



Grand Valley

2045 REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION
PLAN UPDATE

MESA COUNTY COORDINATED TRANSIT AND HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

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Mesa County Coordinated Transit and Human Services Transportation
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1 Introduction

Purpose

This plan serves as the federally-required Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for the Mesa County Transportation Planning Region (TPR). At its core, this plan summarizes coordination strategies and other actions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness by which public transit and human service transportation providers meet the transportation needs within the region through the year 2045. The following key items are included in this plan:

- A summary of existing public transportation, human services transportation, and for-profit transportation providers in the region;
- An analysis of existing transportation service gaps, duplications, and needs in the region;
- A discussion on emerging transportation trends that may impact transit in the Grand Valley in the future; and
- Lastly, a list of strategies for improving transportation services for the general public as well as people with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes through coordination efforts, strategic capital and operational investments, and funding strategies.

This plan will be used by the Mesa County Regional Transportation Planning Office (RTPO) and the Grand Valley Regional Transportation Committee (GVRTC) to guide efforts and prioritize funding investments for public transit, human services transportation, and coordination between providers. This plan will also be used by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) in evaluating and approving grant applications for capital and operating funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in particular Section 5310 funds.

Study Area

The study area for this plan consists of the Grand Valley Metropolitan Planning Area as well as the Grand Valley Transportation Planning Region, which covers all of Mesa County. This includes the City of Grand Junction, City of Fruita, Town of Palisade, Town of Collbran, and Town of De Beque as well as numerous other unincorporated communities throughout Mesa County.

Background

This plan is an update to the previous Mesa County Coordinated Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan published in 2014. The update to this plan was developed in concert with the Grand Valley 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update. Many of the public and stakeholder engagement activities used to inform elements of this plan were facilitated as part of a joint effort with the larger RTP Update.

In addition, since development of the last Coordination Transit Human Services Transportation Plan, the Mesa County RTPO developed a separate plan, the Grand Valley Transit (GVT) Strategic Plan in 2018.

The GVT Strategic Plan is a 10-year scenario-based strategic plan targeted specifically at guiding future investments for GVT. Given the existence of this more detailed planning effort for GVT, this plan will largely focus on regional transit needs, coordination with other transportation providers as well as longer term transit needs in Mesa County. While this plan discusses many detailed aspects of GVT service, ultimately this plan will default to the GVT Strategic Plan for short-term transit investment strategies within the GVT service area.

Federal Requirements

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), passed in 2015, carried forward federal requirements for certain funding distributed by the FTA described under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). According to the FTA:

Federal transit law requires that projects selected for funding under the Enhanced Mobility for Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan," and that the plan be "developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public" utilizing transportation services. These coordinated plans identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provide strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.¹

FTA Requirements

"Before receiving a [Section 5310] grant the designated recipient must certify that:

- The projects are included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan
- The plan was developed through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers
- To the maximum extent feasible, the services funded will be coordinated with transportation services assisted by other federal departments and agencies . . ."

Further, under the FAST Act, Mesa County, as a FTA Recipient, is required to demonstrate that public transit projects funded under the Section 5307 Urban Formula and Section 5311 Rural Formula programs are coordinated with other federal programs which fund transportation services.² It should be noted that since the Census Designated Urbanized Area of Grand Junction has a population of less than 200,000 people, disbursement of Section 5310 funds is actually done at the state level. In Colorado, the CDOT Division of Transit and Rail is responsible for disbursement.

¹ <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/coordinated-public-transit-human-services-transportation-plans>

² FTA C 9070.1G (https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/C9070_1G_FINAL_circular_4-20-15%281%29.pdf)

To meet the federal requirements, this plan identifies projects (including strategies) that may be funded under the FTA Section 5310 grant program. A description of the public and stakeholder process use to develop plan strategies is detailed in Chapter 3 – Transit Need Assessment.

Value of Transit

Transit plays a valuable role in the health, quality of life, and economy of the Grand Valley and is particularly critical to the most disadvantaged populations, including low-income households, seniors, youth and people with disabilities. Investment in transit will provide numerous benefits to the community, including:

- **Equity** – Transit provides a more affordable transportation option, that is essential to many people who cannot drive or do not have access to a personal vehicle.
- **Economic** – Transit enhances the Grand Valley economy by providing affordable and viable transportation to access jobs, services, and shopping.
- **Health** – Transit provides a viable means for people to access healthcare and promotes an active lifestyle by complementing bicycle and pedestrian networks.
- **Environment** – Transit results in lower greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution rates per capita as compared to driving, leading to healthier air, and reducing the risk of many heart and respiratory diseases.
- **Land Use** – Transit can support more compact, walkable development patterns.
- **Resiliency** – By providing another transportation option, transit increases the ability of Grand Valley residents to adapt to changing circumstances.

2 Existing Transportation Services & Coordination Activities

This Chapter summarizes the existing transportation services provided in Mesa County as well as the existing coordination activities between various providers. Transportation services and providers are organized into the following four categories:

- **Public Transit** – This includes publicly funded transportation services that are available to all members of the public.
- **Human Services Transportation** – This is defined as providers who offer transportation services for qualifying populations (i.e. people 65 and older, people with a disability, veterans, etc.). These providers may offer transportation to specific services, or as a supplement to existing public transportation options for their clients.
- **Other Human Services Providers** – This includes agencies that provide human services, but do not directly provide transportation. Many of these agencies provide transportation related assistance, such as bus passes, gas vouchers, transportation funding or referrals.
- **Private For-Profit Transportation Providers** – This includes services available to the public, but operated by private, for-profit companies, such as taxis, resort shuttles, and transportation network companies (i.e. Uber & Lyft).

Public Transit

Public transit operating within the Grand Valley is organized into two categories: local public transit, serving trips within Mesa County, and regional/intercity transit, serving trips between Mesa County and places outside Mesa County.

Local Public Transit

The following agencies provide public transit for trips entirely within Mesa County.

- **Grand Valley Transit** – Grand Valley Transit (GVT) is managed by the Mesa County RTPO and serves the urbanized areas of Mesa County, which includes the City of Grand Junction, the City of Fruita and Town of Palisade, and the unincorporated communities of Clifton, Fruitvale, Redlands and Orchard Mesa (see **Figure 1**). GVT operates 11 fixed-routes and complimentary para-transit, with all but one route operating at hourly frequencies between about 5 AM and 8 PM (the other operating at 30 minute frequencies at certain times – see callout box for Dash Local Shuttle). GVT operates three off-street transit centers to facilitate timed transfers between routes. These include: West Transfer Station (near Mesa Mall), Downtown Transfer Station (at 6th Street and South Avenue), and the Clifton Transfer Center (at 32 Road and I-70 Business Loop). More information is provided in the **Table 1**.
- **Town of De Beque** – The Town of De Beque operates the De Beque Shuttle, which is an on-demand service providing weekly trips to Grand Junction with advanced reservations and for a fee of \$5.00.

- Town of Collbran – The Town of Collbran operates The Town of Collbran Van, which is an on-demand service operating between Collbran, Mesa and Grand Junction. The van operates the first and third Thursday each month, leaving Collbran at 9 AM and returning at 5 PM. The service is open to the public through advanced reservations, but has a maximum capacity of 10 people, and people 60 years and older receive preference when full.

The Dash Local Shuttle

Beginning in 2019, a second bus was added to Route 1 between 4 PM and Midnight Thursday through Saturday. Route 1 operates between Downtown Grand Junction, Colorado Mesa University (CMU), and the Grand Junction Regional Airport. The new service is called the Dash and during its initial launch service on Route 1 was free. Route 1 effectively operates at 30 minute frequencies between 4 PM and Midnight Thursday through Saturday. Funding is provided through a collaborative agreement between Downtown Grand Junction, GVT, City of Grand Junction, CMU, Horizon Business Improvement District (BID), and Grand Junction Regional Airport.



