



Colchester
VERMONT



**A Local Perspective on Vermont Older Adults &
Persons with Disabilities (O&D)
Transportation Program**

1/20/2026



Program Overview

Vermont's Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities (O&D) Transportation Program helps to fill gaps in transportation services for adults ages 60 and above and individuals with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The State of Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) created a unique program that provides funding for coordinated human services transportation utilizing a mix of federal and state funding. The program offers 80% state/federal operating funding and 20% local funding from local nonprofit organizations and municipalities providing human services transportation.

Most states this program is capital only (buses), sometimes with mobility management allowed.

VTrans trained the transit providers to maintain detailed cost allocations which document the administrative and maintenance costs in all public transit programs which are allowable 80% capital costs under the USDOT. This is how the O&D program is 80% federal/state.

It is a lot of work, and we appreciate VTrans' role in setting up and maintaining the framework for this important program

USDOT



Federal Transit Agency



VT State Taxes



Vermont Agency of Transportation



Local Match from participating municipalities & entities



Green Mountain Transit



Special Services Transportation Agency



Provides rides to qualifying program participants





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How O&D is funded

Federal Transit Agency (FTA) awards funds to each state based on census counts of older adults and persons with disabilities in each state.

Funding from the FTA is not sufficient for Vermont's transportation needs for its O&D riders.

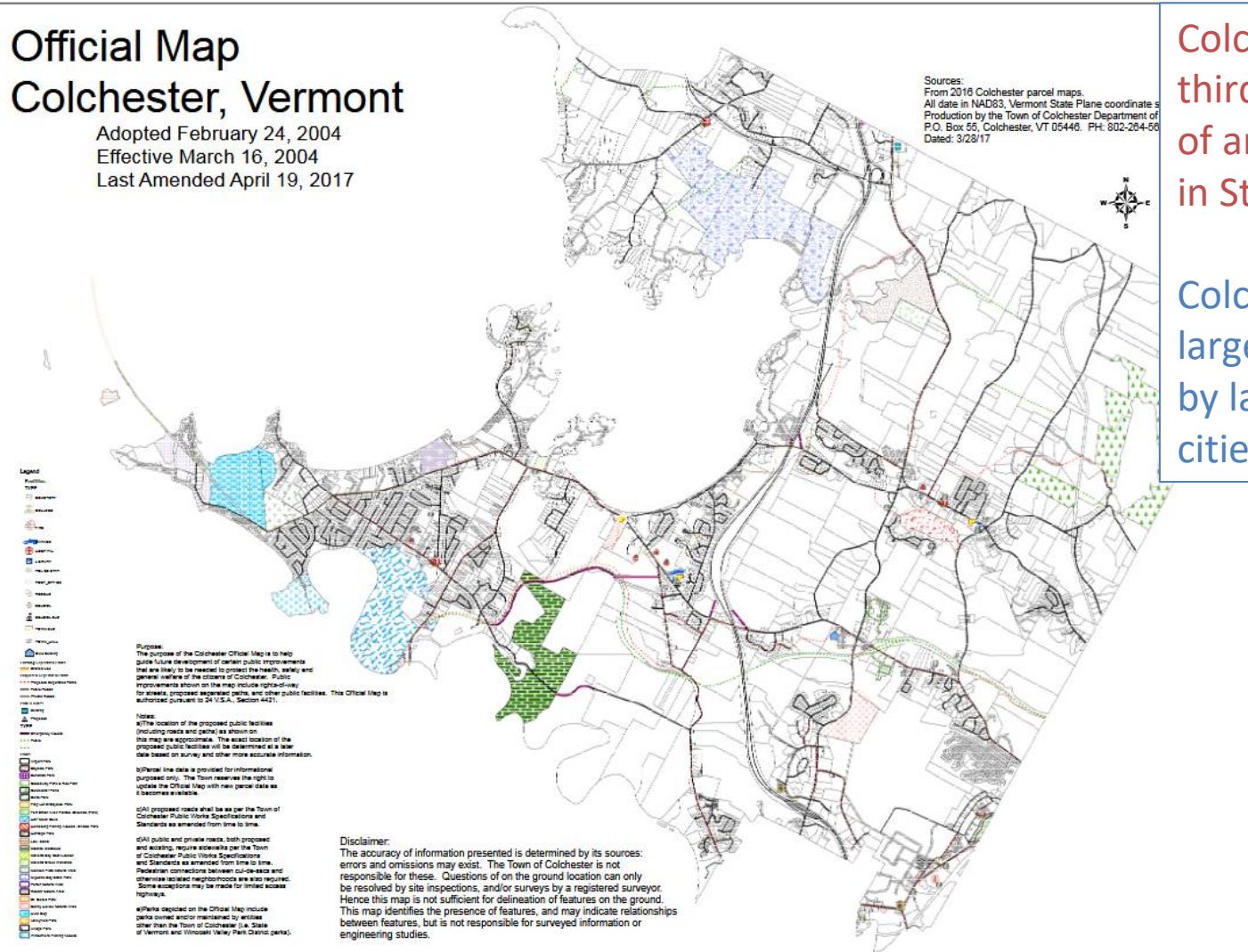
To supplement this, Vermont administers the O&D program with a combination of federal, state, and local funding sources.

