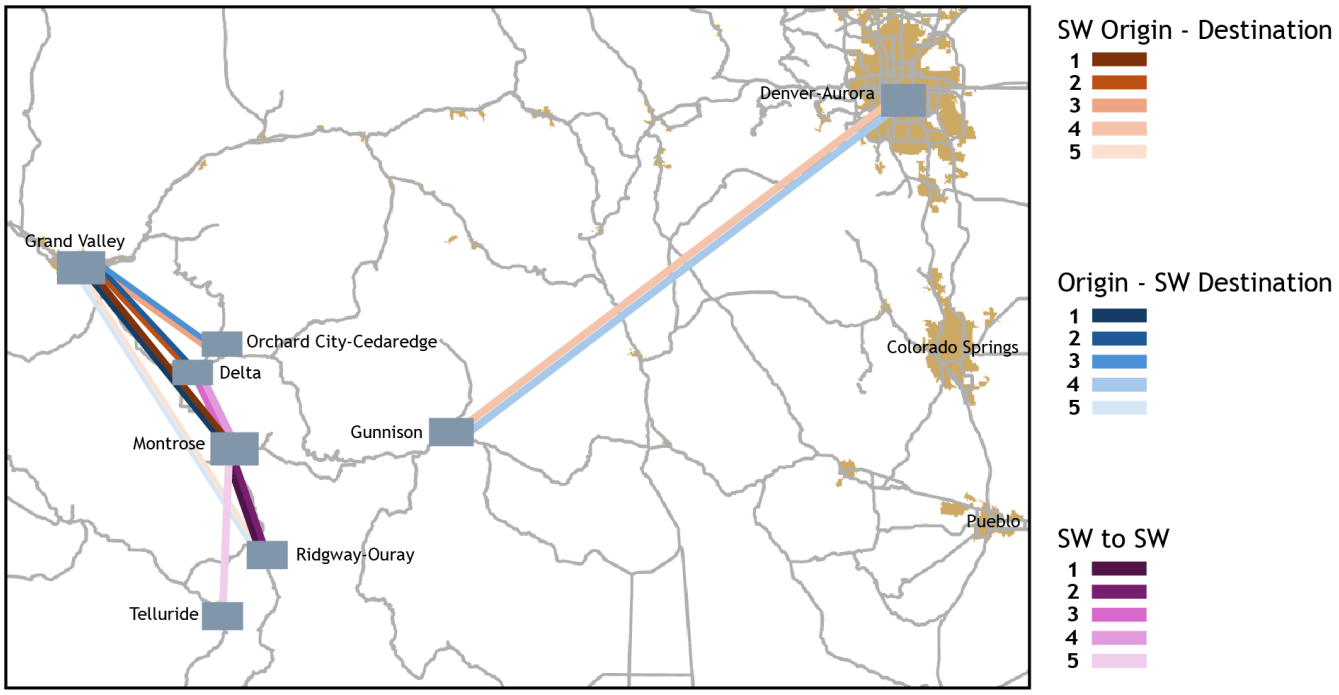
4	Gunnison	Denver	281	312	421	5%
5	Ridgway/ Ouray	Grand Junction	204	306	1,750	4%

Origin-Southwest Destination (Interregional Gunnison Valley)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Grand Junction	Montrose	2,696	2,880	2,701	47%
2	Grand Junction	Delta	2,052	2,053	1,881	35%
3	Grand Junction	Orchard City/ Cedaredge	454	532	388	8%
4	Denver	Gunnison	294	352	287	5%
5	Grand Junction	Ridgway/ Ouray	239	320	348	5%

Southwest Origin-Southwest Destination (Gunnison Valley)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Ridgway/ Ouray	Montrose	2,139	1,700	1,671	22%
2	Montrose	Ridgway/ Ouray	2,090	1,808	1,585	22%
3	Delta	Montrose	1,988	1,598	1,404	21%
4	Montrose	Delta	1,894	1,474	1,354	20%
5	Montrose	Telluride/ Mountain Village	1,570	1,025	905	16%



Southwest Origin-Destination (Interregional Four Corners)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Pagosa Springs	Mineral Area	463	487	477	43%
2	Durango	Denver	226	176	217	20%
3	Pagosa Springs	Denver	156	116	233	15%
4	Durango	Ridgway/ Ouray	100	104	201	11%
5	Silverton Area	Ridgway/ Ouray	113	103	203	11%

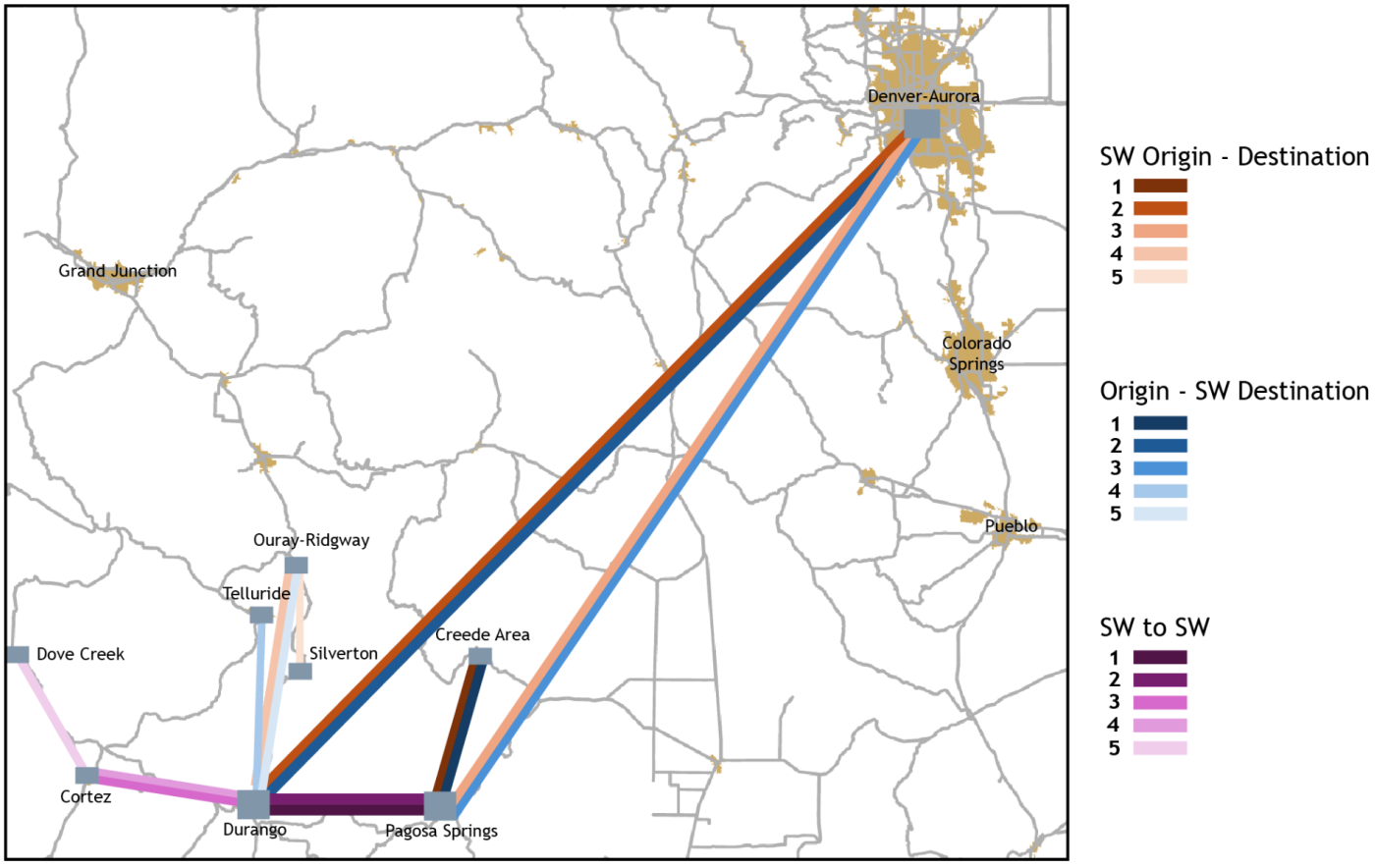
Origin-Southwest Destination (Interregional Four Corners)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Mineral Area	Pagosa Springs	415	485	2,964	40%
2	Denver	Durango	246	154	1,598	22%
3	Denver	Pagosa Springs	183	129	1,212	17%
4	Telluride/ Mountain Village	Durango	88	189	774	11%

5	Ridgway/ Ouray	Durango	93	131	770	11%

Southwest Origin-Southwest Destination (Four Corners)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Pagosa Springs	Durango	1,158	1,001	900	22%
2	Durango	Pagosa Springs	1,092	931	835	21%
3	Cortez	Durango	1,125	844	677	21%
4	Durango	Cortez	1,162	845	577	21%
5	Dove Creek Area	Cortez	765	598	660	15%



Southwest Origin-Destination (Interregional San Luis Valley)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips

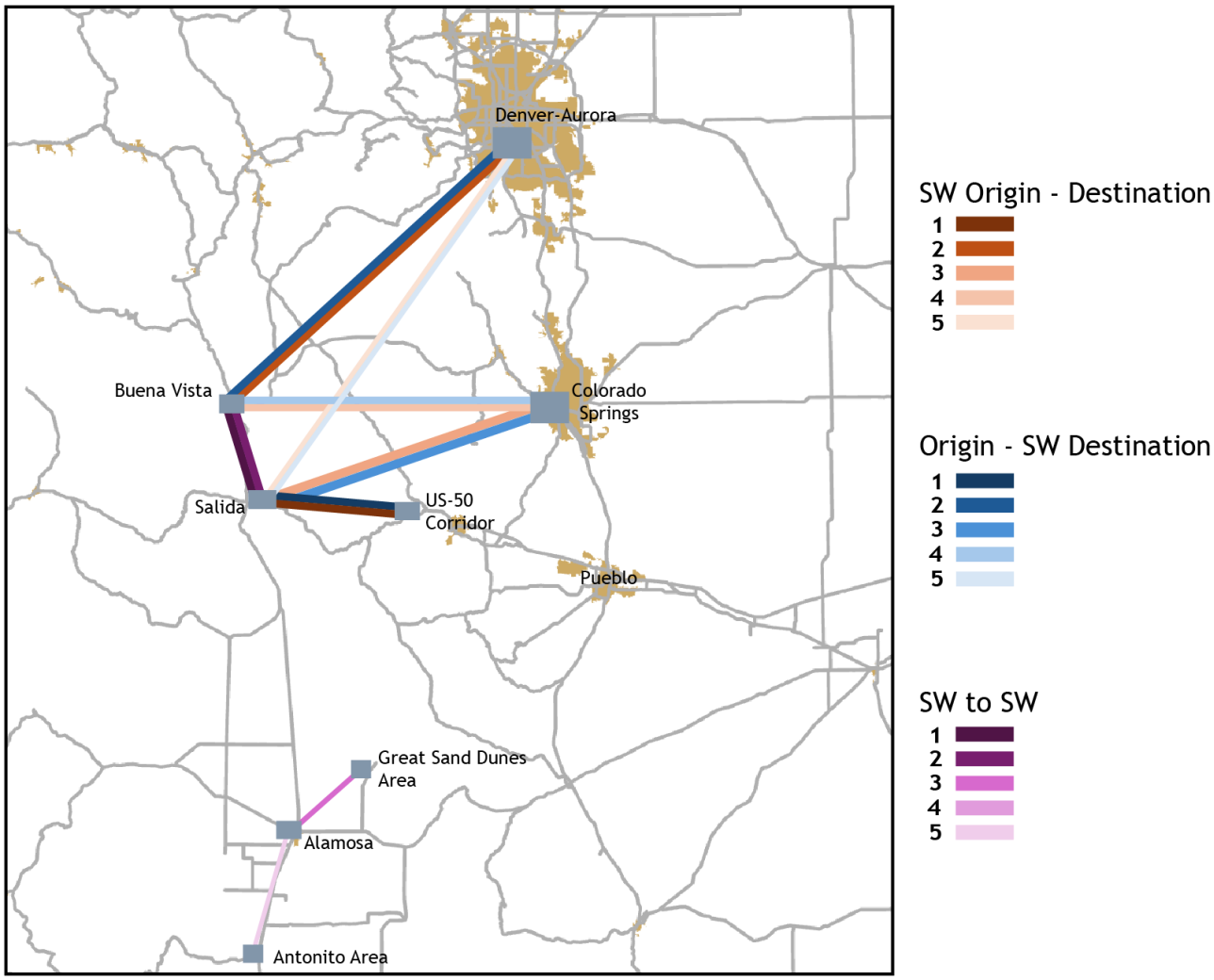
1	Salida	US 50 Corridor between Salida & Canon City	1,058	883	662	30%
2	Buena Vista	Denver	562	758	1,158	21%
3	Salida	Colorado Springs	513	660	902	18%
4	Buena Vista	Colorado Springs	513	492	746	17%
5	Salida	Denver	420	539	799	15%