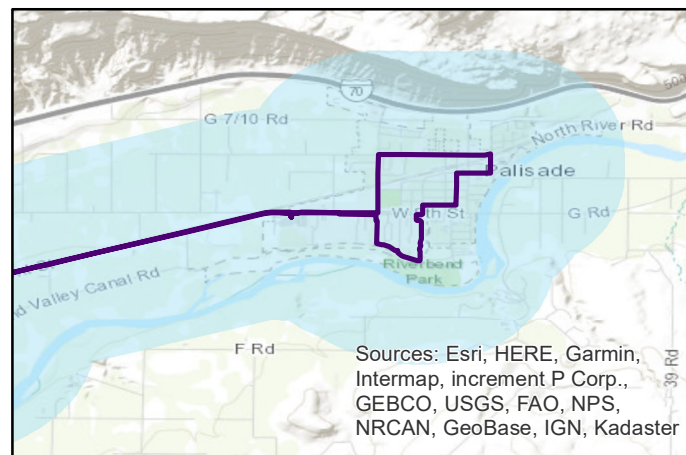
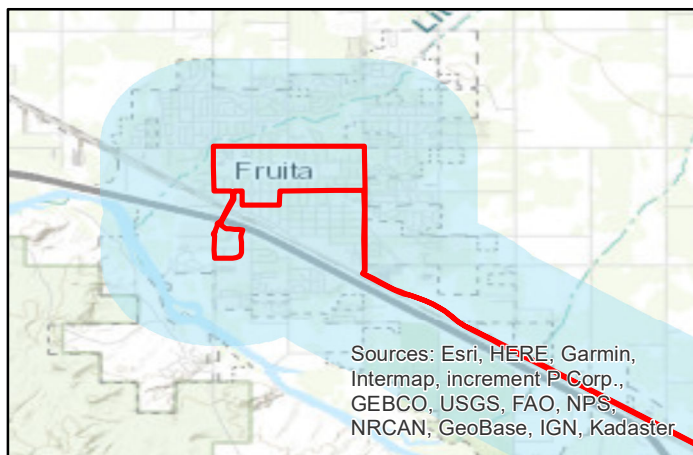
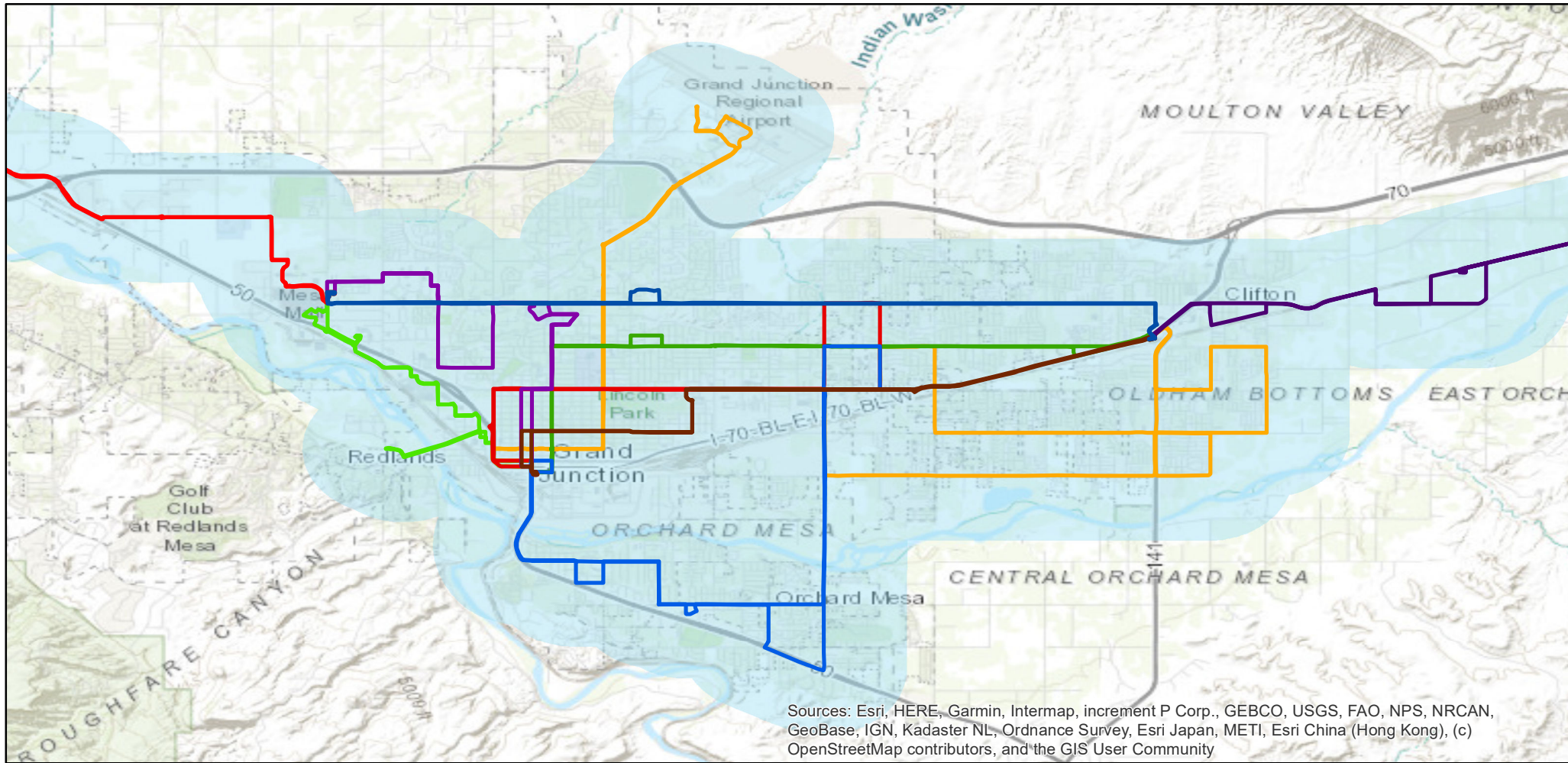
Photo by Devon Balet

Table 1: Local public transit providers

Provider	Service Area	Span	Fares	Types of Service	Operations Funding Source	2018 Operations Metrics
Grand Valley Transit	Urbanized area of Grand Junction, City of Fruita and Town of Palisade, Clifton, Fruitvale, Redlands and Orchard Mesa	Mo-Sa, 5 AM – 8 PM (Th-Sa Rt. 1 runs until Midnight)	\$1.50* (\$3.00 for paratransit)	Fixed-route, paratransit	FTA (5307), Mesa County, Grand Junction, Fruita and Palisade	Ridership: \$777,384 Funds Expensed: \$3,502,064 Rev. Hours: 64,978 Rev. Miles: 986,612
Town of De Beque	De Beque to Grand Junction	Weekly	\$5.00	On-Demand	Unknown	Unknown
Town of Collbran	Town of Collbran and Mesa to Grand Junction	1 st & 3 rd Thursday each month, 9 AM – 5 PM	\$5.00	On-Demand	Unknown	Unknown

**Fare is \$0.75 for Medicaid, Medicare, people with disabilities and seniors over 64 years all day Saturday and during non-peak hours (6:15 AM to 10:15 AM) Monday through Friday.*

Figure 1 Grand Valley Transit Service Area



- Route 1
- Route 2
- Route 3
- Route 4
- Route 5
- Route 6
- Route 7
- Route 8
- Route 9
- Route 10
- Route 11
- GVT Paratransit Service Area

Regional & Intercity Transit

The following agencies provide public transit for regional and intercity trips between Mesa County and other locations outside Mesa County.

- Bustang – Bustang is an express intercity bus service managed by CDOT that began operations in 2015 and began service to Mesa County in 2018. The Bustang West Line, which connects Denver and Grand Junction, currently operates one round-trip daily from the Grand Junction Greyhound Station (located downtown). The route from Grand Junction to Denver has intermediate stops in Parachute, Rifle, Glenwood Springs, Eagle, Vail, Frisco, Idaho Springs, and Lakewood.
- Bustang Outrider – Bustang Outrider is funded by CDOT, but operated by local agencies. The Bustang Outrider Durango-Grand Junction route provides once daily service between Grand Junction (at the Greyhound Bus Station downtown) and Durango, with intermediate stops in Delta, Montrose, Ridgway, Placerville, Telluride, Rico, Dolores, Cortez and Mancos. Southern Colorado Community Action Agency (SoCoCaa) operates this line as Road Runner Stage Lines.
- Amtrak - Amtrak operates the once daily California Zephyr between Chicago, Illinois and the San Francisco Bay Area with a stop in Grand Junction, at the train station at 1st Street and Pitkin Avenue downtown. The train serves five other stops in Colorado, consisting of Fort Morgan, Denver, Fraser, Granby, and Glenwood Springs.
- Greyhound - Greyhound operates two buses per day in each direction on its cross-country route from New York, New York to Los Angeles, California, both with a stop in Grand Junction (at the Greyhound Bus Station downtown). This route makes five other stops in Colorado, in Glenwood Springs, Vail, Frisco, Idaho Springs, and Denver. Note: Greyhound is a mostly privately funded, for-profit agency, but gets limited public funding for certain services and coordinates with CDOT on services provided.

Human Services Transportation

Table 2 lists human service agencies in Mesa County that provide transportation to qualifying populations. Table 2 also details the type and location of service as well as the passengers served. As part of developing this plan, a Mesa County Transit and Human Services Transportation Survey was sent to the 65 agencies in Mesa County that are on the Local Coordinating Council (LCC) contact list (see **Table 4**). Twenty one of the 65 agencies responded to the survey. The list in **Table 2** is comprised mostly of the providers that responded to the project survey sent in October, 2019 as well as those documented in the LCC database that could be verified to provide transportation. Due to the complexity of this type of service and the lack of a central database with all the current information related to these providers, this list may not be comprehensive.

Table 2: Human services transportation providers

Provider	Service Area	Passenger Eligibility	Types of Service	Additional Information	Received FTA 5310 Funds?
Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Colorado	Mesa County	Older adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand response (volunteer) • Contract w. other transportation providers 	Shuttle bus operates between low-income senior housing and groceries, retail and Senior Rec Center. Supporting Our Seniors provides transportation to doctors and shopping.	No (but uses bus from GVT)
Center for Independence	Grand Valley	People with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand response (staff & volunteer) • Contract w. other transportation providers • Application for paratransit 	Transports low vision clients to appointments	No (but receives federal Older Blind Grant funds for transportation)
Child & Migrant Services	Palisade	Farmworkers & families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand response (staff & volunteer) • Gas vouchers 	Transport farmworkers to work, home, meals and activities	No
Disabled American Veterans	Grand Junction, Montrose and in between	Veterans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand response (volunteers) 	Provide transportation to/from medical appointments	No
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Western Colorado	People with disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand response 		No
Family Health West	Mesa, Delta, Montrose and Garfield Counties	People with disabilities, older adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand response 	Provides free paratransit service to eligible patients	Yes (for van purchase)

Provider	Service Area	Passenger Eligibility	Types of Service	Additional Information	Received FTA 5310 Funds?
HopeWest	Western Colorado	People with disabilities, older adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialized transit services 		Yes (for van purchase)
Meals on Wheels Mesa County	Mesa County	Older adults, low-income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand response (volunteer) 	Coordinates with Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Colorado	No
Millennium Medical Services	Within 250 miles of Mesa County	People with disabilities, older adults, low-income, veterans, Medicaid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand response 	For-profit transportation company that mostly services people with disabilities.	No
Riverside Educational Center	Grand Junction, Clifton, Palisade	Students enrolled in one of nine schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed-route Demand response 	Operates under the Federal 21 st CCLC Grant	No
Strive	Mesa County	People with disabilities, Medicaid recipients, older adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fixed-route On-demand Contract with other transportation providers Provide transit tickets 		No (receives other federal funds)

**Older adults includes those 60 years of age and older unless otherwise noted*

Other Human Service Providers

Table 3 lists additional human service providers in Mesa County that do not provide transportation services, but offer transportation-related services (such as vouchers), fund transportation programs or coordinate with transportation providers in the County. Due to the lack of a central database, this list may not be comprehensive.

Table 3: Other human services providers that offer transportation related services

Provider	Service Area	Client Eligibility	Types of Service
21 st Judicial Group, Probation Department	Mesa County	People on probation supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract with other transportation providers Provide transit passes
Colorado Division of Veterans Affairs West	Western Colorado	Veterans and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide transit passes
Grand Junction Housing Authority	Mesa County	People with disabilities, older adults, low-income, veterans, Medicaid recipients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract with other transportation providers Provide transit tickets Gas vouchers Car repair vouchers
Mesa County Department of Human Services	Mesa County	General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract with other transportation providers Provide transit passes Gas vouchers

There are many other human service agencies within Mesa County, some of which may provide transportation or transportation related services. It should be noted that the lists provided in **Table 2** and **Table 3** includes agencies that responded to the project survey and may not be exhaustive.

Private For-Profit Transportation Providers

There are a limited number of private, for-profit transportation providers operating in Mesa County. The known providers are listed as follows, which include two taxi companies and two transportation network companies (TNCs, i.e. Uber and Lyft).

- K2 Taxi
- Lyft
- Sunshine Taxi
- Uber

While Uber and Lyft do operate in Mesa County, services are typically concentrated in the urban areas around Grand Junction and due to the business model of TNCs, services are not always reliable. In addition to these companies, Millennial Medical Services, is a for-profit transportation provider, but provides demand-response service mostly for people with disabilities. For this reason, they are listed under the Human Services Transportation Provider section.

Existing Coordination Activities

This section describes existing coordination activities among transportation providers, human services agencies, and other government entities within Mesa County.