VTrans applies a very significant share of flexible USDOT funds (USDOT is the agency over the FTA and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to the O&D program).

Human Service Agencies and Municipalities (Partners) supply the 20% local match receive trips for their qualifying riders.

Official Map
Colchester, Vermont

Adopted February 24, 2004
Effective March 16, 2004
Last Amended April 19, 2017



Colchester has the
third highest population
of any city/town/village
in State of Vermont.

Colchester is the 13th largest community in VT by land mass, out of 247 cities/towns/villages.



Colchester is
predominately NOT
an URBAN Area
– PER US CENSUS

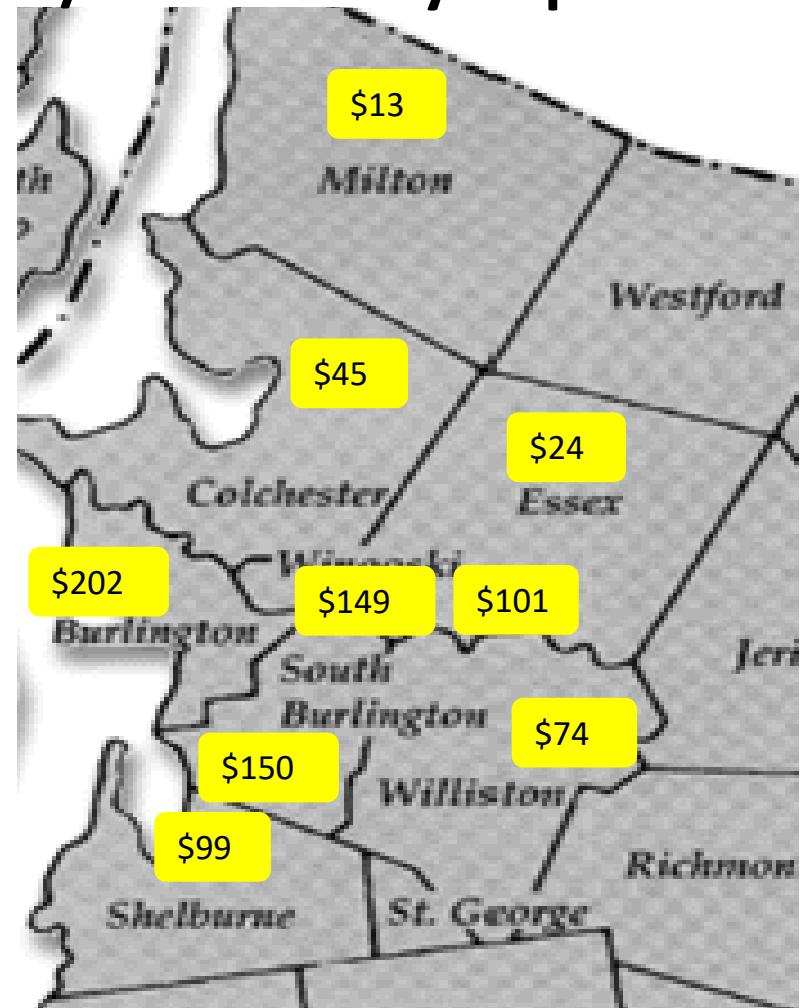
 Darker color indicates
Urbanized Area or Urban
Cluster with a
population of 10,000 or
more in 2010, per the US
Census and Federal
Agencies

With a large land mass, and a population density of 508 people per square mile— mostly due to a few concentrated areas— Colchester has more in common from a land use and transportation perspective with Vermont as a whole, with 70 people per square mile, than Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski, and Essex Junction which range from 1,226 to 5,365 people per square mile.

Value of GMT Service per Resident by Community

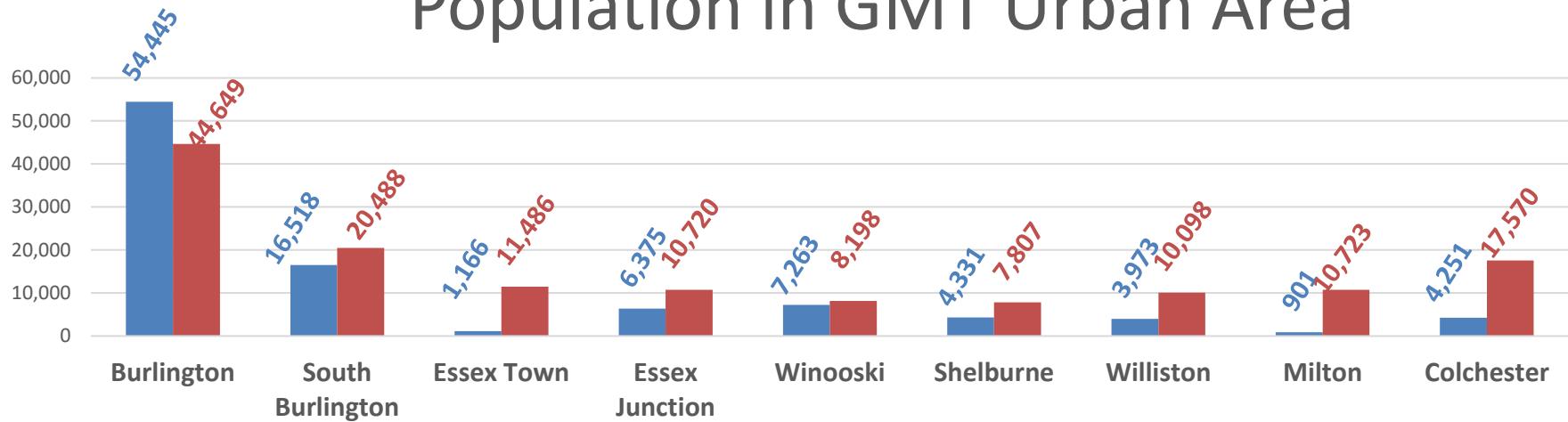
Fixed Route and ADA -- Total Cost / Community Population

