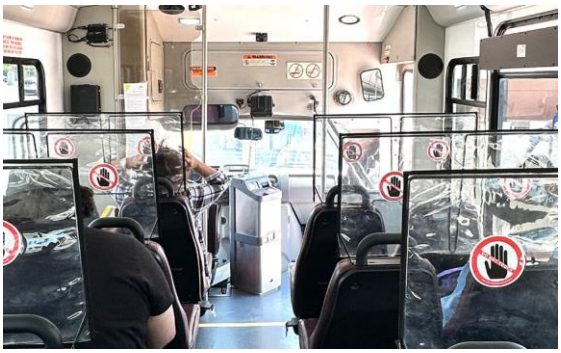
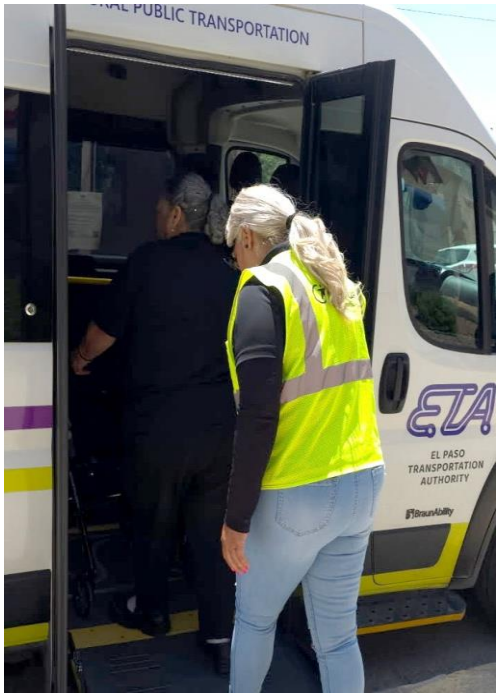
El Paso Transportation Authority

GENERAL PUBLIC DEMAND RESPONSE TRANSIT SERVICES





Texas A&M Transportation Institute

May 2026

EL PASO TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
800 EAST OVERLAND AVENUE, ROOM 423, EL PASO, TX 79901
www.elpasotransportationauthority.org | (915) 273-3838 | director@elpasotransportationauthority.org

Board of Directors
Jackie Butler Chair
El Paso County

Art Rubio Vice Chair
Town of Horizon City

Joel Bishop
El Paso County

Arnulfo Castaneda
Town of Anthony

Susie Rodriguez
Town of Clint

Eddie Conde
City of San Elizario

Andrea Carrillo
Village of Vinton

Ex Officio Members
Karl Rimkus
City of El Paso Mass Transit Department (Sun Metro)

Harrison T. Plourde
El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization

Xavier Banales
Far West Texas / El Paso Regional Transportation Committee

John Andoh
El Paso Transportation Authority

Greetings!

For the past decade, El Paso County has worked to improve transportation options for residents of the county and has recently partnered with the El Paso Area Transportation Services, Local Government Corporation (EPATS, LGC), which is commonly known as the El Paso Transportation Authority (ETA) and began in 2016. This collaboration is an effort to bring seamless, multimodal transportation solutions and mobility options to the Greater El Paso region. Since 2017, several studies have led to service expansions and facility improvements, including the provision of paratransit services, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The improved services help to increase connectivity and accessibility, allowing county residents more options while maintaining affordability.

ETA is committed to continuous improvement. In 2025, ETA retained the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, a part of the Texas A&M University System, to study the need for and feasibility of implementing additional service in the outer reaches of El Paso County. This study was called the *El Paso County Community Transportation Study*. This booklet explains the results of the study and describes transit service enhancements that are planned for the "Outer County." The Outer County consists of areas of the county that are more rural—where residents are more spread out—which makes traditional transit service more difficult to provide and access.

Your feedback is always welcomed and appreciated as we work to provide transportation solutions throughout El Paso County to get you where you want to go.

Sincerely,

John Andoh, CCTM, CPM, TDM-CP
Executive Director

A Local Government Corporation Responsible for Public Transportation Services in Rural El Paso County. Member Agencies are El Paso County, Town of Anthony, Town of Clint, City of Horizon City, City of San Elizario and Village of Vinton.