Local Coordinating Council

The RTPO originally organized a Local Coordinating Council (LCC) in 2010 to facilitate coordination of transportation services among human services agencies, public transit systems, and other transportation providers. The LCC has met periodically since, but generally without regularly scheduled meetings until 2019 when Mesa County hired its first mobility manager to oversee the LCC. The grant that funds the mobility manager position stipulates that the County host two LCC meeting per year. Thus, with leadership from the mobility manager, the RTPO hosted an LCC meeting in July, 2019. Topics covered in the July meeting included introductions of RTPO staff, discussion of new paratransit requirements, and a presentation by CDOT on FTA funding opportunities. The focus of discussion at the July meeting was on developing strategies to get more people to utilize the fixed-route transit system.

Table 4 provides a list of all the agencies currently on the LCC contact list.

Table 4: Mesa County local coordinating council agency list

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21st Judicial District Group, Probation Department • A Better Life for Everyone (ABLE) • AARP & Livable Communities • Area Agency on Aging (AAA) • Ariel Clinical Services • Center for Independence • Child & Migrant Services • City of Fruita • Colorado Department of Labor and Employment • CDOT • Colorado Discover Ability • Colorado Mesa University • Community Hospital • Disabled American Veterans (DAV) • Employment First • Family Health West • Food Bank of the Rockies • Grand Junction Police Department Community Resource Department • Grand Junction VA Veterans Transportation Program • Guided Online Academic Learning (GOAL) Academy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grand Junction Housing Authority • Grand Valley Catholic Outreach • Grand Valley Peace and Justice • Grand Valley Transit • Grand View Apartments • Habitat for Humanity • Head Start • Hilltop Community Resources • Home Care of the Grand Valley • Homeward Bound • Hopewest • K2 Taxi • Latino-Anglo Alliance • Marillac Clinic • Medicare • Mercy Medical Services • Mesa County Aging & Disability Resources Center (ADRC) • Mesa County Department of Human Services • Mesa County Meals on Wheels • Mesa Development Services • Millennium Medical Services • Mind Spring Health • Mosaic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Path-Co, LLC • Riverside Education Center • Road Runner Stage Lines • Rocky Mountain Communities • Rocky Mountain Human Services • School District 51 • St. Mary’s Hospital (Senior Companion Program) • St. Matthews Episcopal Church • STRIVE • Sunshine Rides Taxi • The House • Town of Colbran • Town of De Beque • Town of Palisade • United Way of Mesa County • Veteran Services Officer (State of Colorado) • Veterans Administration • Veterans Service Officer (Mesa County) • Volunteers of America • Westcap/ Colorado Health Network • Western Colorado 211 • Workforce Center
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Agencies in **bold responded to the Mesa County Transit and Human Services Transportation Survey sent in October, 2019.*

Mobility Manager

The RTPO hired a mobility manager in early 2019 from funding allocated by CDOT through the FTA 5310 grant. The main purpose of the mobility manager is to provide trainings and coordinate transit and transportation services among various providers throughout Grand Valley. The mobility manager is currently responsible for the following activities within Mesa County:

- Providing travel training and other transit education to various community groups
- Facilitating train-the-trainer workshops to employers and various agencies
- Coordinating services and providing education to agencies that serve seniors, low-income populations and people with disabilities
- Collaborating with CMU and other agencies to provide bus passes
- Facilitating two LCC meetings per year along with regular email communication
- Providing grant application support and coordination
- Developing a “bus buddy” program to connect people learning to use the bus
- General coordination of transportation services among agencies throughout the Grand Valley

Joint Procurement

Mesa County has participated in the Colorado Mountain Purchasing Consortium (CMPC) since 2013, a consortium of transit agencies and transportation providers in the Rocky Mountain Region, to purchase paratransit and transit buses as part of a joint procurement. Mesa County has participated in two joint procurement purchasing agreements since 2013. ECO Transit led the CMPC with ten other transit agencies in Colorado and New Mexico, including Mesa County, to purchase small cutaway buses for paratransit service as part of a joint procurement. The five-year contract ran from 2013 to 2017. ECO Transit also led a joint procurement with Mesa County and eight other agencies in Colorado and Wyoming as part of the CMPC to purchase transit buses. The five-year contract ran from 2015 to 2020. As of publication of this plan, several agencies, including Mesa County, were interested in beginning a new joint procurement contract for transit buses, but no agreement has yet been made.

Trainings

The mobility manager has led travel trainings to the public at the library and through the Parks and Recreation Department, as well as to senior groups and other agencies serving low-income populations. Trainings include the basics of riding a bus, how to get bus passes, education on Bustang and GVT, as well as bicycle and pedestrian routes around the Grand Valley. The mobility manager will also be leading train-the-trainer programs in 2020 geared toward employers and agency leads to be able to communicate travel information to staff and clients.

Referrals

Many human services providers in the Grand Valley provide referrals to clients to access appropriate transportation services to meet their needs. Agencies that reported providing transportation referrals in the project survey include: Child & Migrant Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Grand Junction Housing Authority, Grand View Apartments, Mesa County Department of Human Services, Probation Department, STRIVE and Sunshine Rides taxi.

Resource Directory

Western Colorado 211 provides an online and phone database of community resources, including human services and transportation providers throughout the Grand Valley. Western Colorado 211 is a part of Hilltop Community Resources, Inc., a non-profit that provides an array of human services, and is also a subgroup of Mesa County Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and the Area Agency on Aging (AAA).

Other Partnerships

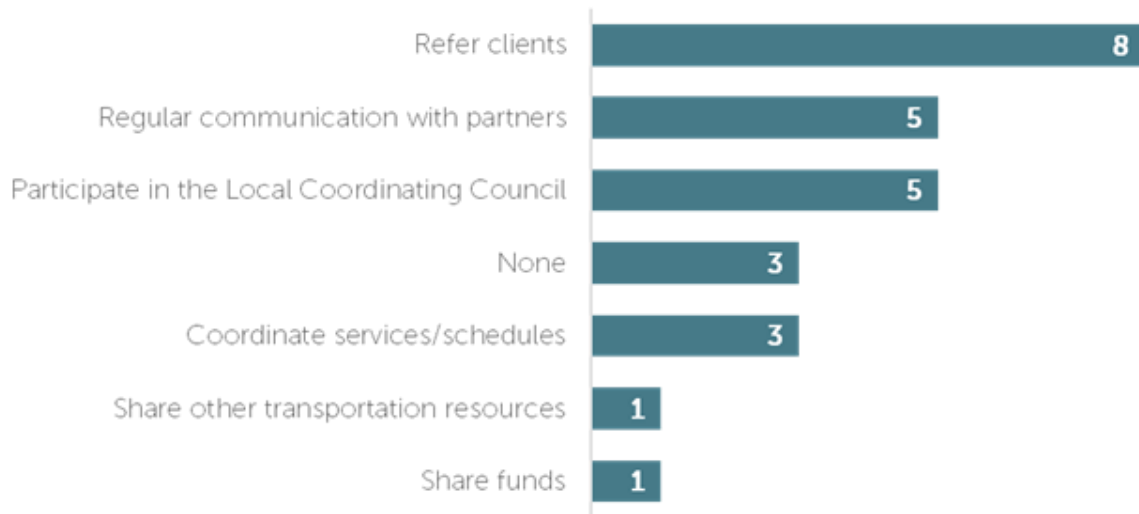
There are several other existing partnerships in the Grand Valley among transportation providers. Documented partnerships include the following:

- The Grand Valley RTPO continually coordinates with CMU, providing information on transit services and other transportation for CMU students and staff. This partnership led to, among other things, the formation of the Dash bus (see Page 8).
- GVT coordinates with School District 51 on GVT bus stop locations and schedules to align transit service to the extent possible with student transportation needs.
- The Mesa County RTPO coordinates with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), local Chamber of Commerce, and different cities in the Grand Valley to adjust transit routing, services, and messaging to the public during special events.
- GVT provides a bus for a special service for seniors to take them to a dining site and shopping.
- The Area Agency on Aging provides grant funding for a shuttle bus provided by and operated by GVT, which operates between low-income senior housing and groceries, retail and the senior recreation center. They also collaborate with Supporting Our Seniors, which provides transportation for seniors to doctors and shopping.

Summary of Existing Coordination Activities

As part of developing this plan, Mesa County Transit and Human Services Transportation Survey was sent to the 65 agencies in Mesa County that are on the Local Coordinating Council contact list (see **Table 4**). Twenty one of the 65 agencies responded to the survey. One of the questions in the survey asked agencies to identify existing coordination activities. **Figure 2** illustrates the response to this question. Referring clients was the most common coordination activity cited. Five agencies also reported participating in the LCC and regularly communicating with partners. A few agencies reported coordinating schedules and services.

Figure 2: Existing coordination activities reported among agencies



**Out of 13 agencies that responded to this question*

3 Transit Needs Assessment

Transit Propensity Analysis

A key component of understanding transit needs in the Grand Valley is first understanding what areas are most likely to be supportive of transit and at what frequency. The most important indicator of the likelihood for a location to support transit is the density of residents and jobs. Since most people access transit by walking, and few people will walk more than a quarter mile (and even fewer more than a half mile) to access local bus service, land use density is important to transit viability.

However, density in-of-itself is not the only factor that predicts the likelihood of using transit. Certain populations (as identified as follows) are more likely to use transit than others. The transit propensity analysis for Mesa County combines these factors (population density, job density and demographic factors) to show the likelihood that different geographic across the county would support different transit types.

Methodology

In order to understand transit propensity across Mesa County, each census tract in the county was assigned a weighted density of residents combined with that tract's job density. This method was adapted from similar methods used in Los Angeles County, CA³ and Fort Collins, CO⁴, and based on national research conducted by the Transit Cooperative Research Program.⁵ The data used in this analysis came from the United States Census Bureau's 2017 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

First, a weighted population density was determined for each census tract. This population density was weighted by the proportion of each areas' population that is more likely to take transit. The following population groups are more likely to take transit at varying rates⁵, thus each were assigned a unique weight:

- People without access to a personal vehicle
- People with ambulatory difficulty
- People in low-income households
- Women
- People of Hispanic or Latino origins
- People of color

Second, the weighted population was added to the number of jobs in each census tract. Jobs were assigned a weight of two times population based on the higher likelihood of workers to use transit⁶. The

³ http://media.metro.net/projects_studies/nextgen/images/Transit_Propensity_writeup_2019-0719.pdf

⁴ *Transit Master Plan* - City of Fort Collins (2019)

⁵ Rosenbloom, S., & Fielding, G. J. (1998). TCRP Report 28: Transit Markets of the Future: The Challenge of Change. *Transit Cooperative Research Program, TRB, National Research Council, Washington, DC*, 40.

