City of Fort Collins

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Transfort Optimization Plan

Kaley Zeisel, Transfort Director

Steven Zupparo, Sr. Operations Manager

Jason Miller, Consultant, Fehr & Peers

Agenda

1. Project Overview
2. Transit Scenario Development
3. Recommended Transit Scenario
4. Paratransit
5. Safety and Security
6. Next Steps

Questions for Council

What questions or feedback do Councilmembers have about the service planning principles and priorities guiding the future transit system?

Project Overview

Purpose + Goals

Purpose: *A short-term transit service plan grounded in financial constraints, focused on community needs and growing ridership.*

Fare-Free Access

Keeping transit free ensures equity and attracts riders.

Inclusive Engagement

Engage diverse voices to shape the priorities.

Best Practices Alignment

Following industry standards supports ridership recovery.

Adaptation to Travel Patterns

Adjust service to new post-COVID travel habits.

Intuitive Design

Clear, simple navigation encourages use.

Financial Feasibility

Plans must be viable to implement within budget.

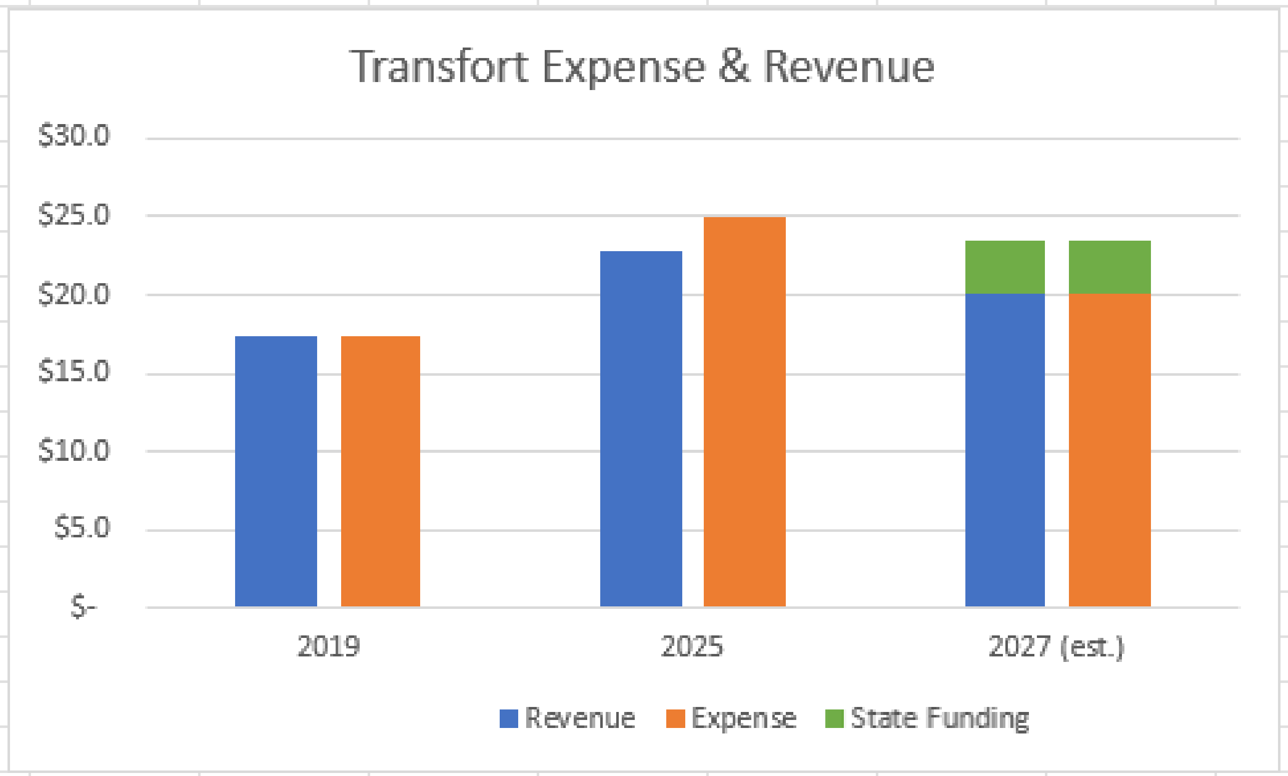
Financial Overview

Expenses

- Transit industry expenses have grown 50-70% since 2019
- Fort Collins projects a ~50% increase (2019–2026)
- Major cost drivers: personnel, vehicle repair, and contracted transportation services

Revenue

- Revenue growth has occurred primarily at the City level (General Fund and 2050 Tax)
- Key external losses: FLEX, FASTER
- Expense growth continues to outpace revenue increases
- Anticipated new State funding source in 2026 (SB24-230)



**2025 revenue vs expense gap anticipated to be filled with use of 2050 Tax Transit*

City Priority

Transit is a City priority and key strategy in achieving City goals. The Optimization Plan implements Transportation Master Plan (TMP) recommendations.

Council Priority

Reduce climate and air pollution through electrification and best practices.

Strategic Plan

Increase Transfort access and ridership by ensuring the City's transit services provide safe, reliable and convenient alternatives to driving.

