



RTD Systemwide Fare Study & Equity Analysis

2022-2023



BACKGROUND

RTD routinely reviews its fare structure, policies and programs to ensure current and future customers have access to high-quality, affordable public transportation. Prior to the launch of the Systemwide Fare Study and Equity Analysis in 2022, RTD received feedback from customers and community members that fares were too expensive and the structure was difficult to understand. In addition, RTD had experienced a decline in ridership since 2014, a trend that was worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response, RTD launched the Systemwide Fare Study and Equity Analysis, a holistic and customer-centric assessment of the current fares. The fare study process was intended to create a fare structure as well as fare policies and programs that achieved three goals: equity, affordability and simplicity.



FARE STUDY GOALS



EQUITY
A structure that supports transit reliant and financially burdened customers and provides fair access to fares, products and discounts regardless of race, color, national origin, income status, or affiliation with other marginalized groups



AFFORDABILITY
A structure that aligns fares with the value of the service



SIMPLICITY
A structure that is easy to understand, with standardized discounts and streamlined fare payment options

HOW DID RTD DEVELOP THE FARE STRUCTURE, POLICIES & PROGRAMS?

To develop a new fare structure, policies and programs that were more equitable, affordable and simple, RTD considered multiple factors, including:



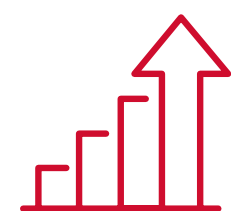
CUSTOMER & COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

RTD met with and gathered feedback from thousands of members of the community to understand perceptions of current fares and future fare structure preferences.



FARE PRICING OF OTHER AGENCIES

RTD reviewed the fare pricing and pass programs of other transit agencies with similar operating characteristics to explore best practices and identify opportunities to better meet customer and agency needs.



LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

RTD predicted fare revenue, sales tax revenue forecasts and cost factors to design a fare structure, policies and programs that would support the agency's long-term financial sustainability.



OPERATIONAL, CAPITAL & TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS

RTD assessed future ridership demand, as well as the potential need for additional vehicles and fare collection equipment and systems. RTD also evaluated expanded retail networks and cash reload opportunities.



FARE EQUITY, INCLUDING THE IMPACT ON MINORITY & LOW-INCOME CUSTOMERS

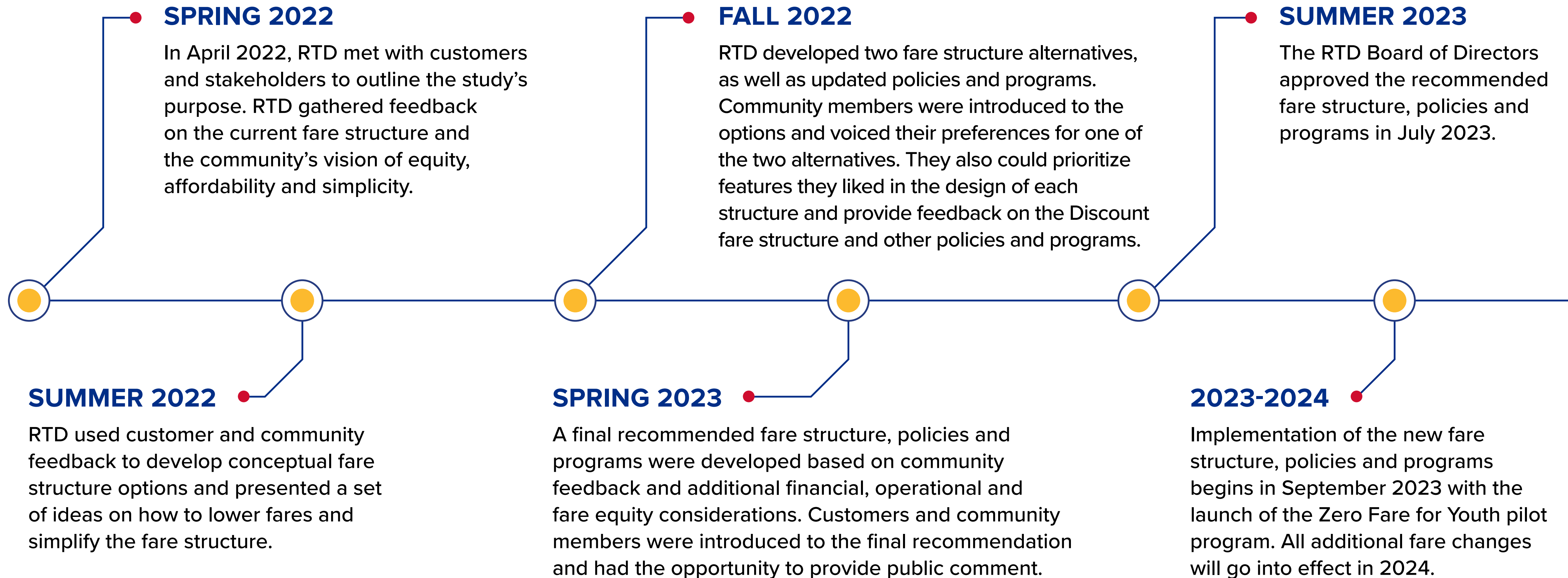
Fare equity was central to the fare study in line with:

- RTD's mission as a public transit agency
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- 1995 Executive Order on environmental justice
- Additional guidelines outlined by the Federal Transit Administration

RTD analyzed all proposed changes to the fare structure to ensure that there would be no negative impacts on customers based on their race, color, place of birth, English language ability or income they make. **No disparate impact on minority populations or disproportionate burden on low-income populations** was found in the fare equity analysis.

ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

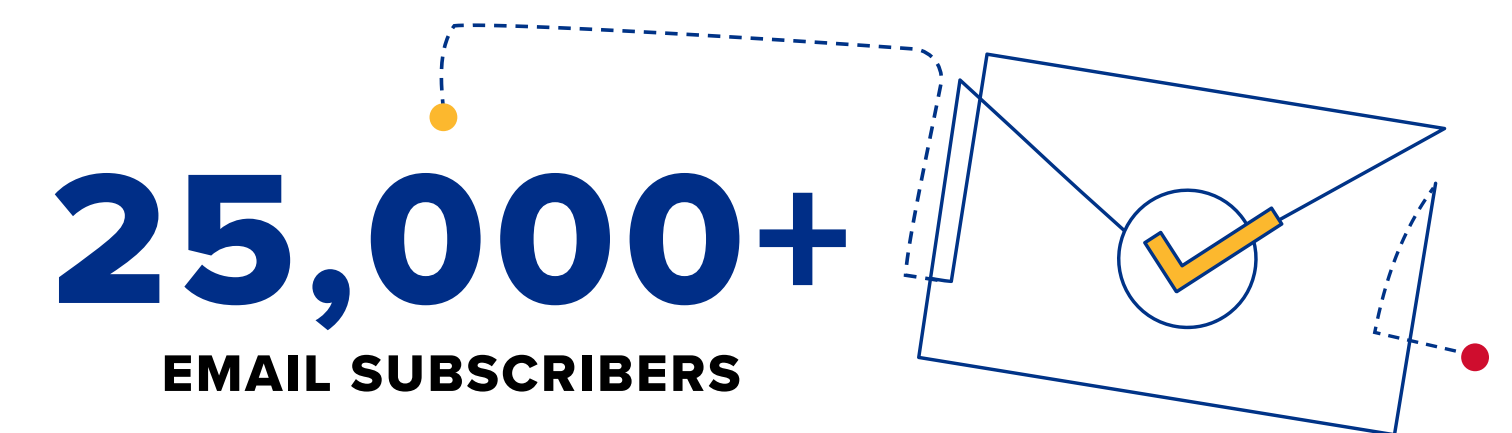
From spring 2022 to spring 2023, RTD engaged with customers, community members and other stakeholders through focus groups, surveys, feedback panels, customer and community meetings, community events, public hearings and open houses. The feedback collected in each stage informed the design of the proposed fare changes.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