⁶ *Transit Master Plan* - City of Fort Collins (2019)

job density was derived using the Census Bureau’s Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) On The Map data. The resulting weighted resident-plus-job-density serves as the transit propensity by census tract, which is mapped in **Figure 3**.

Results

Figure 3 displays the transit propensity map of Mesa County overlaid by the GVT fixed-route bus service. **Table 5** shows the service type and frequency of transit that would be supported by different land use densities as measured by the number of residents plus jobs per acre. In general, locations with 10 or more residents-plus-jobs per acre are best suited for transit.

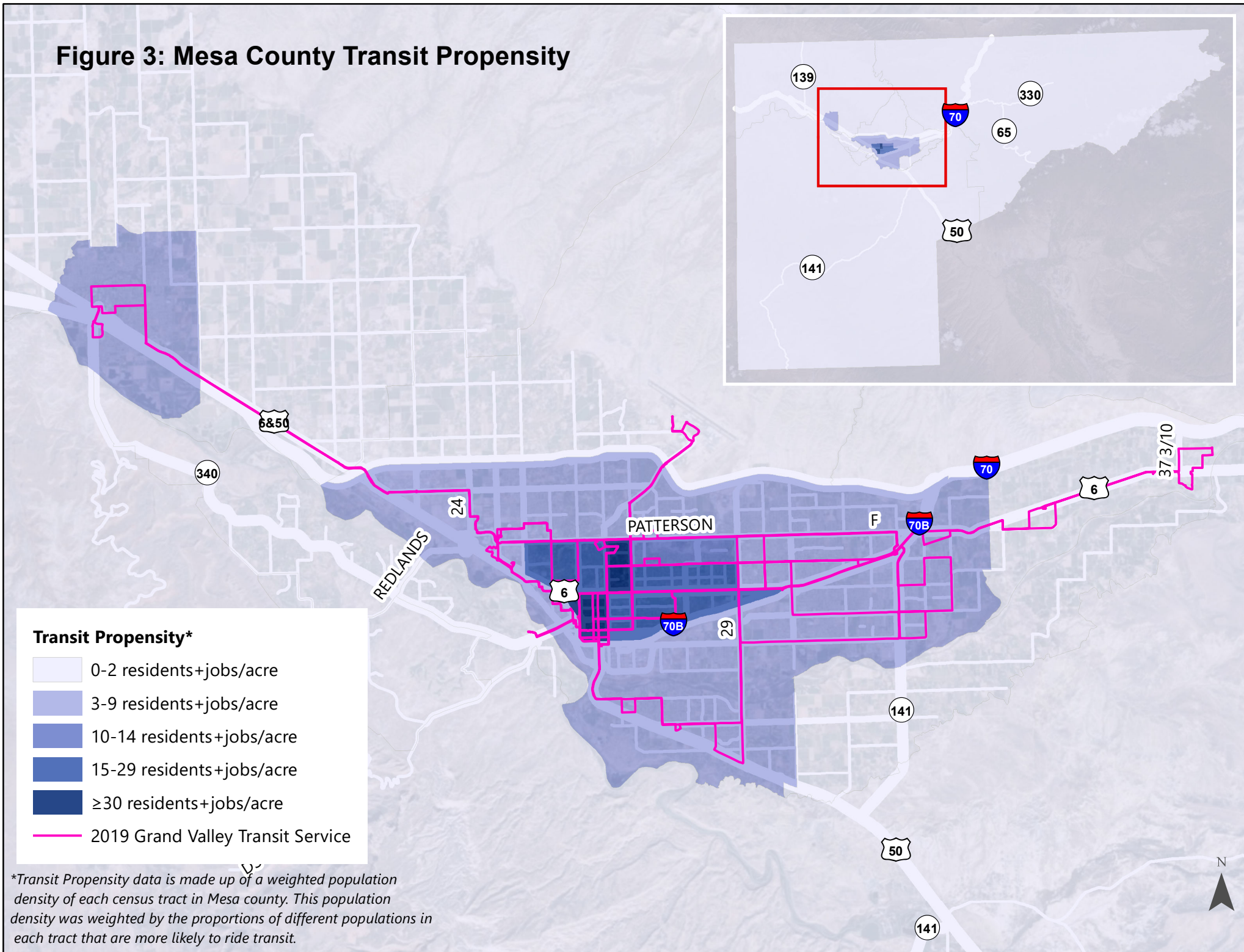
Table 5: Transit propensity for different service types and frequencies

Residents + Jobs/Acre	Corresponding Land Use	Types of Transit	Frequency of Service
≥ 30	Urban or mixed-use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRT • High frequency bus • Local bus 	10-15 minutes
15 - 29	Suburban or mixed use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local bus 	15-30 minutes
10 - 14	Suburban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Bus 	30-60 minutes
2 - 9	Single family residential or rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Bus • Demand response 	60 minutes or less or on-demand
< 2	Rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand response 	On-demand

Figure 3 demonstrates that Grand Valley Transit’s 2019 service area covers the census tracts in the county with the greatest transit propensity. At this level of detail, this analysis shows that the rural areas of Mesa County outside the Grand Valley (i.e., outside of the Fruita-to-Palisade region) have a weighted residents plus jobs per acre of less than two and are likely too low in land use density to support fixed-route transit. These areas would best be supported by a demand response type transit, however providing service to these area would be difficult with a high cost per rider. Additionally, the core neighborhoods of Grand Junction are the only areas in the county likely to be supportive of 30-minute transit frequency, with the areas around downtown, the CMU campus and St. Mary’s Hospital potentially supporting high-frequency transit (15 minutes or less).

It should be noted that **Figure 3** illustrates some GVT routes extending to areas with very low transit propensity. However, this does not necessarily mean these areas are not able to support fixed-route transit service. There may be dense communities in the county that can support fixed-route transit service but are not identified on this map due to the size of some census tracts. This is one limitation of this methodology since much of Mesa County is very rural and comprised of large, low-density, census tracts. Other factors not captured in this analysis that may affect transit propensity include: street connectivity, pedestrian environment quality, and the impact of key locations commonly accessed by likely transit users.

Figure 3: Mesa County Transit Propensity



Transit Propensity*

- 0-2 residents+jobs/acre
- 3-9 residents+jobs/acre
- 10-14 residents+jobs/acre
- 15-29 residents+jobs/acre
- ≥30 residents+jobs/acre
- 2019 Grand Valley Transit Service

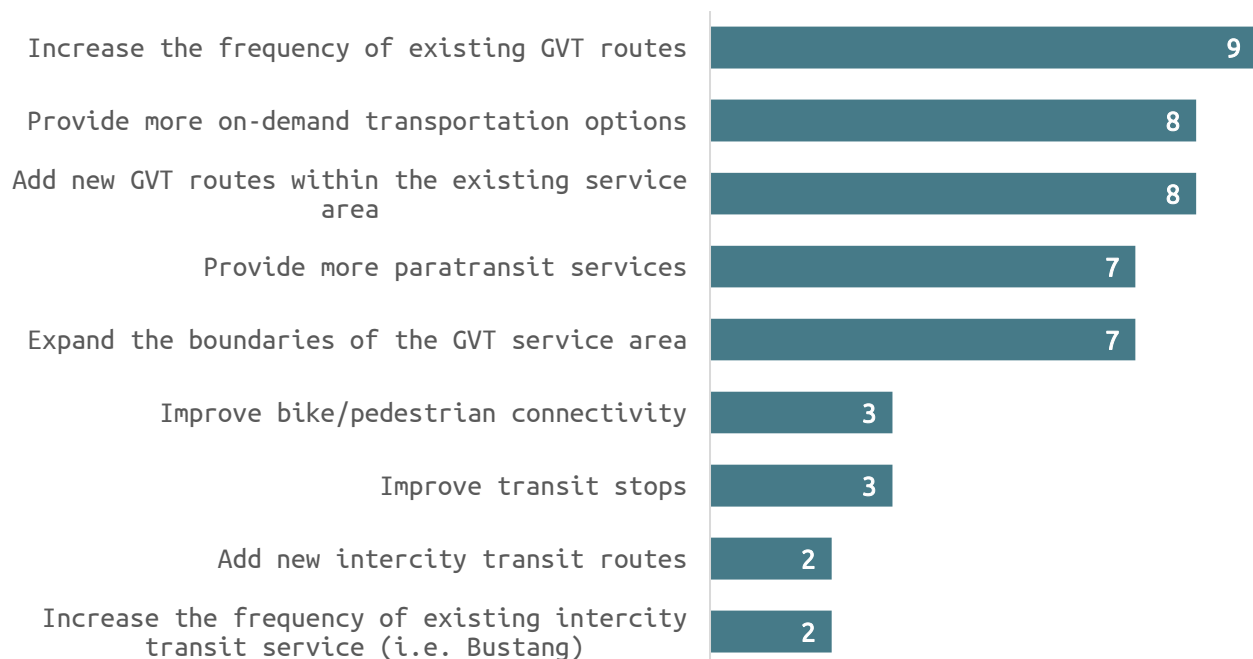
*Transit Propensity data is made up of a weighted population density of each census tract in Mesa county. This population density was weighted by the proportions of different populations in each tract that are more likely to ride transit.

Needs Identified by Agencies

Local area agencies provided input on the current and future transportation needs of Mesa County as part of the planning process for the Grand Valley 2045 Regional Transportation Plan Update. Participation generally occurred in one of two ways: through public engagement activities in the summer and fall of 2019 (both in-person and online), as well as through the Mesa County Transit and Human Services Transportation Survey, which was emailed to all agencies on the LCC contact list (see Table 4). This section summarizes local agency feedback received through the Mesa County Transit and Human Services Transportation Survey.

As part of the Mesa County Transit and Human Services Transportation Survey, agencies were asked to identify their highest priority transit improvements to meet the needs of their clients and the community. **Figure 4** summarizes the responses received. The results show that increasing the frequency of existing GVT bus service is the top priority among agencies surveyed. This is followed closely by increasing the number of on-demand transportation options in the county and adding new transit routes within the existing GVT services area. Agencies also showed strong support for increasing paratransit services and expanding the boundaries of the existing GVT service area to serve a larger geographic area. There was less support for prioritizing expansion of intercity bus service (such as Bustang).

Figure 4: What are the highest priority transit improvements of agencies in the LCC?

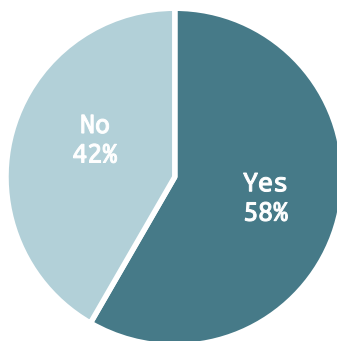


Additional comments provided by agencies on transit improvements needed included:

- Have buses run on Sundays.
- Expand weekend transit.
- We have been told more service between Grand Junction and Fruita would be helpful.
- Extend the routes to Mack.
- Travel to the Redlands area may be useful at some stage, but aware that it is dangerous to stop on Broadway.
- We need more paratransit so customers don't have to wait so long to be picked up.
- Waiting can be difficult as many have multiple disabilities.
- Routes services are sometimes too far for some seniors to walk safely.
- Money is a factor to many of our clients.