Origin-Southwest Destination (Interregional San Luis Valley)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	US 50 Corridor between Salida & Canon City	Salida	1,027	830	592	29%
2	Denver	Buena Vista	647	775	776	21%
3	Colorado Springs	Salida	522	730	636	18%
4	Colorado Springs	Buena Vista	542	519	606	17%
5	Denver	Salida	460	538	466	15%

Southwest Origin-Southwest Destination (San Luis Valley)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Buena Vista	Salida	1,589	1,222	1,054	23%
2	Salida	Buena Vista	1,488	1,254	932	22%
3	Alamosa	Great Sand Dunes National Park	1,215	1,259	821	19%
4	Great Sand Dunes National Park	Alamosa	1,190	1,302	829	18%
5	Antonito Area	Alamosa	1,222	1,007	778	18%


Denver-Aurora
Buena Vista
Colorado Springs
Salida
US-50 Corridor
Pueblo
Great Sand Dunes Area
Alamosa
Antonito Area
SW Origin - Destination
1
2
3
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Origin - SW Destination
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5
SW to SW
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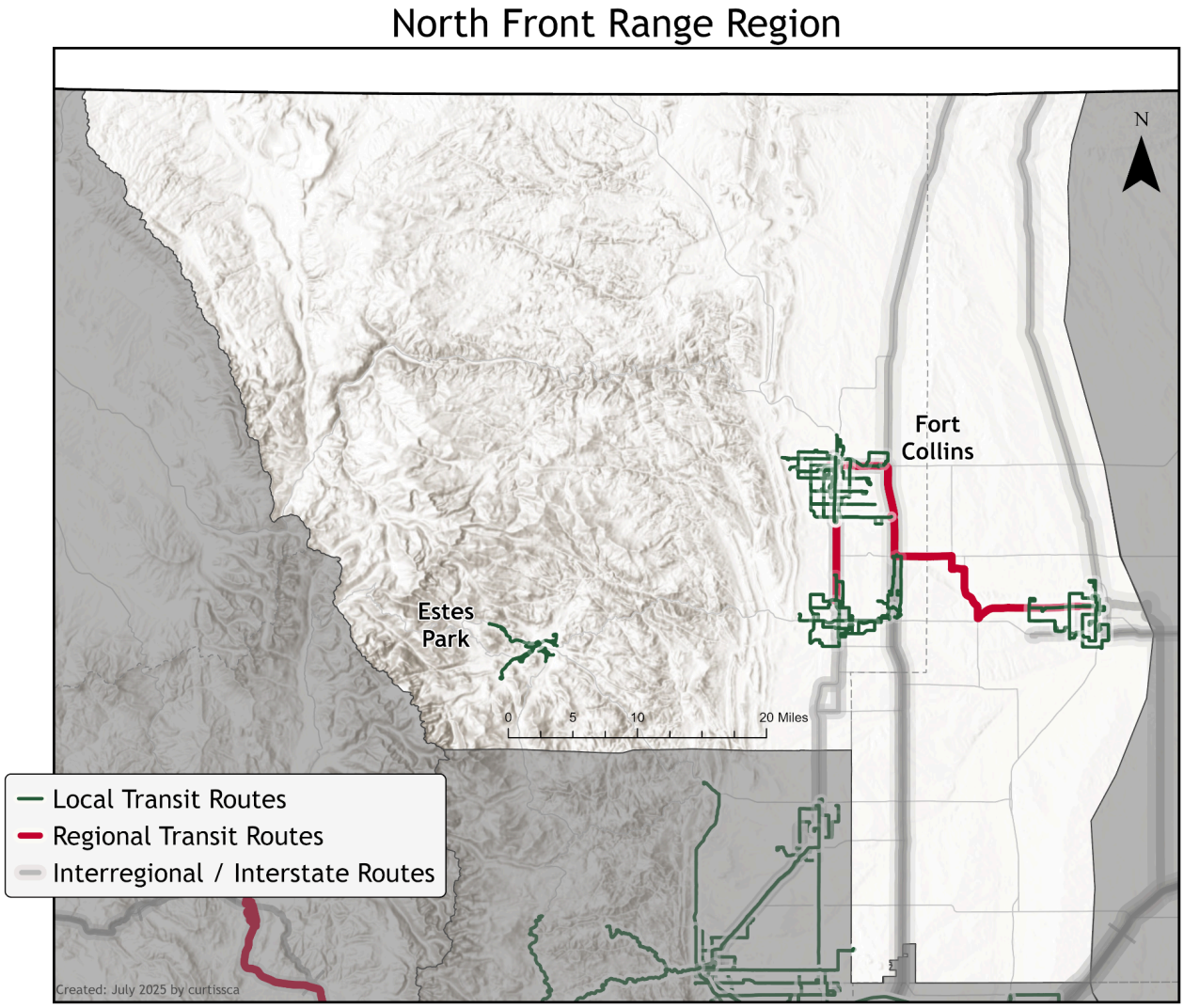
5

North Front Range



The North Front Range is home to Larimer and parts of Weld County. These include two of Colorado's larger and faster growing cities Fort Collins (Larimer) and Greeley (Weld), along with Estes Park, home of Rocky Mountain National Park. Both counties are home to universities. Colorado State University is in Fort Collins and the University of Northern Colorado is Greeley. This region is served by the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization (NFRMPO) and CDOT's Region 4. Also, the newly established GoNoCo 34 Transportation Management Organization (TMO) operates within the region, and is one of the few TMOs to operate outside of the Denver metros area.

Weld County is the number one agricultural producer in the state. It is a largely rural county. However, Greeley, the county seat, is one of the fastest growing cities in the state, and its population could double by 2050. On the other hand, Larimer County's most populous city is

Fort Collins. Fort Collins' main employer is the university followed by UC Health and the school district. Fort Collins and Larimer County had been one of the fastest growing areas in the state, but that growth has slowed in recent years.

Counties	Travel Corridors
• Larimer • Weld	• I-25 North • US 34 Estes Park to Fort Morgan • US 85 Greeley to Denver • US 287 • CO 14 • CO 119

Origin-Destination Analysis

North Front Range Origin-Destination (Interregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Fort Collins	Denver	27,485	31,592	30,648	52%
2	Greeley	Denver	14,376	14,386	14,030	26%
3	Firestone/ Frederick	Denver	6,426	5,834	4,763	11%
4	Fort Collins	Longmont	3,685	3,341	2,858	6%
5	Estes Park	Denver	2,053	3,130	4,662	5%

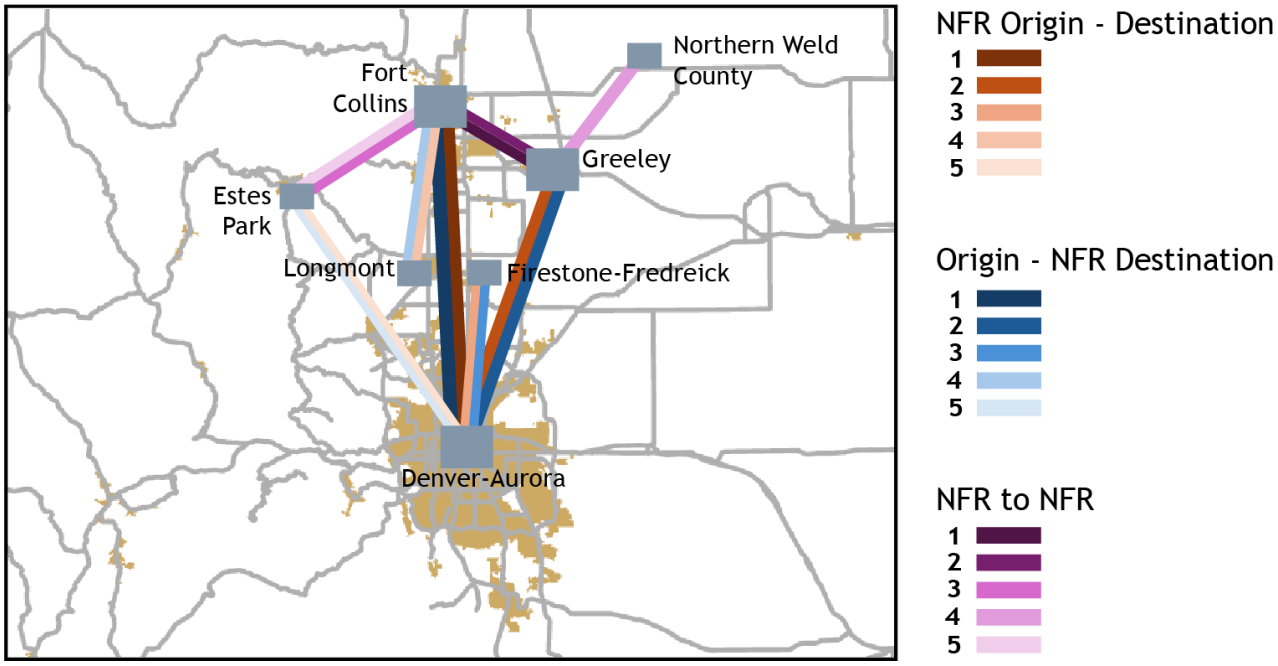
Origin-North Front Range Destination (Interregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Denver	Fort Collins	27,027	31,602	30,509	52%
2	Denver	Greeley	14,123	13,966	14,497	26%
3	Denver	Firestone/ Frederick	6,075	5,568	5,071	11%
4	Longmont	Fort Collins	3,741	3,257	2,980	7%

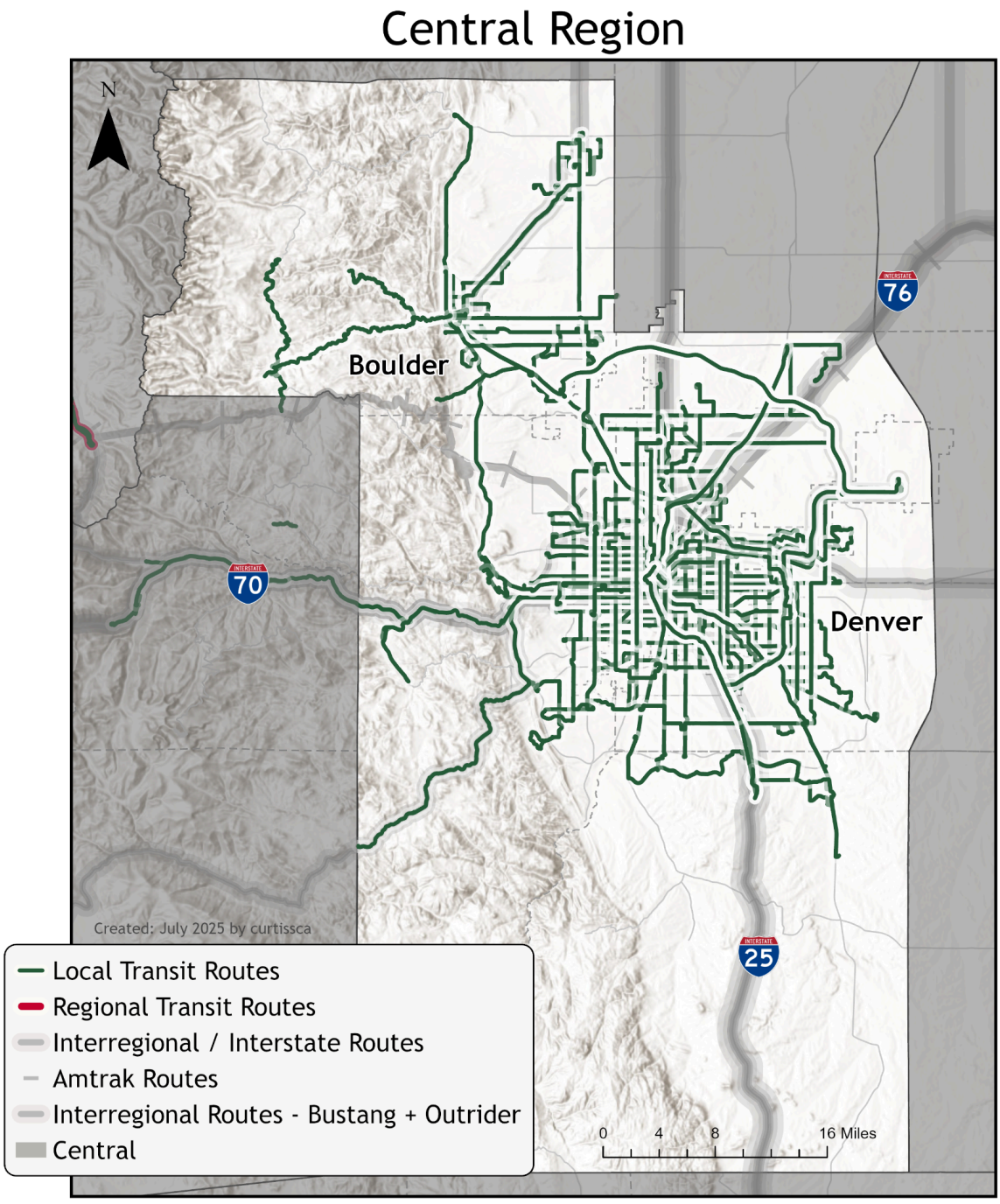
5	Denver	Estes Park	2,227	3,274	39,340	5%

North Front Range Origin-North Front Range Destination (Intraregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Fort Collins	Greeley	7,112	5,972	5,195	33%
2	Greeley	Fort Collins	6,961	6,203	5,102	32%
3	Fort Collins	Estes Park	2,268	2,716	2,810	12%
4	Greeley	North Weld County	2,420	2,194	2,180	12%
5	Estes Park	Fort Collins	2,102	2,480	2,878	11%



Central Region



The Central Region is Colorado's most populous region and includes Denver, which is Colorado's largest city and the state capital. The Central Region is served by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and CDOT Region 1. The Denver-Metro region alone is home to about 3 million people,

and is expected to increase by 260,000 people by 2030.[17] The Central Region is a major public transportation hub for Colorado, with most intercity lines running through Denver, often through Denver's Union Station. Besides being a major economic hub, the region serves as a major entertainment center. It is the home of several major attractions that draw people from around the state and country, including five major league sports teams and famous concert venues like Red Rocks Amphitheater. It is also home to one of the largest international airports in the country and to the University of Colorado, which is the state's largest University.

