



Zero Fare Pilot Program

Agenda

- Why and How
- Exploring Options
- Next Steps
- Questions/Discussion



The WHY

- A climate action strategy to offset regional GHG emissions by boosting ridership

The HOW

- Launch the *Zero Fare Pilot Program* during the Fall 2025 Season





Project Summary

- Zero fare on all regional routes
 - 62 days: Mon. Sep. 22nd – Sun. Nov. 23rd
- Affected routes: *VelociRFTA* BRT, Valley/Local and Hogback
 - Maroon Bells is not included
- 2025 OKR: Implement fare reductions to increase ridership
- Contingent on finding financial partners to backfill ~\$550k of lost fare revenue



Opportunities and Constraints

Pros:

- Ridership 
- Regional GHG emissions 
- Available existing bus capacity during off-season
- Information gained

Cons:

- Contingent on financial partners to backfill ~\$550k of lost fare revenues
- “Joy-riders”
- Standees during peak time/peak direction trips
- Refunds for portion of Spring/Summer/Fall Seasonal Zone Passes sold



How to Measure Success

Successes

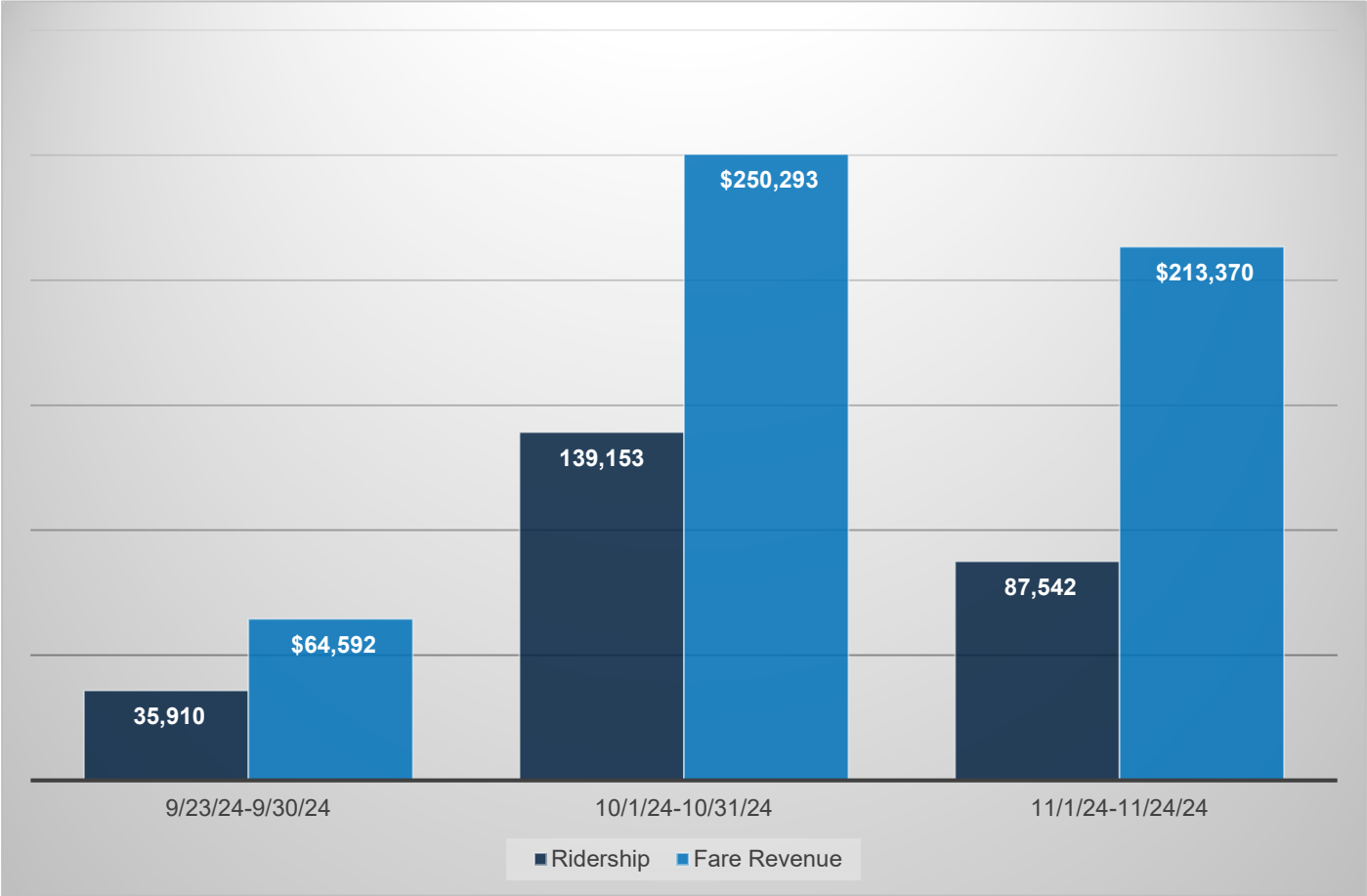
- Increased Boardings
- Minimal Impacts to Bus Capacity
- Minimal Requirements for Additional Buses
- Positive customer feedback

Measurements

- Compare Boardings
 - Fall 2024 and Fall 2025 service schedules should be nearly identical
- Estimate GHG emissions offset
- Compare bus volume/capacity ratios
- Staff and customer feedback



2024 Ridership & Fare Revenue Baseline Data VelociRFTA, Local & Hogback Routes



2023

Ozone Season Transit Grant Program REPORT

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Average Monthly Ridership Increase During 3-Month Zero Fare Program (Peer Agencies)

Vail Transit	38%
Grand Valley Transit	31%
Mountain Metro Transit	35%

- *Victoria Transportation Policy Institute (VTPI) Source: projected 20% - 50% ridership increase based on elasticity models*



Draft Schedule

- 3/10 Project Kickoff Meeting
- 4/4 Project Management Plan (PMP) complete
- 4/10 Present to RFTA BOD
- 5/9 Operations Staff Outreach
- 7/1 Public Outreach
- 8/1 Operations Staff Training
- 9/22 Launch pilot program
- 11/23 End pilot program
- 11/24 Begin evaluation phase
- Jan. 2026 Project evaluation and final report

THANK YOU!

Questions/Discussion