Our Climate Future

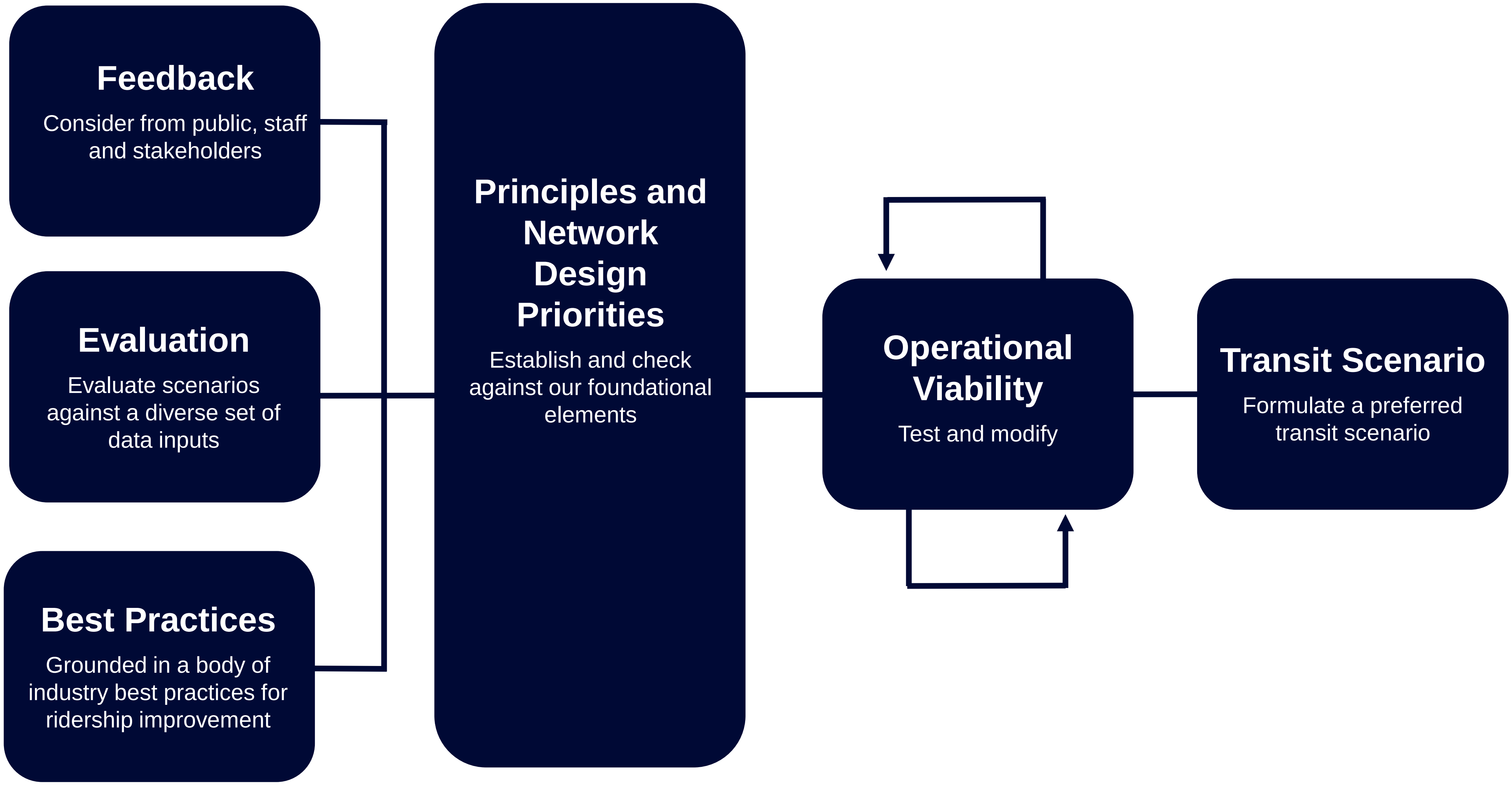
Make investments in equitable access to, and expansion of, all sustainable modes of travel with emphasis on growing transit ridership.

Transit Master Plan

Provide safe, attractive, efficient, equitable, modern and innovative mobility for people to live, work and play in the City.