Counties	Travel Corridors
• Denver • Boulder • Broomfield • Douglas • Jefferson • Part of Adams County • Part of Arapahoe County	• I-25 • I-70 • I-76 • I-225 • C-470/E-470 • Colorado Blvd. (CO 2) • Colfax Ave. (US 40/US 287) • Federal Blvd. (US 287/CO 88)

Origin-Destination Analysis

Central Origin-Destination (Interregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Denver	Colorado Springs	38,562	43,433	42,405	43%
2	Denver	Fort Collins	27,027	31,602	30,509	30%
3	Denver	Greeley	14,123	13,966	14,497	15%
4	Castle Rock	Colorado Springs	5,329	6,320	6,354	6%
5	Denver	Silverthorne/ Keystone	5,061	6,214	6,523	6%

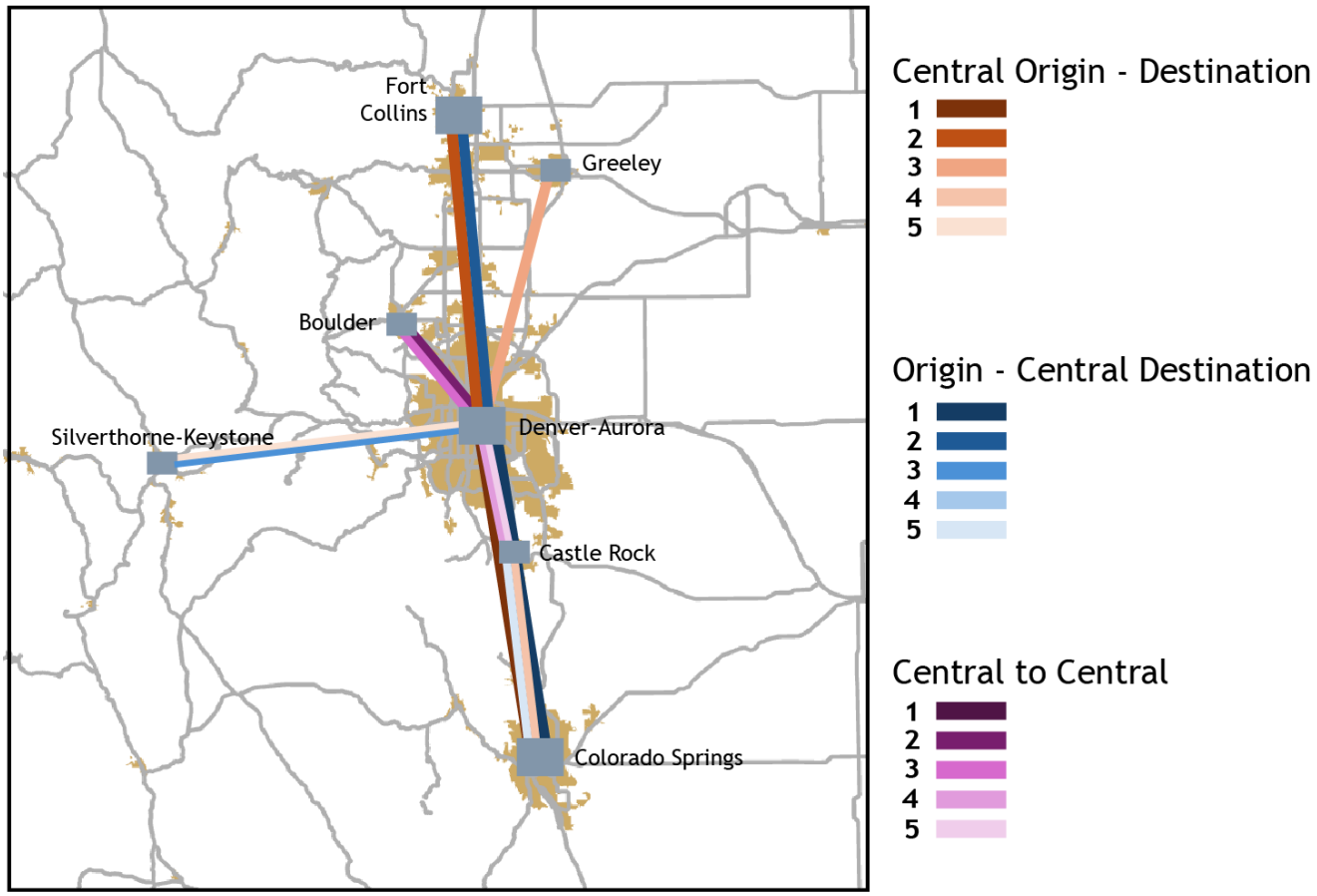
Origin-Central Destination (Interregional)

[17] https://demography.dola.colorado.gov/

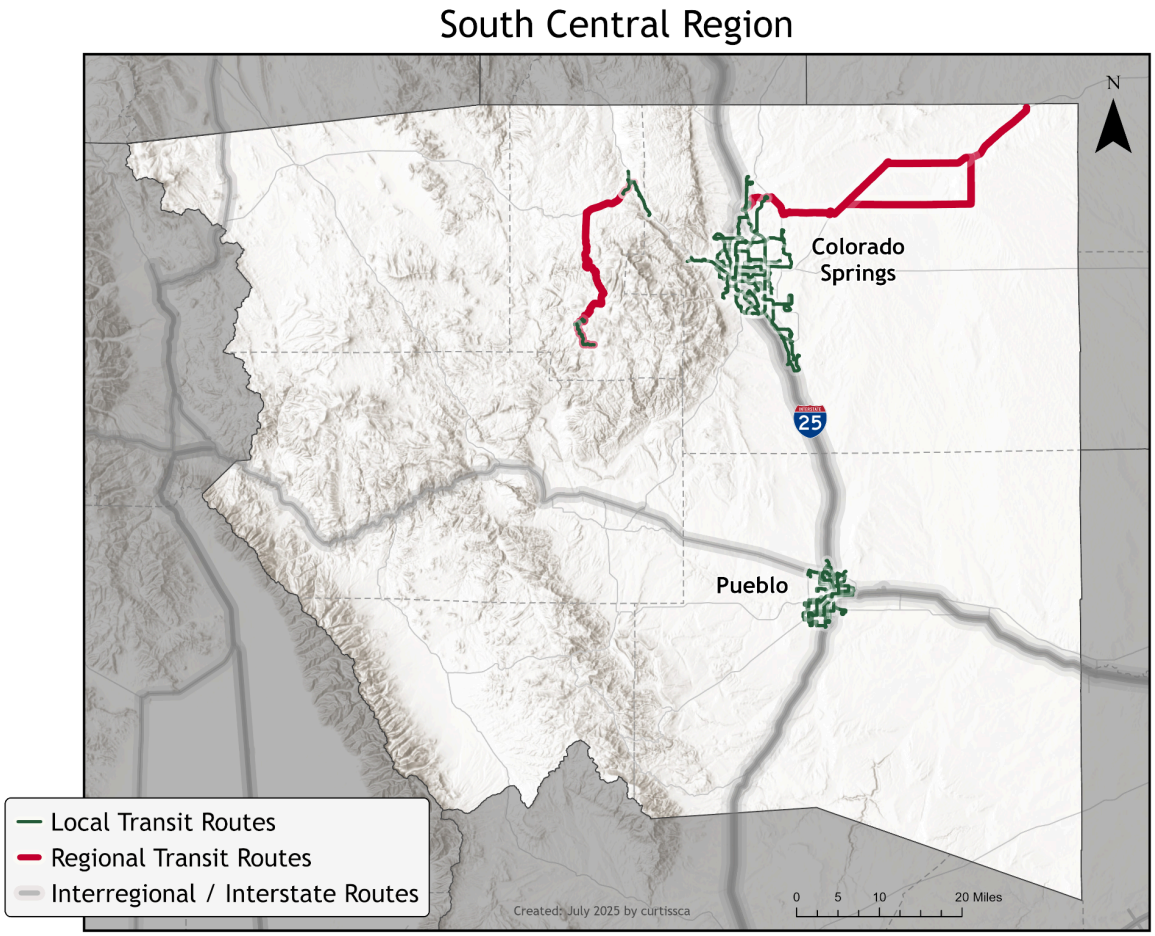
	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Colorado Springs	Denver	39,503	43,630	43,532	43%
2	Fort Collins	Denver	27,485	31,592	30,648	30%
3	Greeley	Denver	14,376	14,386	14,030	15%
4	Silverthorne/ Keystone	Denver	4,582	5,315	8,095	6%
5	Colorado Springs	Castle Rock	5,229	6,159	6,429	6%

Central Origin- Central Destination (Intraregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Denver	Denver	136,001	126,298	119,338	67%
2	Boulder	Denver	20,055	19,201	17,462	10%
3	Denver	Boulder	20,175	18,774	17,391	10%
4	Denver	Castle Rock	12,987	12,852	12,039	7%
5	Castle Rock	Denver	13,331	12,799	11,502	7%


Fort Collins
Greeley
Boulder
Denver-Aurora
Silverthorne-Keystone
Castle Rock
Colorado Springs
Central Origin - Destination
1
2
3
4
5
Origin - Central Destination
1
2
3
4
5
Central to Central
1
2
3
4
5

South Central Region



The South Central Region is the second most populated region in Colorado. The economy of this region is, in part, driven by the numerous military bases in the area. In addition to military activity, it is also a popular tourist destination because of its outdoor recreation, casinos, and the National Forest System.

Transportation planning in this region is covered by two Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), also known as Council of Governments (COGs), the Pikes Peak Area COG and Pueblo Area COG. For planning at the state level, this region is covered by the Central Front Range Transportation Planning Region (TPR), the Pikes Peak Area TPR, and the Pueblo Area TPR.

Since the year 2010, the Pikes Peak region experienced a notable population growth which is projected to continue. Outside of El Paso County, however, growth rates are expected to be lower than the Central and North Front Range. By 2045, the Pikes Peak region alone expects to see more than 300,000 new residents, mostly with people over the age of 65, and the number of jobs more than doubling from 200,000 to 542,000 jobs. Again focusing on the Pikes

Peak area, existing land use patterns such as low density housing and street layout make providing public transportation services physically and financially difficult.

