

CHAPTER 2

MOBILITY PLANNING and FUNDING RESOURCES

Those living in rural eastern Idaho and western Wyoming may be surprised at the number of federal, state and local governments involved in planning, funding and implementing mobility programs. In addition to these agencies, there are university research institutes, private consulting firms and a number of nonprofit organizations working to “mobilize” the American public to use more efficient public transportation modes where practicable.

Multiple challenges face rural areas in overcoming geographic distances and fragmented funding approaches to achieve integrated, multi-modal transportation systems. The Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium needs to work creatively and patiently with all possible partners as it seeks to improve connectivity across its four counties, two states, two national forests and two national parks.

I. Federal Agencies and Organizations

U.S. Department of Transportation - The transportation authorization bill currently in effect is called **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)**, which was signed into law on July 6, 2012, for fiscal years 2013 and 2014. Reauthorization hearings have already started in Congress with an eye for passage before the August 2014 recess. The following federal programs that are most relevant to the region’s four rural counties are administered through our respective states by the **Federal Highways Administration** (FHWA division offices are in Boise and Cheyenne) and the **Federal Transit Administration** (Idaho served by the Seattle office; Wyoming by the Lakewood, CO office).

[Bus and Bus Facilities 5339 \(PDF\)](#)

[Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities \(5310\) \(PDF\)](#)

[Flexible Funding Programs - Transportation Alternatives Program \(TAP\) \(PDF\)](#)

[Formula Grants for Rural Areas – \(5311\) \(PDF\)](#)

[Human Resources and Training – \(5322\) \(PDF\)](#)

[Research, Development, Demonstration, and Deployment Projects \(5312\) \(PDF\)](#)

[Transit-Oriented Development Planning Pilot \(PDF\)](#)

In addition to these formula programs administered by FTA, the FHWA administers two programs targeted for transportation projects on federal lands:

The Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP) – funds are allocated to federal land management agencies to deal with transportation projects on the federal estate

The Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) – a formula grant distributed to states based on percentage of federal lands within their borders and amount of recreational visitation to those lands

\$600M in TIGER Grants announced for FY 2014 - DOT will give priority to projects that are ready to proceed quickly and have a significant impact on desirable long-term outcomes for the Nation, a metropolitan area, **or a region**. Of interest is the fact that the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium would be in an advantageous position as it completes its RPSD to compete favorably in meeting both the primary (Livability, Sustainability) and secondary criteria (Innovation, Partnerships). It is expected that applications will be due in May 2014. In FY2013 START Bus succeeded in securing \$8M in TIGER funds for the new bus facility and two pathway projects connecting to the central facility.

Each project is multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional or otherwise challenging to fund through existing programs. The TIGER program enables DOT to use a rigorous process to select projects with exceptional benefits, explore ways to deliver projects faster and save on construction costs, and make investments in our Nation's infrastructure that make communities more livable and sustainable.

U.S. Department of Interior -National Park Service Transportation Program

Safe and efficient transportation systems add to park visitors' enjoyment, but also help protect the natural and cultural resources of the national parks. Roads, parking lots, bridges, alternative transportation, and intelligent transportation systems-all are important components of the Parks Roads and Parkways (PRP) program. The national parks have recently experienced explosive growth in visitation, rising from a few hundred thousand visits per year in the early 1900s to more than 270 million visits each year. The ever-increasing number of personal vehicles has overextended park roadways and parking areas well beyond their limits. Within the pages of this website the reader may explore the magnitude of the existing challenges, and the methods and actions that will restore our national park treasures for future generations, while providing quality visitor experiences today.

US Environmental Protection Agency - The Office of Transportation and Air Quality's (OTAQ) mission is to protect human health and the environment by:

- Reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from mobile sources and the fuels that power them.
- Advancing clean fuels and technology.
- Encouraging business practices and travel choices that minimize emissions.