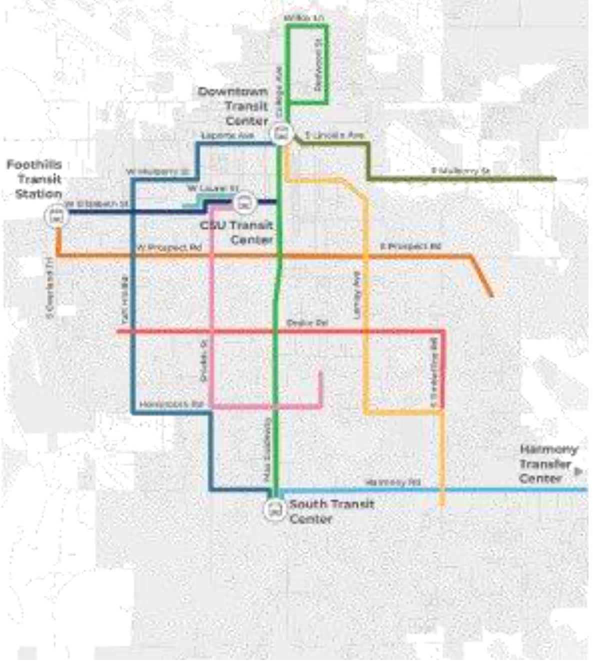
Transit Scenario Development Process

Path to the Recommended Transit Scenario

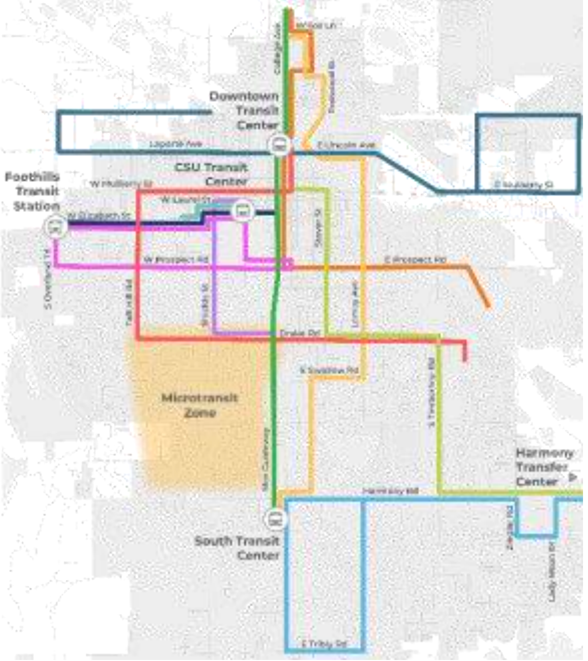


Three Scenarios for Public Feedback

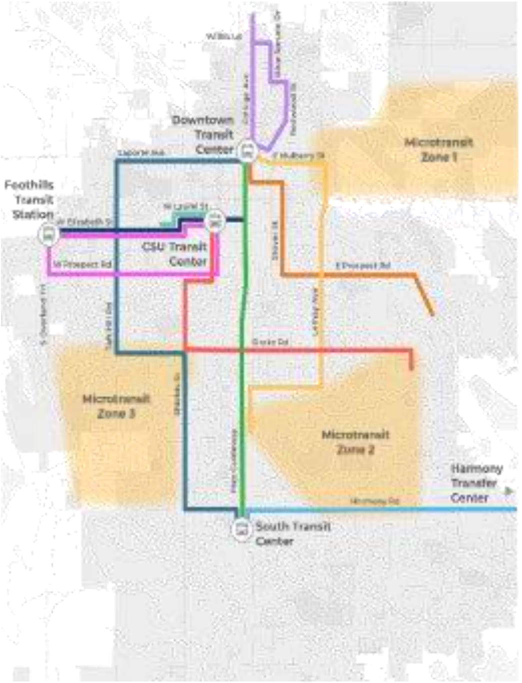
Scenario 1: Travel Patterns



Scenario 2: Rider Demand



Scenario 3: Condensed with Microtransit



Each scenario was accompanied with their anticipated impacts:
Equity benefits, cost effectiveness, ridership improvement, economic health benefits, environmental benefits, alignment with City priorities.

Feedback on the Three Scenarios

Who and How

The community-at-large, Boards and Commissions, TAC/CAC and targeted groups weighed in on the three options via an online survey, focus groups, presentations, open house, and other community events.

What We Heard

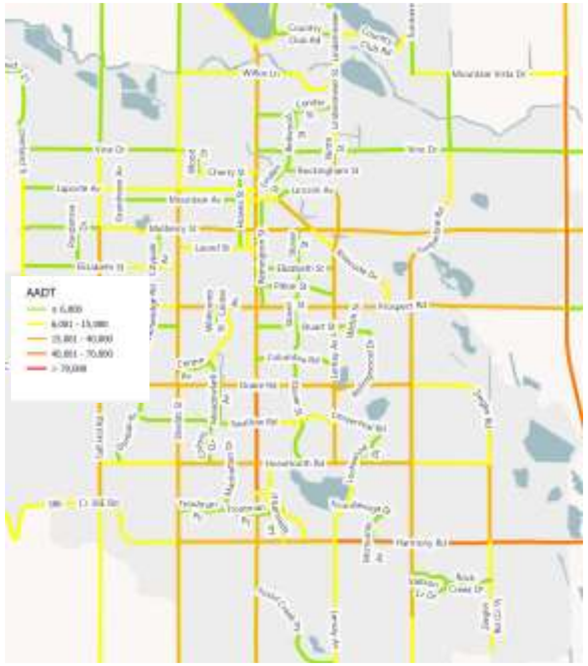
- **Frequency First:** Frequency (over coverage) is the top priority!
- **Rider-Centered Service:** Support for transit-reliant riders and simple, linear routes on major corridors for clarity and ease of travel..
- **Safety and Quality:** Focus on improving on-time performance, reliability, safety, and overall service experience.
- **System Gaps and Travel Time**: Concerns about long routes, low-frequency service, and gaps in areas (Timberline, Trilby).
- **Microtransit:** Some interest but skepticism due to cost, with most people not liking the idea of transferring from microtransit to fixed route.
- **Partnerships:** Enhance and establish new partnerships to expand service opportunities.
- **Expanded Access:** Requests for evening, weekend (esp. Sunday), and school-oriented service, including PSD high schools, CSU, Front Range Community College (FRCC) and parks and recreation areas.