El Paso Transportation Authority does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

INTRODUCTION

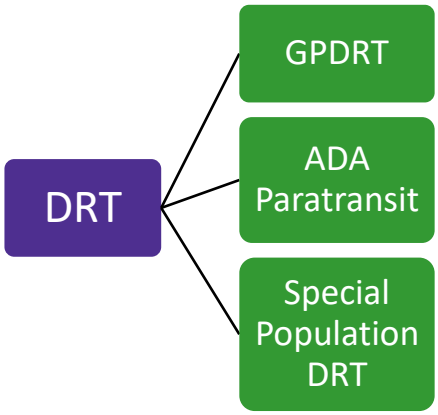
Background

The **El Paso Transportation Authority** (ETA) has been working hard to improve and expand transit service throughout the county. Through multiple studies—and using input gathered from the public and stakeholders over the last several years—ETA has developed guidelines and priorities for implementing various types of transportation services. This booklet describes the **general public demand response transit** (GPDRT) services that are planned to be part of the future transit system in El Paso County. The GPDRT services were developed and analyzed in the *El Paso County Community Transportation Study*, which was approved in February 2026.

Definition of GPDRT

Demand response transit (DRT) is public transit service that operates in response to individual trip requests and does not follow fixed routes or fixed schedules. DRT vehicles may be shared by multiple riders traveling between different origins and destinations; the more sharing that occurs, the more cost-effective DRT is.

GPDRT is DRT that serves the general public. Other kinds of DRT service are **Americans with Disabilities Act** (ADA) paratransit and special population DRT. GPDRT serves all individuals in the community, whereas ADA paratransit and special population DRT serve specific population groups.



In low-density areas, it can be more cost-effective to provide GPDRT service than fixed-route service. GPDRT can also be used in such areas to grow transit demand to the point where fixed-route service becomes cost-effective.

Service Planning Guidelines

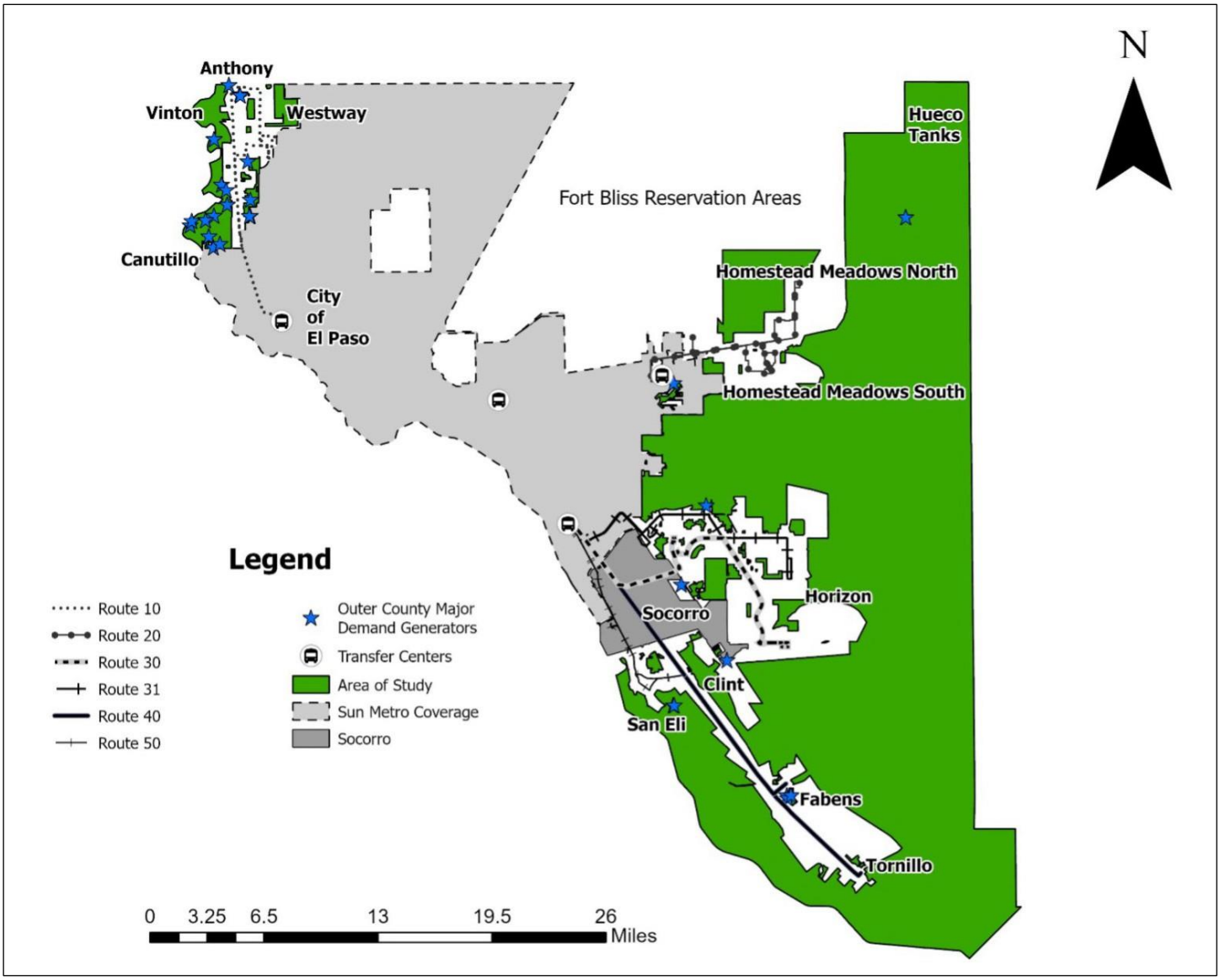
These guidelines are ETA's framework for planning, implementing, and operating GPDRT services in the county:

1. GPDRT should be available to all residents of rural El Paso County.
2. GPDRT may take multiple forms.
3. New or modified transit services should serve existing riders to the extent possible.
4. Transit service should run at least 14 hours per day on weekdays and at least 12 hours per day on weekends.
5. GPDRT service should not compete with other public transit providers for riders.
6. GPDRT service should connect residents of rural El Paso County to (a) key destinations in the county and (b) Sun Metro transfer centers.
7. GPDRT should be easy to understand and use, and individuals with limited access to the internet and electronic payment methods should be able to access it.
8. GPDRT should be cost-effective (i.e., well-used while making efficient use of funding and other resources).

Service Area

The *El Paso County Community Transportation Study* focused on the outer regions of El Paso County that are currently underserved. The study area is shown in green on the map on the next page. The existing ETA paseo bus routes are also shown on the map, as well as the transfer centers where riders can transfer to Sun Metro transit service.

The mission of ETA is to provide safe, reliable, and accessible transportation solutions that connect the rural communities of El Paso County. ETA is committed to enhancing mobility, fostering regional cooperation, and improving the quality of life for all residents.



Study Area for the *El Paso County Community Transportation Study*

CURRENT ETA DRT SERVICES

ETA access

Because ETA operates local fixed-route bus service (known as **ETA paseo**), ETA is required by the ADA to provide "ADA paratransit" service to individuals who are unable to independently use or access ETA paseo services due to physical, visual, or cognitive disabilities. ETA's ADA paratransit service is called **ETA access**. ETA access is *not* GPDRT, as it is not available to the general public.

ETA access currently provides service only to ADA-eligible riders in the county.

ETA access provides door-to-door service on a shared-ride basis. Individuals who want to use ETA access must first apply for eligibility. To then travel on ETA access, they must make a trip reservation between one and seven days in advance of their trip.

ETA access is available during the same service hours as ETA paseo service and within 3/4-mile of ETA paseo routes. If capacity is available, individuals can also travel between ETA access zones (which are shown on the map on the next page) and into Sun Metro's ADA paratransit service area.