Counties	Travel Corridors
• El Paso • Fremont • Pueblo • Teller	• I-25 • US 285 • US 24 • US 50

Origin-Destination Analysis

South Central Origin-Destination (Interregional)

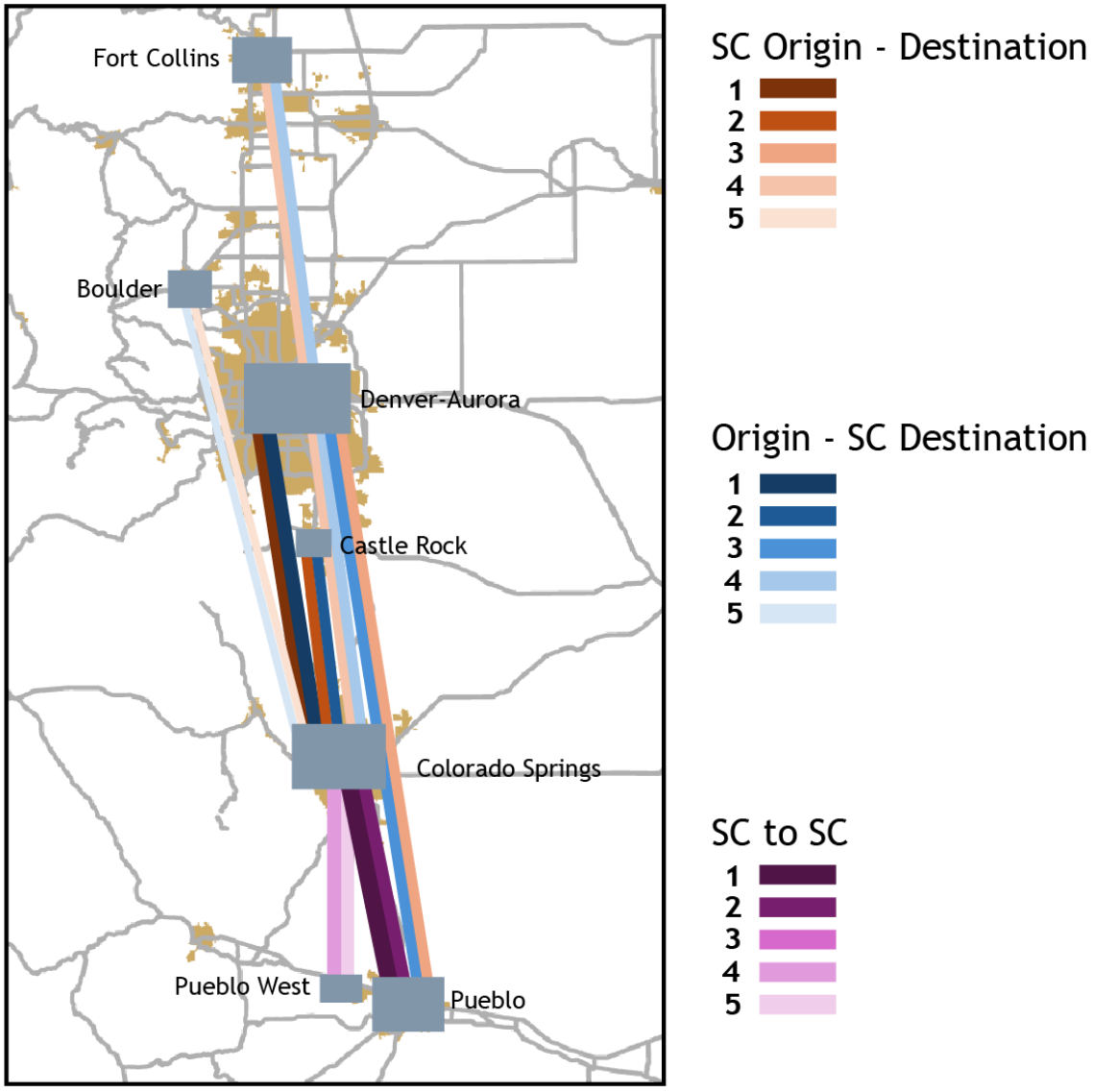
	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Colorado Springs	Denver	39,503	43,630	43,532	79%
2	Colorado Springs	Castle Rock	5,229	6,159	6,429	11%
3	Pueblo	Denver	2,797	3,651	3,222	6%
4	Colorado Springs	Fort Collins	1,034	1,690	1,729	2%
5	Colorado Springs	Boulder	695	1,012	1,075	2%

Origin- South Central Destination (Interregional)

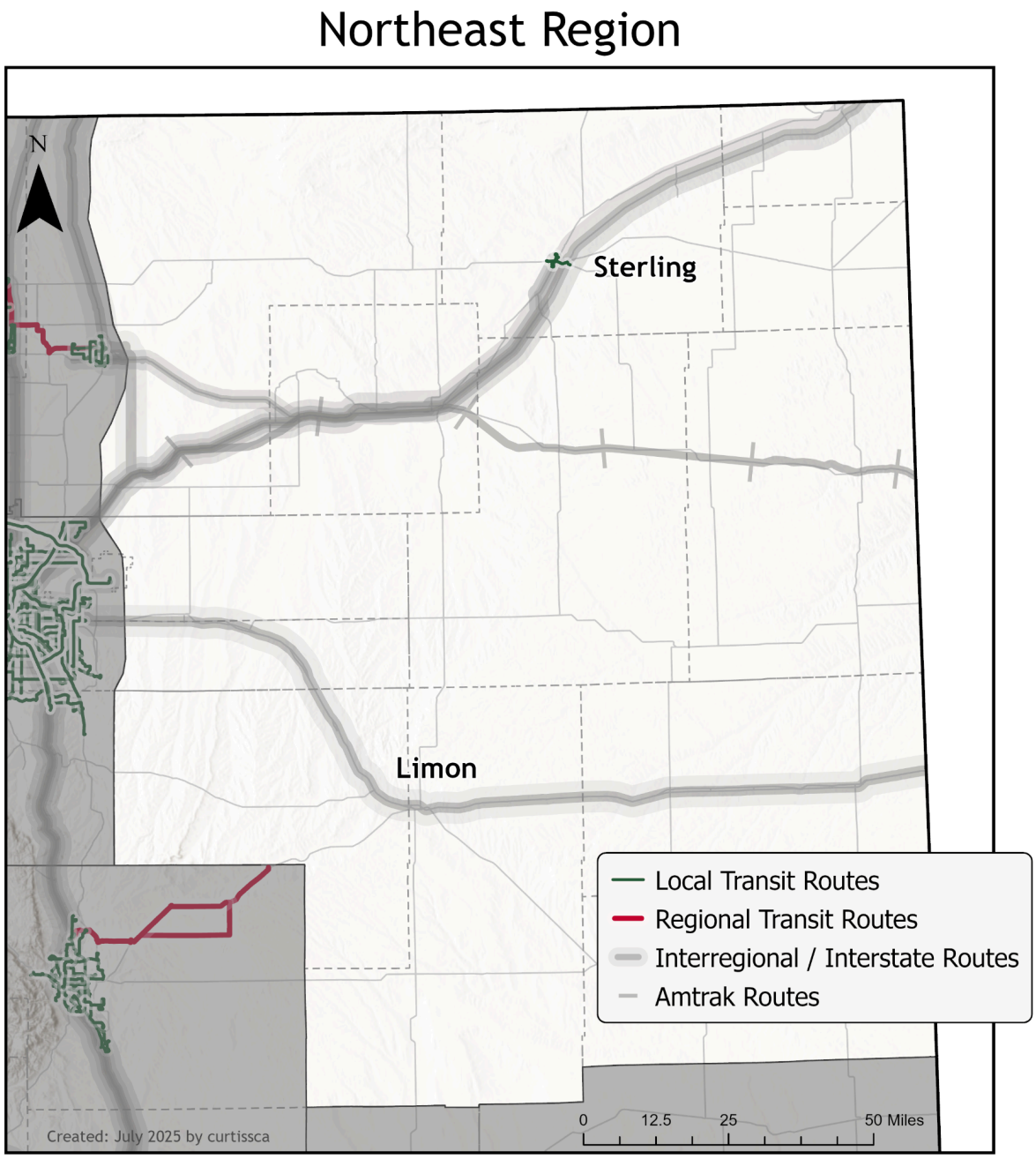
	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Denver	Colorado Springs	38,562	43,433	42,405	79%
2	Castle Rock	Colorado Springs	5,329	6,320	6,354	11%
3	Denver	Pueblo	2,701	3,404	3,232	6%
4	Fort Collins	Colorado Springs	1,047	1,590	1,778	2%
5	Boulder	Colorado Springs	718	977	949	2%

South Central Origin- South Central Destination (Intraregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Colorado Springs	Pueblo	11,725	10,932	9,554	29%
2	Pueblo	Colorado Springs	11,816	10,774	9,238	29%
3	Colorado Springs	Colorado Springs	9,641	7,662	6,113	23%
4	Pueblo West	Colorado Springs	3,959	3,772	3,327	10%
5	Colorado Springs	Pueblo West	3,829	3,770	3,250	10%



Northeast Region



The Northeast region of Colorado is defined by expansive plains, native grasslands, and gentle canyons. Agriculture is the cornerstone of the region's cultural and economic identity. Points of interests include North Sterling and Bonny Lake state parks, Pawnee National Grasslands, and local fairs and rodeos. While agriculture still remains the economic backbone of the area, there is a growing economic sector based around advanced manufacturing and energy production such as oil, gas, wind, and ethanol.

Public Transportation coordination in the region is managed by East Central Council of Local Governments (ECCOG) and the Northeast Colorado Association of Local Governments (NECALG). ECCOG directly operates the Outback Express, the region's primary public transportation service, and facilitates additional localized services through the City of Burlington and the Town of Limon.

Counties	Major Travel Corridors
• Cheyenne • Elbert • Kit Carson • Lincoln • Logan • Morgan • Phillips • Sedgewick • Washington • Yuma	• I-70 • I-76 • US 24 • US 34 • US 287 • US 385 • CO 71 • CO 86

Origin-Destination Analysis

Northeast Origin-Destination (Interregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Ponderosa East	Denver	2,220	1,723	1,286	29%
2	Fort Morgan	Denver	1,476	1,633	1,571	22%
3	Elizabeth/ Kiowa Area	Denver	1,430	1,345	1,264	20%
4	Elizabeth/ Kiowa Area	Denver	1,236	1,145	970	17%
5	Fort Morgan	Greeley	905	996	958	13%

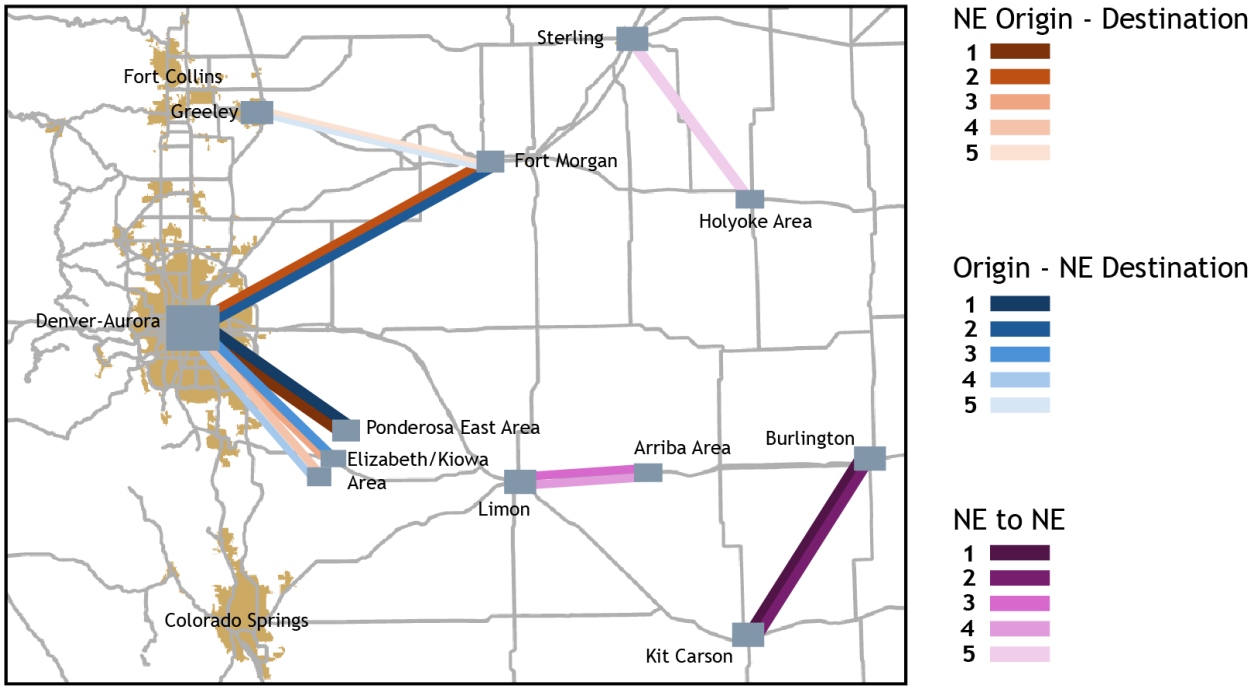
Origin-Northeast Destination (Interregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips

1	Denver	Ponderosa East	1,794	1,502	1,179	25%
2	Denver	Fort Morgan	1,476	1,701	1,690	23%
3	Denver	Elizabeth/ Kiowa Area	1,414	1,250	1,282	21%
4	Denver	Elizabeth/ Kiowa Area	1,075	1,025	999	16%
5	Greeley	Fort Morgan	967	1,022	915	15%