Lastly, agencies were also asked to identify any barriers that make it challenging to coordinate with other transportation providers. The results, shown in **Figure 5**, demonstrate that just over half of respondents identified barriers that make it challenging to coordinate with other transportation providers.

Figure 5: Are there barriers that make it challenging to coordinate with other transportation providers?



The barriers to coordination reported by agencies include:

- Language challenges, as many of our clients speak Spanish and may have very limited or no English
- It can be difficult to contact Bustang. I sometimes have a client traveling intercity from Grand Junction to Denver.
- Cost of transportation that is not covered by Medicaid
- Not enough providers to fit the need
- The School district tried to get a few kids from Palisade and Central High School on a route to GJHS for after school programming, but timing was off, the route passed by the schools before school gets out and too late after school gets out.
- Perhaps there is a directory, but I'm not aware - that would be helpful

Needs Identified by the Public

The Grand Valley Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) included an extensive outreach process that reached a large number of residents, employees, and visitors from a diverse cross section of the region. The input sought from the public was crafted to be transparent, quantifiable, and meaningful. By meeting these characteristics, input could be incorporated into the plan that represented the priorities of the majority of community members and tracked in a transparent way.

Outreach was done in two phases throughout the year-long TMP process:

- **Phase I (Summer 2019)** - The project team presented the existing conditions and asked the community about current challenges and opportunities for traveling within and through the Grand Valley.
- **Phase II (Fall 2019)** - The project team presented draft recommendations for feedback and asked the community about priorities within and between roadway, biking, walking, transit and freight projects.

In order collect a diverse amount of input for the RTP, the project team conducted public outreach through several different methods. Overall, this planning effort included almost 10,000 points of contact. **Figure 6** breaks down the number of people reached through each outreach method.

Figure 6 Public outreach mediums



Figure 7 Current and desired transit destinations from public input

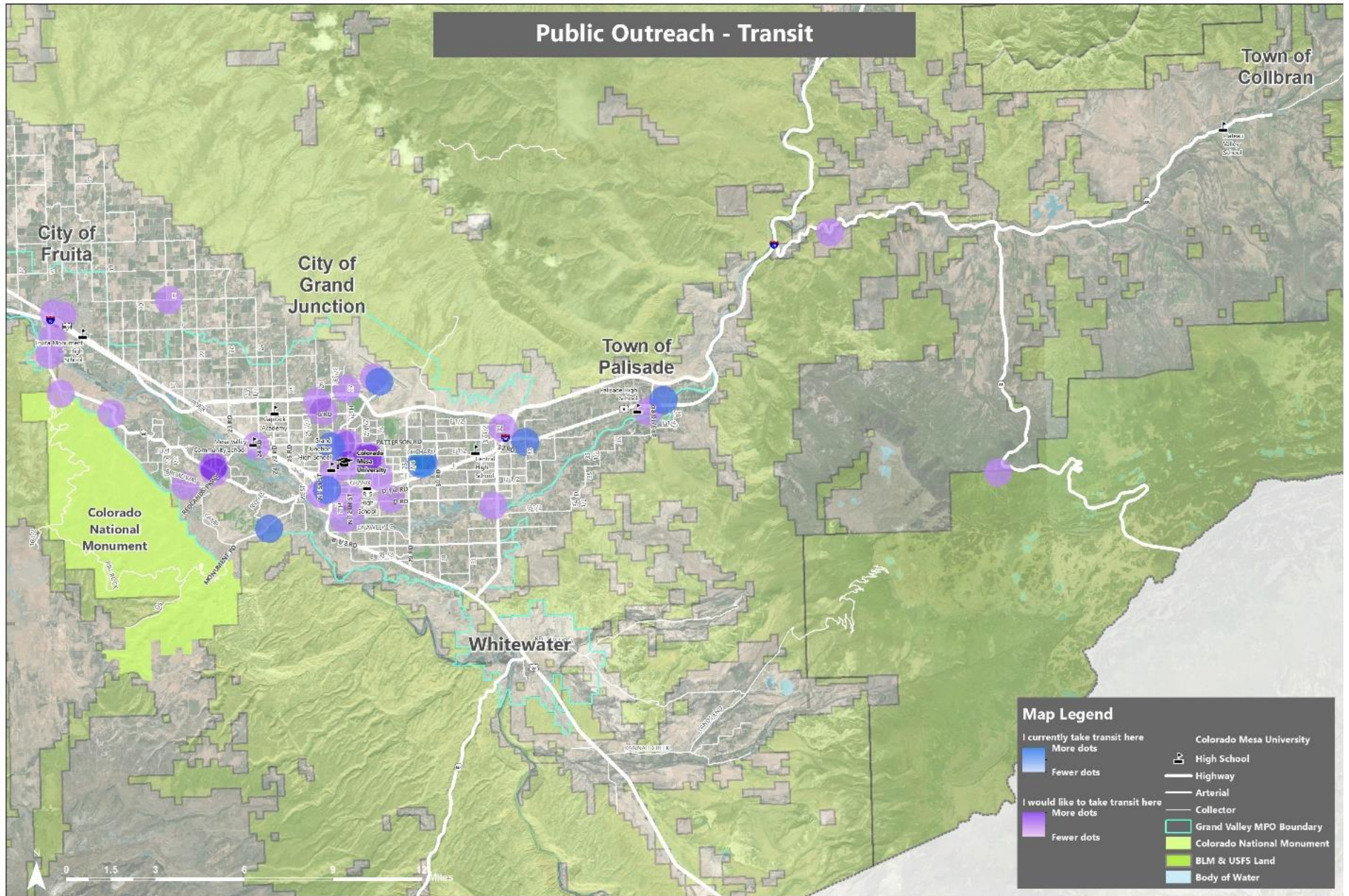
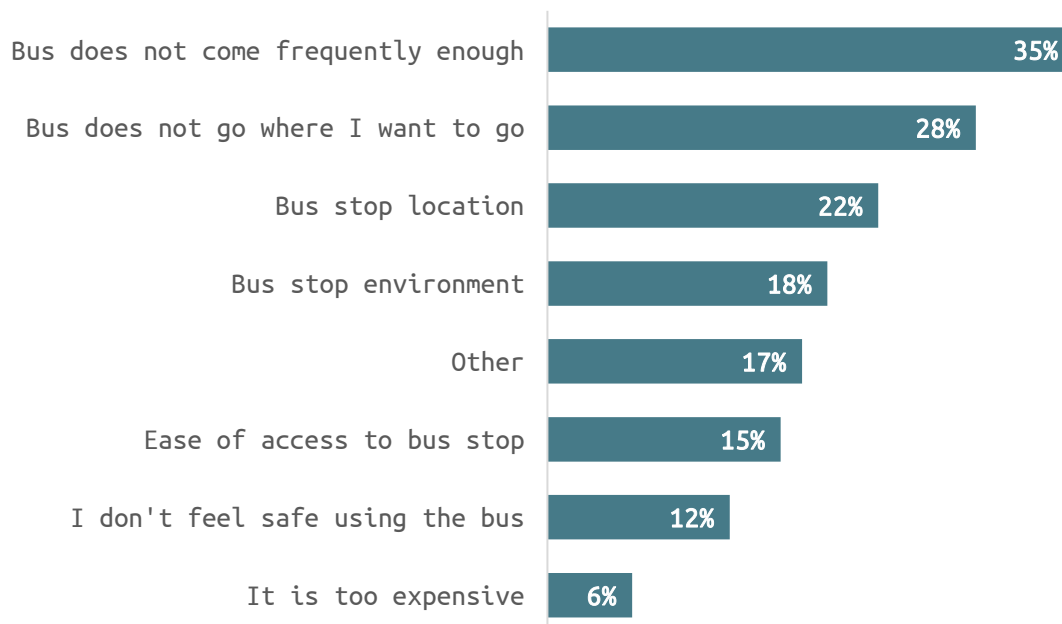


Figure 8, Figure 9, and Figure 9 show the public feedback for transit in the Grand Valley. **Figure 7** shows participant responses when asked to identify where they currently take transit (blue) and where they would like to take transit (purple). The map shows that respondents currently take transit around Grand Junction, but there is a desire for transit connectivity to more areas of Grand Junction, such as to CMU, areas east and south of Downtown, along Broadway (CO-340), and to/from Fruita.

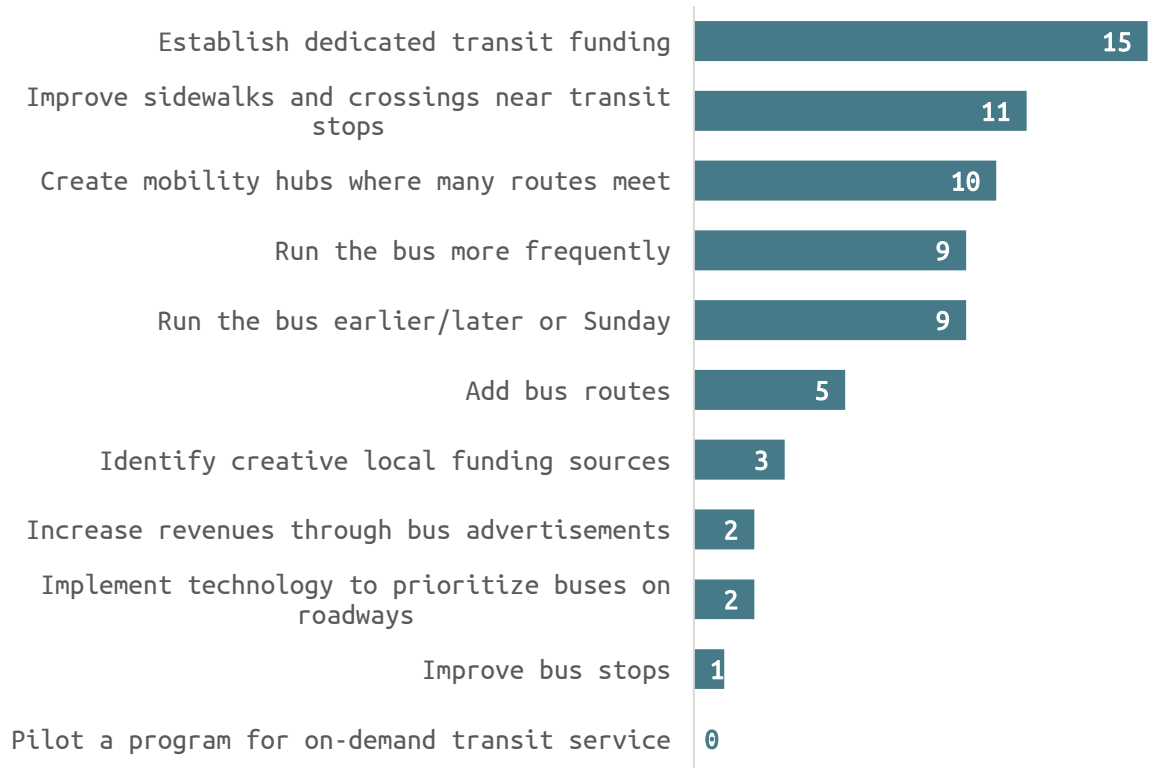
Figure 8 illustrates how the community responded in the online survey when asked to identify the biggest barriers to using transit in Mesa County. Infrequent service was cited often in public responses as a major challenge to taking transit. In the online survey, 34% of 359 respondents surveyed indicated low frequency as a barrier to using the bus, the highest of any responses. Routes not serving destinations, the bus stop location, and bus stop environment were also frequently cited barriers to using transit.