RTD used multiple engagement methods to ensure customers and community members were aware of fare changes and had the opportunity to express their ideas and preferences in the design of the new fare structure, policies and programs. RTD used an approach centered on customers and equity by:

- Engaging historically underrepresented populations through partnerships with community-based organizations, including **Athletics and Beyond, CREA Results, Cultivando, Denver Streets Partnership, Focus ReEntry** and **Una Mano Una Esperanza**
- Performing **all engagement activities** in both English and Spanish
- Hosting feedback panels with representatives of diverse communities
- Translating fare study materials into **more than 20 different languages** spoken by customers within the service area



FARE CHANGES

Driven by the goals of equity, affordability and simplicity, the Fare Study and Equity Analysis resulted in the following changes to the fare structure, policies and programs.

NEW FARE STRUCTURE

The new fare structure lowered fares for all customers and community members. Fares were simplified by combining the Local and Regional fares into one Standard fare.

PREVIOUS STRUCTURE

	LOCAL	REGIONAL	AIRPORT
3-HOUR	\$3.00	\$5.25	\$10.50
DAY	\$6.00	\$10.50	
MONTHLY	\$114.00	\$200.00	

NEW FARE STRUCTURE (2024)

	STANDARD (LOCAL/REGIONAL)	AIRPORT (A LINE/SKYRIDE)
3-HOUR	\$2.75	\$10.00
DAY	\$5.50	
MONTHLY	\$88.00	



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR CUSTOMERS

Under the new fare structure, customers pay an Airport fare for SkyRide and A Line trips that begin or end at Denver International Airport. **All other destinations in the RTD service area will use the Standard fare, which combines all services categorized as Local and Regional under the previous structure.** RTD customers can also purchase a Monthly Pass for \$88, which allows for travel anywhere in the system, including to and from the airport.



DISCOUNT FARE STRUCTURE

The fare study streamlined Discount fares for customers ages 65 and older, individuals with disabilities, Medicare recipients and customers who enroll in the LiVE Income-Based Fare Discount Program.

PREVIOUS DISCOUNT FARE STRUCTURE

AGE 65+, CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES/LiVE***

	LOCAL	REGIONAL	AIRPORT
3-HOUR	\$1.50* / \$1.80**	\$2.60* / \$3.15**	\$5.25* / \$6.30**
DAY	\$3.00* / \$3.60**	\$5.25* / \$6.30**	
MONTHLY	\$57.00* / \$68.40**	\$99* / \$119.70**	

NEW ADULT DISCOUNT FARE STRUCTURE (2024)

	DISCOUNT FARE (LOCAL, REGIONAL & AIRPORT)
3-HOUR	\$1.35
DAY	\$2.70
MONTHLY	\$27.00

Under the new fare structure, adult customers participating in Discount programs receive:

ACCESS TO ALL RTD DESTINATIONS
(INCLUDING THE AIRPORT) FOR

ONE FARE PRICE

50% DISCOUNT ON ALL 3-HOUR
& DAY PASSES (\$1.35 & \$2.70)

70% DISCOUNT FOR
MONTHLY PASSES (\$27)

LIVE PROGRAM EXPANSION

RTD has also expanded access to the LiVE program by:

- Increasing the income a household can earn to qualify to 250% of the federal poverty guidelines (e.g. \$75,000 for a family of four)
- Eliminating the requirement to have an address within the RTD service area
- Increasing outreach and communications about the LiVE program and partnering with community organizations to support customers with enrollment



YOUTH & ORGANIZATION PROGRAMS

RTD amended and developed new policies and programs to lower costs and increase transit access for youth customers and organizations, including non-profits and employers.

