



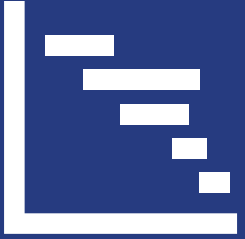
**We Make Lives Better
Through Connections.**

Zero Fare for Better Air/ Fare Study and Equity Analysis

Chris Quinn
Planning Project Manager

RTD Overview

- Created by state legislature in 1969
- Primary provider of transit in eight counties, including all of Boulder, Denver and Jefferson counties, most of Broomfield, with western Adams and Arapahoe counties, northern Douglas County and a small piece of southwest Weld County
- **2,342 square miles**
- 3.1 million population
- Services include:
 - Bus/Rail (10 rail lines, 100+ bus routes, 24 Flexride areas)
 - ADA Paratransit
 - Demand responsive services



Zero Fare for Better Air

July 11, 2023

Ozone Season Free Transit Grant Program

SB22-180 established the Ozone Season Free Transit Grant Program, which provides funding to provide free transit services for at least 30 days during the ozone season (June 1 – August 31).



State of
COLORADO



\$3 million per year for 2 years



\$11 million per year for 2 years,
20% local match required

Planning

Anticipated additional needs during Zero Fare for Better Air:



Additional cleaning of vehicles and facilities due to increased use

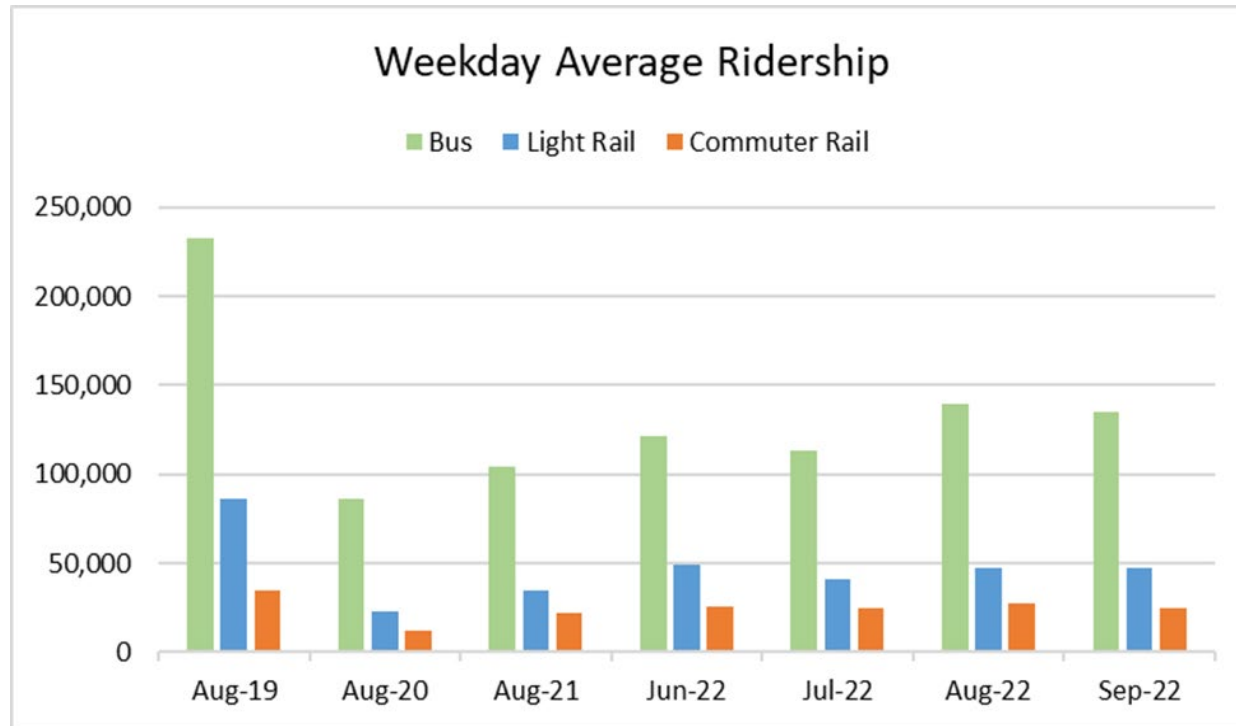