System Evaluation

The three scenarios were evaluated against a diverse set of data inputs including:
Route productivity, ridership by route and stop, rider demographics, transit propensity, travel patterns, annual average daily traffic, affordable housing, proximity to key destinations.

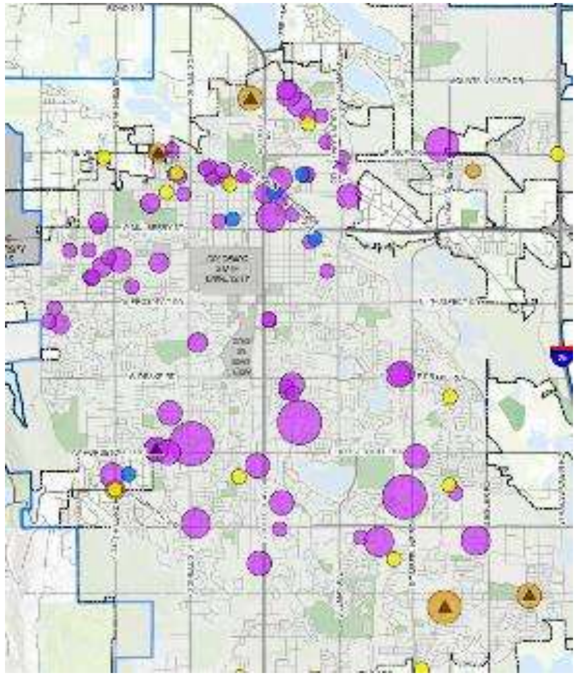
Areas of High Transit Propensity

Average Annual Daily Traffic



Existing Routes with Highest Ridership

Affordable Housing Locations



Best Practices

City of Fort Collins

We examined the main recovery drivers of six peer agencies with successful ridership recovery rates well above the national average between 2019 and 2023.

Characteristics	Transfort Fort Collins, CO	METRO Akron, OH	CityBus Lafayette, IN	Unitrans Davis, CA	FAST Fayetteville, NC	GP Metro Portland, ME	WRTA Worcester, MA	Summary
Ridership Recovery	46%	99%	93%	93%	103%	89%	156%	Each peer agency's ridership recovery is well above the national average.
Service Area / Number of Routes	N/A	-7%	-8%	-14%	-1%	-9%	-14%	On average, most peer agencies have reduced their service area by ~ 6%.
Total Operating Funds	+16%	+8%	+27%	+45%	+19%	+28%	+24%	Operating funds have increased across all peer agencies
Operating Expenses per Passenger	+76%	+37%	+46%	+84%	-20%	+57%	-4%	Operating expenses per passenger have increased across most agencies, except for two peer agencies.
Main Recovery Drivers	N/A	Network redesign, higher frequency	Higher college enrollments and limited parking spaces	Student focus and limited parking spaces	Free fare and flex stop for a new route	Half fare, route adjustments, higher frequency	Free fare, extended service hours, partnership	

Themes: Smaller service areas/less routes, increased operating expenses and funds

Principles and Design Priorities

Feedback + Evaluation + Best Practices → Principles and Design Priorities

Principles

- Frequency
- Productivity
- Equity
- Simplicity
- Efficiency

Network Design Priorities

- Grid pattern
- Data-driven
- Transit-reliant populations
- Productivity
- Highest-travelled corridors
- Popular destinations
- Community-requested service
- Highest ridership return