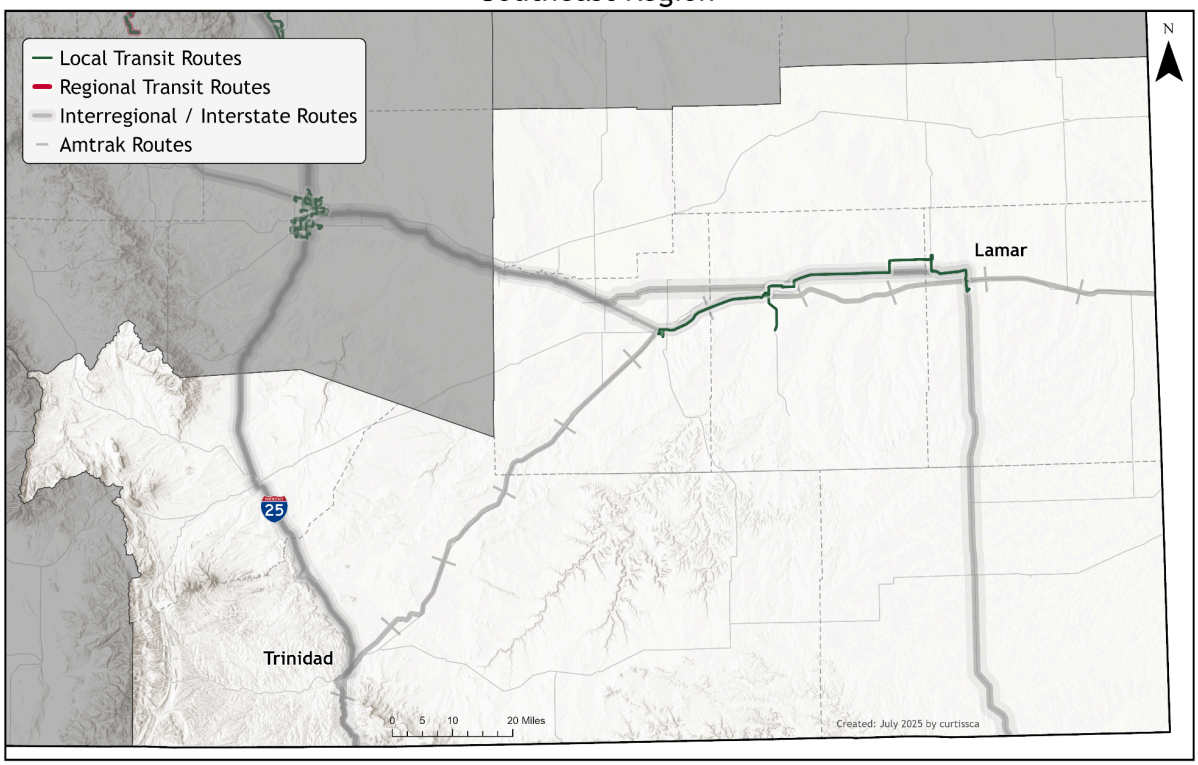
Northeast Origin- Northeast Destination (Intraregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Kit Carson	Burlington	872	723	554	22%
2	Burlington	Kit Carson	840	724	539	22%
3	Limon	Arriba Area	815	547	546	21%
4	Arriba Area	Limon	815	553	510	21%
5	Sterling	Holyoke Area	525	630	403	15%



Southeast Region

Southeast Region



The Southeast Region of Colorado is characterized by its expansive plains, small towns, and deep historical roots. Anchored by communities such as Trinidad, La Junta, and Lamar, the region features an agricultural and energy-based economy and is home to important historical and natural landmarks, including Comanche National Grassland and Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site. Public transportation in Huerfano and Las Animas Counties is provided by the South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG), along with the City of La Junta, Bent County, and Prowers County. Bustang's Lamar-Colorado Springs route also serves the area along the I-25 and US-50 corridors. This region sees strong travel flows to and from Pueblo, highlighting the importance of enhancing both regional and interregional connectivity to improve access to employment, healthcare, and education opportunities for rural populations in the area.

Counties	Travel Corridors
• Baca • Crowley • Huerfano • Kiowa • Las Animas	• I-25 South • US 50 Pueblo to Lamar • US 350 Trinidad to La Junta

• Otero • Prowers	

Origin-Destination Analysis

Southeast Origin-Destination (Interregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	La Junta	Pueblo	838	1,021	746	27%
2	Trinidad	Pueblo	809	1,003	824	26%
3	Ordway Area	Pueblo	578	475	381	17%
4	Walsenberg	Pueblo	483	595	410	15%
5	Fowler	Pueblo	493	472	348	15%

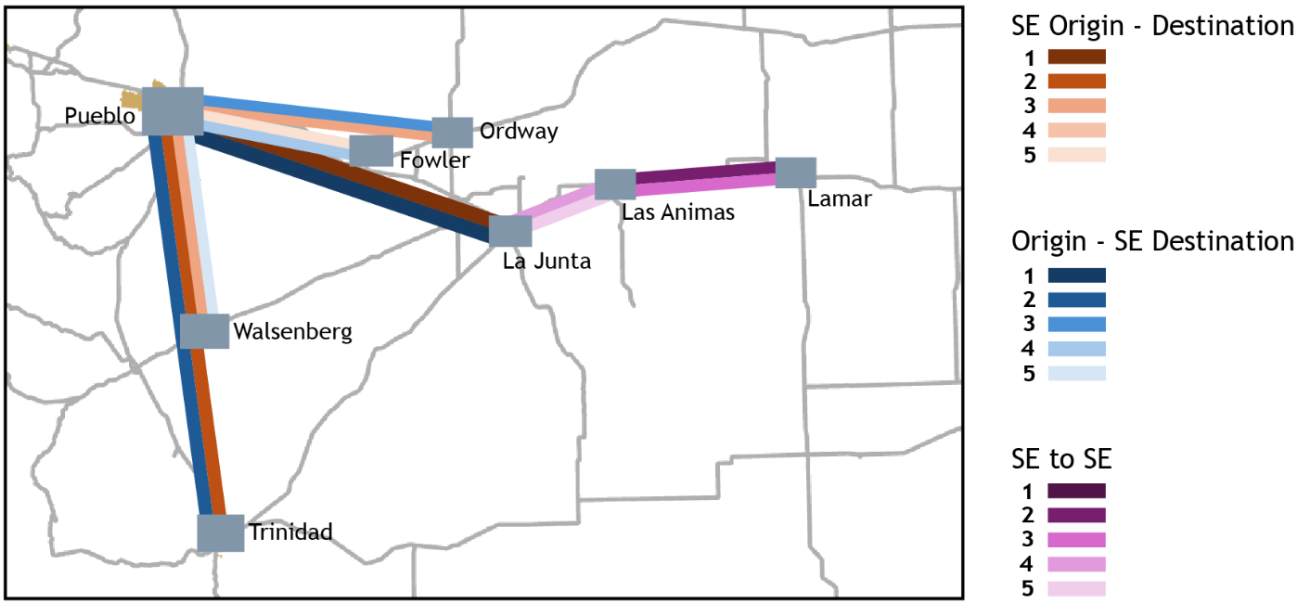
Origin-Southeast Destination (Interregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Pueblo	La Junta	829	1,084	807	27%
2	Pueblo	Trinidad	868	942	881	27%
3	Pueblo	Ordway Area	545	477	399	16%
4	Pueblo	Fowler	589	406	299	16%
5	Pueblo	Walsenberg	477	577	320	14%

Southeast Origin- Southeast Destination (Intraregional)

	Origin	Destination	Weekday	Saturday	Sunday	% of Top 5 Trips
1	Trinidad	Trinidad	7,126	5,074	4,838	62%
2	Las Animas	Lamar	1,123	920	758	10%

3	Lamar	Las Animas	1,176	840	728	10%
4	La Junta	Las Animas	949	794	750	9%
5	Las Animas	La Junta	1,008	792	676	9%



(7) Gaps Analysis & Methodology

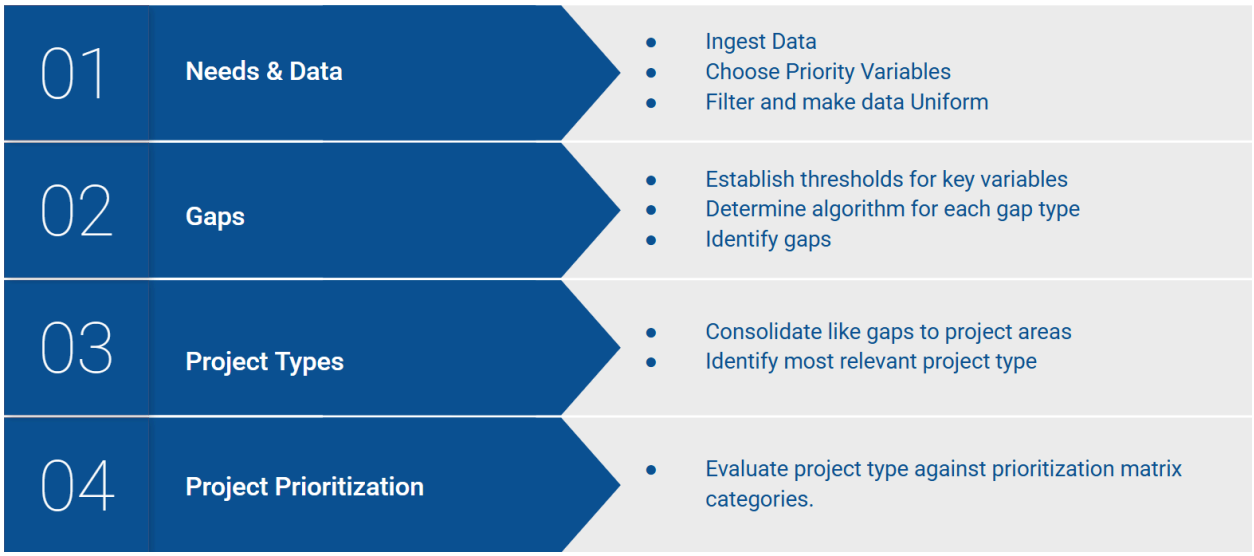
Take the regions above and identified corridors and map public transportation gaps and needs in the state

The TCS gap analysis reviews Colorado's current public transportation landscape, focusing on regional characteristics, challenges, key corridors, demographics, and travel demand using 2023 and 2024 data. The primary goal is to identify spatial, temporal, and service gaps and needs at the regional and interregional levels. Project types are identified to fill gaps and better connect the state through a transit provider neutral approach.

Identification of Gaps and Needs

The TCS is built to address the transit needs of the state and assess those needs against the existing transit system to establish gaps. The approach is limited to regional and interregional travel, which allowed the study's scope to remain focused. The identified needs helped guide the data collection process, while the gaps analyze the needs against the transit landscape. Once all gaps were identified, project types distilled the various identified gaps into a concentrated inventory. The gap analysis attempts to provide a holistic picture of the transit

system and existing gaps, but there still remains limitations on what gaps could be identified and what needs could be addressed. The section defines what needs were evaluated. Additionally, this section details how those needs identified different gaps, and how those gaps could be subsequently addressed by a project type and scored.



Needs to address

A dedicated list of needs, which transit can address, identified the various types of gaps. Each need could be addressed by a particular transit service solution. These needs, reflected through different quantifiable categories of data, were categorized into various gaps. These gaps were subsequently filled by various project types. The summary of the four broad categories of needs match the high-level TCS project goals, while remaining a level above detailed transit planning. The four categories of needs are:

1. Transit Network Connectivity
2. Community Access
3. Travel Demand
4. Equity

These categories represent the basis for the input data the TCS analyzed, turned into gap types, and result project types chosen.

Transit Network Connectivity

The overarching goal of the TCS is to provide a strategy for an interconnected interregional and regional transit network. The goal is to connect more communities and allow for longer journeys to be taken by transit.

The single most important data feed into the transit-network-connectivity need is General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) data. This data stream provides most of the valuable information about the state's transit agencies including routes, stop location, route frequency, and many other relevant transit agency defining characteristics. One of the many challenges of this project has been validating the data submitted by each transit agency and ensuring it is consistent. Consistent data is necessary to make direct comparisons between agencies. Due to inconsistencies in the data, there were some limitations in this iteration of the TCS. However, the extraordinary amount of data provided through this standard offered an opportunity for more detailed analysis done in the future.

Community Access

Community access evaluated how quickly and easily communities are able to connect to Colorado's transit network. A community's connection to the statewide transit system was accomplished through the use of GTFS data, as described above. Categorizing communities through definitions like urban areas and primary or secondary state corridors was important for predicting demand and will be discussed during the gap analysis section. Additionally, community access deals with the ability to access critical destinations clustered together. The clustering of critical destinations are referred to as activity centers.

