



2024 Annual Report



What's Inside

**Message from the
CEO and General
Manager**

**Year in
Review**

**Summary of
Programs**

**Summary of Revenue
and Expenditures**

About Us

Mountain Line is the transit agency in northern Arizona operating fixed route bus service on nine routes, paratransit service, vanpool, and seasonal Mountain Express service to Arizona Snowbowl. Established in 2001, Mountain Line has grown into a system that employs more than 100 people and transports more than one and a half million riders a year.

Our Mission

Getting You Where You Want To Go

Our Vision

Leading the way with sustainable transportation that connects our communities and provides value for our residents.

Board of Directors

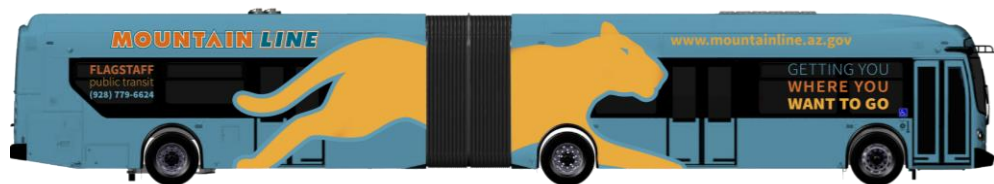
Tony Williams (Coconino Community College), Josh Maher (Northern Arizona University), Lori Matthews (City of Flagstaff), Jeronimo Vasquez (Coconino County), Miranda Sweet (City of Flagstaff)

Transit Advisory Committee

Kim Musselman (Coconino County), Carol Covington (County Citizen Representative), Greg Clifton (City of Flagstaff), Karli Vander Meersch (ASNAU), Michele James (City Citizen Representative), David Wessel (MetroPlan), Gail Jackson (ECoNA), Kurt Stull (Coconino Community College), Erin Stam (NAU)

Staff

Heather Dalmolin (CEO and General Manager), Jacki Lenner (Deputy General Manager), Josh Stone (Management Services Director), Samuel Short (Workforce Director), Rhonda Cashman (Executive Assistant and Clerk of the Board)



Message From The CEO and General Manger

September 30, 2024

Honorable Chair and Members of the Board:

In accordance with A.R.S. 28-9101 et seq. to establish an intergovernmental public transportation authority and the restated Master IGA signed by Coconino County, signed on June 7, 2013, this annual report will serve to advise the Board of Directors of the activities, transactions, and finances for the preceding fiscal year. Staff has prepared the FY2024 Annual Report. The report contains a summary of the activities, including performance data from the City of Flagstaff and Coconino County public transportation systems. The report provides an overview of revenue and expenditures along with a financial statement for FY2024. During the fiscal year 2024, operations included planning services for multiple jurisdictions and management and oversight of the City of Flagstaff and Coconino County's public transit systems. In addition to operating these services, Mountain Line continues to work with other transit systems and public agencies to create coordinated services between and within communities. In conclusion, the FY2024 Annual Report provides a summary of the program activities, the respective revenues received, along with expenditure of funds.

Respectfully,

Heather Dalmolin

CEO and General Manager

Mountain Line



Year In Review

The Downtown Connection Center administration building is under construction! The new hub of Mountain Line is on track for completion in Spring 2025.



\$16.3

**Million in FTA Bus
and Bus Facilities
Grant**

Mountain Line received a \$16.3 million Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Bus and Bus Facilities grant to build a new maintenance facility per the Kaspar Master Plan. The new facility will improve and expand maintenance capabilities and create the capacity for Mountain Line's transition to a zero-emission fleet. Construction is anticipated to start in Spring 2025.

Mountain Line successfully completed a Federal Transit Administration Triennial Review of FY2022-2024 with only five deficiencies out of a possible 159. This is a major process which examined three years' worth of projects and processes for compliance in 23 review areas.

97%

**FTA Triennial
Results**



Mountain Line held a grand opening of a new CDL training course in partnership with NAU. This dedicated facility provides a space for training new operators and is a major asset for the community!

The Safety Committee continued to meet monthly. They evaluated and addressed more than 32 staff suggested concerns in advance of the actual occurrence of incidents and accidents.

32+

**Safety Concerns Addressed
Preemptively**



**Jim Wagner, Former
Operations Director**

Mountain Line's first and only Operations Director Jim Wagner has officially retired! Jim was with Mountain Line from the beginning, when the system had four routes and six buses. He helped Mountain Line grow into what it is today, a thriving transit system with nine routes and 30 buses.

Mountain Line continued to reach service performance benchmarks of large transit agencies, resulting in receipt of 6 of 6 "Small Transit Intensive Cities" competitive funding measures from the Federal Transit Administration.

6/6

**STIC Measures
Obtained**



Mountain Line completed a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) Plan with Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI). This Plan evaluated existing paratransit and microtransit operations and developed recommendations for potential new operational opportunities.

Fixed Route Bus



Mountain Line Operates...

- 22 35 Ft Hybrid Electric
- 6 60 Ft Articulated
- 2 35 Ft Fully Electric



Operations

Mountain Line's fixed route fleet consists of 30 buses, including 22 35-foot buses and six 60-foot articulated buses. Recently, Mountain Line has acquired two fully electric buses and has placed an order for four additional electric buses, expected to be delivered in FY2026 and replace a portion of the aging hybrid electric fleet. The vehicles continue to be well-received with customers and the community as they are quieter, reducing noise along transit routes through residential neighborhoods.