Recommended Transit Scenario

The Recommended Transit Scenario

Toward growing ridership

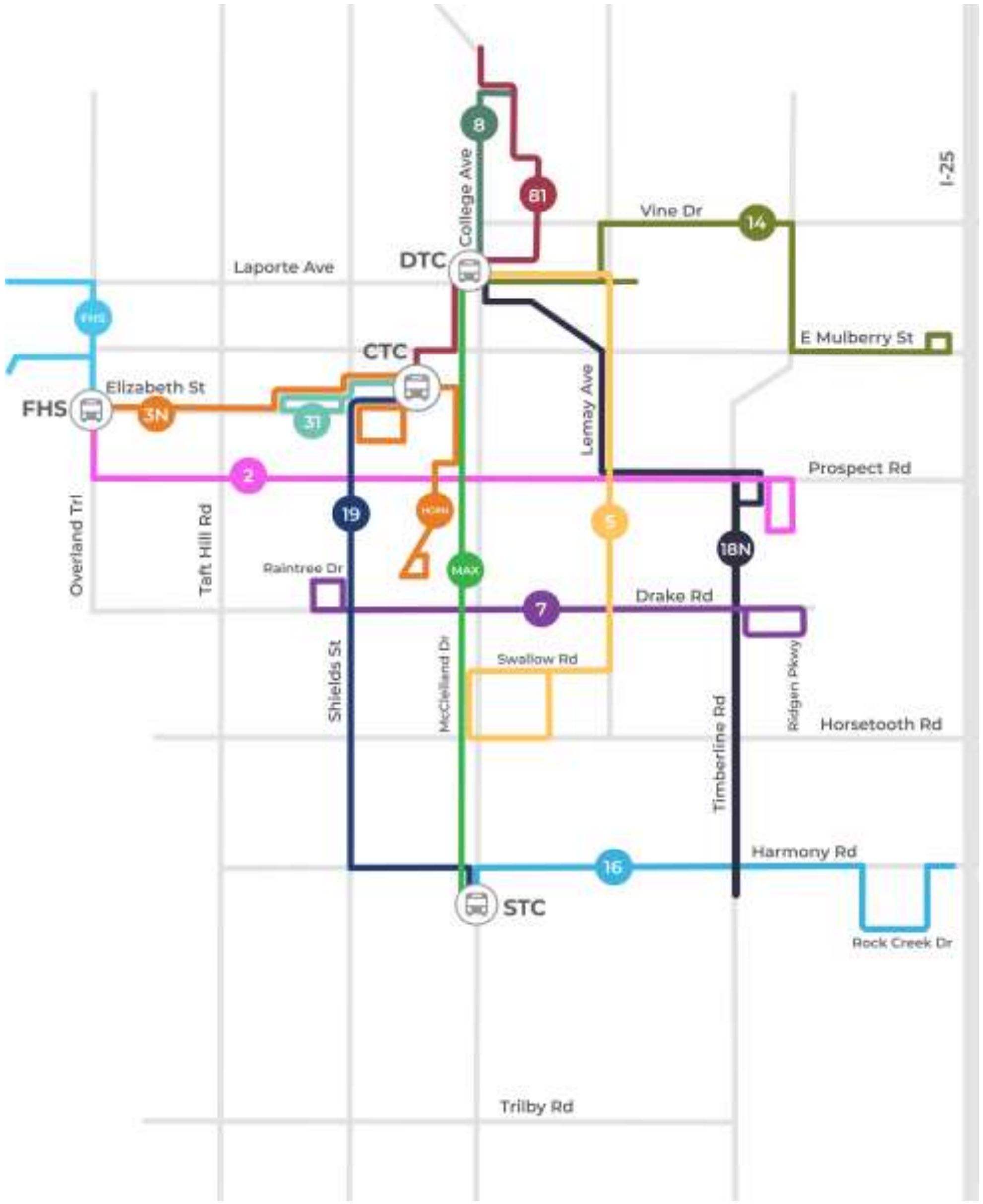
- A lean, linear, grid-like route system that limits detours
- Maintains or improves highest performing routes
- Ridership projected to increase to 3.35M (2.62M in 2024)

Focuses on community needs

- Informed by community outreach (e.g. new service on Timberline)
- Serves areas of the city with the highest transit reliance
- Connects key destinations like schools, healthcare facilities, shopping centers, human services, and affordable housing

Grounded in financial constraints

- Retools low performing routes
- Tested against existing resources
- Operationally viable