Activity Centers

Community Access considers how well transit was able to connect a community to an activity center. Activity centers are major locations, including urban areas and locations falling outside of urban areas, that attract trips based on essential services and key destinations including. The TCS identified six categories of Activity Centers:

- **Medical:** access to major medical facilities, defined as Trauma Hospitals + VA facilities
- **Essential:** access to ordinary critical shopping, Grocery Stores + Pharmacies
- **Educational:** Colleges, Universities, and Trade Schools
- **Institutional:** Human Services, DMV, Social Security
- **Recreational:** State & National parks + ski areas
- **Interstate Transportation:** Access to Greyhound, Amtrak, hub airports

Travel Demand

Travel demand consisted of evaluating regional and interregional travel patterns and transportation needs across the state. Travel demand represents where people need to move. Existing trips,limited in focus to the census tract level, show individuals' desire to move, and where the highest opportunity for modeshift to transit might exist. To analyze travel demand, the TCS considered:

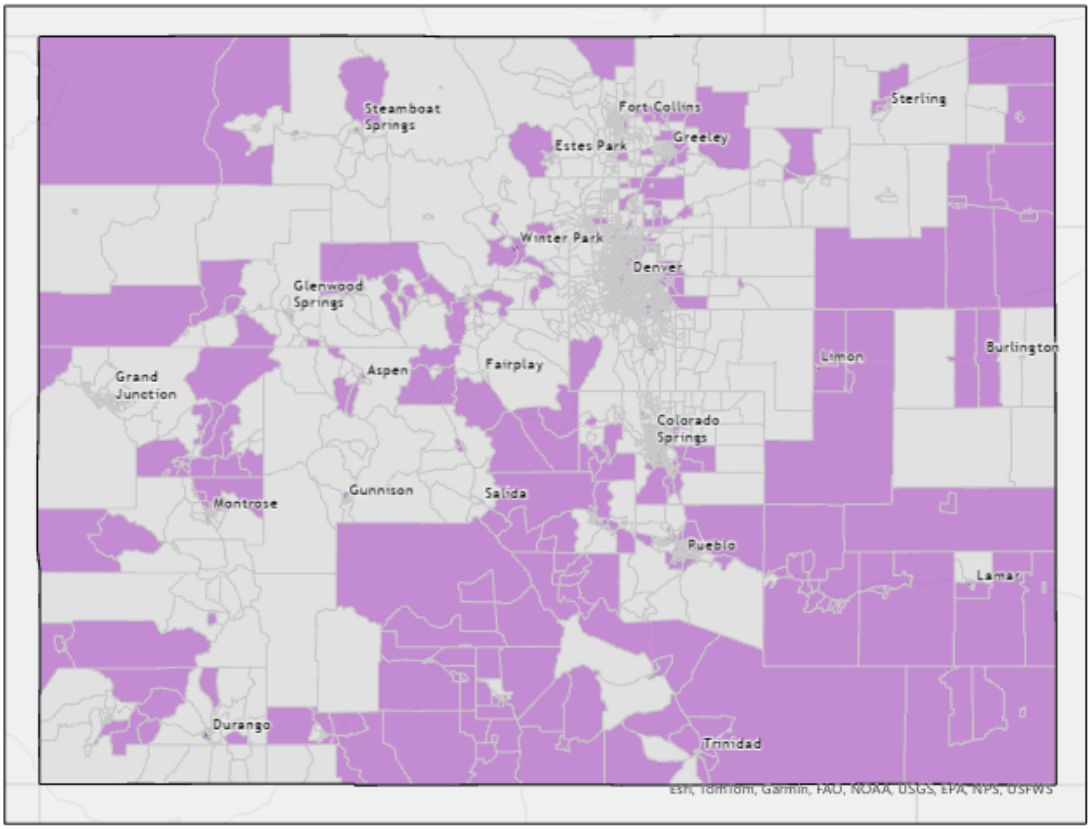
- Population and employment density
- Location-Based Service (LBS) trips

- Travel flows
- Observed demand and potential demand
- Transit usage relative to overall total travel demand

Equity

The TCS attempts to balance the demand and need for transit with an equitable system that can serve a diverse set of riders and potential riders. Two categories were used to determine equity needs based off of CDPHE's Enviroscreen tool and a transit dependency index built from the Census's American Communities Survey. The CDPHE's Disproportionately Impacted Communities section of the Enviroscreen tool allows for a deep dive into communities which have been impacted through a variety of causes. Data and details on the thresholds for indicating a DI community status were not modified from CDPHE's definition. Additionally, Justice40 census tracts and Tribal Communities were included in the data set by default.

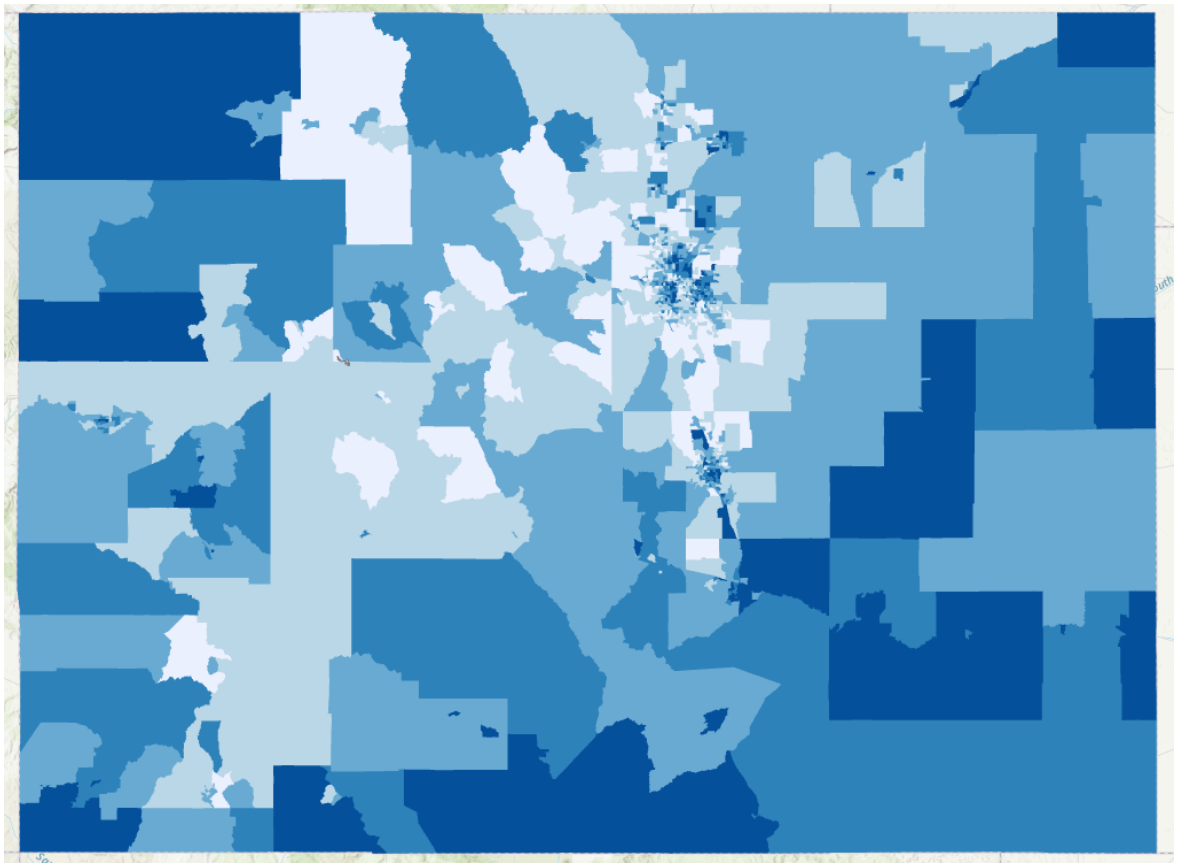
Figure 24: Disproportionately Impacted (DI) Communities in Colorado



The transit dependency index takes an alternative approach of looking at populations within the state, which indicates the propensity for a population in a census tract to take transportation. The need within a community is aggregated across populations most likely to rely on transportation like zero-car or low-income households. The assumption is that a high

density of transit-dependent populations would need transit access in their communities to effectively and equitably address their needs.

Figure 25: Transit Dependency Index



Gaps Overview

This study focused on spatial and temporal gaps. What opportunities exists to better connect the state geographically, like communities with no transit access, and what opportunities exist to better connect the state temporally These are the principal areas identified which could be evaluated at a high-level without requiring evaluating individual provider's routes or service levels. Each gap type provides insight to potential improved or add service, but may not by itself represent a recommended project. Gaps simply are a representation of an area where transit can be potentially improved, gaps themselves are only indicators for the need of a project but a final project may be an agglomeration of gaps and existing services instead of one-to-one assignment between gaps and projects.

1. **Spatial gaps:** geographic areas that lack public transportation service
2. **Temporal gaps:** a mismatch in service hours or schedules between connecting providers

3. **Service gaps:** A need for more public transportation service across a span of time (A need for hourly service where only AM-PM service exists)

Spatial gaps are usually the most straightforward to visualize across a map and generally illustrate a lack of access for an entire region or specific location.. This is not only a gap at the macro level, but at the local level where stop location transfers will be evaluated as well. The goal of this gap is to locate opportunities for better geographic transit coverage to access the entire state. The resulting projects create a more complete network map to access all corners of the state. However, this alone does not guarantee access because the other gap types, temporal and service, may prevent access and connectivity.

Temporal gaps represent a travellers limitation in accessing transit because services may not be available at specific times of day or on the weekend. Temporal gaps exist when the existing transit schedule does not allow effective transfer to other interregional or regional services. Areas of the state may appear more connected geographically than can be realistically travelled, especially within a day or without significant wait for connecting services. The TCS defines a significant wait as over two hours. Interregional connections to local and regional transit services which do not have effective transfer windows is the same as the connection not existing for the purposes of this gap.

Lastly, service gaps provide an opportunity to review existing networks to ensure demand at different times and locations is being met. Aligning modeled demand to ensure service exists at the right times of day is necessary to address all trips along a corridor instead of the usual commuting behavior. Given the state’s history as a center for outdoor recreation, weekend access to Colorado's outdoor recreation centers is a particular area of interest for providers and travellers alike.

These gaps are evaluated through a framework built around four key elements: connectivity, community access, equity, and travel demand. This evaluation framework allows……

Gap Types

Several different detailed gap types were designed to provide insight on specific issues, which may be impacting one of the four target elements (connectivity, demand, accessibility, and equity) to better connect Colorado. These gap types were each chosen because addressing them would fulfill a need to improve the state’s transit network. Additionally, the data available allowed for comparison and evaluation across different settings. In all there are 10 gaps measured and listed below:

1. Unserved corridor
2. Unserved demand from travel patterns
3. Unserved urban area or activity center
4. Lack of interregional service option
5. Lack of regional service option

6. No transit coverage in rural, transit-dependent communities
7. No or limited service along a corridor with high travel demand
8. No timely transfer options
9. No collocation of existing transit services
10. Unserved area indicating a propensity for transit service

Each of these gap types provides a more detailed picture and insight into different issues occurring around the state. Each of these gap types was manually evaluated for validity. A short summary of the detailed steps for each evaluation method is included here.

Unserved Corridor

Analysis Summary	An unserved corridor gap is when an primary or secondary state corridor has no existing transit and a minimum demand identified. A state corridor is identified by existing travel demand along the route.
Data Inputs	Primary and Secondary State Corridors, Fixed Route Transit Coverage by Census Tract, and Population and Employment Density
Assumptions	Primary and secondary corridors are identified by total trip counts. Floor thresholds were established using population and employment density well below 1 standard deviation.

An unserved corridor evaluates each of the state's highest trafficked corridors to ensure transit was a realistic option for transportation along the corridor. Each corridor was identified and classified as a primary or secondary corridor based on annual average daily trip totals. From there the corridors were broken down based on the census tracts they intersected with. Each of those census tracts was evaluated against the GTFS data for a transit stop to a local, regional, or interregional system. Lastly, population and employment extremes were utilized as a tool to filter out gaps which fall under a threshold to be addressed.

This created a list of census tracts which could be evaluated as part of the larger network or as a stand alone gap. The goal here is to ensure we have enough transit coverage to encourage mode shifts along the state's busiest corridors.

Unserved demand from travel patterns

Analysis Summary	Unserved demand from travel patterns builds on unserved corridors to evaluate trips occurring between any two urban or rural areas at a high rate. This gap only applied to areas without existing transit options.
Data Inputs	Urban areas simplified by census tract, location-based services (LBS) data by day and time period, and GTFS transit locations.

Assumptions	Three tiers of demand thresholds were applied for urban to urban, rural to urban, or rural to rural transit trips.

Unserved demand from travel patterns as a gap type relies heavily on location-based services data provided by a consultant for weekend and weekday trips split into 6 hour time windows. This data was provided in a format simplified to urban areas where applicable or rural census tract outside of urban areas. The data includes demand only for trips greater than 20 miles, which is the lower threshold set for regional transportation. A threshold value for demand was established to filter out low demand routes. Lastly, a filter was applied to eliminate options which already had existing interregional or regional service options.

The goal of this gap is to fill areas across the State of Colorado which have high demand for +20 mile trips but do not have current access to an interregional or regional transit option.

Unserved urban area or activity center

Analysis Summary	Unserved urban areas which are not connected to the interregional or regional transit system today. Unserved activity centers are concentrated locations of importance for Coloradoans, which do not currently receive transit as a mode choice.
Data Inputs	Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) urban areas, GTFS transit data, and American Community Survey census data on key locations.
Assumptions	Census tracts were simplified into urban areas whether the entire tracts was part of the urban area or not.

Unserved urban areas are locations around the state which meet DOLA's criteria for an urban area but do not have access to regional or interregional transit. Census tracts may have areas which were defined as outside of the urban area, but for analysis purposes the entire tract was coded as containing an urban area.

Unserved activity centers focus on the important community or regional locations where people may take transit to go. The definition of an activity center is a high density or combination of essential, medical, educational, institutional, recreational, intercity transit, or lifeline services. Definitions for each of those location types are included in the table below and are taken directly from US Census data. These critical destination types are summed by census tract for the purposes of the analysis. Once a census tract passed the threshold and was considered an activity center, the location was verified to not contain any local, regional, interregional, or demand response transit service. This was chosen since access to many of these destinations is more of a local community connection than an interregional connection.

Critical Destination Type	Description
Essential	Ordinary shopping destinations for food and other necessary goods
Medical	Major medical facilities, including trauma centers
Educational	Post-secondary educational facilities including colleges, universities, and trade schools
Institutional	Human services and critical government facilities
Recreational	Large parks and regional destinations; ski areas
Interstate Transportation	Greyhound stations, Amtrak Stations, and airports
Lifeline	Small, lower-service stores such as gas stations, dollar stores and general stores.