**Pantograph, Aug
28, 2024,**

Mountain Line continues to be a leader in emerging technologies. On August 28th, 2024, the first EV pantograph was commissioned and charged both EV buses. This expedites charging of EV buses, enabling 25% to 100% charge in 60-75 minutes, a significant reduction in time.

Service

Mountain Line’s fixed route service serves 9 routes throughout Flagstaff. Service runs **363 days of the year, 7 days a week**. Services operate Monday through Friday between 5:30 am to 10:30 pm and weekend service between 7 am to 8 pm. Current routes are listed below.

Route	Peak Frequency	Off Peak/Weekend/Holiday Frequency
Route 2	20 Minute	30/60 Minute
Route 3	30 Minute	60 Minute
Route 4	20 Minute	40 Minute
Route 5	60 Minute	–
Route 7	20 Minute	60 Minute
Route 8	30 Minute	60 Minute
Route 10	10-20 Minute	20-40 Minute
Route 14	30 Minute	–
Route 66	30 Minute	60 Minute

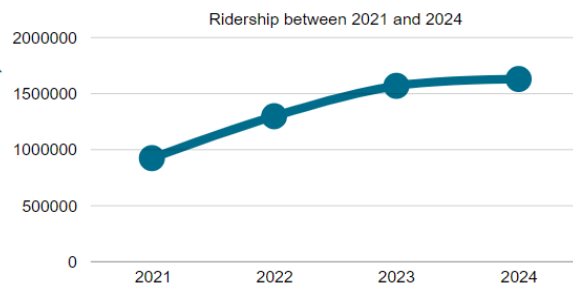
Ridership

Ridership has continued to increase year over year since the pandemic, while cost per passenger and cost per hour has continued to decrease. In FY2024, Mountain Line operated for a total of 70,231 hours and 865,308 revenue miles. Passengers per revenue hour was 22.61, a 78% increase. Total passengers for the year were 1,630,830, a 4% increase from FY2023.

between 2021 and 2024...

Fixed Route ridership increased by **76%**

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Trips	924,728	1,298,670	1,569,968	1,630,830

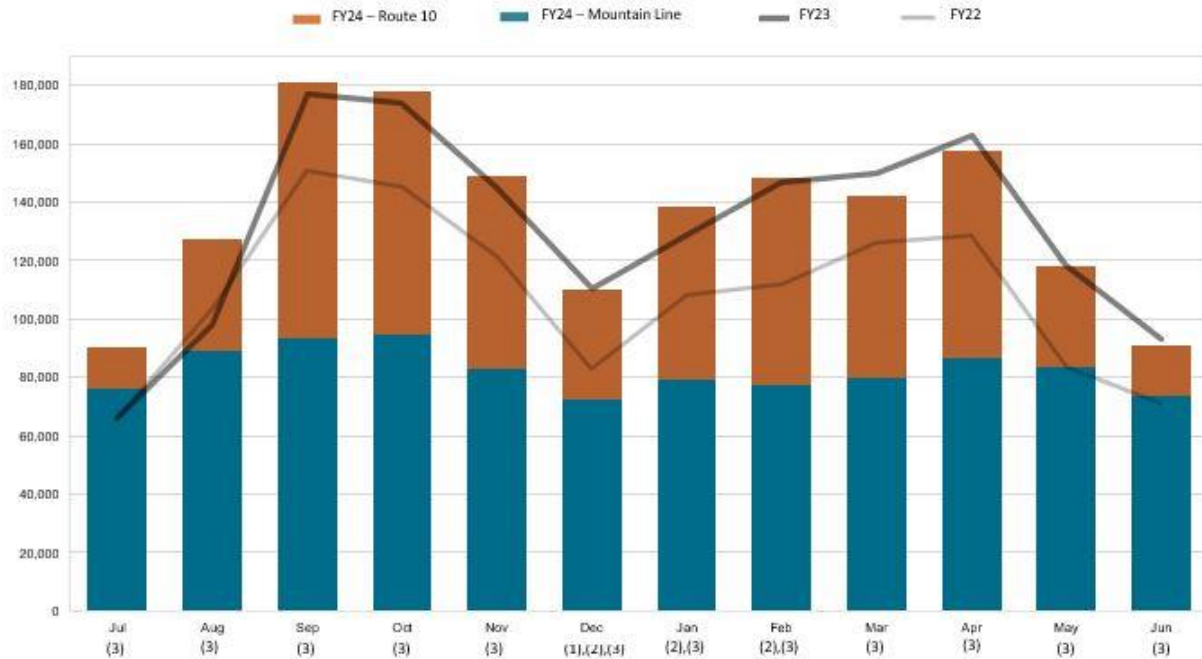


Ridership Month to Month:

Ridership Comparison by Month
FY22 to FY24

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
FY22	66,181	103,622	151,013	145,254	121,147	82,901	108,086	111,732	125,804	128,756	83,286	70,888
FY23	65,873	98,203	177,204	173,719	145,093	110,370	129,126	146,550	149,625	162,488	118,458	93,259
FY24	90,547	127,564	181,064	177,789	148,845	110,322	138,482	148,078	142,082	157,290	117,929	90,838
Change from prior year	37%	30%	2%	2%	3%	0%	7%	1%	-5%	-3%	0%	-3%

The orange top represents Route 10 and the blue bottom represents the rest of Mountain Line
Bars - current fiscal year. Lines - previous fiscal years (lighter, older).