Burlington	\$ 202
South Burlington	\$ 150
Winooski	\$ 149
Essex Junction (City)	\$ 101
Shelburne	\$ 99
Williston	\$ 74
Colchester (3rd lowest 47% below average)	\$ 45
Essex (Town)	\$ 24
Milton	\$ 13
Average	\$ 95



Local Municipal Funding is 23% of GMT's FY 27 \$21.8M Urban Budget

Annual Fixed Route Bus Service Hours vs. Population in GMT Urban Area



■ 2025 Bus Hours ■ Population

Of Nine Communities
Colchester is Third Highest Population; Third Lowest Bus Service Hours

O&D Program Overview

VTrans guidance, “[VERMONT OLDER ADULTS & PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES PROGRAM MANUAL & BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY](#),” page 14, “*Eligible trip types include:*

Critical Care Non-Medicaid – Transportation to kidney dialysis and cancer treatment appointments.

Non-Medicaid Medical needs – All trips to non-emergency medical appointments, except Critical Care non-Medicaid as defined above.

Senior Meals Programs – Trips to local congregate meal programs or group settings for seniors at a meal site approved by the local AAA as outlined by the Older Americans Act.

Adult Day Services – Services include professional nursing services, respite, personal care, therapeutic activities, nutritious meals, and support and education to families and caregivers in a community-based, non-residential day center not covered under the Medicaid program.

Wellness – Trips to providers of wellness programs such as nutrition, smoking cessation, pre-diabetes, chronic pain management, or exercise programs at a qualifying center

Shopping – Trips to local grocery store, pharmacy, food shelves, thrift shops, clothing and/or hardware stores.

Vocational – Trips to paid employment, interviews or training programs

Social/Personal – For socialization and/or personal trips. Trips could include: religious services, personal trips (such as hair appointment or visiting a family member). ”





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O&D Committee

Funding for the O&D program is determined on an annual basis by a grant from VTrans to GMT.

Decisions about the O&D program in Chittenden County are made by a committee comprised of member municipalities and human service agencies who contribute the 20% match to the program. Partners include:

- ***Town of Colchester - 115 O&D Riders in last five months as of December 2025***
- Cathedral Square
- Age Well
- Age Well County-Wide
- Burlington Department of Parks, Recreation, & Waterfront
- City of Winooski
- Milton Family Community Center
- Town of Richmond
- Town of Williston
- UVM Medical Center Home Health and Hospice
- Care Partners

This committee is facilitated by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and meets quarterly. The partners are supposed to approve (by consensus or vote) the split of funds to the partners and approve the trip purposes.