Unserved urban areas capture high population and employment areas to best identify gaps where transit could be most useful for daily travels. An activity center gap is defined as an activity center that does not have access to transit.

Lack of interregional service options

Analysis Summary	Areas around the state where there are no options to connect to interregional transit.
Data Inputs	GTFS data by census tract
Assumptions	Not a stand alone evaluation but added to other gap types as a filter for existing services.

Lack of interregional service options represents the most important geographic gap for connectivity. Across multiple gap assessments, a filter of available interregional transit access by census tract was applied to highlight areas which may need service.

The goal of this gap is to]cover the state with interregional transit access to ensure maximum mobility and mode choice.

Lack of regional service options

Analysis Summary	Areas around the state where there are no options to connect with the regional transit network.
Data Inputs	GTFS data by census tract
Assumptions	Not a stand alone evaluation but added to other gap types as a filter for existing services.

Lack of regional service options represents the second important geographic gap for connectivity behind interregional service. Regional service across Colorado represents a key connector for urban and high population areas. Across multiple gap assessments, a filter of available regional transit access by census tract was applied to highlight areas which may need service.

The goal of this gap is to geographically cover the State of Colorado with regional transit where interregional transit is not available.

No transit coverage in rural, transit-dependent communities

Analysis Summary	Identify rural areas around the state which have no transit access of any type, but have a sufficiently large transit-dependent community.
Data Inputs	GTFS data by census tract, CDPHE enviroscreen database, and US Census american communities survey, and urban areas database.
Assumptions	An aggregation of metrics relating to mobility and community characteristics is a good representation of transit dependency.

The analysis starts with all rural communities within the state and identifies key characteristics about the area: disabled population, zero car households, low-income population, non-English speaking, seniors, and non-white population. Standard deviations were run for each characteristic in rural areas, and then run against an aggregated normalized score for each characteristic and rural area. A resulting score in the top half of this metric identified a transit-dependent community. Additionally, a disproportionately impacted community by CDPHE definition was enough to identify a need for transit for the

purposes of this analysis. This was then filtered by existing transit services, both fixed route and demand response, to provide the gap.

The goal of this gap is to ensure communities in rural areas with the highest likelihood to use or need transit have access to some form of mobility opportunities.

No or limited service along a corridor with high travel demand

Analysis Summary	Assess existing interregional and regional transit routes to identify areas where additional demand could be served along existing corridors.
Data Inputs	GTFS data by census tracts, location-based services demand data by day and time, and urban areas definition
Assumptions	Aggregation of demand along a route represents the maximum number of expected riders on a service at any one time. Transit ridership is expected at 2% of rural demand and 4% of MPO demand.

The interregional and regional services were broken down by route for evaluation. Demand and census tracts were identified for each stop along each route. The demand aggregated directionally along the route from start to finish looking for the maximum existing demand on the transit service at one time. Once the demand was located, a peak service sizing was determined. The peak service sizing was based on the MPO and rural area, and thresholds for minimum demand were identified based on proposed bus sizes (14 vs 35 passenger) and service frequency (daily, hourly, and once per 6 hrs). Once the peak demand and appropriate service size was proposed, a manual comparison to existing frequency was made. A gap was identified if existing service was notably less than the minimum service identified by the aggregated demand. No reduction gaps were identified.

This gap identified existing regional and interregional services which have unmet demand along their existing routes. This is not to imply that the service itself must fill the unmet demand, but it should be evaluated if there are certain spikes in need along an existing route.

No timely transfer options

Analysis Summary	Identify gaps in stop timing for regional or interregional services connecting to other local, regional, or interregional services.
Data Inputs	GTFS stop data
Assumptions	Allowable wait times to take an interregional service were higher than regional or local service for longer trips.

All colocated stops were aggregated which connect a regional or interregional route to a separate local, regional, or interregional route. These services had all stop data from GTFS

identified to calculate the difference in timing for a nominal trip. Differences on stop timing between routes were identified by direction and by stop location. If transfer was unavailable because of a miss or an excessively long wait at a location, the connection between two existing colocated services was identified as a gap for no timely transfer options.

The gap identified here assists separate transit planning agencies to better align services to allow the population to access more connections through aligning stop timing.

No collocation of existing transit services

Analysis Summary	Identify existing transit stops which are too far apart to be considered for a transfer without use of another vehicle.
Data Inputs	GTFS stop locations
Assumptions	Stops within 0.3 miles of each other are considered to be collocated. Transit stops located further than the collocation threshold but within 3 miles were considered a gap for evaluation.

Direct distance was calculated between all stops in the state for all services except for the service being analyzed. The stop distance was then filtered for a minimum distance of 0.3 miles and maximum distance of 3.0 miles for eligible stops. The gap is defined as the nearest gap distance between two stops where the two services do not connect. If two services already are determined to connect, no gap is identified.

The gap will assist in the location of stops which are currently too far apart to comfortably transfer without using another form of transportation.

Unserved area indicating a propensity for transit service

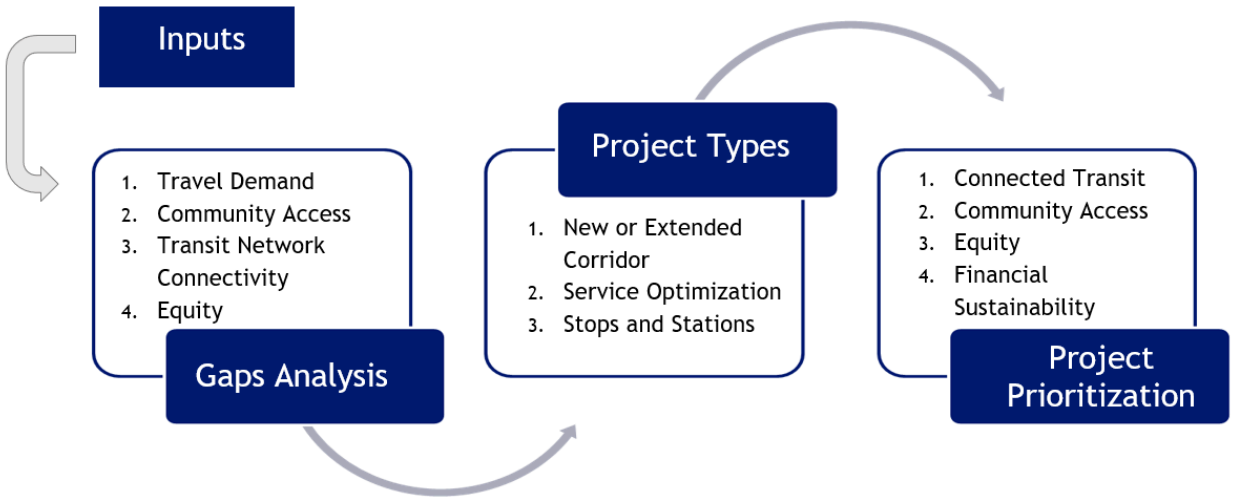
Analysis Summary	Identify areas around the state which have no transit access but have a disproportionately impacted or transit-dependent community.
Data Inputs	GTFS data by census tract, CDPHE Enviroscreen database, US Census American Communities survey, and urban areas database.
Assumptions	An aggregation of metrics relating to mobility and community characteristics is a good representation of transit dependency.

The analysis starts with all communities within the state and identifies key characteristics about the area: disabled population, zero car households, impoverished population, non-English speaking, seniors, and non-white population. Standard deviations were run across each characteristic in rural areas, and then run against an aggregated normalized score for each characteristic and rural area. A resulting score in the top half of this metric identified a

transit-dependent community. Additionally, a disproportionately impacted community by CDPHE's definition was enough to identify a need for transit. This was then filtered by existing transit services, both fixed route and demand response, to provide the gap.

The goal of this gap is to ensure that for all transit dependent populations and disproportionately impacted communities that there is an acknowledgement where transit access is lacking.

(9) Connecting the State- TCS Project List



The TCS developed a list of projects through the gaps and needs analysis to fill regional and interregional gaps along corridors. The gaps and needs are prioritized based on metrics developed from the gaps analysis framework (connectivity, accessibility, travel demand, and equity). Projects are not recommended for a specific agency to fill, rather they are shown as gaps in the state's existing transportation network. These projects would serve to fill the following types of spatial, temporal, and service gaps in Colorado's public transportation network:

- Corridors between or beyond service areas where no service is currently operated
- Stops shared by two or more service agencies where existing schedules make transfers difficult, resulting in lengthy waits or no practical transfer opportunities at all
- Constrained service schedules, including times of day and times of week, that impact riders' ability to use service or make a reasonable transfer.
- Activity centers that would warrant public transportation service or a stop, but are unserved today.
- Areas of the state not served by fixed-route or demand response services where travel demand is low, but a proportionally high percent of the population is

transit-dependent and would benefit from public transportation access through demand-response services.
- Increasing public transportation service in areas of the state where existing service levels do not match demand or limit access to services.
- Stops, stations, and mobility hubs that are underutilized where coordination, service changes, or a new or extended corridor help to optimize the use of a modal hub.

Project Typologies

Once the gap was identified, a project typology was recommended to address the gap. The project typologies identified are:

1. New or Extended Corridor
    a. New interregional fixed route service
    b. New regional fixed route service
    c. New demand response service
2. Service Optimization
    a. Frequency Change
    b. Time Transfers
    c. Schedule Change
        i. Realigning run times to meet demand patterns (TOD/TOW)
3. Stops and Stations
    a. Unlinked Transfers
    b. New Market or Activity Centers

Prioritization Matrix

In order to identify the highest-leverage projects, a prioritization matrix was developed. Projects were evaluated for: connection, accessibility, equity, and financial sustainability. Using this matrix the TCS was able to:

- Identify logical opportunities to enhance connectivity, accessibility and integration of the Public Transportation network
- Highlight network-level benefits
- Prioritize projects based on their ability to help develop a statewide transit network

Transit Network Connections	**Geographical** • Does the project connect to an existing public transit service? • Does the project connect two existing nearby transit stops? **Temporal** • Does the project reduce connecting time between two connecting transit services? • Does the project provide additional connections between existing services?
Community Access	**Geographical** • Does the project connect to an unserved activity center? • Does the project bring additional transit to underserved areas with demand? • Does the project provide transportation to a population without transit service? **Temporal** • Does the project extend the span of service or align the service schedule to provide additional access? • Does the project improve access to transit via frequency change?
Equity	• Does the project provide access for a DI Community? • Does the project provide access for a transit dependent population?
Financial Sustainability	• Would the project be eligible under existing funding sources?

While each project type is scored, this scoring should only be interpreted as the project type's likelihood for accomplishing the goals of TCS. High scoring projects address each of the categories in the scoring prioritization matrix and represent solutions for a more connected system. ..

The project's score can be useful in determining the additional value a project may bring to a region or population. However, the score does not completely validate or invalidate the project. A project type will need local knowledge, partnership, and planning to truly evaluate the success and effectiveness of a project in expanding transit in Colorado.

Summary

The TCS started by identifying relevant inputs (travel demand network, gaps, access, unmet needs, and equity) to identify high-level gaps in the state’s regional and interregional transit network. Once those gaps were identified and analyzed (see the methodology section), a high-level project typology was suggested to fill that gap. Typologies included new or extended corridor service, service optimization, or infrastructure improvements. This created a list of projects. In order to identify the highest leverage projects, the list was put through a

prioritization matrix. This matrix evaluated projects for their ability to improve connections, accessibility, equity, and their financial sustainability. This whittled down the project list to the most impactful projects for improving the statewide transit network. The following section breaks out the list of projects by region as identified in section 5.

Project List

This list contains all of the projects identified by the TCS. The list includes the region the project occurs, beginning and ending locations if applicable, and project type. For a description of the project and the identified benefits, see Appendix X.

