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FACT SHEET

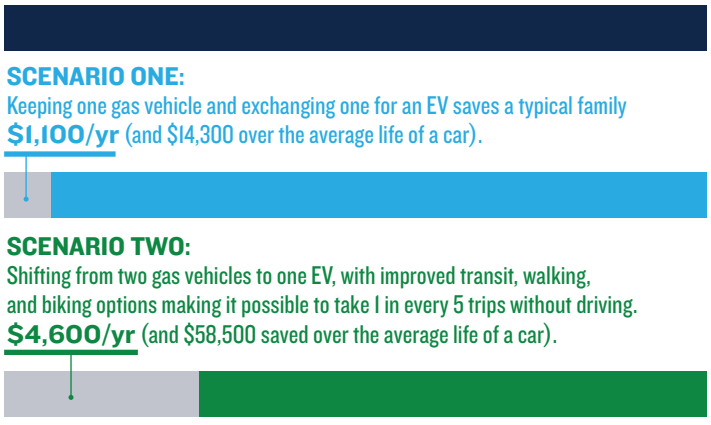
COLORADO'S NEXT GOVERNOR HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN REDUCING HOUSEHOLD TRANSPORTATION COSTS

After housing, transportation is the second-largest expense for Colorado households. The average family spends more than $16,000 a year on car payments, fuel, maintenance, and insurance, which is 17 percent of the state's $96,800 median household income.[1] Most Coloradans have no choice but to absorb those costs, because in much of the state driving is the only practical way to get to work, school, or the doctor. It doesn't have to be this way. State leaders can change that by giving families more choices: reliable transit, safe routes for walking and biking, and electric vehicles that cost less to fuel and maintain. **Clean transportation belongs at the center of a governor's affordability agenda** because it lowers household costs while improving access, air quality, and economic resilience.

STATE LEADERS CAN GIVE FAMILIES MORE OPTIONS AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAVE MONEY

Our model analysis assessed the potential cost savings that could accrue from the following scenarios:

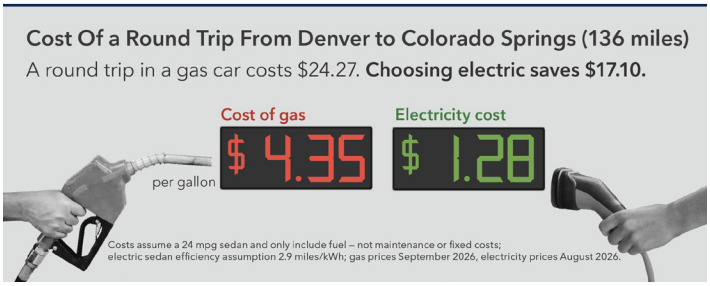
FIGURE 1: HOW COLORADO FAMILIES CAN SAVE ON TRANSPORTATION COSTS[2]



*Total cost includes car payments, gas, maintenance, and insurance. This analysis assumes the vehicles are sedans, 24 mpg or 2.9/kWh efficiency.

If given the option to affordably switch from a gasoline vehicle to electric, many families can save money year over year. For other households in some parts of the state, expanding access to transit, biking, walking, and bike- or car-share opportunities can make it possible to reduce the number of household vehicles, generating even larger savings.

FIGURE 2: COMPARING THE COST OF FUELING GAS AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES[3]



Electric vehicles cost less to fuel and maintain than gas cars do, meaning that EVs can help families cut transportation costs.[4] Additionally, expanding EV charging makes better use of the electric grid, which helps keep power bills from going up for everyone, including people who never plug in a car.[5]



A traffic jam on Interstate Highway 25 in Denver, Colorado.

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CONTINUING TO ELECTRIFY OUR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CAN REDUCE UNEXPECTED PRICE JUMPS ACROSS HOUSEHOLD BUDGETS

Nearly all food and most consumer goods are transported via trucks, most of which still run on diesel. Moving away from diesel—which not only is vulnerable to price spikes but also disproportionately contributes to toxic air pollution that drives up our public health costs—must be a priority for protecting both our lungs and our pocketbooks.