O&D Committee – Trip Purposes

E & D GENERAL GUIDELINES				Effective	10/2/2019	Limits	
E&D Town	Hours of Operation	Days of Operation	E&D Contact Person	Phone Number	Donation Request	** To qualify, individual must be 60 years or older or have a physical or mental disability. Any rides outside these guidelines need Town approval. Radiation/Chemo treatments also need approval. E&D rides are not guaranteed if requested later than 5pm the day before the trip.	
Trips to non E&D towns are allowed as long as the number of trips each month do not exceed the maximum trips allowed by the E&D town.							
Cathedral Square	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon Thru Friday	Laura Wilson / Beth Alpert Kristi Lyon	482-7757	\$0.00	A. Used for all Cath. Sq Properties B. 2 Trips per week any purpose Names called in. Other rides need prior approval	
CVAA	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon thru Fri	Erica Marks	662-5224	\$0.00	Used for group trips to senior meal sites. Names called in the day before ride by mealsite volunteers.	
CVAA (County Wide)	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon thru Fri	Erica Marks	662-5224	\$2.50	E&D trips specifically NOT supported by another Chittenden County Local Partner(s) Up to 6 round trips per month for Medical Trips OTHER: up to 3 unrestricted round trips per month Hinesburg: No personal trips for ambulatory except on volunteer St. George Residents must travel with volunteer driver. Charlotte Residents East of Route 7 must travel with volunteer driver unless approved by L Murphy for van/sedan under County Wide pool	
Burlington PRW	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon Thru Fri	Candice Holbrook 503-7716 Note: As of 7/1/17 Champlain Sr Ctr is now Burlington Parks, Rec, and Waterfront		\$2.50	Used for group trips for senior meals scheduled by Senior Center staff Names called in daily.	
City of Winooski	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon thru Fri	Barb Pitiffo	802-655-6425	\$2.50	Used by Winooski residents for trips within the ADA area ONLY and who meet the E&D guidelines. No restriction for Critical Care. Up to 2 round-trips per month for Non-Medicaid Medical. Exceptions must be approved by Jahnine (1st call) or Ray (2nd call).	
Ray Coffey				655-6410 x20			
Town of Milton	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon thru Fri	Amber N. Baker	802-891-8054	\$1.00	Trips limited to two (2) round trips per week, of which, only one (1) per month may be other than medical or grocery shopping (groceries trips must be done origin & destination as Milton). Exceptions approved by Town of Milton	
Colchester	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon thru Fri	Aaron Frank Renae Marshall	264-5509	\$1.00	Maximum: 3 round trips per week in any category other than Medical, no restrictions for medical trips Social Personal: Up to 3 round trips per week for any of the following: Visiting spouse cared for outside the home. Trips to visit friends or church. Social Personal trips for any other purpose not permitted at this time. NO RESTRICTIONS ON ORIGIN OR DESTINATION	
Richmond	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon thru Fri	Josh Arneson	434-5170	\$1.00	1 Round Trip per week in any category OTHER than Social/Personal. 2 Round Trips per month for Social/Personal.	
Williston	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon thru Fri	Jordan Posner, GMT contact GMT will notify town of Williston	540-0874 878-0919	\$2.50	Williston must be the town of destination or origin. No other restrictions for Williston residents except social personal as below. social personal trips limited to 2 round-trips (or 4 one-way) per week. Exceptions need to be approved by GMT	
UVMHH	5:45 AM-6 PM	Mon thru Fri	Heather Filonow	658-1900	\$2.50	Used for UVMHH only. UVMHH determines who can use the funds. UVMHH will fax transportation authorization for their transportation.	
Note:							
The E&D program operates outside the strict service criteria required of the complementary paratransit (ADA) program. Thus the specific requirements relating to Service Area (except for the City of Winooski) Response Time, Fares, Trip Purpose Restrictions, Hours and Days of Service, and Capacity Constraints for the ADA program do not specifically apply to E&D rides. Consequently, the ability of SSTA to limit the availability of transportation to eligible individuals is less restrictive. Request for E&D travel can remain unfilled and/or open to negotiations due to Response Time or Capacity Constraints. Trip requests may be turned down if received too late in the day, or are beyond the capacity of SSTA to accommodate a particular trip pattern, or appear to be outside the parameters of the supporting member's guidelines. Alternative arrangements must be proposed either the same day or for the next day (e.g. within 24 hours) to accommodate the Please do not refer passengers to GMT without talking with GMT staff first. Let the passenger know someone will get back to them before the end of the next business day							
S:\CCTA\Planning\planning on Planning\E&D Program\CCTA CC E&D\E&D Advisory Committee (CC)\General Guidelines\Local Partner Guidelines\E&D guidelines for partners Effective 10-2-19 Sheet1							
3/5/2020 10:09 AM							

O&D Committee – Trip Purposes Colchester

COLCHESTER O&D TRIP RULES, UNTIL FEBRUARY 23, 2026

- ***Critical Care Non-Medicaid*** – Transportation to kidney dialysis and cancer treatment appointments.
- ***Non-Medicaid Medical needs*** – All trips to non-emergency medical appointments, except Critical Care non-Medicaid as defined above.
- ***Senior Meals Programs*** – Trips to local congregate meal programs or group settings for seniors at a meal site approved by the local AAA as outlined by the Older Americans Act.
- ***Adult Day Services*** – Services include professional nursing services, respite, personal care, therapeutic activities, nutritious meals, and support and education to families and caregivers in a community-based, non-residential day center not covered under the Medicaid program.
- ***Wellness*** – Trips to providers of wellness programs such as nutrition, smoking cessation, pre-diabetes, chronic pain management, or exercise programs at a qualifying center
- ***Shopping*** – Trips to local grocery store, pharmacy, food shelves, thrift shops, clothing and/or hardware stores.
- ***Vocational*** – Trips to paid employment, interviews or training programs

Maximum: 3 round trips per week in any category other than Medical, no restrictions for medical trips

Social Personal: Up to 3 round trips per week for any of the following:

Visiting spouse cared for outside the home.

Trips to visit friends or church.

Social Personal trips for any other purpose not permitted at this time.