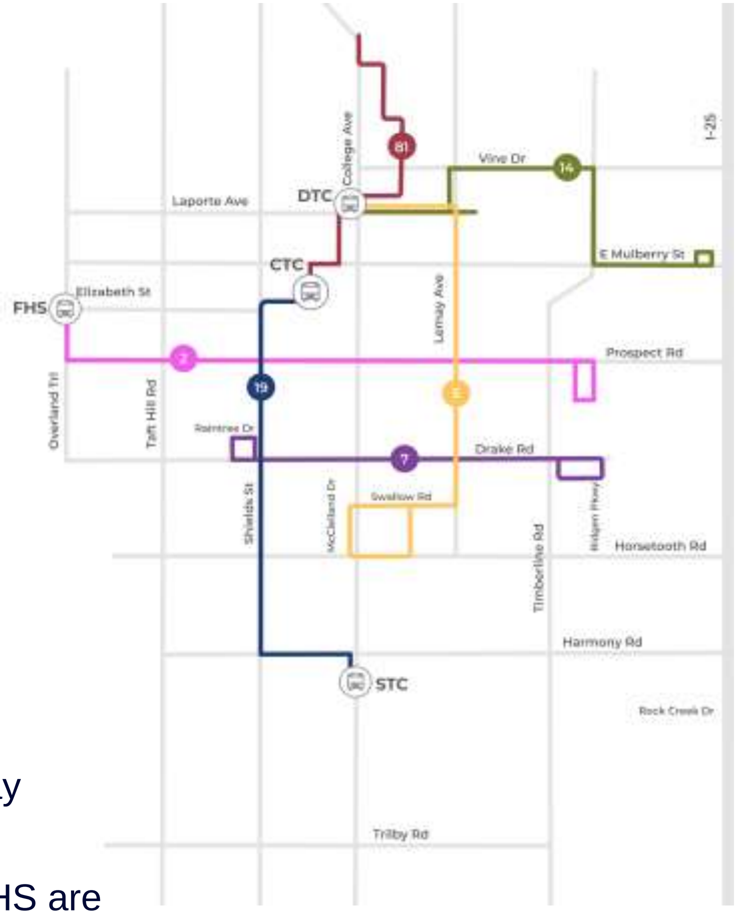
Layered Network Approach

Frequent

Weekday **10-20 mins** all day
Weekend **15-20 mins** all day

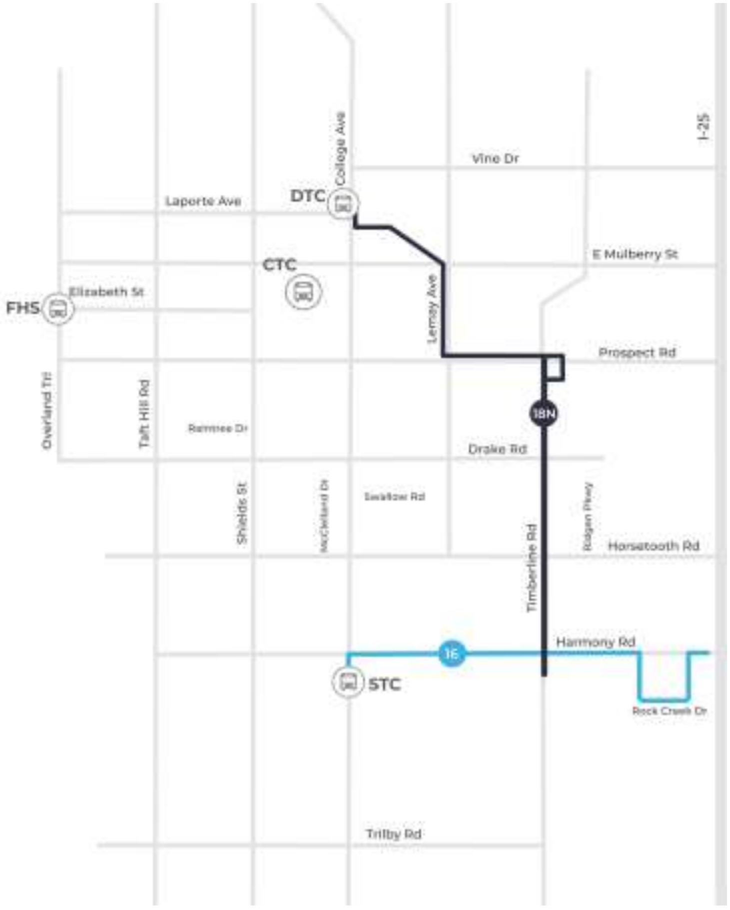
Core

Peak frequency of **30 mins** for 8 hrs/day*
Off-peak frequency of **60 mins** for 6 hrs/day



Local

Frequency of **60 mins** for 14 hrs/day



*The 7 runs at 30 min frequencies for 14 hrs/day Monday-Saturday

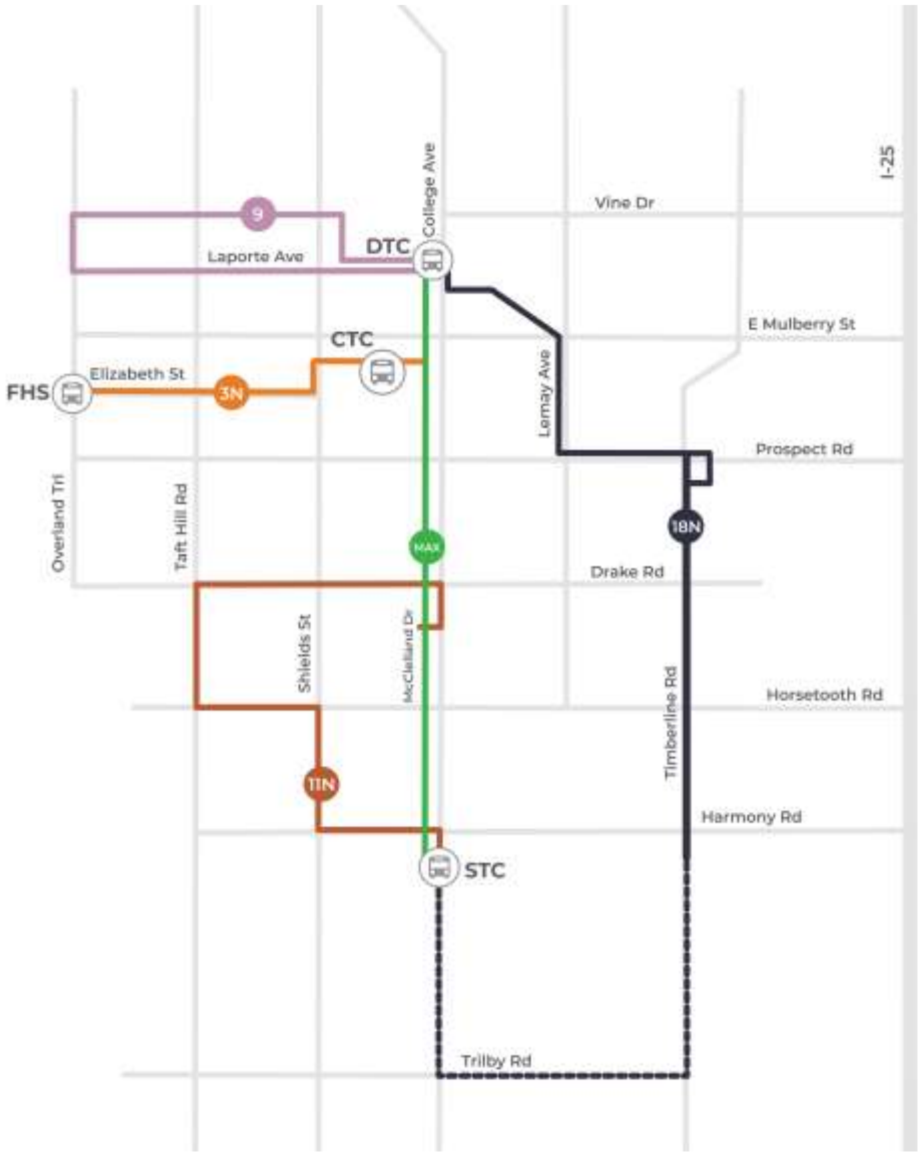
Contracted routes FLEX, HORN, GOLD and FHS are included in the system