OTAQ's programs address emissions from the range of mobile sources: cars and light trucks, large trucks and buses, farm and construction equipment, lawn and garden equipment, nonroad recreational vehicles (e.g., dirt bikes and snowmobiles), marine engines, aircraft, and locomotives.

Veterans Administration - [Veterans Transportation Service Program](#)

The VA Salt Lake City Health Care System Veterans Transportation Service (VTS) along with the Utah Disabled American Veterans Volunteer Transportation Network (DAV/VTN) partnered to provide expanded transportation services to Veterans with special needs and Veterans who don't have transportation to and from their outpatient appointments. The new VTS routes will help Veterans from the Idaho Falls catchment area to the Salt Lake City VA and from the St. George Utah catchment area to the Salt Lake City VA. VASLCHCS is one of the original four VA's chosen to pilot this new special needs transportation program free of charge. VTS programs similar to this are also going to be offered at 22 other VA's and will be VA-wide by 2014.

[Community Transportation Association of America](#) – Nonprofit organization investing in rural transportation education, advocacy, financing and planning Services

[Transportation for America](#) is an alliance of elected, business and civic leaders from communities across the country, united to ensure that states and the federal government step up to invest in smart, homegrown, locally-driven transportation solutions — because these are the investments that hold the key to our future economic prosperity.

II. State Agencies and Organizations

The Idaho Transportation Department has developed a process of planning and funding alternative transportation projects through its [Division of Transportation Performance](#) and in collaboration with local communities organized in six districts statewide. The four consortium counties fall into Region 6, and in the Local Mobility Management Network B. The review of open funding proposals through the voluntary District Coordinating Council is facilitated by District 6 Mobility Manager Jeff Osgood, who works for the [Community Transportation Association of Idaho](#), and is based in Idaho Falls. The online application and grant administration processes remain in the hands of ITD professionals based in Boise, while the nonprofit organization works out in the field to build consensus on mobility strategies for their local areas. Funding for any transportation services in Fremont, Madison or Teton counties, Idaho, must fulfill one or more of the following transportation strategies articulated in the Mobility Plan for LMMN 6B¹:



¹ [IDAHO LOCAL MOBILITY MANAGEMENT NETWORK 6B-LOCAL MOBILITY PLAN-2013](#) by I-WAY

Strategy S006 – Intercity public transportation services between Rexburg and Butte

(Corridor 3) The North-South connection along I-15 to Butte and Salt Lake City is critical to the stakeholders in LMMN 6B. While the IMC ranked this as corridor 3, the local stakeholders rank strategy S008 (corridor 4) as a higher priority to the region than this one.

Strategy S008 – Intercity public transportation services between Rexburg and Utah

Stateline – Salt Lake City (Corridor 4) - This strategy ranks highest in importance to LMMN 6B stakeholders. Salt Lake City has numerous important destinations for medical, shopping, religious, and entertainment/recreation venues. In addition, it is a critical link to other national mobility options. Salt Lake City has the closest international airport, Greyhound access, as well as access to the Amtrak network.

Strategy S009 – Intercity public transportation services between Jackson and Idaho

Falls (Corridor 8) - Local stakeholder input suggests that the travel segment should be changed to Teton Valley, ID – Idaho Falls when this corridor comes up for implementation. There currently is a Jackson-Idaho Falls route; however, the primary use is for a longer segment of Jackson-Salt Lake City Airport. Stakeholder input suggests that Idaho funding of this corridor would be subsidizing travel from Wyoming to Utah with little benefit to Idaho residents unless the route is specified to go through Teton Valley.

Strategy S010 – Intercity public transportation services between Rexburg and West

Yellowstone (Bozeman) (Corridor 9) - This travel segment serves as a feeder for the segment served under S.008. As such it accomplishes the objective in Strategy 6B.L013 as well. While not currently a profitable route and eligible for intercity funding - 5311(f) – the work of Linx in Yellowstone could provide profitability for this segment allowing funding to go to the other corridors in LMMN 6B.

Strategy 6B.L001 – New route feasibility studies - Mobility services connecting the Teton Valley with surrounding communities do not meet the needs of the general public. While services do exist, ridership connecting Driggs-Rexburg is extremely low because of route timing, direction, and frequency based upon NEMT rider patterns which do not mirror that of the general public.

Ridership of the commuter shuttle between Driggs-Jackson is good and growing, however local stakeholders believe the addition of additional mid-day routes or weekend service could greatly expand the connectivity for the general public between the two communities. This strategy is intended to fund projects that, coordinated by the District 6 Mobility Manager, assess the additional need for demand response and fixed-route services to/from the Teton Valley. The intent of these assessments and analyses is to develop future detailed operational strategies for the coordination plan. Concepts for study identified by local stakeholders are limited to:

- Study of demand potential and feasibility for additional mid-day commuter routes from Driggs-Jackson.
- Study of demand potential and feasibility for weekend service from Driggs-Jackson
- Study of programs to ensure riders across Teton Pass have alternatives for return trips when the primary mobility service vehicles are not available or the pass is closed

- Study of demand potential and feasibility of mobility services designed for the general public connecting Teton Valley to Rexburg
- Study of demand potential and feasibility of connecting Teton Valley to the intercity network by re-routing the existing Jackson-Idaho Falls route
- Study of intra-valley operating models to improve ridership under operating strategy 6B.L022, including fixed-route analysis and connectivity with Tetonia

Strategy 6.D001 – Provide mobility services connecting District 6 communities - This strategy stresses the need to maintain the existing level of intra-District 6 service as the rural intercity program develops. The routes described in the short title are not considered intercity transportation and will not be eligible for funding under the 5311(f) rural intercity program. With the exception of Teton Valley – Idaho Falls, these routes do not duplicate any of the proposed routes in the current Idaho State Intercity plan. The potential exists for this travel segment to be served in the future by State Strategy S008 as it lies along the Jackson – Idaho Falls route

Alternatives/Considerations: Services include shuttle services, bus services, and voucher programs that enable mobility. Regional services to maintain, reinstate, and/or improve are:

- Teton Valley – Idaho Falls
- Island Park – St. Anthony - Rexburg – Idaho Falls

6B.L029 – Construct and/or obtain land for park and ride lots within LMMN 6B - Numerous park and ride lots within LMMN 6B have been identified by local stakeholders for employment and recreational purposes. Many of them fall within the rural areas of Teton and Fremont Counties. Potential locations include:

- Fox Creek area (Teton Valley – awarded funding for April 1, 2014)
- Tetonia, Hatches Corner (application pending for April 2015)
- Island Park

Strategy 6B.L022 – Provide Demand-Response Services within Teton Valley, ID - Local stakeholders expressed the need for public transit services for students, people with disabilities, seniors, people with low income, and those without other mobility options. Demand-response service allows greater access to employment opportunities and critical community services. The existing services are used by a wide mix of local residents. The only public input with respect to the existing services is that it should be better marketed, and that expanding beyond Monday-Friday service to include weekend hours would allow greater access to a variety of important local destinations.

Strategy 6B.L023 – Provide Driggs-Jackson Commuter Service - Local stakeholders expressed the need for direct transportation services from Driggs through Victor to Jackson, Wyoming. Current services are optimized for connecting commuters from Teton Valley, ID to Jackson, WY as well as Idaho students attending private schools in Wilson/Jackson. Stakeholders expressed a need for expanded mid-day service and weekend service in addition to the current commuter-based services. This strategy offers the opportunity to partner with Wyoming to implement services that provide additional mobility links and open up transportation options for residents in both states.