(1) Extended New Years Eve Hours and Free Service All Day FY17-FY20 and FY23-FY24. FY21 and FY22 did not have extended hours but service was free all day.

(2) Mountain Express seasonal service to Snowbowl FY15-FY24.

(3) Due to Operator shortage, Mountain Line implemented various levels of the triaged service plan from October 21, 2021 to January 16, 2023, and again on August 28, 2023 to present, contributing to the reduction in ridership.

Passengers per hour has nearly doubled (**12.71** → **22.61**) between 2021 and 2024. In this same time, cost per passenger has been reduced (**\$8.63** → **\$6.53**), although operating cost per hour has increased (**\$109.66** → **\$147.55**)

78%
Passengers Per Hour Between 2021 and 2024

Summary of Financials

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Fixed Route - Bus				
Total Trips	924,728	1,298,670	1,569,968	1,630,830
Cost per Passenger	\$ 8.63	\$ 7.03	\$ 6.36	\$ 6.53
Cost per Hour	\$ 109.66	\$ 124.10	\$ 137.10	\$ 147.55
Passengers per Hour	12.71	17.65	21.57	22.61

Summary of Ridership

	FY24 Ridership	Compared to Previous Year (FY23)	Compared to pre-COVID (FY19)
Mountain Line Bus	1,630,830	4%	-36%
Route 10	642,387	-10%	-49%
Rest of system	988,443	15%	-23%

Special Services

Mountain Lift

Mountain Lift runs daily between December 26th - January 2nd. Mountain Lift runs weekends in January and February.



Mountain Line also operates the Mountain Express route, providing ski-season transit service between downtown Flagstaff and Arizona Snowbowl. This service includes a free Park-n-Ride facility at Flagstaff High School through a partnership with Flagstaff Unified School District. The total ridership was **6,184** over 24 days of service. Mountain Express continues to provide congestion relief along US 180 and is an attractive option to driving.

FUSD



"Mountain Line is prepared and can provide safe and reliable transportation for FUSD families. They already transport hundreds of students to and from school daily, and they look forward to welcoming more students to public transportation." - FUSD

Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) partnered with Mountain Line in January 2024 to offer ecoPass to students impacted by a school bus service reduction in middle and high school. The ecoPASS program enables Flagstaff employers to provide an annual bus pass at a reduced rate. This comes after Flagstaff Unified announced discontinued

school bus service to middle and high school students within Flagstaff boundaries. The partnership has been a success, with many students and parents becoming increasingly familiarized and comfortable with Mountain Line. Route 2, the route which serves many FUSD schools, has run 60-foot articulated busses at school start and end times to safely handle increased student use.

Passenger Shelter Program

The passenger shelter program has provided increased amenities to passengers, including better accessibility, covered waiting, seating and trash receptacles.



Mountain Line has continued to run a passenger shelter program, aimed at providing increased passenger amenities. These include better accessibility, covered waiting, seating and trash receptacles. Some locations have been outfitted with bike racks. In FY2024, 9 bus shelters and sign stops have been refurbished. These stops are better designed for longevity in Flagstaff's climate and are less expensive and easier to maintain.

Paratransit

Operations

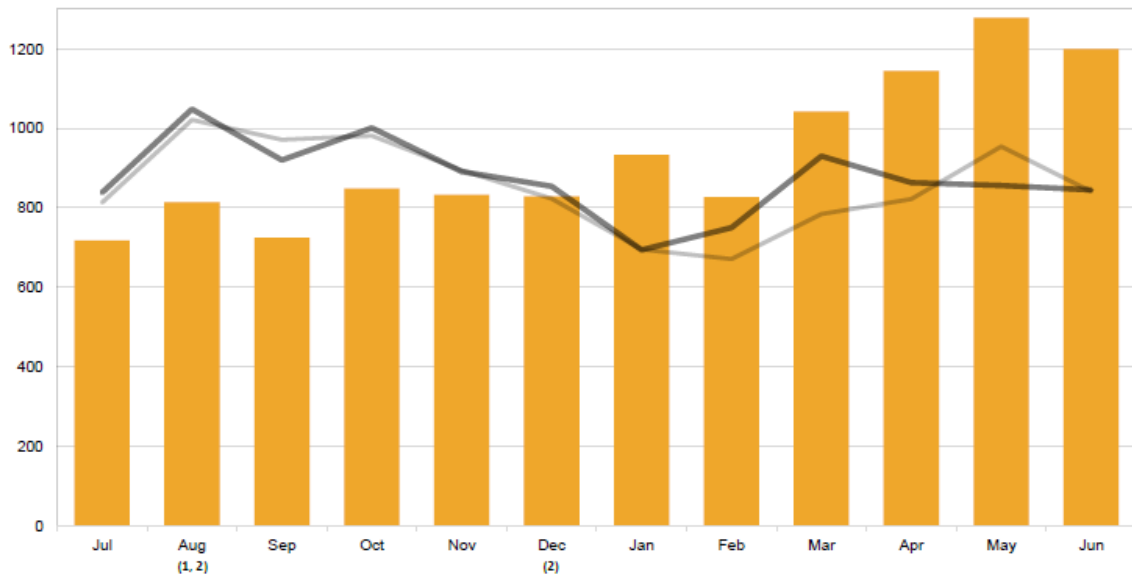
In cooperation with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Federal Transit Authority, Mountain Line Paratransit provides an “ADA Guaranteed Ride Area”. This is an origin to destination, demand-responsive paratransit service that mirrors Mountain Line fixed-route service in terms of service times and areas. The service is only for those people with disabilities who do not have the functional ability to ride fixed-route buses, either permanently or under certain conditions. This service aims to promote independence, integration and self-sufficiency.