Additional security



Increases to rail capacity

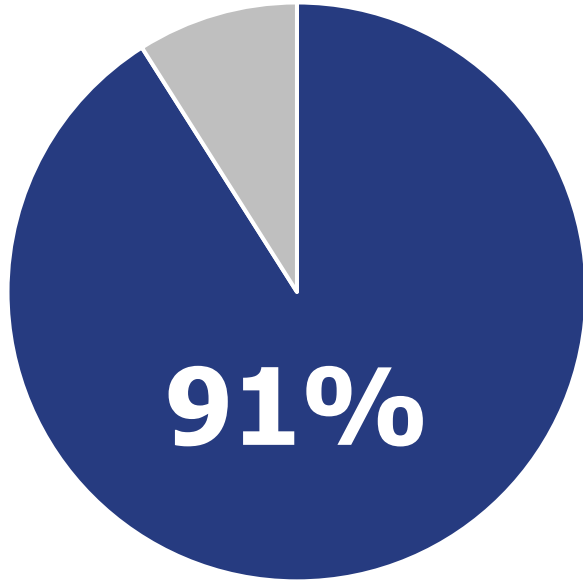
Ridership



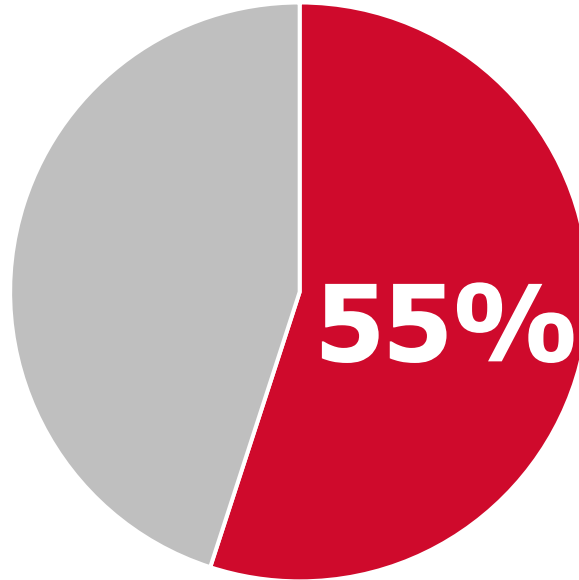
- Overall ridership increased 22%* from July 2022
- Much was retained in September 2022

**Between 2016 and 2021, August ridership was between 2% and 12% higher than July ridership*

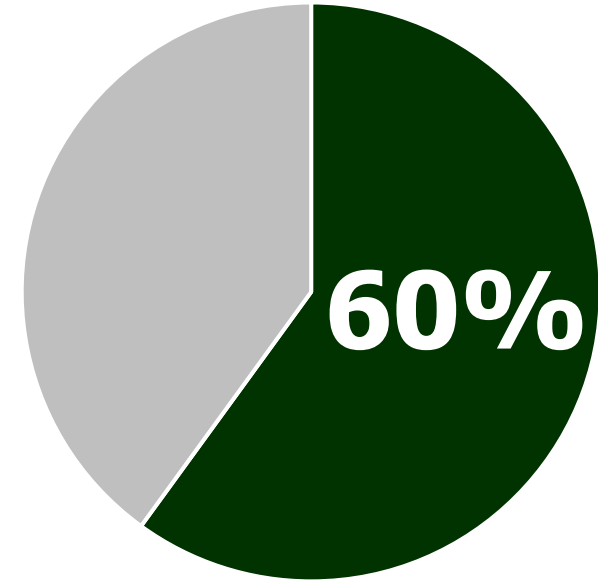
Customer Survey



of respondents
previously used RTD



of respondents
increased usage during
ZFBA

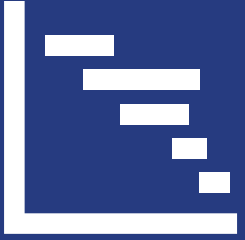


of respondents
motivated by cost

Impact Analysis

- Regular transit ridership increased, but catalysts are unclear.
- RTD absorbed the increased ridership without substantial increases in service.
- No major increase in quality of life/crime incidents.
- Extensive use of paratransit services may have significant cost implications.
- Impacts to air quality are difficult to quantify.





Fare Study and Equity Analysis

July 11, 2023

What RTD Heard: Fare Structure

There are too many fare options. It is hard to know which one to choose. Make fares easier to understand.



Reward customers who use RTD regularly.



Every cent matters! Lower prices. Make it less expensive to take transit than to drive and park.