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Passengers exiting and boarding a bus in downtown Denver, Colorado.

CLEAN TRANSPORTATION ALSO DELIVERS IMPORTANT HEALTH AND CLIMATE BENEFITS

Cleaning up transportation provides major public health, climate, and economic benefits. Transportation is the single biggest source of climate and local air pollution in the United States. A study by the American Lung Association found that zeroing out tailpipe pollution by electrifying cars, trucks, and buses in Colorado could yield $9.5 billion in public health benefits and avoid up to 857 premature deaths, 31,200 asthma attacks, and more than 151,000 lost workdays between 2020 and 2050.[6]

These benefits would be especially pronounced near major truck routes, where communities are exposed to enormous amounts of transportation pollution. Focusing on zero-emission freight can help ensure that those living near freight corridors and experiencing disproportionate exposure to transportation pollution share the benefits of cleaner air and reduced health harms.

WHAT COLORADO'S NEW GOVERNOR CAN DO TO MAKE TRANSPORTATION MORE AFFORDABLE FOR COLORADO HOUSEHOLDS

- State leadership matters because states control much of how transportation funding is spent, including federal highway formula dollars. State leaders can **engage proactively in next year's legislative process around transportation revenues** to ensure that any deal to pursue new statewide revenue grows funding for clean transportation infrastructure and minimizes spending on ineffective projects that add highway lanes.
- Access to charging infrastructure is the biggest barrier to EV adoption.[7] While Colorado has been a leader in supporting EVs, insufficient charging capacity is holding the state's EV market back; Colorado currently ranks 48th out of 50 states in available public charging capacity per EV on the road.[8] Thankfully, state leaders have the authority to **ensure that utilities continue to upgrade the grid in a timely manner**. They also need to secure the approval of an Xcel Colorado Transportation Electrification Plan with at least $250 million of funding—largely for charging infrastructure.
- State leaders should continue to **support existing state EV purchase incentives and defend delivery fee revenue that has already been secured for transportation programs**.
- State leaders can direct state agencies to develop and begin implementing a Clean Deliveries policy requiring warehouses to reduce emissions, including by transitioning to zero-emission trucks and installing EV charging infrastructure.

Endnotes

1 Ali Lehman, "Methodology: State Governors Have an Important Role to Play in Reducing Household Transportation Costs," NRDC, November 2026, https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/2026-10/Methodology_State_Governors_Have_Important_Role_Play_Reducing_Household_Transportation_Costs.pdf. Installation costs for home charging, electricity demand charges, free public or workplace charging, purchase taxes, resale value, depreciation, and parking costs are not included in this analysis.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Dan Wilkins and Nick Nigro, "Comparing the Cost of Owning the Most Popular Vehicles in the United States: 2025 Update," Atlas Public Policy, June 2025, https://atlaspolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Comparing-the-Cost-of-Owning-the-Most-Popular-Vehicles-in-the-United-States-2025-Update.pdf.

5 Sarah Shenstone-Harris et al., "Driving Affordable Rates with EVs: Colorado," Synapse Energy Economics, 2025, https://www.synapse-energy.com/sites/default/files/25-136%20Colorado%20Factsheet%2025-136.pdf.

6 American Lung Association, *Zeroing In on Healthy Air: A National Assessment of the Health and Climate Benefits of Zero-Emission Transportation and Electricity*, 2022, 10–11, https://www.lung.org/getmedia/13248145-06f0-4e35-b79b-6dfacfd29a71/zeroing-in-on-healthy-air-report-2022.pdf.

7 Mark Vaughn, "JD Power Finds Charging Access Biggest Deterrent to EV Adoption," *Autoweek*, February 28, 2025, https://www.autoweek.com/news/a63965563/ev-charging-access-jd-power-study/.

8 Atlas Public Policy, "Charging Deployment Dashboard," accessed October 23, 2026, https://atlaspolicy.com/; U.S. Department of Energy, Alternative Fuels Data Center, "Vehicle Registration Counts by State," accessed October 23, 2026, https://afdc.energy.gov/vehicle-registration?year=2025.