Figure 8 What is the biggest challenge to using transit in the Grand Valley?



Lastly, **Figure 9** shows how the community voted on transit recommendations presented as part of Phase II of the public process. Establishing a dedicated transit funding mechanism received the most support. Sidewalk and crossing improvements near bus stops, mobility hubs, increasing the span of transit service (to nights and Sundays), and increasing the frequency of transit service also received strong support. Interestingly, on-demand service did not receive any votes from those who participated in the in-person community events.

Figure 9 Public support of draft transit recommendations (votes)



4 Gaps & Duplication of Service

An analysis of gaps and duplication of service was performed based on the findings of the transit propensity analysis, existing transit service and human services transportation, public and agency feedback and conversations with Mesa County RTPO staff. The analysis is divided into three sections:

- Geographic service gaps
- Gaps in service types (for specific needs)
- Duplication of service

Geographic Service Gaps

Gaps Outside the GVT Service Area

The largest geographic gaps in transit service are the areas outside of the GVT service boundary (see **Figure 1**). This includes rural areas of the county, including places such as Mack, Whitewater, Collbran, Mesa, Gateway and De Beque. Several of the human services agencies provide transportation to these areas for eligible clients and for specific services. However, the only public transit service available outside the GVT service boundary are the De Beque Shuttle and the Town of Collbran Van (see Pages 4-6). These services provide, at most, one round trip a week from those respective communities (including the Town of Mesa) to Grand Junction. It should be noted that the results of the transit propensity analysis demonstrated that the land use density outside of the GVT service area is too low to support fixed-route transit; any future transit to areas outside the GVT service area would be difficult to serve and best supported by an on-demand type of service.

Gaps Within the GVT Service Area

There are a few geographic gaps in service within the GVT service area, including:

- The Redlands (the Broadway/SH 340 corridor);
- Along 32 Road south of the Colorado River;
- Along H Road north of I-70 in Grand Junction; and
- Along Riverside Parkway east of 5th Street

With the exception of Riverside Parkway, all of these areas were found to have a low transit propensity (see **Figure 3**), with land use densities likely too low to support fixed-route transit. The location that was most commonly mentioned as part of the public outreach where additional service is desired was to the Redlands along SH 340. GVT previously operated fixed route service to the Redlands. Due to low ridership, in 2008 GVT replaced fixed route service with an on-demand service called Dial-A-Ride, which was available to all members of the public and required that reservations be made the day before. However, beginning in January, 2019, GVT stopped accepting new Dial-A-Ride passengers, again due to low ridership, and as of publication of this plan, was only providing service to those who joined the service prior to 2019.

Service Type Gaps

Beyond the geographic gaps, analysis and feedback revealed several additional gaps related to the type of service and/or clientele demand as described in this section.

- **Transit Frequency** – In general, the frequency of the GVT fixed-route service is low. With the exception of Route 1 (which operates at 30 minute frequencies from 4-8 PM Thursdays through Saturdays), all of GVT’s fixed-route buses operate at 60-minute frequencies, which is too low to meet the needs of many potential riders. The low frequency of service was identified as the number one barrier to people using transit in the Grand Valley (see **Figure 8**).

The transit propensity analysis showed that most of the GVT service area lacks the density to support higher frequency service (see **Figure 3**). The exception is the core area of Grand Junction, roughly from 1st Street to 29 Road and from Patterson Road to the railroad tracks. Based on population and job density, this area may be able to support more frequent transit service. The GVT 1-10 Year Strategic Plan identified three routes to increase frequency to 30 minutes if funding becomes available, consisting of Route 1, Route 5, and Route 9. All of these routes serve the core area of Grand Junction where the transit propensity is likely high enough to support 30-minute service.

- **Regional Service** – Regional transit service is currently provided by Bustang, Bustang Outrider, Greyhound and Amtrak between Grand Junction and other parts of Colorado as described in Chapter 2. However, the frequency of service is limited, with 1 to 2 trips per day to most locations. An increase in the frequency of regional service along the I-70 and US-50 corridors would better meet the needs of existing and potential future riders.
- **Older Adults and People with Disabilities** – Feedback from the public as well as the 2019 Mesa County Transit and Human Services Transportation Survey demonstrated that the largest need from a population segment was for transit service that better fits the needs of older adults and people with disabilities. The combination of distances between bus routes, lack of adequate pedestrian infrastructure in many places (i.e., sidewalks, curb ramps, safe crossings, regular maintenance), and the low frequency of service were cited as challenges for many people within this segment of the population to use the fixed-route transit system. Additionally, GVT paratransit ridership has surged in recent years, adding increased strain on GVT resources. Some of these gaps in service may be addressed through better coordination with human service transportation providers, while some can also be addressed through pedestrian infrastructure improvements, bus stop improvements, and increasing the frequency of existing transit service.

Duplication of Service

The primary duplication of service found to currently exist is between paratransit and some transportation services provided by human services agencies and private providers. Paratransit is

provided by GVT as a requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Paratransit is a demand-response service for members of the public that have a disability that prevent them from using the GVT fixed-route system and is provided for areas within three-quarters of a mile from an existing fixed-route. As stated earlier, GVT faces new challenges based on the recent increase in paratransit demand.

To address this issue and overlap, the transportation needs of many paratransit customers may be able to be met through existing human services transportation providers or private providers, which would free up capacity for paratransit. A successful example of implementing this type of coordination effort can be found from a brokerage program used by the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) – see case study callout box.

Case Study:

NWCCOG Paratransit Brokerage Program

In response to capacity constraints on paratransit service in the mountain areas of Colorado, the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) operates a ride brokering program that helps redistribute paratransit requests away from overburdened providers. This program was created by the NWCCOG mobility manager, who participated in discussions with Medicaid staff and the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing in order to provide services for different populations in the region.

5 Emerging Mobility Trends & Opportunities

Transportation is rapidly evolving from emerging mobility solutions such as ridesharing, bike and scooter sharing, microtransit and mobility hubs to new technologies such as autonomous vehicles, battery technology, and intelligent transportation systems. The technology and services that the public and private sector will be able to employ to provide mobility over the next decade may have an impact on transit in the Grand Valley. This chapter outlines a few of the emerging mobility trends and opportunities most relevant to Mesa County and the provision of transportation services in the region.

It should be noted that the future trends and opportunities discussed in this chapter are very much emerging and somewhat speculative. As such, the impact they may have on the future of transit in Mesa County is uncertain. This list is not intended to be an action list, but instead a list of trends and opportunities for Mesa County to pay attention to and consider as part of transit planning and implementation over the next 25 years.

Mobility Hubs

Mobility hub is an emerging term to describe a location where multiple transit and other transportation services come together allowing for convenient transfers between service types. In addition to the convergence of multiple local and regional transit services, mobility hubs are best located in high-activity centers where multiple modes of transportation come together, such as major bicycle facilities, bike-share or car-share opportunities, and on-demand transportation. In the context of the Grand Valley, a mobility hub can range from a major regional transfer center with additional modes and service types, to a smaller hub with one or two buses and other modal amenities.

One potential mobility hub opportunity for Mesa County to consider is the concept of a regional mobility hub where GVT buses, Bustang, Bustang Outrider, Greyhound and Amtrak can come together along with other mobility services. Currently, all five of those services stop in three different locations in downtown Grand Junction, which can make it challenging to transfer between local and regional transit services. It's unlikely that all five services could be combined into one location anytime soon, given the constraints of the rail station location and the recent investments in the GVT downtown transfer center. However, in the foreseeable future, opportunities to improve the transit connectivity between the "transit triangle" of the Amtrak station, Greyhound station, and GVT transfer center in downtown Grand Junction (along with integration with other modes and technologies -see MaaS discussed below), could greatly increase regional transit connectivity across the Grand Valley.

Additionally, the establishment of smaller mobility hubs at activity centers throughout the region would provide another opportunity to increase mobility and access to transit. Small mobility hubs would allow patrons to conveniently transfer between transit, on-demand services, or other modes. The CMU campus could be one location to pilot a concept of a smaller mobility hub in the Grand Valley, as could the Mesa County Department of Human Services Campus or existing transfer centers.

Leveraging On-Demand Services & Partnerships

The rapid rise of transportation network companies (TNC), such as Uber and Lyft, over the last decade have transformed the transportation dynamic, particularly in urban locations. While in some instances, TNCs compete with transit for riders, the emergence of TNCs has also generated opportunities for partnerships that can bolster transit and enhance mobility. The most common trend is to partner with TNC's as a first/last mile solution to provide a more cost-effective way to connect lower density areas to the core transit network. Partnership opportunities include:

- **Extending the reach and duration of transit service** by providing transit service to low-density areas or low-demand (late evening, early morning) periods, which can be more efficient through partnerships
- **Faster response times** compared to infrequent fixed-route or traditional paratransit services
- **Operating cost savings** compared to the least productive fixed-route and paratransit services

Several agencies and cities across the country (including in Colorado) have tested such partnerships to various degrees of success. Examples are provided in the callout box. Some of the lessons learned from this first generation of partnerships include challenges related to enforcing use as a first/last mile connection, providing seamless integration with bus service, and getting the word out to riders and the community about the service. Lastly, while these services can greatly increase mobility in low-density areas, they are much less efficient than productive fixed-route services, and should not be considered as a means to greatly increase ridership. While Mesa County does not plan to pay for service expansion through a third party on-demand provider in the near-term, the County is open to coordinating services. Using the lessons learned from other agencies that have experimented with on-demand partnerships and carefully assessing potential opportunities would be important if Mesa County were to explore opportunities for partnership in the future.