Ridership Comparison by Month
FY22 to FY24

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
FY22	813	1,021	971	981	894	823	695	671	784	822	954	841
FY23	838	1,048	920	1,001	891	854	694	750	930	863	856	845
FY24	718	814	725	849	833	829	933	827	1,042	1,144	1,278	1,199
Change from prior year	-14%	-22%	-21%	-15%	-7%	-3%	34%	10%	12%	33%	49%	42%

The gold bar represents Paratransit service provided by Mountain Line.
Bars - current fiscal year. Lines - previous fiscal years (lighter, older).

FY2024 FY2023 FY2022



(1) Department of Developmental Disabilities contract ended on August 31, 2022.

(2) The Lyft partnership started on August 22, 2022 and ended on December 31, 2022.



Paratransit service aims to promote independence, integration and self-sufficiency for those without the ability to ride fixed-route buses.

Mountain Line Paratransit is a shared-ride program, meaning multiple individuals' trips are grouped together to meet all trip requests and improve efficiency. Each trip requires an advance reservation and is provided without regard to the purpose of the trip.

Mountain Line Paratransit fleet consists of eight cutaway vans available during peak service. Total revenue hours operated in FY2024 were 5,749 with 62,148 revenue miles and a total of 1.81 trips per revenue hour, providing 11,191 trips to more than 200 clients.

Quick Facts and Statistics



62,148
Revenue Miles



5,749
Revenue Hours



11,191^{+7%*}
Trips



200+
Clients

*Comparison From FY23

Financials

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Demand Response - Paratransit				
Trips Per Hour	2.61	1.81	1.97	1.97
Cost per Trip	\$ 55.69	\$ 58.62	\$ 53.97	\$ 75.57
Cost per Hour	\$ 189.21	\$ 107.19	\$ 106.26	\$ 148.83

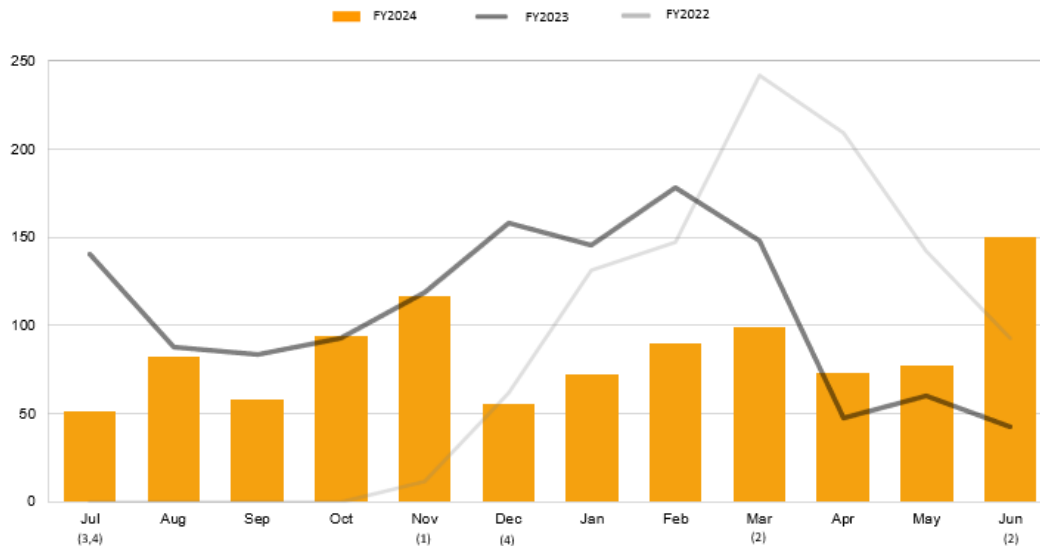
Special Services

GO! Microtransit

Ridership Comparison by Month
FY22 to FY24

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Annual Total
FY22	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12	62	131	147	242	209	142	93	1,038
FY23	141	88	84	93	119	158	146	178	148	48	60	43	1,306
FY24	51	82	58	94	117	56	72	90	99	73	77	150	1,019
Change from prior year	-64%	-7%	-31%	1%	-2%	-65%	-51%	-49%	-33%	52%	28%	249%	-22%

The gold bar represents **GO - Huntington**.
Bars - current fiscal year. Lines - previous fiscal years (lighter, older).



Mountain Line launched a targeted first mile-last mile microtransit service, Mountain Line GO!, as a pilot program in 2022, and made it a permanent service in 2023. This service provides key access to many non-profits, human service agencies, and clinics within the Huntington and Industrial corridor, a location with poor transit access area due to railroad tracks, Interstate 40, and lack of sidewalks causing physical barriers. Riders can book a trip through the Mountain Line GO! app for \$1, or by calling Mountain Line dispatch, and the program allows connectivity within the corridor and to fixed routes.