NO RESTRICTIONS ON ORIGIN OR DESTINATION



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Annual Budget - Initial FY 26 Budget

BREAKDOWN - GRANT BUDGET

AGENCY	100%	80%	20%
CATHEDRAL SQUARE	875.00	700.00	175.00
AGE WELL -CHAMPLAIN AGENCY AGING (CVAA)	-	-	-
AGE WELL - COUNTY WIDE (CVAA)	160,000.00	128,000.00	32,000.00
CORE ADULT CENTER	24,375.00	19,500.00	4,875.00
CITY OF WINOOSKI	3,750.00	3,000.00	750.00
TOWN OF MILTON	76,625.00	61,300.00	15,325.00
TOWN OF COLCHESTER	160,625.00	128,500.00	32,125.00
TOWN OF RICHMOND	13,250.00	10,600.00	2,650.00
TOWN OF WILLISTON	97,500.00	78,000.00	19,500.00
UVM HOME HEALTH & HOSPICE	7,000.00	5,600.00	1,400.00
	544,000.00	435,200.00	108,800.00

Recent Events

- FY 26 regional transit provider **received additional \$950,000** in state provided federal funding for urban fixed route transportation system
 - *Was included in Governor's budget, but my understanding is you have to ask early, often with a very strong argument, to obtain almost \$1M in additional funding*
- At the same time, despite increasing needs (the Chittenden County O&D program was over budget by \$168,000 in FY 25) there was no specific request for more O&D funds.
- **O&D funding was reduced by \$300,000 statewide from FY 25 to FY 26**
- Chittenden County O&D partners were aware that we would likely have a budget problem in July 2026 based on FY 25 spending
- O&D costs can be extremely variable by partner and by County
 - Dialysis and Cancer Treatments are a large part of the variability
- Individual Transit Agencies and VTrans can move money among partners or across counties
- The typical approach is to wait and see how things turn out and if you are over mid-year to move money, make adjustments to trip parameters, engage in mobility management (other options for trips) or all of the these
- In December 2025, GMT identified that spending trends project that they will exhaust the Chittenden County Federal O&D funds as early as January 2026
- In response to this trend, in December 2025, VTrans agreed to provide additional Federal and State funds to the O&D program in Chittenden County. Despite having these additional funds, GMT still predicted a \$161,000 deficit by the end of the fiscal year.



Recent Events (cont.)

- GMT announced to the nine Chittenden County O&D partner agencies on 12/10/25 they were:
 - Restricting trip types and number of trips
- GMT mailed letters to riders on 12/17/25
- Some riders did not receive the letter due to the ongoing mail delays and holidays
- Some riders received initial notice by phone call on Friday 1/2/26 canceling trips on Monday 1/5/26
- Colchester advocated for another week notice; GMT granted; SSTA called riders on Saturday
- Colchester advocated again for a total of one month notice, given significant impact to riders; GMT granted request to delay the implementation of trip constraints until February 2, 2026
- **Colchester advocated to follow, VTrans O&D guidance:**

*"If a Regional O&D Advisory Committee foresees a budgetary shortfall, it will institute measures to determine the greatest need for remaining funds and will **reallocate funds as necessary to have the smallest possible negative impact on O&D Transportation services.**"*

GMT Suggestion - Comparison to prior Colchester trip parameters

Would be EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 23, 2026

- **ALL RIDERS – SIX ROUND TRIPS MAXIMUM PER MONTH OF ALL TRIP TYPES , UNLESS OTHERSISE NOTED**
- **IF RIDERS TAKE SIX ROUND TRIPS FOR ADULT DAY, DIALYSIS OR CANCER TREATMENT, they are NOT eligible for other trips**

Critical Care Non-Medicaid – Transportation to kidney dialysis and cancer treatment appointments – **remains unlimited**

Non-Medicaid Medical needs – All trips to non-emergency medical appointments, except Critical Care non-Medicaid as defined above-**Six trips a month maximum**

Senior Meals Programs – Trips to local congregate meal programs or group settings for seniors at a meal site approved by the local AAA as outlined by the Older Americans Act-**Six trips a month maximum**

Adult Day Services – Services include professional nursing services, respite, personal care, therapeutic activities, nutritious meals, and support and education to families and caregivers in a community-based, non-residential day center not covered under the Medicaid program. – **remains unlimited**

Wellness – ~~Trips to providers of wellness programs such as nutrition, smoking cessation, pre-diabetes, chronic pain management, or exercise programs at a qualifying center~~

Shopping – Trips to local grocery store, pharmacy, food shelves, thrift shops, clothing and/or hardware stores. **Six trips a month maximum**

Vocational – ~~Trips to paid employment, interviews or training programs~~

Social/Personal – ~~For socialization and/or personal trips. Trips could include: religious services, personal trips (such as hair appointment or visiting a family member)."~~