Study Goals and Process

Goals



Equity

- Support transit reliant/financially burdened customers
- Provide equitable and fair access to fares, products, and discounts
 - Regardless of race, color, national origin, income status, and for other marginalized communities



Affordability

- Align fares with service value



Simplicity

- Make fares easy to understand
 - Standardized discounts and streamlined fare payment options

Outreach – Feedback Panels

- **Purpose:** Use customer input to consider/improve options and identify trade-off choices between alternatives

Equity Feedback Panel	Pass Program Feedback Panel	Jurisdiction Feedback Panel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BIPOC ● English language learners ● Refugees/immigrants ● Low-income ● Houseless ● Youth, Seniors ● Seniors ● People with disabilities ● LGBTQ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employer EcoPass ● Neighborhood EcoPass ● CollegePass ● Colleges not participating in CollegePass program ● Schools ● Nonprofit program (governmental/nonprofit agencies) ● Employment centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State ● County ● City ● Denver Regional Council of Governments ● Transportation management associations/organizations

Activities and Feedback



Website*, Study Materials, and Social Media

- 4,600+ unique website views
- 63,000+ social media impressions in targeted ad campaign
- New website (English/Spanish) with detailed fare structure alternatives overview
- Fact sheets (English/Spanish)



Customer and Community Meetings

- Virtual Zoom webinars/meetings
- 87 attendees
- English/Spanish



Community Partner Focus Groups

- Led by six community partners
- 84 participants
- English/Spanish



Stakeholder Groups

- Targeted Focus Groups
- Feedback Panels (3): Equity, Pass Programs, and Jurisdiction



Online Survey*

- 3,900+ respondents
- In-person surveys conducted by community partners
- English/Spanish



Community-Based Organization Survey*

- 53 respondents
- English/Spanish

**Language assistance and communications tools were implemented*



Final Recommendations

July 11, 2023

What the Fare Structure Means For Customers



Customers would pay an Airport fare for A Line and SkyRide trips that leave from or arrive at Denver International Airport.



All other destinations in the RTD service area would use the Standard fare, which combines all current Local and Regional services.



Monthly Pass customers would travel anywhere, including to and from the airport, for one price.

Fare Structure Summary

	Current			Proposed				
	Full Fare			Full Fare		Discount Fares*		
	Local	Regional	Airport	Standard	Airport	Local	Regional	Airport
3-Hour Pass	\$3	\$5.25	\$10	\$2.75	\$10	\$1.35		
Day Pass	\$6	\$10.50	\$10.50	\$5.50	\$10	\$2.70		
Monthly Pass (Multiple of 3-Hour Pass)	\$114 (38x)	\$200 (38x)	\$200 (19x)	\$88 (32x Local / Regional)		\$27 (20x)		

*Discount Fare includes older adults (65+), people with disabilities, Medicare recipients, and customers enrolled in LiVE



Access-A-Ride Fares

	Current			Proposed				
	Full Fare			Full Fare		LiVE Enrolled		
	Local	Regional	Airport	Standard	Airport	Local	Regional	Airport
One-Way Fare	\$5	\$9	\$20	\$4.50	\$19	\$2.25		\$9.50
6-Ride Tickets	\$30			\$27		\$13.50		



LiVE Program

- Increase discount from 40 to 50% to align with fares for older adults, people with disabilities, and Medicare recipients
- Increase income threshold from 185 to 250% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- Establish comprehensive outreach/engagement action plan
- Explore expanding means testing beyond current system



Current Pass Programs



- **Proposal for EcoPass, CollegePass, and NECO Pass**
 - Contracts will have two-year, utilization-based, fixed pricing
 - Contract minimums reduced to lower participation barriers
 - New pricing for 2024
 - Simplify EcoPass pricing matrix

Zero Fare for Youth Pilot

- Introduce no-cost transit for youth ages 19 and younger
 - One-year pilot program
 - External funding required after year one to continue

Current Fare Structure
(Youth Discount, ages 6 - 19)*

	LOCAL	REGIONAL	AIRPORT
3-HOUR	\$0.90	\$1.60	\$3.20
DAY	\$1.80	\$3.20	
MONTHLY	\$34.20	\$60.00	

Recommended Fare Structure
(Zero Fare for Youth, ages 19 and younger)

	ANY DESTINATION IN THE RTD SERVICE AREA
3-HOUR	\$0
DAY	
MONTHLY	

*Children ages 5 and younger currently ride for free.