YOUTH & STUDENT PROGRAMS

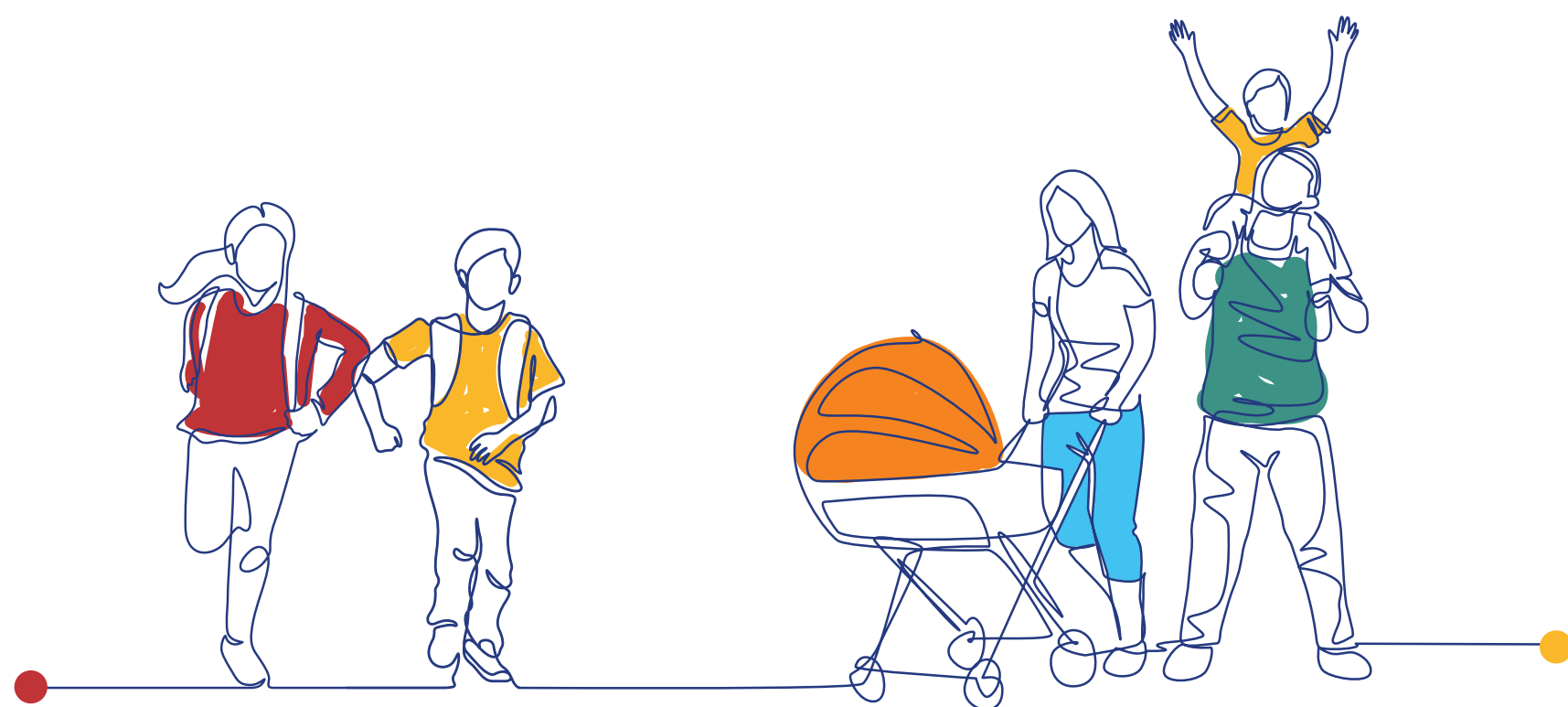
RTD created two new youth and student programs, including:

- **Zero Fare for Youth**, a pilot program that offers fare-free transit for youth ages 19 and younger
- **SemesterPass**, a program that offers a 20% discount on the full fare Monthly Pass price for each month of the school term for students who attend participating post-secondary schools

ORGANIZATION & EMPLOYER PROGRAMS

Non-profit organizations and employers benefit from:

- A transit assistance grant program – a fund for nonprofit and social service agencies to provide passes for clients who have immediate travel needs
- A 10% discount on bulk purchases over \$1,500
- Simplified Pass Program pricing, including multi-year pricing and decreased contract minimums for EcoPass, Neighborhood EcoPass and CollegePass institutions as well as a reduction in price categories for EcoPass



RTD FARE STUDY
& EQUITY ANALYSIS



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