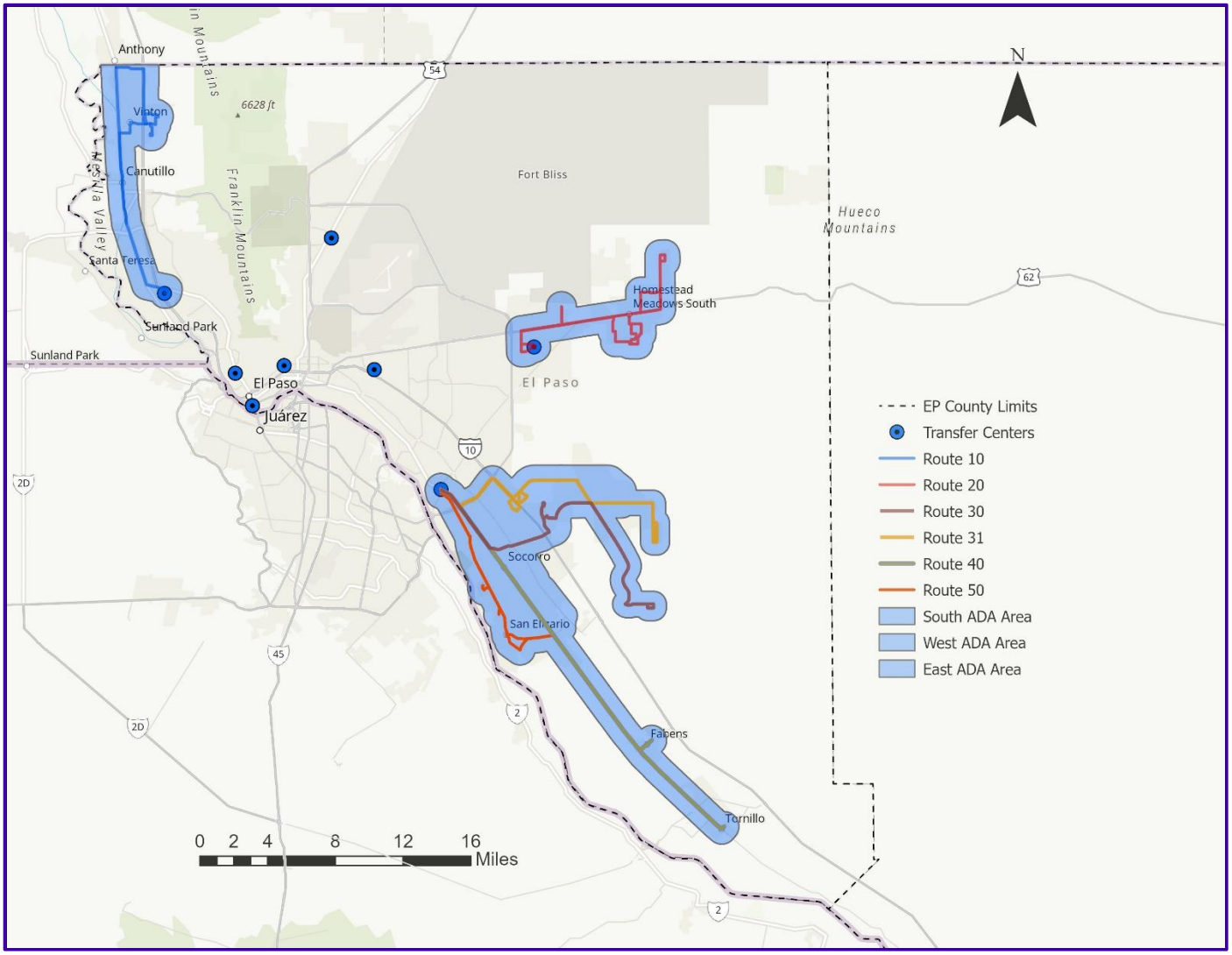
More information about ETA access is available at https://elpasotransportationauthority.org/access/.

ETA ándale

ETA ándale is a microtransit service for the general public. Microtransit is a technology-enabled shared-ride, curb-to-curb service in which passengers book a trip via an app or phone call and are transported by a microtransit vehicle. Microtransit service can be used to make spontaneous and same-day trips.

ETA ándale currently operates as a pilot program. It is available for trips within San Elizario and Clint as well as trips that connect San Elizario and Clint to Mission Valley Transfer Center, El Paso Community College Mission del Paso campus, and destinations in Socorro. To book a trip, individuals must call ETA. After the trip is booked, an ETA bus will arrive at the pickup location within 30 minutes.

More information about ETA ándale is available at https://elpasotransportationauthority.org/andale/.