Monday-Saturday service, no Sundays

Long-term Service Expansion Options

Service Expansion Options

- W. Elizabeth connection to MAX
- Higher frequency on MAX
- Extending Timberline route to service Trilby (18N)
- New route to service west Harmony (Route 11N)
- Sunday service for fixed route and paratransit
- Return of service along Laporte Ave (Route 9)
- Micro-transit zone



Paratransit

Dial-A-Ride Service Area – Impacts and Mitigation

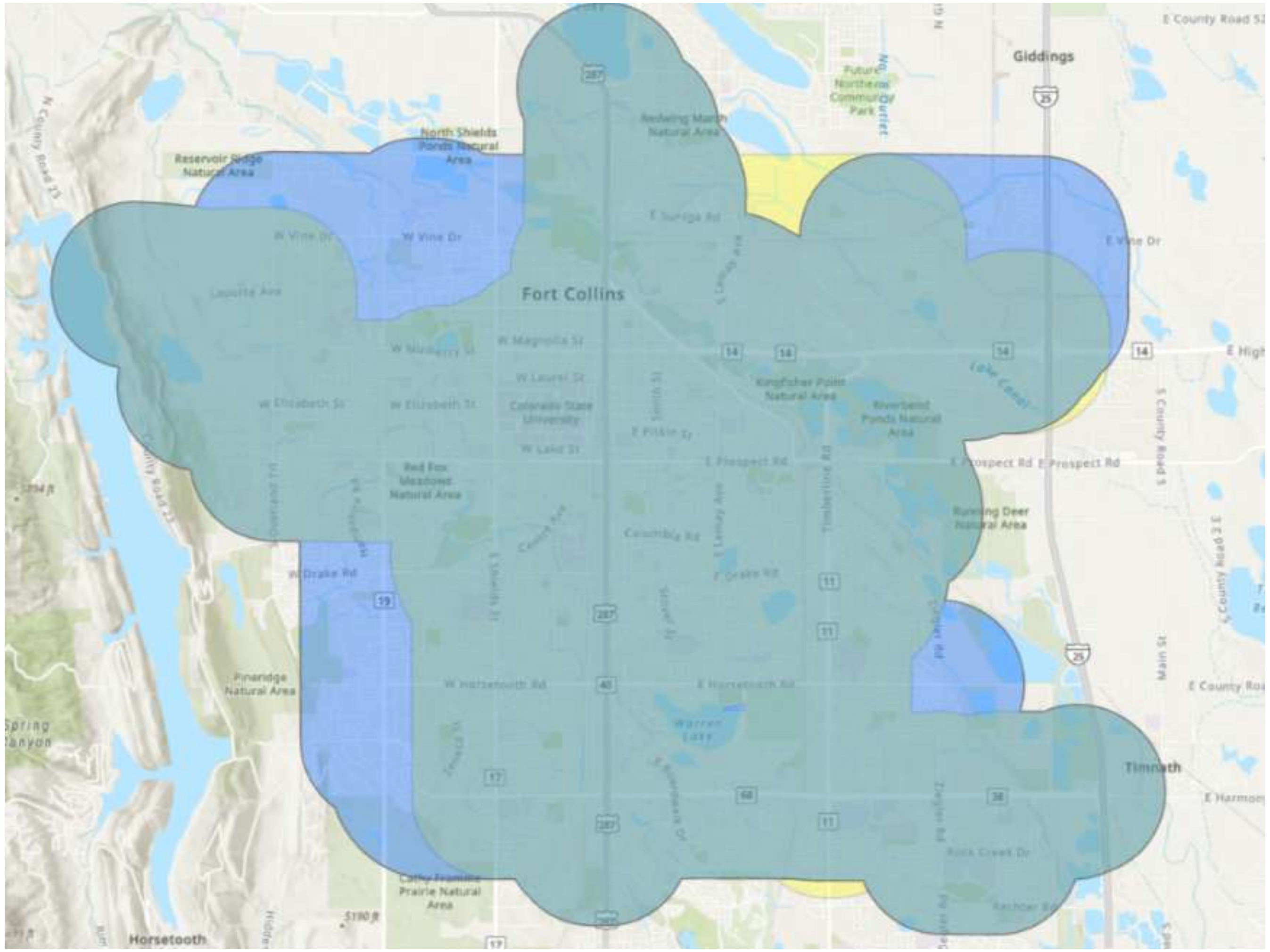
Impacts

- Dial-A-Ride service area will decrease with new fixed route map
- No Sunday service
- FTA requires complementary paratransit service within ¾ mile of fixed route service
- Dial-A-Ride program costs are difficult to predict or control