According to Spare, the technology provider for Mountain Line GO!, **87%** of riders indicated that **the service enabled them to access locations they would otherwise have trouble getting to.**

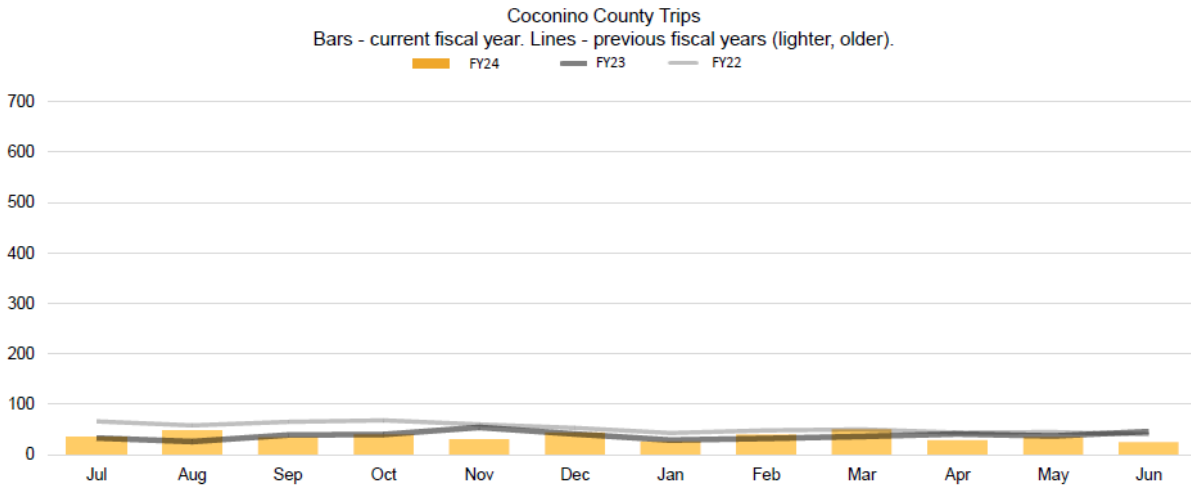


Sandra W.,
Mountain Line Go!
Rider

"I am 86 years old, and I go to Walmart to get 1 – 2 weeks' worth of groceries. It is very difficult for me to maneuver my cart on the regular bus. I love [Mountain Line Go!]. It is easier to get my cart on there since there is more room and the driver puts the lift down for me. The people on there are also very friendly and the drivers are wonderful."

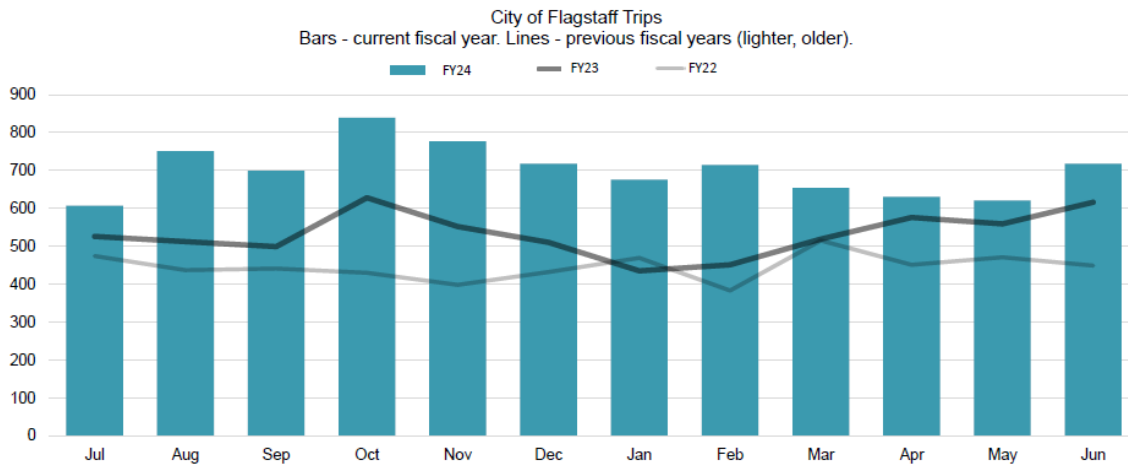
This program has also resulted in reduced idle time for vehicles and increased efficiency for the system. Commingling, or using the same bus and Operator, for both microtransit and paratransit services has increased vehicle revenue hours by 14%, but reduced deadhead (non-revenue) hours by 22%.

Taxi Program



Total City of Flagstaff and Coconino County Trip Comparison by Month
FY22 to FY24

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
FY22	540	495	506	498	458	485	512	431	565	495	516	489
FY23	559	538	538	668	606	551	464	483	555	617	596	662
FY24	642	799	733	879	808	762	702	754	704	659	656	743
Change from prior year	15%	49%	36%	32%	33%	38%	51%	56%	27%	7%	10%	12%



The Mountain Line Paratransit Taxi Program is part of a host of services offered by Mountain Line Paratransit. It is a taxi subsidy program for residents who live within the Mountain Line Service Area and qualify for Mountain Line Paratransit service. The purpose of this program is to provide a transportation alternative that is flexible, within the control of the client, and relatively affordable. This program is not intended to serve

all people or all trips but is intended to give Mountain Line Paratransit clients another option for their trips. In FY24, there was a continued focus on growing the Paratransit Taxi Travel program for our paratransit clients, encouraging trips in a taxi or rideshare whenever possible.