Current ETA access Service Area, with South, West, and East Zones

FUTURE ETA DRT SERVICES

ETA access

MODIFIED

ETA access will transition from an ADA paratransit service to a **commingled DRT** service that is available everywhere in ETA's service area. *A commingled DRT service is one in which ADA paratransit trips and general public trips are carried on the same vehicles.* This means ADA-eligible riders and general public riders might be sharing a bus. A commingled DRT service can be a cost-effective way to deliver DRT service because only one fleet of buses and only one pool of bus drivers are needed to serve ADA-eligible riders and the general public.

To ensure that ETA can meet its ADA obligations, ETA will prioritize ETA access capacity for ADA-eligible riders within 3/4-mile of ETA paseo routes. As capacity is available, all individuals can travel between ETA access zones (the future versions of which are shown on the map on the next page) and to permitted destinations in the Sun Metro service area.

In the future, ETA access will provide advance-reservation service to everyone in the ETA service area.

Commingled ETA access will provide door-to-door service to the general public and curb-to-curb service to ADA-eligible individuals.

Riders must register to use ETA access. To travel on ETA access, they must make a trip reservation between one and seven days in advance of their trip. ETA access will be available during the same service hours as ETA paseo service.

ETA ándale

CONTINUED

ETA will continue to operate **ETA ándale** in San Elizario and Clint, although an evaluation of the existing pilot service might result in some changes to ETA ándale. The evaluation will also provide information to help ETA decide if and when ETA ándale should be implemented in other parts of the ETA service area.

Volunteer Driver Program

NEW

A **volunteer driver program** (VDP) involves transit service being provided by volunteer drivers using their own vehicles. Volunteer drivers are compensated through mileage reimbursement. VDP trips might be available on days and at times when other transit services are not available, depending on availability of volunteer drivers.

ETA would likely not be the administrator of the VDP. Rather, ETA would partner with the VDP to provide mileage reimbursement for approved VDP trips (e.g., trips within the ETA service area). ETA might also make a wheelchair-accessible vehicle available to the VDP. Policies and procedures for booking VDP trips would be those of the VDP administrator.