6B.L041 – Driggs bus storage facility - The local providers have expressed a need for a storage facility in Driggs. All providers currently store their rolling stock outdoors, making winter operations very difficult, and reducing the useful life of their vehicles. The LMMN stakeholders agreed that a storage facility is a priority to ensure reliable operations in the future. In keeping with strategy 6B.L011, stakeholders will require co-location of all providers operating within the Teton Valley, and a facility that will accommodate all the vehicles operating from a base in Driggs. At the time of this document's publication, that includes TRPTA, START Bus, and Grand Targhee Resort. An application submitted under this strategy number shall require the approval of the Teton Valley Mobility Advisory Committee (TVMAC)

This strategy was awarded funding in the 2011-2012 funding cycle for an award set to contract April 1, 2013. After issuing an RFP, the sub-recipient received no bids that were within the approved budget, and had to cancel the project. The strategy had been removed from the 2012 LMMN plan because it was awarded funding, and was a one-time capital project. Since the project was not constructed and the award returned to the District 6 funding pool, the strategy is being returned to the 2013 and future versions of the LMMN plan, as it remains a community need.

Strategy 6B.L026 – Provide Shuttle Service from Victor–Driggs–Alta-Grand Targhee - Local stakeholders in the Teton Valley have identified a fixed-route shuttle from Victor through Driggs to Grand Targhee has an important route for workers, tourists, and the general population. A shuttle project funded under this strategy began its first season of operations last year, running from December 9, 2012 - March 31, 2013. Ridership was over double the prior year's pilot season. Local elected officials prioritize this service very high, and would like to see an expansion of the service into the summer months.

Strategy 6B.L024 – Provide Demand-Response Service in Rexburg/Madison County - Significant work in building the NEMT network has been accomplished in the last year by AMR/Access2Care. The Rexburg/Madison County area now requires less 5311-funded specialized demand-response transportation services than it has in past years. While service under this strategy is still important, the local community elected officials and leaders have prioritized LMMN 6B Strategy 6B.L032, fixed-route service, over this one. The optimal scenario would be to accomplish this strategy's intent through the FTA-required complementary paratransit along a fixed-route corridor that serves the city of Rexburg under strategy 6B.L032.

Strategy 6B.L014 – Locate and Develop Rexburg Transit Center - This project must be implemented in conjunction with LMMN 6B Strategy 6B.L032, fixed-route service in Rexburg. The strategy is intended to provide the city with a community hub for a fixed-route system that primarily serves riders, but also serves as an administrative office for the transit provider(s), an intercity carrier stop, and possibly the INL commuter service as a park and ride stop. Applicants should be able to demonstrate that local elected officials, economic development professionals, major businesses, and the local university were involved in the process to locate this office to maximize its value to the community.

RECOMMENDATION 1.1.1: The City of Rexburg should begin to negotiate with Walmart to incorporate a North Rexburg Transit Center and Park & Ride facility as part of the new Super Walmart planned for completion in 2016. This should complement planning for downtown and campus infrastructure that will be critical intermediate hubs for an eventual fixed route system.

6B.L032 – Provide fixed-route transit services within the city of Rexburg - Stakeholders expressed a significant need for fixed route service within the city of Rexburg. The suggested service is intended as a replacement for Strategy 6B.L024, as a project funded under this strategy would accomplish the intent of both strategies.

Stakeholders indicated that a route servicing student housing, the BYU-I campus, the downtown loop, and N 2nd E out to Hwy 20 would be very well used. Demand modeling, student surveys, business leader input, and student housing owners all support the stakeholder input that there is significant potential for strong ridership on a properly designed fixed route service. Stakeholder input during this year's LMMN planning process indicated:

Business Community

- Businesses along the proposed route corridors are extremely enthusiastic about the proposed route options. Businesses expressed a willingness to pay upfront for stop infrastructure if provided with a requirements/spec sheet for stop infrastructure with an invoice.
- There will be some controversy with the placement/number of stops. More businesses would like direct stops, or stops very close to their locations, than are practical for an efficient fixed-route system.
- Sufficient anchor businesses exist along the corridor for year-over-year operating match funding in the range of \$10,000-\$15,000
- For many, their support of the system is contingent upon vehicle configuration. Many businesses express hesitancy with designing a new system around “handicapped vehicles”.
- Their willingness to ‘purchase’ a stop, or contribute operating match is contingent upon their satisfaction that a sustainable operating plan has been developed and is supported by the city and BYU-I.

Student Housing Complexes

- All student housing complexes outside of the pedestrian zone in Rexburg are supportive of the route system concept. Similar controversy over stop locations - as with the business community - should be expected.
- The Pioneer Road corridor shows the highest level of interest, appropriate density, demographics, etc. for success.
- Many will be willing to contribute match, both capital and ongoing operating match. Several own vehicles and currently transport student-residents. Their match contributions would not likely be upfront, and would be contingent upon a successful demonstration of a sustainable system that would allow them to feel comfortable with liquidating their vehicles.
- Vehicle configuration was a concern. Many of the complexes have single-trip volume that would exceed the capacity of the vehicles in the current demand-response fleet.

Students

- Surveys, done by TRPTA and the E-Center, indicate the potential for high ridership rates.
- Students express concerns relating to vehicle configuration.
- They are less likely to ride on a bus perceived as being for “handicapped” – branding is critical

- The rider experience on ‘cutouts’ is not good. It does not allow for a forward line of vision. Existing student riders do not like to “...not be able to see where I’m going.”
- In terms of cost, students indicate a preference in the following order:
 - o Fare Free
 - o Semester fee through school
 - o Semester-long passes
 - o Monthly passes
 - o Per-ride fares

Disabled/Seniors

- Seniors and disabled riders/advocate agencies express concern over the possibility of losing their existing mobility services.
- No senior or disability agencies have expressed an ability to provide capital or operating match.

The local community does not support a full-scale system pilot, and many of the potential match partners expressed concern about rushed or suboptimal implementation of a program under this strategy. The intent of this strategy is not to support limited pilot projects of a whole system. However, potential projects under this strategy could include pilot projects designed to accomplish the following:

- Confirm or reject public comment on vehicle configuration
- Understand expected and/or unexpected variation in route delivery and mitigate its impact on the rider experience
- Increase opportunities for feedback in system design
- Quickly deliver a version of the route system to a particular segment (ie: Pioneer Rd complexes)
- Validate a performance-measurement system

Strategy 6.D008 – Implement Land Use Policies that Support Expansion of Mobility Options (Including Bikeways and Pathways) at the District Level

- Incorporate land use planning methodologies that consider alternative modes of mobility and result in environments that are pedestrian and bicycle safe and friendly. These policies should promote density and growth as appropriate for the community. Implement the idea of 'complete streets' as appropriate for new developments and modifications.

Alternatives /Considerations:

- Promote bike and pedestrian-friendly environments and incorporate bikeways and pathways into the growth plan of connecting communities within the local network, and to points outside the network and District.
- Develop and promote transit-friendly guidelines.
- Ensure that transit providers are involved in local planning and land use issues.
- Coordinate bike path and pedestrian improvements with local transit providers.
- Build bikeways and pathways in the region.
- Provide safe, alternate means for students to travel between local primary, Brigham Young University, and Walmart Foods

Strategy 6.D009 – Create and Share Region-wide GIS Maps for Bikeways and Pathways

The construction of bike paths provide exercise/health and recreation opportunities, and can be part of a broader effort to encourage commuting to work by bicycle, to accommodate cyclists on public roads, and to design multi-use paths in the community. Bikeways and pathways can serve the growing tourism and recreation economy and make the region more attractive. They can also help reduce congestion. To support this endeavor, the stakeholders expressed the need for a region wide GIS map for bikeways and pathways. This will help to coordinate the ongoing bikeways and pathways planning efforts being conducted by different agencies and integrate them with the I-way planning process.

Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT)

Transit programs in Wyoming are administered by WYDOT through the Office of Local Government Coordination. Transit programs are funded through a variety of federal and state programs. Currently all 23 counties have at least one provider of public transportation. Many of the public transportation programs are provided by the senior centers in the area. Transit programs are divided into three major funding categories: Administrative Assistance, Operating Assistance, and Capital Assistance. Many of the specific programs allow for multiple categories within each fund type. All are reimbursement programs with varying match ratio required.

[FTA Section 5311](#)

Capital and Planning Grants

5316, 5317 and ARRA

As part of receiving these monies, the FTA and WYDOT require individuals who receive certain funding types must be a part of a locally derived coordinated plan. A goal of LGC staff is to have coordination at all levels: local, regional and statewide.

III. County and Municipal Responsibilities

Several of the communities within the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium have ongoing advisory or planning committees functioning to plan for local mobility projects and respond to grant opportunities. They include:

Teton Valley Mobility Advisory Committee - Ease of transportation is critical to the success of any visitor/tourism economy, along with choice in travel mode (car, bus, bike, etc.). To improve both of these factors (referred to here as mobility), the city works with an ad-hoc transportation planning group called the Teton Valley Mobility Advisory Committee (TVMAC), with members from City of Victor, Teton County, Grand Targhee Resort, Linx Transportation Co-op, and Teton Valley Trails and Pathways. This group develops investment priorities that are adopted into the State of Idaho planning document called the Local Mobility Management Network (6B) Plan. The city also works with the Teton Valley Trails and Pathways on local and valley-wide pathways planning.

Jackson Hole Transportation Advisory Committee - Participation from local agencies will be conducted with a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC includes representatives from the Town of Jackson, Teton County, Jackson Hole Community Pathways, START, and WYDOT.

Research Institutes and Nonprofit Organizations

[Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University](#)

Designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration as one of the top 10 National University Transportation Centers, we fulfill our charge of advancing the field of transportation and developing the next generation of professionals by conducting cutting-edge, multidisciplinary research.

Mobility and Public Transportation program research area works at providing a comprehensive approach to solving issues facing rural transportation (transit), federal lands (national parks, forests, etc.) and tribal agencies through research, outreach and education/training. It does this through facilitating transportation coordination among transportation providers, including human service, tourist industries and other organizations, and increasing mobility for individuals of all ages and abilities by using innovative solutions that include bicycle, pedestrian and all other modes of transportation.

Yellowstone-Teton Clean Energy Coalition (YTCEC) – Based in Jackson, Wyoming, the mission of



YTCEC is to displace the use of petroleum in the regional transportation sector, improve air quality through reduced harmful exhaust emissions, and increase energy security and sustainability. This is accomplished primarily through the promotion of alternative fuels and vehicles, integrated transportation systems, and conservation strategies and technologies that benefit the public interest by reducing energy

consumption, particularly of petroleum based fuels. Programs that could be implemented in partnership with the Idaho cities and counties in the WGY Consortium include:

Green Fleets is an alternative transportation consulting service of YTCEC. Current fleet data is analyzed to quantify baseline petroleum use, greenhouse gas emissions and cost. After fleet goals and objectives are established, recommendations are calculated then compiled into a comprehensive report.

Greater Yellowstone Electric Vehicle (GYEV) Working Group- Its purpose is to create a plan to introduce electric vehicles and electric vehicle charging stations into our region with cohesion and simplicity. By positioning ourselves at the front of the EV trend, our region will be situated to embrace this new technology and serve the needs of communities and the millions of visitors we host each year.

Idle-Free Campaign - The Town of Jackson, WY recently passed an idle-free resolution to encourage the citizens to limit unnecessary vehicle idling in public. Resolution 10-19 will help reduce carbon emissions, fuel consumption and promote improved air quality by decreasing unnecessary vehicle idling. Jackson now joins the numerous cities, in almost every state, that have resolutions or binding ordinances that address unnecessary vehicle idling. Along with the resolution, education and outreach programs will be enacted to communicate the negative impacts of idling on air quality and the ability for modern engines to work well without warming up for long periods of time.