



Core Transit Named Transit Agency of the Year

Gypsum, CO – Core Transit was honored with the Large Community Transit Agency of the Year award at the fall Colorado Association of Transit Agencies (CASTA) conference. This award recognizes outstanding best practices or projects undertaken by transit agencies serving communities of over 15,000 people.

“Core Transit was the clear choice this award. Their ability to stand up a brand-new regional transportation authority while increasing service, going fare-free, and transferring the current operations from Eagle County to Core Transit in just about 20 months is a monumental accomplishment,” said Ann Rajewski, CASTA’s executive director.

Ridership is BOOMING

Put simply, ridership is booming. Core Transit has experienced tremendous growth over the past few years, with annual ridership approaching 1.3 million and increasing by as much as 20% year-over-year. This momentum has continued into 2024, with ridership in the third quarter alone rising by up to 60% over the same period last year. Alongside this impressive growth, Core Transit has maintained a trip completion rate of over 99%, ensuring reliability for all riders. Curious how this compares to the national trend? We were too! Nationally, ridership growth sits at less than 8% through mid-2024.

Well, those are impressive numbers, but what did it take to get there?

After voters approved the formation of a new Regional Transportation Authority in November 2022, the newly appointed board of member jurisdictions quickly began laying the groundwork to fulfill its promises. Core Transit needed to expand service rapidly, bringing on new operators and buses while establishing essential



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organizational foundations like employee handbooks, HR and finance software, policies, and procedures.

The first significant service increase was implemented in November 2023, and at that same time, Core Transit went from one employee to two. A strong partnership with Eagle County Government and the current ECO staff made the service increase possible. Rolling into 2024, the next goal was hiring core admin staff and providing fare-free service with the launch of the Summer 2024 schedule.

"I cannot stress enough how impressive it was that our staff found a way to accomplish two major schedule increases over 7 months. When we made routes fare-free, we estimated a 50% increase in ridership. We have exceeded that estimate all while completing 99.5% of our scheduled routes," said Tanya Allen, Core Transit's executive director. "Next time you hop on a bus or see one of our operations staff, give them a big thank you!"

After launching the new, more frequent, mostly fare-free summer schedule in May 2024, Core Transit kept the momentum going with an ambitious goal. By August 4th, all ECO operations staff would officially become Core Transit employees.

"August 4th was an 'ahead of schedule' deadline to transition ECO staff to Core Transit," said Amy Phillips, Core Transit's board chair. "I want to thank our staff and Eagle County Government for their hard work in making this a reality. We went from 11 employees to 94 overnight," Phillips continued.

All of these service increases have played a pivotal role in supporting the workforce and economy in Eagle County.

"When an employee hopped on the Vail/BC express route to get to work last winter, there was a good chance they were sitting next to a guest who was traveling to ski, shop, and dine in one of our activity hubs in Eagle County. Core Transit brings both sides of our economy to where they need to be," said Chris Romer, executive director of Vail Valley Partnership.

During the transition from ECO to Core Transit, staff collaborated with the Core Transit board to establish a compensation philosophy aimed at being an employer of choice. As a result, Core Transit recently announced 9 operator positions for the upcoming winter service increase and received well over 40 applications.



As a people-first organization, Core Transit fosters a work environment where team members feel valued, supported, and empowered. Their culture embodies empathy, dedication, and a relentless pursuit of doing what's right, recognizing that small actions can lead to significant change. Core prioritizes comprehensive health coverage, offering free health insurance with excellent benefits and low deductibles. Coupled with a generous 10% retirement match, their employees are securing their financial futures while enjoying four weeks of vacation and approximately ten paid holidays each year. This approach allows the team to appreciate the breathtaking beauty of our mountain communities fully. The increasing number of applicants reflects the outrageously beneficial benefits Core Transit offers.

Visit CoreTransit.org to learn more about upcoming winter schedule enhancements, sign up for alerts, and browse their careers page.

About Core Transit

Core Transit is a user-friendly, multi-modal transportation authority driven by the belief that every journey should be an empowering and gratifying experience. Founded in 2022 with voter approval, Core is funded by a half-penny sales tax for operations. Core Transit serves Eagle County along the I-70 and Highway 6 corridors from Dotsero to Vail and includes Minturn, Red Cliff and Leadville routes along Highway 24. With an annual ridership of over 1 million and 98% route completion rate, we're well-equipped to help you navigate Eagle County safely, easily, and affordably. Our lively crew of experts drive home the benefits of public transportation with consistently reliable, lighthearted, and rewarding service that unites us. Many of our routes are free, and all are a safe, fun, and reliable way to get you to your final destination.