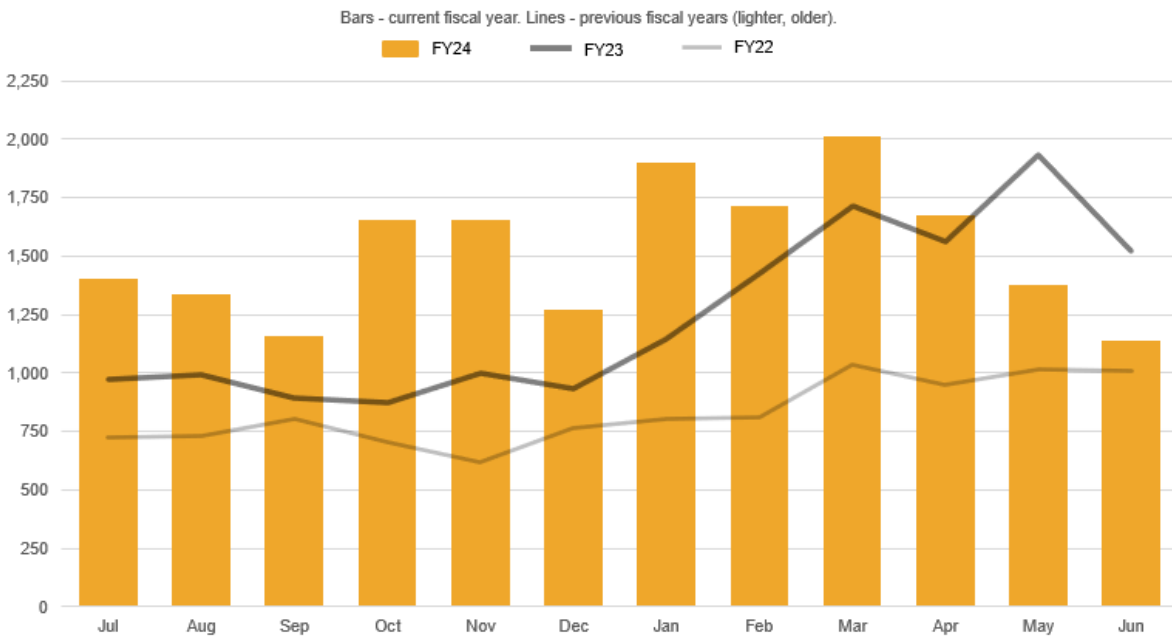
Mountain Line's Paratransit Taxi Travel program provided 8,404 trips for paratransit clients within city limits, expanding the options of clients beyond the services offered by the ADA paratransit service. The taxi travel program trips are economical, saving the City of Flagstaff approximately \$635,085 annually or approximately \$75.57 per trip if provided in a van. The following are graphs to demonstrate the changing demands on the Mountain Line Paratransit service over the last several years.

On behalf of Coconino County, Mountain Line also operates a Taxi Travel Program for paratransit clients in surrounding areas. Coconino County does not offer any type of bus system or paratransit system, opting to support the taxi program to meet the specific needs of identified travelers to meet mobility demands.

Mountain Line Vanpool

Ridership Comparison by Month
FY22 to FY24

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
FY22	722	732	804	706	616	766	804	812	1,038	950	1,018	1,008
FY23	971	990	895	872	1,002	936	1,147	1,425	1,718	1,565	1,931	1,520
FY24	1,405	1,335	1,161	1,654	1,658	1,271	1,901	1,713	2,013	1,678	1,380	1,140
Change from prior year	45%	35%	30%	90%	65%	36%	66%	20%	17%	7%	-29%	-25%

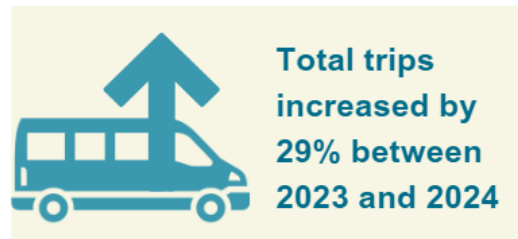
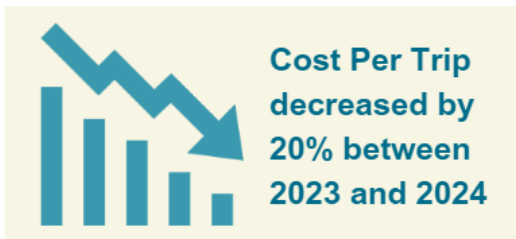


The Mountain Line Vanpool program connects travelers with common origin or destinations and reduces single occupancy vehicle use as well as increases mobility options for those without other means of transportation. Vanpool is an option for commuters who travel more than 20 miles on a regular basis, with an origin or destination within Coconino County. In FY2024, the Mountain Line Vanpool program had approximately 67 users in up to 11 vans in peak service and provided 19,309 trips covering 162,162 miles.

Coconino County funds a \$400 per month subsidy to each vanpool group. Commuters share the cost of operating the van by paying a monthly fee to our contractor, Commute with Enterprise.



