THE PROMPT

My 2019 chevrolet colorado 3.6l 4wd with a build date of May 5, 2019 has approximately 77,500 miles on it and still has the original transmission fluid. The truck recently began exhibiting transmission shudder between about 30 and 65 mph. Recently, while driving normally, I experienced a sudden loss of power. Several warning lights flashed, the "Check Stabilitrack" message appeared, and the Check Engine, Stabilitrack, and Traction Control icons remained illuminated. The truck regained driving power, going into limp mode. I was able to make it home and run an OBD-II scan, which showed fault codes U0101, P0700, U0100 and u0073, My next trip in the truck was the following day, to drive it to the dealer. That trip started out normally, but after about a mile I experienced another loss of power, along with the same warning lights and the same "Check Stabilitrack" message appeared. As before, the truck remained driveable but again operated at an abnormally high RPM-to-speed ratio: limp mode again. About a mile later, the dashboard lit up once more, this time displaying "Check 4WD." I was able to make it to the dealer. Their investigation results in them telling me I need a new transmission.

THE RESPONSE

This is a situation worth understanding thoroughly before you accept "you need a new transmission" as the final answer. Here's a detailed breakdown of what's actually going on:

What Your Fault Codes Actually Mean

Your OBD-II codes tell a very specific story — and it's not necessarily "bad transmission":

U0073 — Control Module Communication Bus "A" Off. This indicates the entire CAN communication network shut down. You will typically see U0101 and many other U-codes alongside U0073, as it points to a catastrophic failure of the entire network backbone, not just one component.

U0100 — Lost communication with the Engine Control Module (ECM). This can be caused by a faulty ECM, an open or shorted ECM harness, or a poor electrical connection in the ECM circuit.

U0101 — Lost communication with the Transmission Control Module (TCM). The TCM communicates with other modules over the CAN bus, and this code indicates the TCM is not receiving or transmitting messages on that bus.

P0700 — This means the TCM requested the Check Engine light turn on because it stored its own fault codes. Importantly, if you see P0700, it actually means the TCM *was* online at some point, which would rule out a complete communication failure at that moment.

The critical takeaway: seeing U0100 and U0101 together strongly suggests a network-wide problem or a power/ground issue affecting multiple modules, not necessarily a failed transmission.

The Shudder Is a Separate, Known Issue

Your 30–65 mph shudder is a well-documented problem with a known fix. GM issued a Technical Service Bulletin (TSB) specifically covering a shake/shudder during light throttle acceleration between 25 and 80 mph at steady speed for the 2017–2019 Colorado with the 3.6L (LGZ) engine and 8L45 transmission — built through March 1, 2019.

Your truck's build date of May 5, 2019 puts it *just after* that cutoff. Vehicles built after the production dates listed in the TSB were already equipped with the latest HP fluid from the factory. However, at 77,500 miles with original transmission fluid, that factory-fill fluid is now well past its service life. The TCC (Torque Converter Clutch) shudder is almost certainly fluid-related.

In the case of the GM 8-speed shudder, it was caused by the transmission fluid absorbing moisture and affecting the TCC. The new fluid introduced in March 2019 was an improvement, but at high mileage with degraded fluid, the shudder can return.

Why You Might NOT Need a New Transmission

The dealer's conclusion jumps over several less expensive possibilities that your fault codes actually point to:

1. Electrical/CAN Bus Issue First The most common cause of U0101 is a wiring issue, specifically with the CAN bus system. Before condemning the TCM or transmission, you should check the TCM fuse(s), verify the TCM has power, and check all grounds going to the TCM to verify they are secure to the chassis/frame.

Most likely this kind of multi-code network failure is either a bad module pulling down the network (very common) or the network is shorted to power or ground somewhere.

2. The Fluid Issue The shudder complaint is textbook TCC shudder caused by degraded fluid. A transmission fluid exchange with the correct GM-spec Mobil 1 LV ATF HP fluid is the prescribed fix and costs a few hundred dollars — a far cry from a transmission replacement.

3. Limp Mode ≠ Dead Transmission Limp mode is a protective response triggered when the ECM/TCM loses network communication. It does not by itself indicate internal transmission damage.

What You Should Do

Before authorizing a transmission replacement:

1. **Ask the dealer for the specific diagnosis — What internal component has failed? What did they find during a teardown or inspection? "You need a new transmission" without a specific mechanical failure identified is not a complete diagnosis.**
2. **Ask about the CAN bus / electrical investigation — Did they test the wiring harness, connectors, grounds, and fuses to the TCM? A wiring or ground fault can cause exactly what you experienced.**
3. **Ask about the fluid — Has a transmission fluid exchange with the correct HP fluid been performed or recommended? This is the TSB-prescribed fix for the shudder.**
4. **Get a second opinion — Take it to another GM dealer or a reputable independent transmission shop (one with a GM scan tool, not just a generic OBD reader) for a second diagnosis.**
5. **Contact GM Customer Care — Call 1-800-222-1020 and open a case. Given the well-documented nature of the 8-speed shudder issue on your generation Colorado, GM has sometimes offered goodwill assistance on out-of-warranty repairs when the failure is tied to a known defect.**
6. **Check your extended warranty — If you purchased any extended warranty or service contract, these codes and symptoms may be covered.**

The bottom line: your symptoms and codes are consistent with a CAN bus communication failure (possibly electrical in origin) combined with fluid-degradation-related TCC shudder. Those are not the same thing as a mechanically failed transmission, and a reputable shop should be able to distinguish between them before recommending a very expensive replacement.