#	Project Name	Region	Location (Start End, if applicable)	Project Type
1	Connecting Pagosa Springs	Southwest	Pagosa Springs	New Regional Fixed Route
2	Addressing Castle Rock's Unserved Demand	Central	Castle Rock	New Markets
3	Serving North Denver Activity Center	Central	I-25 & E 136th Ave	Extended Regional Fixed Route
4	CO-7 Transit	Central	Erie and Broomfield along CO-7	New Regional Fixed Route
5	Cañon City Direct Connection to Colorado Springs	South Central	CO Springs- Canon City	New Regional Fixed Route
6	US 85 as an Alternate Route	N. Front Range	Eaton-Denver	New Interregional Fixed route
7	Denver Access to Estes Park	Central	Denver-Estes Park	New Interregional Fixed route
8	Georgetown Sunday Service	West	Georgetown	Weekend Service
9	Pueblo West to Colorado Springs	South Central	Pueblo West- Colorado Springs	New Interregional Fixed route
10	North Front Range Connection to Estes Park	N. Front Range	Ft. Collins-Estes Park	New Regional Fixed Route
11	East I-70 Regional	Northeast	Watkins- Deer Trail	New Regional Fixed Route
12	Colorado Springs to Woodland Park Regional	South Central	Colorado Springs- Woodland Park	New Regional Fixed Route
13	Pueblo to Cañon City	South Central	Pueblo- Cañon City	New Regional Fixed Route
14	Johnstown Connection	N. Front Range	Johnstown	New Regional Fixed Route
15	Roxborough Park Connection	Northwest	Roxborough Park	New Regional Fixed Route

16	Severance Connection (Ft. Collins and Greeley)	Northwest	Severance	Extended Regional Fixed Route
17	Wellington Connection (Ft. Collins)	Northwest	Wellington	New Regional Fixed Route
18	Southern Ute Tribe Demand Response	Northwest	US 550 South	Demand Response Zone
19	Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Demand Response	Northwest	US 491 South	Demand Response Zone
20	Crowley Demand Response	Northwest	CO 96	Demand Response Zone
21	Grand Lake Connection	Northwest	Grand Lake	New Regional Fixed Route
22	Pueblo to Trinidad Weekend Service	South Central	Pueblo-Trinidad	Weekend Service
23	Greeley to Ft. Collins Weekend Service	Northwest	Greeley- Ft. Collins	Weekend Service
24	Montrose to Telluride Weekend Service	Northwest	Montrose- Telluride	Weekend Service
25	Montrose to Ridgeway Weekend Service	Northwest	US 550 South of Ridgeway	Weekend Service
26	Colorado Springs to Northeast US 24	South Central	Colorado Springs- Calhan	Weekend Service
27	Ft. Collins to Boulder Weekend Service	N. Front Range	Ft. Collins- Boulder	Weekend Service
28	Ft. Collins to Longmont Weekend Service	Central	Ft. Collins- Longmont	Weekend Service
29	Amtrak to Bustang Colocation (Grand Valley Transfer Station)	Southwest	Grand Junction	Unlinked Transfers
30	Amtrak to Bustang Colocation (Trinidad)	Southeast	Trinidad	Unlinked Transfers
31	Amtrak to Bent County Transportation Colocation	Southeast	Lamar	Unlinked Transfers

32	Bustang Southline to Envida (Colorado Springs)	South Central	North Colorado Springs	Unlinked Transfers
33	Bustang Outrider to Summit Stage (Fairplay)	Northwest	Fairplay	Unlinked Transfers
34	Roundabout to RTD (Bergen Park)	Northwest	Bergen Park	Unlinked Transfers
35	Regional Connection to Yampa Valley Airport	Northwest	Yampa Valley Airport	Extended Regional Fixed Route
36	Regional Connection to Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional Airport	Northwest	Gunnison-Crested Butte Regional Airport	Extended Regional Fixed Route
37	Southeast Denver- Ponderosa East Area	Northwest	Ponderosa East Area	New Markets
38	Colorado Springs to Pueblo	South Central	Colorado Springs- Pueblo	Frequency Change
39	Bustang Outrider & Road Runner Transit- Bayfield Transfer	Northwest	Bayfield	Timed Transfer
40	Bustang Outrider & Amtrak- Ft. Morgan Transfer	Northeast	Ft. Morgan	Timed Transfer

(10) Advancing the Study

The findings and data presented in this study serve as a resource in helping to identify opportunities across regions and agencies to further develop Colorado's transit network. This plan aligns with Colorado's vision for the future of its public transportation system. Implementing the plan will help Colorado achieve its GHG, VMT, and safety goals. It will increase access and opportunities for Coloradans. Advancing the plan will require coordination and collaboration between local and state partners. The section below provides an overview of the next steps and existing resources that can help advance the TCS.

Agency Collaboration

Colorado has a strong environment of inter-agency collaboration. Transit providers throughout the state share ideas and resources to achieve collective transportation goals. Recognizing that travel patterns often extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries, continued cooperation is a critical component to the further development of Colorado's transit network. As the state prepares for new passenger rail initiatives, enhancements to Bustang, the ongoing development of Regional Transportation Authorities, and new local transit agencies, it is critical that CDOT and its partners statewide continue to collaborate to address existing gaps in the transit network. Filling the selected gaps identified by the TCS begins with meaningful collaboration between stakeholders to align stops and services.

Improving Data Collection and Data Sharing

General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) and the FTA's National Transit Database (NTD) provide important metrics and data to analyze existing transit systems and track changes in transit over time. Improved accuracy in GTFS and NTD reporting provides richer levels of information and a greater understanding of transit conditions, needs, and opportunities across the state.

While publishing GTFS data has become more commonplace for transit agencies, there are gaps and inaccuracies in the data that limit the information's utility. Promoting GTFS reporting, and identifying opportunities to train agencies, especially small rural agencies, on data publishing will improve the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of GTFS data in Colorado. Additionally, keeping a catalog of agency GTFS data at the state level provides an opportunity for this information to be readily available for CDOT and its partners to use in future plans, projects, and studies.

Expanding Interregional Transit -The State's Role

The introduction of Bustang helped to fill gaps left by a declining network of legacy private intercity bus carriers, and the introduction of Mountain Rail will reintroduce passenger rail along a corridor that was once served extensively by rail. Colorado's interregional transit

system helps to connect regional and local systems to the broader state network and to key destinations to connect residents and visitors alike to interstate travel options including intercity bus, Amtrak, and airport facilities.

Promoting Regional Transportation Authorities

Regional Transportation Authorities (RTAs) provide a great opportunity to fund and further develop transit across the state including increased regional planning, coordination, and mobility. Through the formation of an RTA, communities can leverage additional local funding to help supplement services costs, invest in infrastructure improvements, and expand transit service across a region. RTAs providing transit service help to fill regional gaps across the state where local systems would otherwise have more limited options in connecting populations across municipal or service area lines. RTAs can play a crucial role in filling transit gaps around the state.

Securing Transit Funding

Transit agencies rely on government grants and subsidies to support the development and operation of services. Changes in federal, state, and local funding can make it difficult to predict future funding for transit development and operations. The State of Colorado continues to identify new funding opportunities for transit even with funding constraints across all state programs. Such sources of funding at the state level can come from enterprises, which are able to generate funding through fee structures. Notably, such enterprises include the Clean Transit Enterprise (CTE) and the Colorado Transportation Investment Office (CTIO).

Clean Transit Enterprise (CTE)

The CTE was created within CDOT by SB 21-260 to support public transit electrification planning, facility upgrades, fleet motor vehicle replacement, and support the construction and development of electric vehicle charging and fueling infrastructure through a retail delivery fee. SB 24-230 expanded CTE's purpose to include reducing and mitigating the pollution impacts of the transportation sector by investing in public transit. This includes funding for vehicles, infrastructure, equipment, materials, supplies, maintenance, operations, and staffing to achieve an increase in ridership. This new business purpose is support through an oil and gas production fee.

Colorado Transportation Investment Office (CTIO)

CTIO, originally the Colorado High Performance Transportation Enterprise, was created in 2009 as an independent government owned business within CDOT through Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery Act (FASTER). CTIO aggressively seeks out opportunities for innovative and efficient means of financing and delivering surface transportation infrastructure projects around the state. CTIO uses

public-private partnerships, operating concession agreements, user fee-based project financing, and availability payment and design-build contracting to deliver projects.

Other funding sources at the state level include 10-Year Plan Strategic Funds, FASTER Funding, and Multimodal and Transportation and Mitigation Options Fund (MMOF).

While expanding transit opportunities to achieve a more robust statewide transit network is a focus area, it is also important to invest in the current systems. Increasing funding for existing operations and the infrastructure needs for the current transit network is a critical investment in our future. While agencies in urban areas and resort communities have a significant impact on metrics like ridership and vehicle revenue miles,smaller, rural providers offering limited fixed-route or demand-response services have a large impact on their communities as well. Small rural agencies are critical in providing access and opportunities to Coloradans in the state's most rural areas.

Using the Study

The project types identified in the TCS are not an exhaustive list of projects and are presented as the broader gaps identified in the network. Local governments, agencies, and residents have a deeper understanding about how people move in their communities and what opportunities exist to provide additional transit services and develop transit projects. The TCS is meant to support the development of Colorado’s statewide transit network by further informing statewide transit planning, Bustang and passenger rail planning, and regional and local planning efforts.

CDOT is currently updating the Bustang Business Plan (BBP), portions of which have been developed with inputs from the analysis work done for this study and a deeper level of review into service planning. The TCS along with the BBP will inform the future of Bustang service.

The data used in the TCS will be illustrated via a story map and available for download including:

- Demographic data by census tract
- Non-truck traffic counts aggregated by corridor
- Route and Stop GIS data
- Agency GTFS files
- Travel demand data
- National Transit Database (NTD) data

This information along with the study’s findings are meant to support the development of new projects and to validate existing projects that help to further integrate Colorado’s transit network.

This is the first study to be released. Future iterations of the study will take lessons learned and continue to develop and update the information, tools, and outcomes that can be used to inform transit work across the state.

Conclusion

The TCS provides a high-level group of suggested projects to better connect the statewide transit network. These suggestions build on the extensive work already done by transit agencies, local governments, CDOT, the legislator, and the governor's office to create the vast network Colorado has now. These projects are meant to increase connectivity, access, and equity. Filling the gaps identified in the TCS will support the state's ridership and modeshift goals for public transportation. This document should serve to help guide future planning efforts around Colorado. While the plan does not identify funding sources or call for specific agencies to fill these gaps, the gaps should be taken into consideration in future rounds of planning.

The TCS started by analysing four inputs across the state's transit network. These inputs consisted of travel demand, network gaps and needs, access, and unmet and inequitable needs. The goal was to answer where people were trying to go, what transit options were available to them, and what barriers stood in the way. This led to the identification of three specific types of gaps to be addressed: spatial, temporal, and service gaps. Spatial gaps were geographic areas that lacked public transportation service. Temporal gaps were mismatched service hours or schedules between connecting providers. Finally, service gaps were the need for more frequency across a specific span of time. Each of these gaps serves as a barrier in preventing travellers from accessing their destinations.

To address the identified gaps, each gap was then evaluated and assigned a project type. These project types fell under one of three categories: new or extended corridor service, service optimization, or improved or new stops and stations. The project types identified opportunities to enhance connectivity, access, and integration into the state network. From there, each project was then put through a prioritization matrix. The TCS used this matrix to highlight the highest-leverage connections based on their ability to help develop a statewide network. The matrix criteria consisted of transit network connections, community access, equity, and financial sustainability. This does not mean that other projects that did not make the top list are not valuable, or that filling those gaps would not increase connectivity, access, or equity. Rather, it indicates that those projects did not score the highest in terms of improving the statewide transportation network.

Overall, the TCS is a document meant to bolster the statewide transportation network. The goal is that it is used as a consideration in future planning efforts. The TCS is meant to support the hard work that is already being done and the transit vision laid out for Colorado's future.

Appendix

Key Terms

The following terms are used to describe the types of service and service levels used in this report.

Service Types

This report broadly defines all types of transportation as either fixed route or demand response.

Table 13: Types of Public Transportation Services

Type	Description
Fixed Route	Service provided on a fixed schedule on a specific route, most often with designated stops to pick up and drop off passengers.
Demand Response	Service provided on a fixed schedule on a specific route, most often with designated stops to pick up and drop off passengers.

Note: The term “paratransit” is commonly used to describe certain types of demand-response services. The FTA uses paratransit to describe the comparable transportation service that must be provided for individuals who are unable to use fixed-route systems. As such, demand response excludes paratransit when categorizing an agency as providing or not providing demand response services.

Service Level

This report classifies public transportation as operating at one of four levels: local, regional, interregional, and interstate.

Table 14: Levels of Public Transportation Service

Level	Description
Local	Service operating primarily within a city, town, or community
Regional	Service that connects cities, towns, or communities within a region of Colorado
Interregional	Service providing trips between regions connecting cities, towns, and counties across Colorado
Interstate	Long-distance service connecting to the national Public Transportation network

Note: Interregional and interstate are intercity bus services as defined by the Federal Public Transportation Administration (FTA). Interstate systems are differentiated to categorize intercity transportation that happens within the state (interregional) and intercity travel that provides service beyond Colorado state lines (interstate).

Classification Type

Public transportation includes the general public or an eligible subset of the general public based on age, income or disability status.

Table 15: Public Transportation Classification Types

Type	Description
Open-Door Public Transportation	Services that are open to any member of the public, in the case of public transportation programs, as opposed to services that are

	limited to a particular sub-group of the general population.
Open-Door Specialized Transportation	Service available to any elderly or disabled person in need and not limited to a particular clientele or facility.
Closed-Door Service	Transit service that is limited to a particular clientele, such as the participants in a particular program or the residents of a particular facility, as opposed to being offered to the public at large or to any senior or person with a disability.

Note: This report does not include closed-door service providers

Table 16: Types of Public Transportation Providers Included in the TCS

Service	Service Type	Service Levels
Intercity Passenger Rail	Fixed Route	Interstate/Interregional
Intercity Bus	Fixed Route	Interstate/Interregional
Public Transportation Providers	Fixed Route/Demand Response	Interregional/Regional/Local

Note: Intercity passenger rail and intercity bus are not considered public transportation as it is defined federally. However, this report includes intercity bus and rail as public transportation.