Volunteer Driver Program
Source: NATDC.org

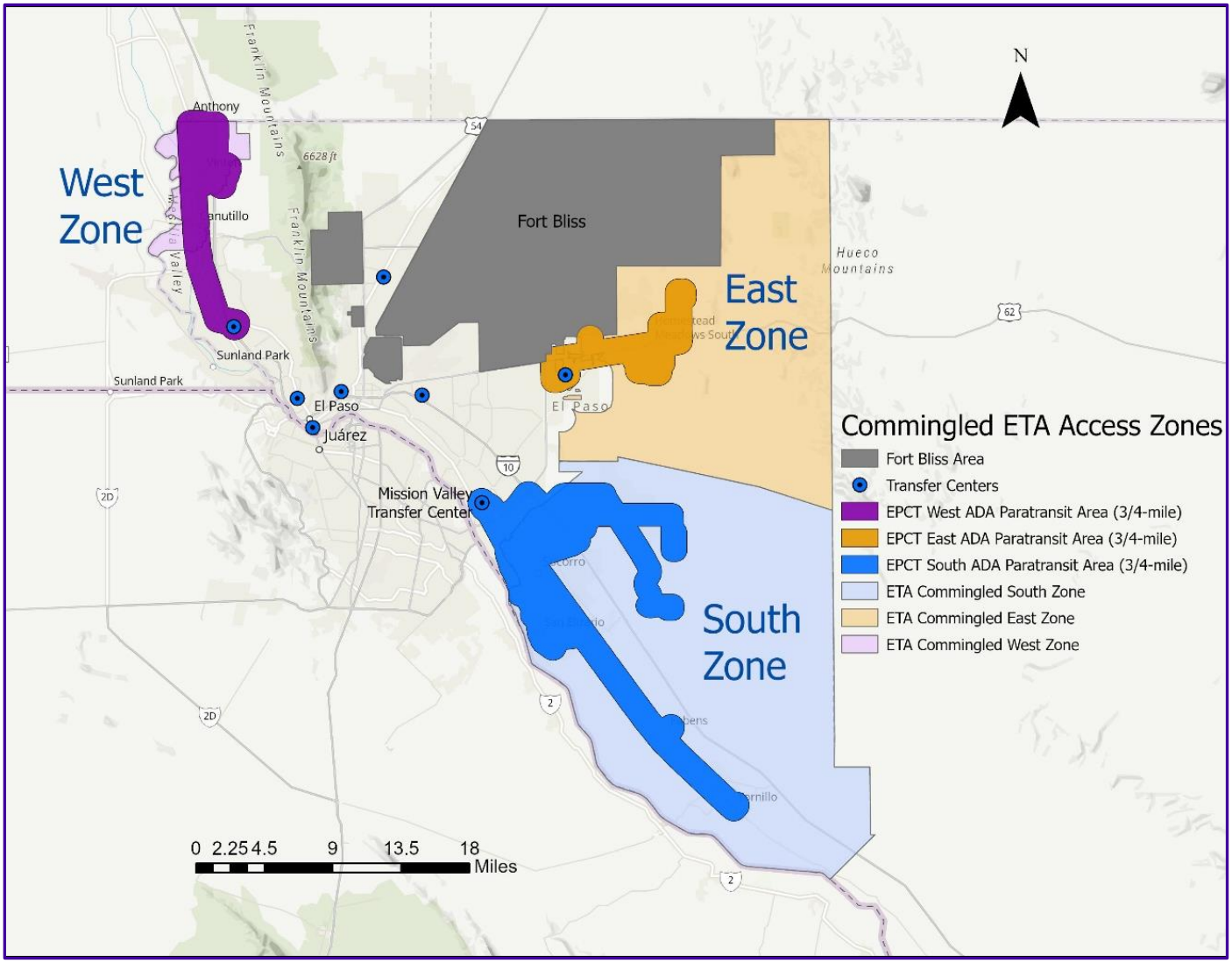
User-Side Subsidy Program

NEW

A **user-side subsidy program** involves a transit agency and/or other sponsoring entity providing a discount on riders' use of other transportation providers' services. These other providers might be taxi companies, companies like Uber and Lyft, and local human services transportation providers. Depending on the provider, trips might be available for spontaneous or same-day trips and for trips that occur outside of ETA's operating hours.

In ETA's user-side subsidy program, riders are likely to be responsible for paying a base fare to the provider, after which ETA will pay the fare up to a specified maximum. The rider would then pay for any remaining portion of the fare. ETA would pay the subsidy only for trips in the ETA service area or for trips that connect points in the ETA service area to permitted destinations in the Sun Metro service area.

User-side subsidy programs can be a cost-effective way to transport customers. ETA subsidy policies would be set to manage program demand and costs.



Future ETA access Service Area, with South, West, and East Zones

GPDRT SERVICE INTEGRATION

Mobility Management

ETA's approach to providing GPDRT service is called **mobility management** approach. Mobility management is way to manage and deliver transportation services to customers. It focuses on meeting individuals' transportation needs while coordinating transit services within the larger transportation system.

To implement mobility management, ETA will hire a mobility manager who will be responsible for the following:

- Coordinating and planning GPDRT services
- Recruiting partner providers and managing ETA's agreements with them
- Engaging with and educating the public about GPDRT services
- Registering riders for GPDRT services
- Assisting riders in using GPDRT services
- Evaluating GPDRT services
- Convening stakeholders and partners as needed

Smart Phone App

Riders of ETA services can download the Transit app to plan ETA trips, get real-time information about their ETA trips, and provide feedback to ETA. The app is available through Google Play, Apple's App Store, and https://transitapp.com/.

Transit App Logo

GPDRT SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION

ETA plans to implement the future GPDRT services no later than 2029. Some GPDRT services might be implemented sooner. The implementation timeline depends on factors that include the following:

- Available funding
- The level of participation of partner transportation providers
- How well the ETA ándale pilot service performs
- Growth and development activity in potential new ETA ándale service areas
- The length of time needed to evaluate pilot implementations of the VDP and user-side subsidy program and make adjustments
- Feedback received from the public during and after planning and implementation phases
- Operations contracts provisions

ETA's GPDRT services will complement ETA paseo (ETA's fixed-route transit service), the Vámonos vanpool program, and the transit services provided by other entities in the region.

YOUR FEEDBACK

Please contact ETA if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas about GPDRT services in the county.

El Paso Transportation Authority
800 East Overland Avenue, Room 423
El Paso, TX 79901
(915) 273-3838

https://elpasotransportationauthority.org/

EL PASO TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY