

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

YAMPA VALLEY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY



Why Apply?

This is a rare opportunity for an entrepreneurial and collaborative leader to lead one of Colorado's most exciting new regional initiatives. YVRTA's first Executive Director will build a regional transportation system from scratch, shape mobility across one of Colorado's most beautiful and dynamic regions, and make a lasting impact on community equity, economic vitality, and quality of life for northwest Colorado. This role blends startup leadership with public-sector expertise and requires a builder's mindset, political savvy, and the ability to navigate multi-jurisdictional governance. Known for its strong community identity and collaborative spirit, the Yampa Valley is ready for transformative transit—and the Executive Director will lead the way.



Welcome to THE YAMPA VALLEY

Located roughly three hours northwest of Denver, the Yampa Valley is a scenic mountain region shaped by the Yampa River and home to nearly 39,000 people. Sitting at an elevation of roughly 6,700 feet across Routt and Moffat counties, the valley is characterized by working ranchlands, mountain towns, rugged peaks, and broad stretches of public land. The region retains a rural, close-knit character shaped by its Western identity and deep agricultural roots.

As the Routt County seat, Steamboat Springs (pop. 13,200) serves as the primary hub and cultural center of the valley. Known historically as “Ski Town, U.S.A.,” the city balances its cattle-ranching roots with a modern resort economy. Its historic downtown features dozens of locally owned shops, Western outfitters, galleries, and eateries, while Colorado Mountain College adds higher-education opportunities through its full-service campus.

Farther west, Craig is home to about 9,000 residents and serves as the Moffat County seat and the commercial and healthcare center for western Yampa Valley. Hayden is an agricultural community near the Yampa Valley Regional Airport, which provides regular and seasonal commercial air service. Oak Creek and Yampa offer a quieter small-town lifestyle with deep ranching roots and convenient access to Stagecoach State Park and the Flat Tops Wilderness.

Outdoor recreation is part of daily life in the Yampa Valley, with extensive opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, camping, fishing, and boating across the Routt National Forest and nearby state parks. Winter brings cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and ice fishing, with downhill skiing centered at Steamboat Resort and historic Howelsen Hill, Colorado’s oldest continuously operating ski area and a renowned ski-jumping venue.

Community traditions bring residents together through annual events such as the Steamboat Springs Pro Rodeo Series and the 100-plus-year-old Winter Carnival, featuring skijoring—skiers pulled by galloping horses downtown through an obstacle course.

YAMPA VALLEY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

The Yampa Valley Regional Transportation Authority (YVRTA) is a newly established regional transportation authority serving communities across Routt and Moffat Counties in northwest Colorado. Created under Colorado statute, its mission is to provide sustainable, equitable, and efficient transportation connecting residents, workers, and visitors throughout the Yampa Valley.

Following voter approval in 2025, YVRTA was formed through an Intergovernmental Agreement among its six constituent members: Routt County; the Towns of Hayden, Yampa, and Oak Creek; and the Cities of Craig and Steamboat Springs. The Authority is governed by a six-member Board of Directors, with one representative from each member jurisdiction, reflecting its collective intent to foster collaboration and consensus-based governance. The Executive Director will be YVRTA's first employee and will build the organization's operational, financial, and administrative foundation. YVRTA anticipates serving approximately 25,000 residents across a potential network spanning roughly 110 miles of roadway.

YVRTA was formed in response to the need for stronger connections among the valley's communities, employers, services, and transportation providers. Growing communities, changing workforce patterns, and increasing traffic make regional transportation both a necessity and an opportunity. Routt County's median home price reached approximately \$1.15 million in 2024—beyond what many local wages can support—requiring more workers to live farther from Steamboat Springs where the median price is \$1.4 million, and closer to Craig, where the median price is \$320,000. As the region's primary employment and service center, Steamboat Springs generates significant commuter demand, increasing the need for reliable public transportation throughout the Yampa Valley.

Initial goals include increasing regional bus frequency along Highway 40 between Craig and Steamboat Springs, establishing local transit in Craig, and expanding service to South Routt County and other underserved areas. YVRTA also envisions stronger airport connections, improved bus stops and park-and-ride facilities, and partnerships supporting pedestrian and roadway safety. Steamboat Springs Transit will continue providing local service within the city as YVRTA develops a more connected, year-round regional system. Services will be introduced in phases based on available funding and priorities established by the Board.