On-Demand Partnership Examples

- **GoCentennial**- First fully subsidized first/last mile on-demand transportation service; partnership between Lyft, City of Centennial and Bloomberg Philanthropies.
- **GoMonrovia**- Monrovia has subsidized transportation in defined service areas through service through partnership with Lyft.
- **Pinnellas County Direct Connect**- Partnered with Uber and a taxi company to subsidized part of the fare for trips that start/end at a bus stop and are within designated zones.

One additional challenge in Mesa County is that the existing presence of TNCs is limited within the region. While this may change over time, GVT could explore partnering with traditional taxi companies to provide a similar on-demand service.

Integration of Information/Fare Payment across Service Types

One of the strategies identified in the GVT 1-10 Year Strategic Plan is to work with CDOT to identify opportunities for pass integration and mobile ticketing with GVT services. Mobile ticketing has been implemented by many transit agencies across the country (including in Denver) and would greatly increase the convenience and ability for passengers to pay the fare. Integrating passes between CDOT and GVT would allow for more seamless transfers between Bustang and GVT.

These two concepts are part of a larger emerging opportunity in the transit industry, which is the integration of information about various transportation services (and the ability to pay for such services) across multiple modes into one online application. This concept is referred to as Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS – see callout box below). An example may include the ability to search multiple providers (such as

Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS)

As transportation has evolved over the past several years, ride-hailing companies and shared mobility companies including car sharing (Zipcar, Car2Go), bike sharing (Jump, Lime), scooter sharing (Bird, Lime, Razor) have spread the idea that mobility (provided by public and private entities) could be packaged together to provide a viable alternative to owning a car and using this mode as the default form of travel. The concept of combining the information, trip planning, and payment for mobility has been called Mobility as a Service (MaaS).

Increasingly, most people do not make distinctions between public and private transportation options, rather assessing modes by cost, convenience, comfort, and travel time. Many people are comfortable taking a bus to work and then hailing a TNC to go to dinner. However, today, you might have to consult several different smartphone apps to compare different options and prices and it can be difficult to combine modes for a single trip. MaaS offers an opportunity to make the overall transportation network more efficient and user-friendly. MaaS involves the ability to plan, book, and pay for trips on a variety of modes using a single interface – helping to improve access and convenience, while providing cost-effective travel options. MaaS offers transit agencies the ability to create increasingly attractive incentives to taking transit (for at least a portion of the trip) by providing more information on first/last mile access modes and more transparent information on things like traffic congestion and parking costs.

TNCs, transit, bike share, and car share options) to evaluate the time, cost, etc. of each to determine the best mode (or combination of modes) for a particular trip. Additionally, such an application would also enable fare purchases to occur in one place to make it more convenient to plan and book trips. For example, the integration of fare payment across transit agencies could enable someone to purchase a single fare for a trip from Fruita to Aspen on a local GVT bus, Bustang, and the Roaring Fork

Transportation Authority's transit service. Another example might be the ability to purchase a combined trip on a Lyft and GVT from a single online application.

Autonomous Transit

Autonomous transit are self-propelled, driverless vehicles that utilize autonomous vehicle technology. Autonomous transit is still in the early stages of development, but there are examples in service (including in Denver) and autonomous transit has the potential to alter the transit dynamic, particularly from a cost perspective. The single largest cost of transit operations is from paying for the driver. In addition, finding qualified bus drivers has also become increasingly challenging for many agencies. Autonomous transit has the potential to eliminate this need, and thus significantly reduce the cost of providing transit. The additional savings could be applied to expand service or reduce fares, without impacting the agency budget.

While autonomous cars have captured headlines across the country and there are many examples in testing phases, there are numerous challenges to implementing autonomous cars still to be sorted out, many of which autonomous transit may be able to circumnavigate. Because of this, autonomous transit may become widespread far sooner than autonomous cars. The main advantage of transit is the predictability of transit vehicles operating on a fixed-route, with designated stops on a specific schedule, which increases the possibility of controlling the environment (including lane configurations, signals, striping, etc.) to better enable autonomous travel.

The first significant prototypes for autonomous transit are likely to occur along corridors with dedicated right-of-way for transit where conflicts with other modes can best be mitigated, such as bus rapid transit (BRT). The term coined for this type of service is autonomous rapid transit (ART). The Federal Transit Administration estimates that ART will be more than 40 times as cost effective as BRT⁷. Arterial ART is already in operation in China and in on-road testing in the Netherlands and Singapore.

While this technology is likely years away from becoming commonplace in the United States (and is not likely to be implemented in the Grand Valley anytime soon), due to the potential cost savings, it may be beneficial to track how this technology evolves over the next decade to consider its relevance to GVT in the future. In the coming years, the main steps for Mesa County to take would be to stay informed on the evolution of this technology. In the more distant future, if Mesa County decided to pursue autonomous transit, implementation would require addressing potential hazards in the operating environment, including investments in roadway design and technology prior to implementation.

⁷ Federal Transit Administration, Strategic Transit Automation Research Plan, FTA Report No. 0116, page 122, 2018

6 Prioritized Action Plan

This chapter presents the actions the Mesa County RTPO will take through the year 2045 to improve transit and human services transportation in the Grand Valley. The actions will contribute toward achieving the goals and vision established in the Grand Valley 2045 RTP. The Prioritized Action Plan includes both action items and project specific financial plans, and will be used by CDOT to review and award funding for all transit programs administered by CDOT. Action items listed below may or may not pertain to a specific project and are not listed with a cost estimate as many of these items fit within the scope general operations. Project specific financial plans are listed with a cost estimate and are meant to convey project cost with the anticipated schedule of implementation. However, timing for the implementation of these projects is preliminary and is subject to the availability of local, state and federal funding sources, and review by the Mesa County Regional Transportation Planning Office and the Grand Valley Regional Transportation Committee. These are intended to show a comprehensive view of transit-related projects in Mesa County, coordinating GVT with other Human Services Organizations. These financial plans have been checked for consistency with the 2018 GVT Strategic Plan, however the Strategic Plan remains the default plan for GVT's short-term transit investment strategies. The 2019 GVT Transit Asset Management Plan has also been incorporated into this Plan

The elements included in this Action Plan were developed based on a combination of the following:

- Feedback from transit and human services providers.
- Priorities identified by the public
- Input from RTPO staff, GVRTC and the Steering Committee.
- Analysis of existing services, transit propensity, and gaps and duplication of service.
- Emerging opportunities and technologies.
- The vision and goals from the Grand Valley 2045 RTP.

Action items are divided into the following three categories:

- Coordination activities
- Transit service & capital improvements
- Funding actions

Project specific financial plans are divided into the following two categories

- Near-Term Constrained Plan
- Long-Term Unconstrained Plan

Coordination Activities

The Mesa County RTPO will lead the following coordination activities to improve coordination of transit and human services transportation throughout the region.

- **Facilitate Local Coordinating Council (LCC)** – Mesa County RTPO will continue to lead the LCC, which is made up of transit agencies and human service providers in the region. The LLC will

meet bi-annually to coordinate on the provision of services, planning efforts, grant applications, future needs, sharing resources and disseminating information. Between meetings, the RTPO mobility manager will be the point person to communicate with the LCC and will periodically share information on funding, new policies, new transit services and other resources such as travel training or train-the-trainer opportunities.

- **Collaborate Joint Grant Applications** – The RTPO shall collaborate with agencies and providers to apply for regional funding that will aim to improve efficiency of transportation and ensure funding opportunities are consistent with the transportation goals of the region.
- **Maintain Mobility Manager Position** – Continue to fund the mobility manager position through the 5310 grant program. The mobility manager will continue to provide trainings and coordinate transit and transportation services among various providers throughout the Grand Valley to meet the needs of the community with a particular focus on individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low income.
- **Provide Education, Training, & Rider Assistance.** – The RTPO will provide education and training to human service agencies, clients, and the public. Examples include travel training, trip planning, using GVT system maps, interfacing with online trip planners and the mobile app. As needed, Mesa County may coordinate mobility training with GVT and other area agencies. GVT may also coordinate programs that help riders navigate the transit system, such as Bus Buddy program where volunteers help seniors or other users ride the bus, or a Bus Ambassador program where ambassadors are deployed on busses to assist riders and enforce bus rules.
- **Support a Central Call Center for Transportation Services (211 System)** – The 211 call system is currently in place (<https://wc211.org/agencies/>) and RTPO will continue to support and provide coordination between agencies and to explore options for an improved call center or call service. RTPO will periodically provide updated information to the call center and online platform on transportation services available in Mesa County.
- **Facilitate Sharing of Expertise** – The RTPO will share expertise that will help local agencies to understand the resources available in Mesa County and on the Western Slope, FTA funding requirements, and helpful tips for grant writing.
- **Organize a Transit Rider Advisory Group** – The RTPO will organize and facilitate a GVT fixed route/paratransit rider advisory group to collect input on how to improve the transit rider experience and safety.
- **Strengthen Community Partnerships** – The RTPO will continue to strengthen partnerships with agencies including all local Parks & Recreation Agencies, the Public Library, Chamber of Commerce and local businesses. This will be carried out through frequent communication/open dialogue with each agency and gathering information on each agencies transportation needs.

- **Support Transit Oriented Development** – The RTPO will coordinate with developers of affordable and senior housing projects to encourage transit oriented development and transit supportive site locations.
- **Explore a Ride Brokering Program** – In an effort to address the overburdened paratransit system, the RTPO will explore opportunities to establish a rider brokering program to redistribute paratransit trips among other providers.

Transit Service & Capital Improvements

The Mesa County RTPO will implement the following transit service and capital improvements to gradually improve the transit system in the Grand Valley through year 2045.

- **Implement the GVT Strategic Plan** – The Mesa County RTPO will continue to implement strategies outlined in the 10-year Grand Valley Transit Strategic Plan (2018) through 2028.
- **Explore Expanded Service through Partnerships** - The Dash represents a unique strategy for expansion of fixed-route service based on partnering with organizations that directly benefit. This strategy adds more funding stakeholders to GVT and may serve as a model strategy for expansion of service elsewhere in transit system. GVT will explore opportunities to expand service through partnerships where available.
- **Enhance Multimodal Connectivity** – The RTPO will work to increase connectivity between GVT, the Amtrak station, the Greyhound station, and Bustang service. In the long-term the RTPO will explore the possibility of consolidation of locations into a regional mobility hub. RTPO will also explore ways to enhance existing transfer stations to become meeting points for multiple transportation modes.
- **Increase Frequency of Intercity Bus Service on I-70 and US 50** - The RTPO will coordinate with Bustang and Bustang Outrider to support increased frequency of Bustang service between Denver and Grand Junction as well as Grand Junction and Delta/Montrose/Ridgeway/Telluride.
- **Bus Stop Improvements** – The RTPO will improve GVT bus stops to enhance safety and make the waiting area welcoming. This includes one of the strategies of the GVT 1-10 Year Strategic Plan: *expand bus stop standards in GVT Policies and Procedures Manual and develop a process to prioritize stop improvements.*
- **Develop Enhanced Transit Corridors** – The RTPO will implement Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)-like improvements on longer bus routes, through commercial/high activity corridors with high ridership potential (i.e. downtown to airport, North Avenue). Key features would include improving frequency (to headways of 15 minutes or better), reliability, directness, and speed of service. Potential capital improvements may include transit signal priority, queue jump lanes, off-board fare payment, limited stops, enhanced stations, level boarding, etc.