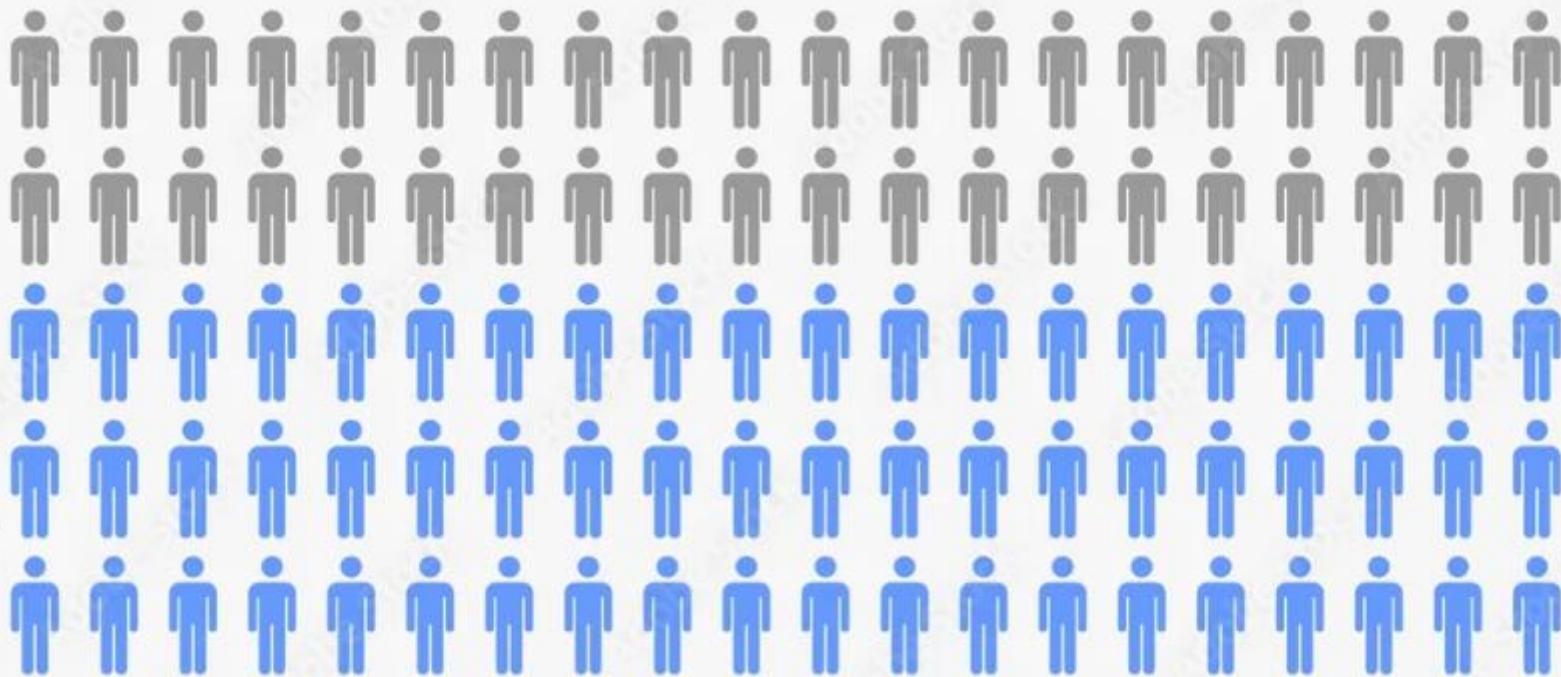
Colchester O&D

- The action taken on December 10, 2025, was not taken by the committee. Nor was it the “smallest possible negative impact on O&D Transportation services.” **It is unlikely that a county-wide approach will accomplish the goals of the State guidance.**
- Colchester is willing to engage in mobility management with vanpools, carpools, friends and family covering some trips, restriction of grocery shopping to in town only, and possibly grocery shopping on a single group trip. We can implement the “smallest possible negative impact on O&D Transportation services” as required by the State guidance. We have made contact with all 115 riders.
- **GMT Granted this request, but the request distributes State and Federal funds unequally.**
- **Partners who agree to follow the mandate, now a suggestion, will be held harmless for ALL cost overages, whereas those that try to provide more service must pay for overages out of their own funds**
- Colchester negotiating with GMT, Colchester offering added local funding at 30% share to extend federal/state share further; GMT now waiting till 1/29?
- **Choosing the suggested trip parameter option eliminates recurring work trips for 9 Colchester riders as well as all social/personal trips**

VERMONT LABOR MARKET

AVAILABLE WORKERS/OPEN JOBS

60/100





Colchester Decisions

- Of the 115 Colchester residents who used the O&D program in the last five months, 89 were going to be affected based on an analysis of trips from July 1 to October 30, 2025.
- Of the 89 Colchester residents affected, the trip purposes were as follows: 9 were for work trips, 2 were for vaccinations; 57 were for personal reasons; 25 were for social personal reasons; 2 were for a medical trips, 2 were for social trips; and 1 was for a trip for substance use disorder treatment.
- Colchester staff are willing to:
 - Engage the work trip rides in mobility management with vanpools, carpools, friends and family covering some trips
 - Conduct outreach to try to find volunteer drivers, which they have in other counties
 - Consider restriction of grocery shopping to in town only like the other towns
 - Consider a weekly town-wide group shopping trip in lieu of individual scheduled trips
- Using these approaches, we can implement the “smallest possible negative impact on O&D Transportation services” as required by the State guidance.
- ***Based on the GMT suggested trip guidelines, providing more trips will place the Town at financial risk vs. accepting the suggested rules***

Two GMT Bus Routes in Colchester

1) Blue - Essex Route: travels the high-density corridor of Rt. 15, where there is very little tax revenue generated for the Town due to non-profit ownership. Essex Junction Route is among the highest performers in the state at total cost of about \$5 per one-way trip.