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THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Reporting to the YVRTA Board of Directors, the Executive Director will serve as the Authority's founding chief executive and lead the organization from start-up. Working closely with the Board, the Executive Director will establish YVRTA's culture, strategic direction, administrative systems, financial framework, and approach to regional service delivery. The position is based in Craig and requires frequent travel and sustained engagement throughout the service region.

Responsibilities include developing operating and capital budgets, pursuing and administering state and federal grants, building organizational capacity, overseeing service planning and operations, ensuring regulatory compliance, and establishing performance measures. The Executive Director will also build strong relationships with member jurisdictions, existing transit providers, community organizations, funding partners, and the public while representing YVRTA at the regional, state, and federal levels.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- 1) **Funding & Financial Sustainability:** A potential November sales tax vote will determine long-term funding. Steamboat Ski & Resort Corporation has committed initial funding for three years, with negotiations underway for a long-term agreement. Early wins and trust-building are essential.
- 2) **Rapid Service Expansion:** Communities expect visible progress. Steamboat's regional routes are anticipated to transition to the RTA by 2028, and communities such as Oak Creek and Yampa are eager for early service.
- 3) **Regional Growth & Safety:** Increasing traffic on Highway 40 and rising accident rates underscore the need for reliable regional transportation. Workforce commuting patterns continue to evolve.
- 4) **Equity & Community Expectations:** Communities expect equitable service distribution and transparent decision-making. The Executive Director must balance differing political cultures across the valley.
- 5) **Long-Term Integration Opportunities:** The emerging Mountain Rail initiative presents future coordination and multimodal planning opportunities.



IDEAL CANDIDATE TRAITS

- Entrepreneurial, startup-oriented leader able to build an organization from scratch, establish systems, and operate effectively with limited initial staff.
- Strong coalition builder with exceptional interpersonal skills and the ability to earn trust across six distinct communities and among elected officials and partner agencies.
- Transportation-competent systems thinker who understands transit operations, funding, and regulatory requirements—even if not a career transit operator—and knows when to bring in experts.
- Financially disciplined manager with demonstrated skill in budgeting, grants, multi-year financial planning, and compliance with federal and state funding programs.
- Politically astute communicator capable of navigating multi-jurisdictional governance, TABOR constraints, and diverse political cultures while maintaining transparency and credibility.
- Creative problem solver who can design innovative service solutions, adapt quickly, and remain resilient in a fast-moving, resource-constrained environment.
- Community-embedded relationship builder willing to be visible in all towns, attend local events, listen deeply, and understand small-town dynamics and history.
- Data-driven planner who uses performance metrics, ridership patterns, and cost analysis to guide service design, expansion, and operational decisions.
- Calm, patient, and even-keeled operator able to manage setbacks, maintain momentum, and balance assertiveness with diplomacy.
- Compelling storyteller and advocate who can articulate the value of regional transit, build public support for funding, and inspire confidence in the RTA's long-term vision.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's degree in public administration, transportation, urban planning, business, or related field.
- Minimum 7 years of experience in transit operations, public agency management, or comparable leadership.
- An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.

PREFERRED

- Experience launching a new transit agency or major program.
- Familiarity with FTA 5311/5339 and CDOT transit programs.
- Experience in rural or mountain communities.
- Experience working with elected boards.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The YVRTA offers an annual salary range of \$150,000 to \$180,000, based on qualifications and experience, along with competitive benefits, including family health, dental, vision, PTO, retirement contribution, professional development, and housing stipend up to \$1,000/month. The Executive Director must reside within the YVRTA's service boundary.



RESOURCES

[About YVRTA](#)

[YVRTA Intergovernmental Agreement](#)

[Routt County](#)

[City of Craig](#)

[City of Steamboat Springs](#)

[Town of Hayden](#)

[Town of Oak Creek](#)

[Town of Yampa](#)



**TO
APPLY**

Apply Online: gmphr.com

First Review: September 8, 2026

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