Mitigation Actions

- Legacy-in existing clients who will be outside the new service area
- Update Dial-A-Taxi Voucher Program
  - Expanded service area to Growth Management Area
  - Service any time of day, any day of week

Dial-A-Ride Service Area



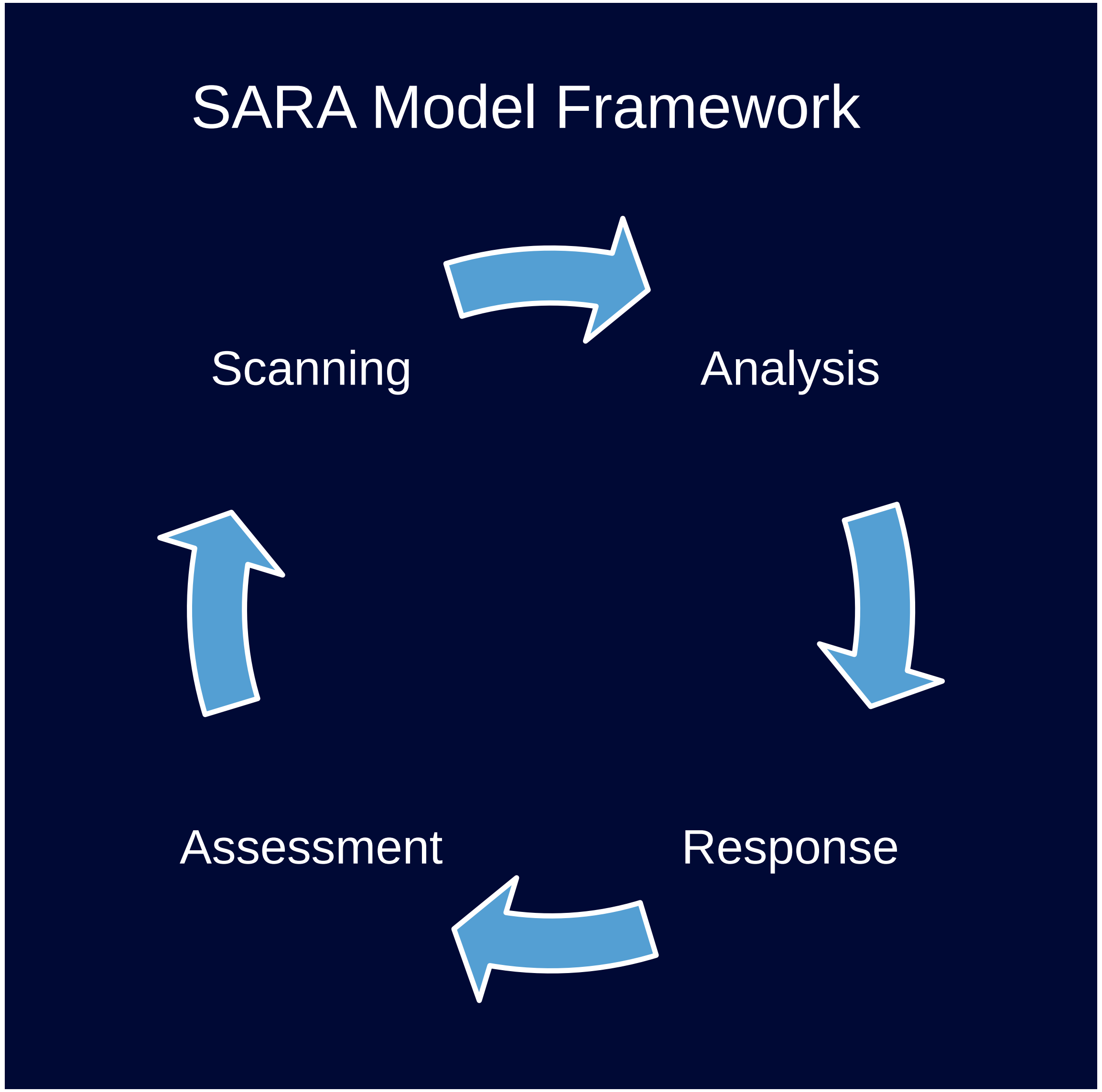
New Service Area

Service Reduction

Service Expansion

Safety and Security

Police & Transfort Partnership



- Homeless Outreach & Proactive Engagement Team (HOPE)
- Mental Health Response Team (MHRT)

Program Timeline: Oct. 2025-Dec. 2028

2025 = $40k
2026 = $260k
2027 and 2028 = $250k annually

Transfort plans to use 2050 tax approved in BFO offer 65.22 to fund partnership.

Next Steps

Next Steps

1. Public outreach and engagement
2. Evaluate and analyze feedback to develop principles and priorities
3. Develop final scenario based on principles and priorities
4. Ensure that final scenario is operationally viable and fiscally sustainable
5. Confirm principles & priorities with Council
6. Inform stage of public engagement
7. Implement operational plan (2027)

Questions for Council

What questions or feedback do Councilmembers have about the service planning principles and priorities guiding the future transit system?

Principles	Network Design Priorities
• Frequency • Productivity • Equity • Simplicity • Efficiency	• Grid pattern • Data-driven • Transit-reliant populations • Productivity • Highest-travelled corridors • Popular Destinations • Community-requested service • Highest ridership return

Thank you!