



Amtrak in Colorado

Fiscal Year 2024



Amtrak is America's Railroad,[®] created by Congress to "provide efficient and effective intercity passenger rail mobility consisting of high quality service that is trip-time competitive with other intercity travel options." In FY 2024, the company's 22,000+ employees operated an average of almost 300 intercity trains per day along 47 permanent routes, serving a record 32.8 million passengers. Amtrak's network includes 524 regularly-scheduled stops across 46 states, 3 Canadian provinces, and Washington, DC. Partner-operated Thruway routes offer connecting service to additional communities, typically via bus.

Service & Ridership

In FY 2024, Amtrak operated an average of **4 intercity trains per day** on 2 permanent routes and 1 seasonal route serving Colorado, with **228,589 total passengers** boarding or alighting in the state.¹ Permanent service was provided via the following routes:²

▪ Long-Distance Trains

- **California Zephyr** — Emeryville (San Francisco Bay area) - Salt Lake City - Grand Junction - Glenwood Springs - Denver - Lincoln - Omaha - Chicago (1 round trip daily)
- **Southwest Chief** — Los Angeles - Flagstaff - Albuquerque - Trinidad - La Junta - Topeka - Lawrence - Kansas City - Chicago (1 round trip daily)

Additional service was provided via the **Winter Park Express**, a seasonal "ski train" that runs several times weekly between Denver and the slopes of Winter Park Resort in Winter Park. Amtrak operates the route in partnership with the resort; the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) provides funding support. In FY 24, service was thrice-weekly (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) from mid-January through late March, totaling forty trips (a more than 20% increase from FY 23, consistent with strong customer demand). In FY 25, the *Winter Park Express* is operating five times weekly, with additional December holiday service; the route has also been extended several miles to the west, and trains now serve both the Winter Park Resort and the nearby town of Fraser.

Thruway Connections

Some Amtrak routes offer partner-operated **Thruway connecting service** and/or other interline connections to additional communities (including in Colorado), via either bus or other modes of transportation. Many such services are sponsored by one or more of Amtrak's State-Supported partners (including Colorado), or by other public entities; these connections can be vitally important in certain markets. Tickets are purchasable through Amtrak; detailed, up-to-date information on available connections can be accessed via the booking tool on Amtrak.com.

¹ Total equals sum of all boardings and alightings at in-state stations.

² Not all stops shown. Note that certain frequencies may not serve every station listed.



Stations

During FY 2024, Amtrak intercity trains made scheduled stops at 10 locations in Colorado:

Station (Code)	Ridership (Ons + Offs)	Amtrak ADA Responsibility	Amtrak ADA Compliance	Amtrak ADA Investment ³
Denver (DEN)	117,811	Partial	Complete	\$484,654
Ft. Morgan (FMG)	3,220	Sole	FY 25	\$4,681,676
Glenwood Springs (GSC)	36,853	Partial	FY 25	\$7,007,723
Granby (GRA)	3,627	Partial	FY 25	\$2,261,190
Grand Junction (GJT)	26,936	Partial	FY 29	\$6,435,121
La Junta (LAJ)	6,272	Sole	FY 26	\$6,968,570
Lamar (LMR)	1,281	Partial	Complete	\$282,202
Trinidad (TRI)	7,097	Sole	Complete	\$491,628
Winter Park Ski Resort (WPR)	17,032	None	N/A	—
Winter Park/Fraser (WIP)	8,460	Sole	FY 28	\$779,501
Total:	228,589	9/10	In Progress	\$29,392,264

Importantly, Amtrak is working to ensure that its stations are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities. Most Amtrak-served stations are decades old; many were served by other railroads before the company ever existed. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), enacted in 1990, requires that U.S. stations be made accessible; in response, Amtrak developed an ADA Stations Program (ADASP) to bring station components for which the company is responsible into full ADA compliance. ADASP aims to ensure Amtrak provides the best possible service in the shortest possible timeframe; the program will ultimately invest a total of \$1.8 billion in up to 385 communities nationwide, including a **\$29.4 million investment in Colorado**. All Amtrak-responsible work is targeted for completion by the end of FY 2029.

Detailed profiles of every permanent Amtrak station stop, including current information on accessibility, can be found on the Great American Stations website: <https://www.greatamericanstations.com>.

Additional Footprint

Amtrak maintains **crew bases** in Denver and La Junta.

Host Railroads & On Time Performance

Outside the Boston-to-Washington, DC, Northeast Corridor (NEC), most Amtrak trains must travel over other “host” railroads’ tracks—and hosts generally control dispatching decisions on the tracks that they own. By law, Amtrak trains are supposed to receive preference over freight trains (i.e., priority in dispatching), but many host-dispatched trains arrive late at their destinations, and many routes do not meet on-time performance (OTP) standards established by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)—affecting millions of passengers per year.

³ “Amtrak ADA Investment” describes Amtrak’s projected total investment in compliance work over the lifetime of ADASP.

Listed below are the permanent Amtrak routes that operate in Colorado, along with each route’s major in-state host railroad(s) and full-route customer on-time performance (C-OTP)⁴ in FY 2024:

Route	In-State Host(s)	C-OTP
<i>California Zephyr</i>	BNSF, Union Pacific	48.5%
<i>Southwest Chief</i>	BNSF	34.0%

Procurement

Amtrak’s procurements are subject to “Buy America”-style domestic preference requirements, which the company is proud to meet or exceed. Nationally, Amtrak paid nearly \$4.5 billion for goods and services in FY 2024; 99% of that amount was spent domestically, and **\$59.7 million** went to vendors in Colorado:

Community	Amount
Lakewood	\$25,009,256
Denver	\$23,534,206
Longmont	\$7,002,519
Littleton	\$1,040,670
La Junta	\$637,544
Arvada	\$448,264
Englewood	\$376,525
Colorado Springs	\$366,457
Thornton	\$343,580
Pueblo	\$237,072
Palisade	\$107,807
Santa Clara	\$99,750
Aurora	\$96,036
Montrose	\$87,570
Vail	\$70,000
Fruita	\$54,420
Greenwood Village	\$41,000
Broomfield	\$29,136
Ft. Collins	\$26,243
All Others < \$25K	\$75,727
Total CO Payments:	\$59,683,781

The single largest in-state payment category was **supplies for various maintenance, repair, or operations (MRO) needs**.

⁴ C-OTP measures the proportion of customers traveling on a given route who arrive at their destinations on time. Suppose that passengers board a train scheduled to make two stops, and suppose that train is on time at the first stop, but arrives late at the second. If all passengers alight at the first stop, C-OTP for that train is 100%; if all passengers alight at the second stop, C-OTP is 0%.

Employment & Compensation

At the end of FY 2024, **70 Amtrak employees** worked in Colorado, and the company had paid out a total of **\$6,367,064 in base wages and salary** in-state. Nationwide, Amtrak employed more than 22,000 active workers; total base wages and salaries for the year exceeded \$2.1 billion.

Current Amtrak Routes in Colorado