2) Green - Franklin County Commuter; local match paid by Colchester and Milton (not Burlington, Winooski or St. Albans)

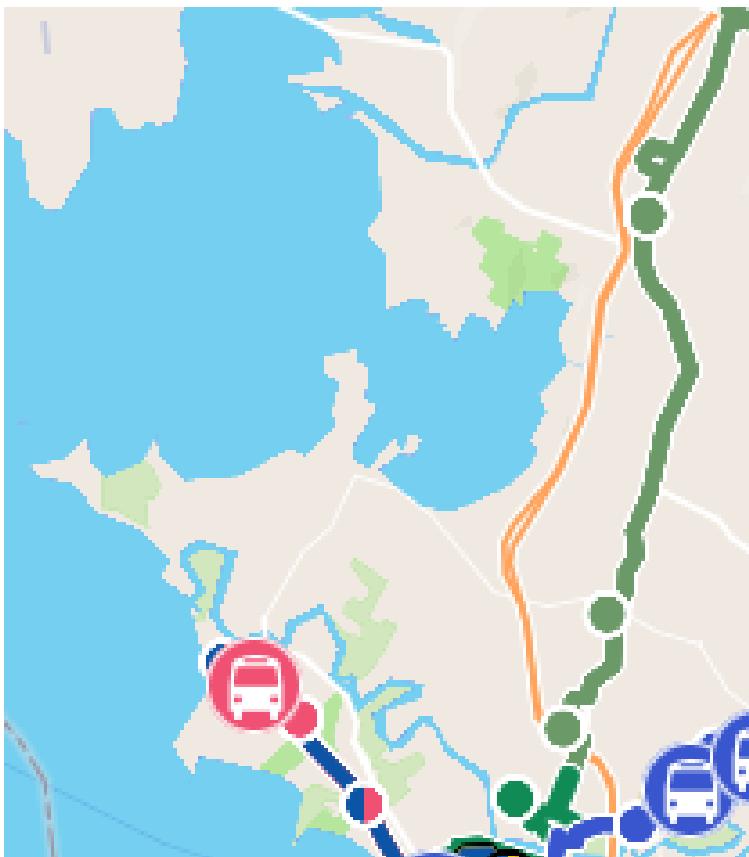
Cost roughly \$32 per one-way trip; Uber is \$51

Prius: Three-year lease \$299 a month w/ 3k down

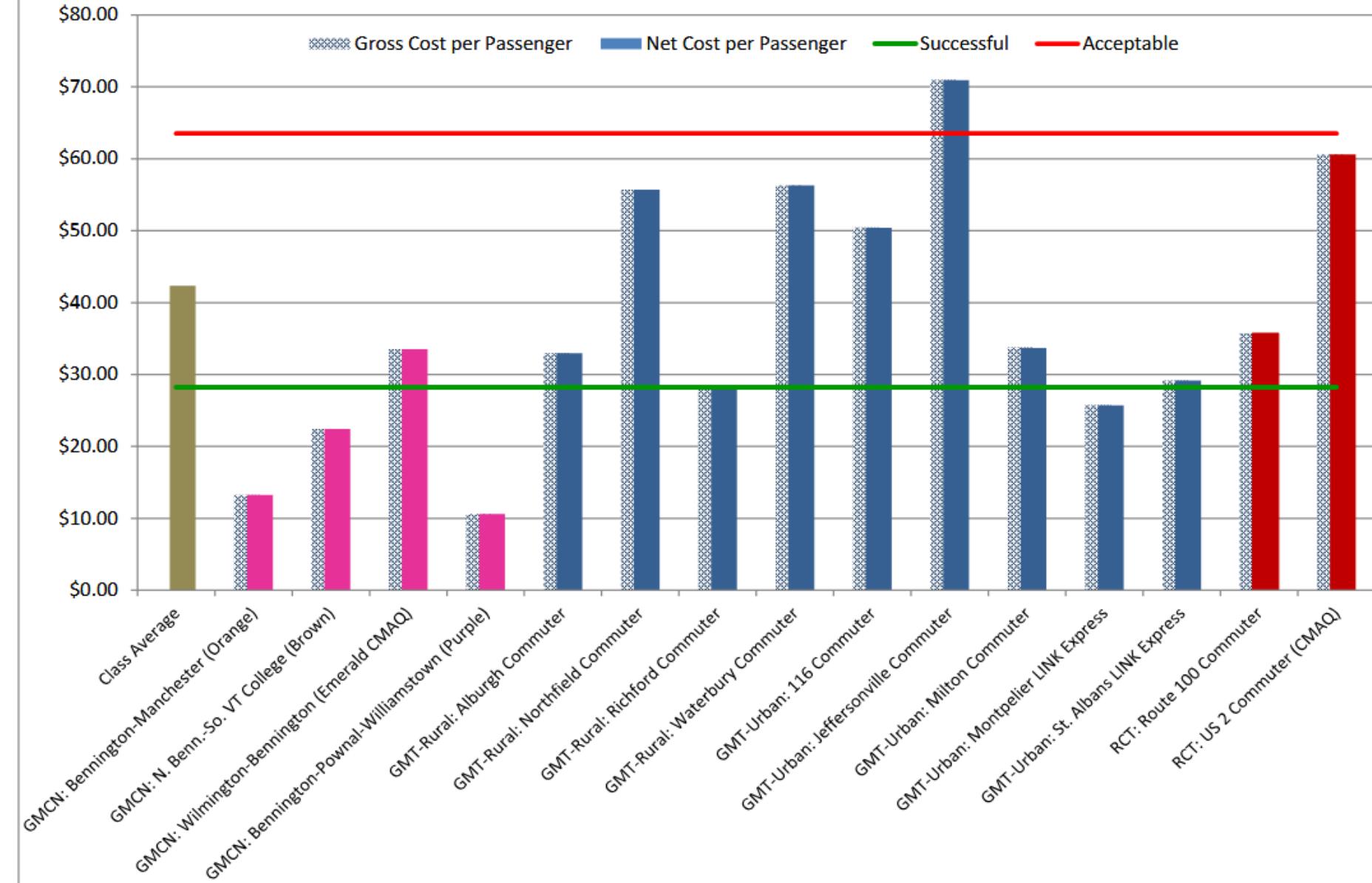
With 42 round trips a month for work, \$6.80/one-way trip. Leaves money for gas (56MPG) and tires and brakes and you can use the car for shopping and other things.

Colchester O&D Cost/Trip \$53.32

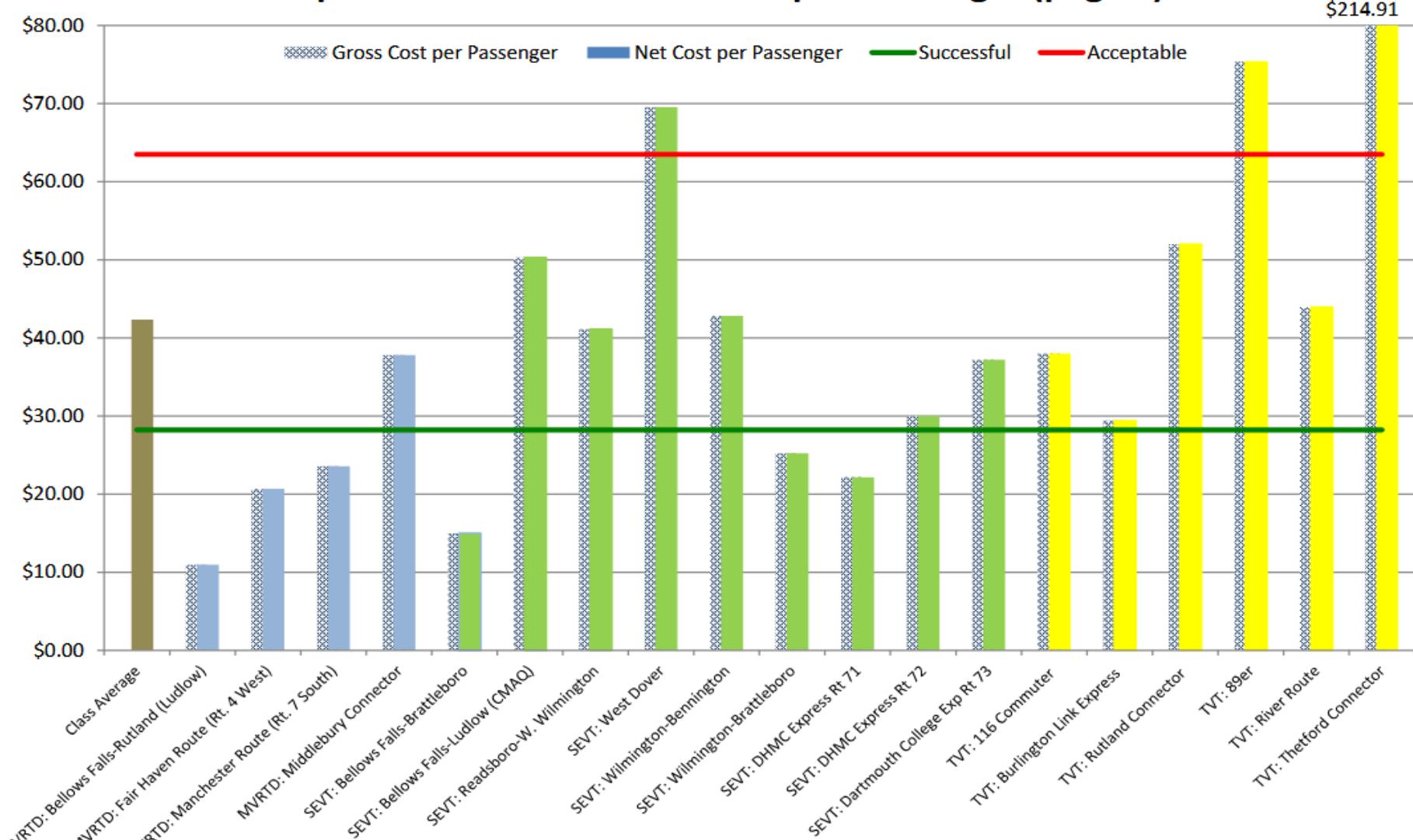
Society/government would have more money to provide transportation for people who can't drive.



Graph #7: 2024 Commuter Cost per Passenger (page 1)



Graph #7: 2024 Commuter Cost per Passenger (page 2)





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Thank You!