Semester Pass

- Create a Semester Pass for students at community colleges, technical schools or other colleges and universities not currently participating in CollegePass
 - Based on age or income, students may qualify for lower fares, such as LiVE or Zero Fare for Youth

Recommended Semester Pass Compared to other recommended Monthly Pass options

MONTHLY PASS (Full Fare)	MONTHLY PASS (SemesterPass)	MONTHLY PASS (LiVE)
\$88	\$70	\$27

Transit Assistance Grant Program and Bulk Discounts

- Create \$1 million transit assistance grant program
 - Supports nonprofits and social service agencies serving community members with immediate transit needs
- Provide 10% discount on all Full and Discount fare products purchased in bulk (\$1,500 minimum)



Fare Equity Analysis: Findings

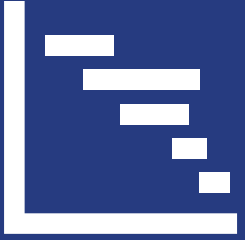
- The analysis found **no disparate impact or disproportionate burden** in the recommendation
- Low-income and minority customers would experience a 22-23% decrease in average fare prices
- While the ~20% decrease is slightly lower than the decrease for all customers, the recommendation:
 - Responds to customers' requests for simplicity
 - Increases equity through other programs and policies



Ridership and Revenue Impacts

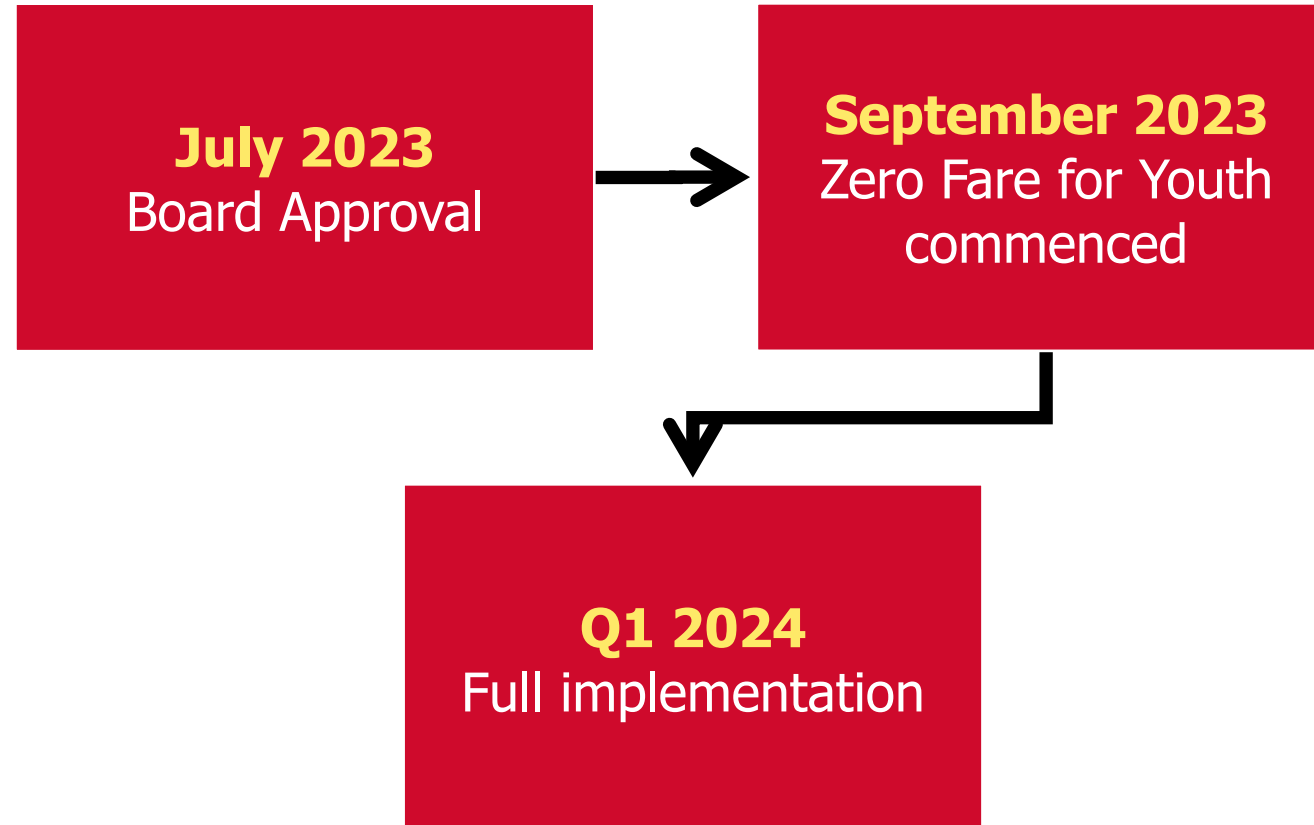
	2024 Ridership (millions)	2024 Fare Revenue (millions)
No Fare Structure Change	65	\$77
Proposed Fare Structure*	73 to 74	\$61 to \$64
Percent Change from Existing Structure	+11% to +13%	-21% to -17%

**Ranges in expected ridership and fare revenue reflect potential impacts of Zero Fare for Youth pilot*



Implementation / Next Steps

Time Line



Thank you.