Vanpool Program				
	2021	2022	2023	2024
Cost per Trip	\$ 6.50	\$ 4.53	\$ 3.63	\$ 2.91
Total Trips	8,646	9,976	14,972	19,309



Summary of Revenue & Expenditures

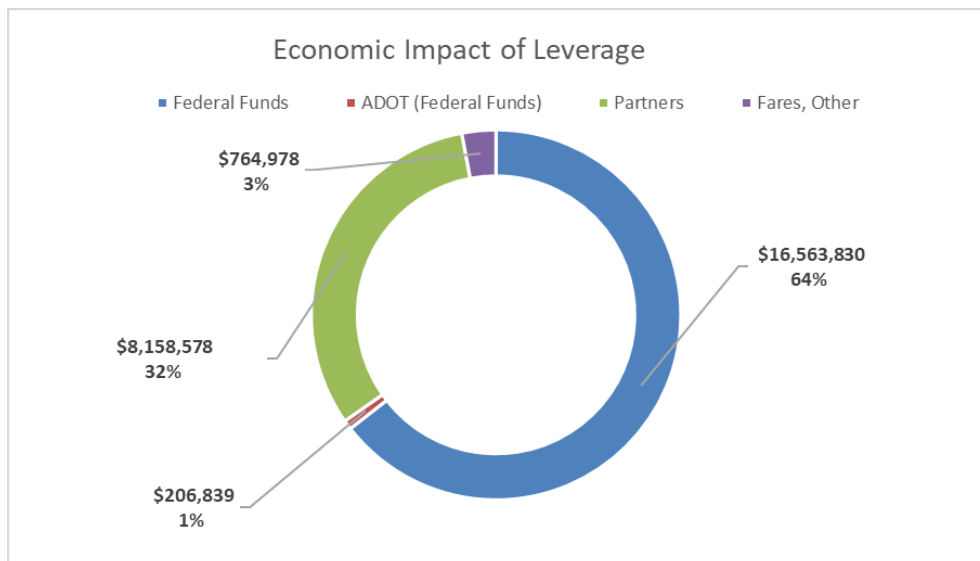
Mountain Line's revenue sources include contributions from each agency with service, the Arizona Department of Transportation, the Federal Transit Administration, and fares and contract fees. The revenues are paid directly to Mountain Line and tracked by service.

Mountain Line pays for the operations of services for the City of Flagstaff and Coconino County. Expenditures related to services include salary and benefits, indirect administrative costs, operations and maintenance, travel, and capital programs.

Revenue

Mountain Line collects revenue for operations from partners based on approved annual budgets as indicated in the Service Agreements signed by each agency. The revenue is generated in each community and paid to Mountain Line monthly, with an annual 3-month deposit at the beginning of each year based on the approved budget to create a fund balance. At the end of the fiscal year, Mountain Line reconciles actual expenses to budgets and adjusts the deposit for the next fiscal year based on the payments received.

In FY2024, Mountain Line received a total of \$25,694,226 from various sources.



The FY2024 breakdown of revenue is as follows:

Federal

5307 Urbanized Area - Flagstaff	\$ 4,173,503
5339 Bus & Bus Facilities	\$ 12,390,327
Total Federal	<u>\$ 16,563,830</u>

Arizona Department of Transportation

5310 Mobility Management	\$ 158,090
5311 Rural Transit	\$ 48,749
Total ADOT	<u>\$ 206,839</u>

Partners

City of Flagstaff	\$ 7,444,742
Northern Arizona University	\$ 713,836
Total Partner	<u>\$ 8,158,578</u>

System Generated

Fares	\$ 675,464
Coconino County	\$ 12,805
Other (Interest, Misc)	\$ 76,710
Total System Generated	<u>\$ 764,978</u>

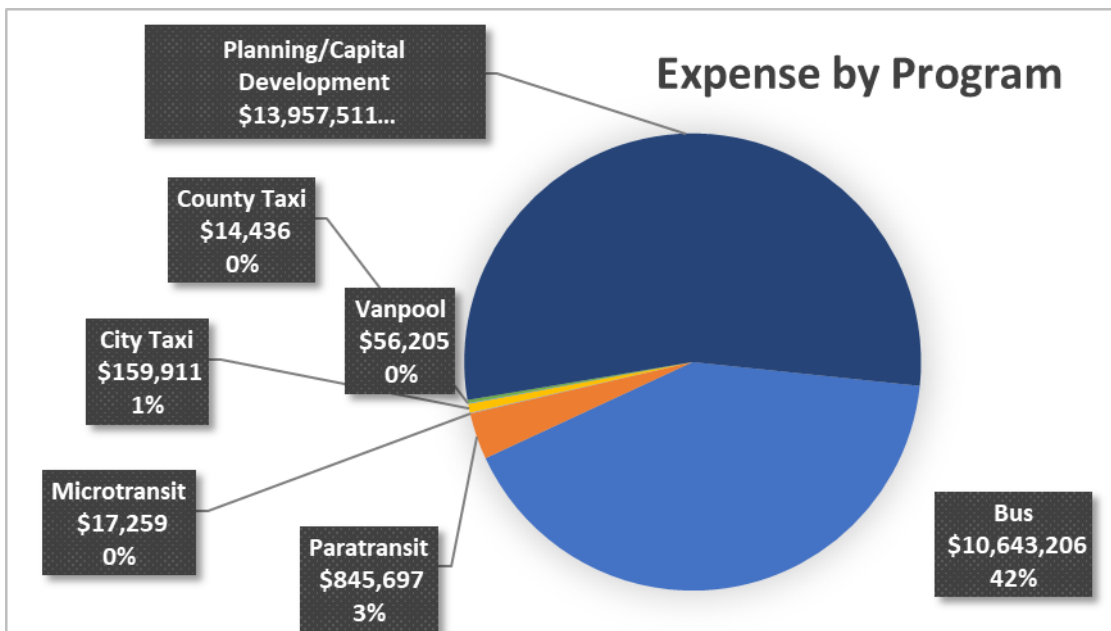
All revenue received by Mountain Line must be used as approved by each partner agency and must be used for the purpose of operating public transportation services.