- **On-Demand Partnership Pilot Program** – The RTPO will explore ways to better coordinate with TNCs or other on-demand providers.
- **Pedestrian Walkway & Crossing Improvements** – The RTPO will fund/apply for grants for sidewalk and crossing improvements around bus stops. Locations with high ridership and limited existing pedestrian walkways and crossings, such as 12th Street, will be prioritized. The RTPO, through the Urban Trails committee, will participate in the Community Development Block Grant program, and attempt to coordinate ADA improvements with transit.
- **Explore a Taxi/Transit Voucher System** – The RTPO will explore the feasibility of offering vouchers for concierge service with local taxi companies for paratransit eligible riders.

Funding Actions

The Mesa County RTPO will explore and potentially implement one or more of the following funding actions to fund transit service, capital projects and other mobility improvements in Mesa County.

- **Pursue Dedicated Transit Funding Stream** – The RTPO will explore establishing a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) or other similar measure to establish a long-term dedicated funding stream for transit service in the region.
- **Additional Local Funding Sources** – The RTPO will explore additional local funding sources including partnerships with local businesses, agencies and colleges to increase funding for transit services and other related improvements identified in this Plan.
- **Bus Advertising** – The RTPO will explore options for increasing transit revenue through bus advertising and on-bus monitors.

Prioritization of Actions

Table 6 illustrates the general timeline for implementing the actions identified in this plan. Actions are divided into of three timeframes:

- **Near-term** – within the next 1-10 years
- **Long-term** – beyond 10 years
- **Ongoing** – programs or strategies that will be implemented annually

Table 6 Prioritized Action Plan

Near-Term Actions	Long-Term Actions	Ongoing Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the GVT Strategic Plan • Increase the frequency of intercity bus service on I-70 and US 50 • Enhance multimodal connectivity • Improve GVT bus stops • Explore on-demand partnership opportunities • Implement pedestrian walkway & crossing improvements • Explore a taxi/transit voucher system • Explore a ride brokering program • Explore expanded service through partnerships • Implement near-term enhanced transit corridor improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore a regional mobility hub • Implement long-term enhanced transit corridor improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue a dedicated transit funding stream • Explore additional local funding sources • Explore bus advertising • Facilitate the LCC • Coordinate joint grant applications • Maintain Mobility Manager position • Provide education, training, and rider assistance • Support a central call center for transportation services (211 system) • Facilitate sharing of expertise • Organize a transit rider advisory group • Strengthen community partnerships • Support transit oriented development

Near-Term Constrained Plan

The Near-Term Constrained Plan has been developed for the five year period of 2020 to 2024. **Table 7** conveys costs assumptions to maintain existing levels of transit service, fleet, staffing, and anticipated near-term projects during this time frame.

The Near-Term Constrained Plan assumes a 5% inflation rate for capital expenses, and a 4% increase in other expenses. The expenses displayed incorporate these respective inflated costs. Operating costs are based on the 2018 National Transit Database. Vehicle replacement is based on the 2019 GVT Asset Management Plan and assumes replacement at the end of the vehicle’s useful life. Sidewalk and Pullout costs include the federal portion only and do not include local funding. These costs may go up or down depending on availability of federal funds. The Mobility Manager position is eligible as a capital expense under the 5310 program, meaning it is eligible for and 80% federal match.

Table 7 Near-Term Constrained Plan Project List

Expenses					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Services					
Operations*	\$3,788,000	\$3,940,000	\$4,098,000	\$4,262,000	\$4,432,000
Mobility Manager	\$71,000	\$74,000	\$77,000	\$80,000	\$83,000
Services Subtotal	\$3,859,000	\$4,014,000	\$4,175,000	\$4,342,000	\$4,515,000
Capital					
Replacement Vehicles					
<i>Low-Floor Bus Replacement</i>	1	2	1	2	0
<i>Cutaway Bus Replacement</i>	2	5	4	0	3
<i>Low-Floor Bus Cost</i>	\$490,000	\$510,000	\$540,000	\$570,000	\$600,000
<i>Cutaway Bus Cost</i>	\$150,000	\$160,000	\$170,000	\$180,000	\$190,000
Vehicle Replacement Subtotal	\$790,000	\$1,820,000	\$1,220,000	\$1,140,000	\$570,000
Sidewalks & Pullouts	\$84,000	\$87,000	\$90,000	\$94,000	\$98,000
ITS Improvements	\$300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Subtotal	\$1,174,000	\$1,907,000	\$1,310,000	\$1,234,000	\$668,000
TOTAL	\$5,033,000	\$5,921,000	\$5,485,000	\$5,576,000	\$5,183,000

Long-Term Unconstrained Plan

Long range financial forecasting for transit is extremely difficult, as costs and revenues can fluctuate dramatically with funding availability. This is particularly true for capital projects which are often funded through competitive grant opportunities. The Long-Term Unconstrained Plan is comprised of desired transit projects in Mesa County without regard to funding constraints for the years 2020 to 2045. Moreover, many of the projects listed are phases of the same activity, for example increasing frequency on select corridors and increasing frequency on all corridors are listed as separate items, but are in fact different phases of the same project. For these reasons, total summary of all project costs are not included in the Long-Term Unconstrained Plan.

Table 8 shows the Long-Term Unconstrained Plan project list. This plan holds the same assumptions as the Short-Term Constrained Plan. The expenses are displayed in constant 2020 dollars, however inflated costs are incorporated into the final column, which shows a sum of all costs in 2045 dollars.

Table 8 Long-Term Unconstrained Plan Project List

Project Number	Description	Priority	Capital or Operating	2020-2024 Cumulative Cost	2025-2029 Cumulative Cost	2030-2034 Cumulative Cost	2035-2039 Cumulative Cost	2040-2045 Cumulative Cost	2020-2045 Total Cumulative Cost (2020 dollars)	2020-2045 Total Cumulative Cost (2045 dollars)
GVT Continue Regular Operations										
1	Operating Cost (Maintain Existing Service)	HIGH	Operating	\$18,939,000	\$18,939,000	\$18,939,000	\$18,939,000	\$22,727,000	\$98,483,000	\$167,845,463
2	Coordination – Mobility Manager	HIGH	Capital	\$357,000	\$357,000	\$357,000	\$357,000	\$428,000	\$1,856,000	\$3,161,200
3	Low-Floor Bus Replacement	HIGH	Capital	\$3,006,000	\$4,008,000	\$3,507,000	\$4,509,000	\$4,008,000	\$19,038,000	\$36,855,635
4	Cutaway Bus Replacement	HIGH	Capital	\$2,170,000	\$1,860,000	\$1,705,000	\$1,550,000	\$1,550,000	\$8,835,000	\$16,309,398
5	Bus Stop/Pedestrian Improvements (Sidewalks/Pullouts)	HIGH	Capital	\$420,000	\$420,000	\$420,000	\$420,000	\$504,000	\$2,184,000	\$3,722,187
6	ITS Technology	HIGH	Capital	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,897,913
GVT Service Expansion										
7	Cutaway Bus Paratransit Fleet Expansion	HIGH	Capital	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$2,250,000	\$4,288,632
8	30 min Frequency on Two Select Corridors During Peak Period	HIGH	Operating**	\$826,000	\$826,000	\$826,000	\$826,000	\$992,000	\$4,296,000	\$8,448,645
9	30 min Frequency on Two Select Corridors All Day	MEDIUM	Operating**	\$2,893,000	\$2,893,000	\$2,893,000	\$2,893,000	\$3,471,000	\$15,043,000	\$29,570,309
10	30 min Frequency on All Routes All Day (Medium-Term)	LOW	Operating**	\$0	\$0	\$15,909,000	\$15,909,000	\$19,091,000	\$50,909,000	\$122,615,416
11	15 min Frequency on Two Select Corridors During Peak Period (Long-Term)	LOW	Operating**	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,653,000	\$1,984,000	\$3,637,000	\$9,763,762
12	15 min Frequency on Two Select Corridors All Day (Long-Term)	LOW	Operating**	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,942,000	\$6,942,000	\$20,881,787
13	Extend Service Until 11:00 P.M. on Two Select Routes	HIGH	Operating**	\$620,000	\$620,000	\$620,000	\$620,000	\$744,000	\$3,224,000	\$6,336,484
14	Extend Service Until 11:00 P.M. on All Routes (Medium-Term)	MEDIUM	Operating**	\$0	\$0	\$3,409,000	\$3,409,000	\$4,091,000	\$10,909,000	\$26,274,740
15	Implement Sunday Service	MEDIUM	Operating**	\$4,201,000	\$4,201,000	\$4,201,000	\$4,201,000	\$5,041,000	\$21,845,000	\$42,947,057
16	Service Expansion - Pear Park & F 1/2 Rd.	MEDIUM	Operating**	\$1,446,000	\$1,446,000	\$1,446,000	\$1,446,000	\$1,736,000	\$7,520,000	\$14,785,180
19	Weekend Powderhorn/Colbran Shuttle	LOW	Operating	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$300,000	\$750,000	\$1,653,564
20	Weekend Powderhorn/Colbran Shuttle Vehicle	LOW	Capital	\$0	\$306,000	\$306,000	\$306,000	\$367,000	\$1,285,000	\$2,787,787
GVT Other Capital Projects										
21	Construction of a Long-Term/Maintenance Facility	HIGH	Capital	\$1,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500,000	\$3,213,151
22	Enhanced Transit Corridor System Improvements on Select Corridors	MEDIUM	Capital	\$1,575,000	\$998,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$600,000	\$4,173,000	\$6,971,889
23	Mobility Hub Improvements at Transfer Facilities	MEDIUM	Capital	\$175,000	\$110,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$60,000	\$445,000	\$730,114
24	CNG Storage Production	LOW	Capital	\$0	\$540,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$540,000	\$759,834

Other Provider Projects										
25	Family Health West Vehicle Replacement	HIGH	Capital	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$0	\$75,000	\$225,000	\$468,397
26	Hope West Vehicle Replacement	HIGH	Capital	\$0	\$152,000	\$0	\$152,000	\$152,000	\$456,000	\$996,748
27	Center for Independence Vehicle & Replacement	HIGH	Capital	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$0	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$300,000	\$620,978

**Capital cost for fleet expansion needed for service included in estimate