Expenditures

Mountain Line is responsible for paying all costs associated with operating and maintaining the public transportation services in the City of Flagstaff and Coconino County. The expenditures for Northern Arizona University are associated with the operation of Route 10 and are paid in lieu of fares for students on Route 10. The revenue received from private partnerships for Mountain Express is paid in lieu of fares for passengers using this seasonal service. The actual expenses are tracked and compared to the budget monthly, with regular financial reports to the partner agencies.

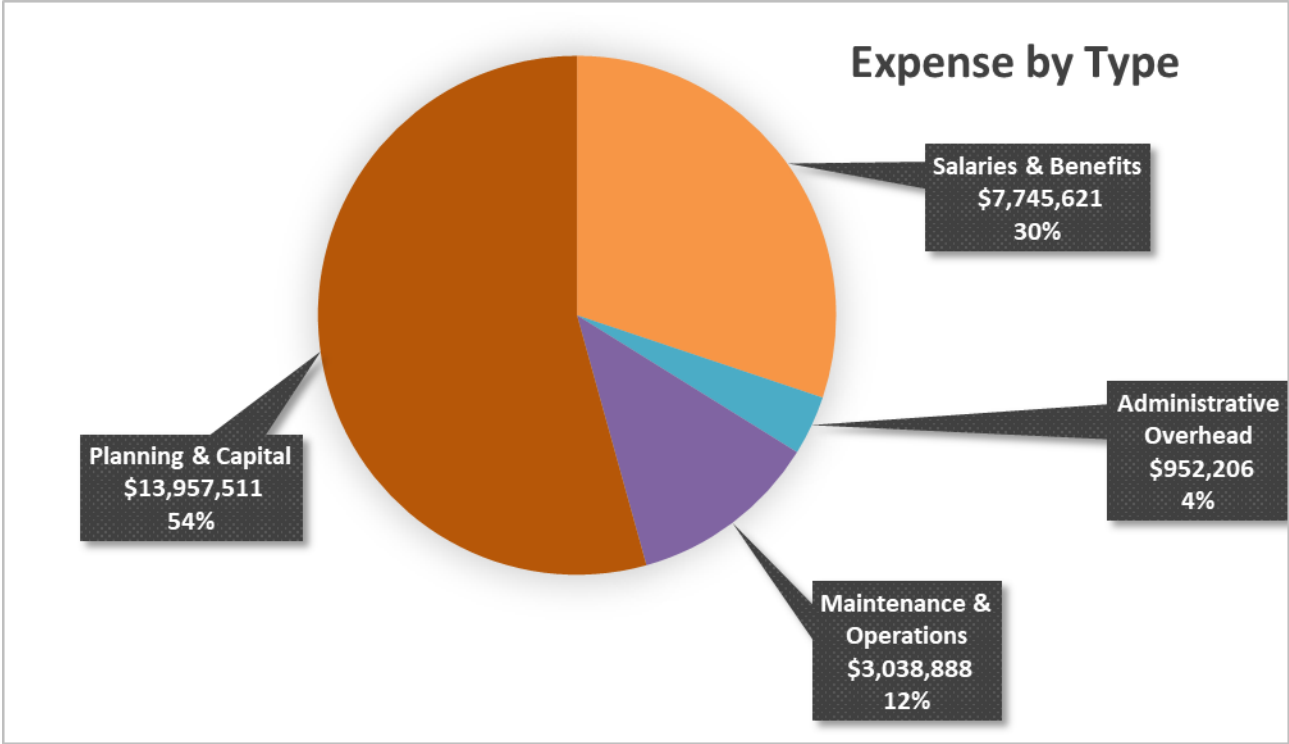
Mountain Line paid salaries and benefits to 13 salaried employees as well as 80 regular full-time and multiple part-time or temporary employees. Employees are broken into three categories: indirect administrative positions, administration/operation support positions, and operation positions. Benefits for all regular full-time positions include enrollment and contribution of 12.29% into the Arizona State Retirement System, 100% employee coverage for Health, Dental, and Vision insurance, portion or share of employee dependent coverage for health insurance, and employee life insurance plan.

Expenses by program is as follows:



Mountain Line's total expenditure was \$25,694,226 for all operations and capital expenses.

The breakdown of expenditures is as follows:





Contact Us

For further information, please reach out to us at transportation@mountainline.az.gov.

Mountain Line (NAIPTA)

Getting You Where You Want To Go

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