Transit Success Stories in Montana

by Lisa Ballard, P.E. & Ted Lange
Current Transportation Solutions
Transit in Montana

- 34 communities have public transportation
  - 13+ communities have fixed or deviated routes
- Almost all Montanans live within 25 miles of bus or rail service connecting to regional hubs and the rest of the country
- 75 non-profit organizations receive capital assistance for elderly and disabled transportation
Helena population: 28,592
Butte population: 34,383
Bozeman population: 38,025
Havre population: 16,397
Streamline
Catch the Current!

- Operating Budget
  $1,387,945
- Riders
  276,856
- Miles Driven
  245,268
- Hours of Operation
  14,436
- Savings in CO2 Omissions
  1,000,000+ pounds

Upstream to Downtown

STREAMLINEBUS.COM - 406.587.2434
Butte Silver-Bow Transit

- 4 fixed route buses
- ADA demand response service
- $920,000
Helena Area Transit Service

- Two fixed routes
- Curb-to-curb service
- Trolley to the trail
- Summer youth bus
- Head start
- $1.3 million per year
One Size Does Not Fit All!

Yurok Tribe
Jet Boat Transit & Tourist Service
Klamath River, CA
Operations Funding

Bozeman, MT  $ 1.4 million
Butte, MT    $ 0.9 million
Helena, MT   $ 1.1 million

Marquette, MI $ 3.2 million

Rimrock Trailways $ 3 million
(MT & ND intercity)
Big Differences Between States

**Bozeman**

**Revenue by Type**

- ASMSU: 13%
- DPHHS: 2%
- Donations: 0%
- Contract: 4%
- Income: 5%
- MSU: 8%
- Other: 8%

FTA: 68%

**Local**: 32%

**State**: 0%

**Federal**: 68%

**Typical Michigan Small Urban**

**Operations Funding**

- FTA 5307: 43%
- Local: 16%
- State: 26%
- Farebox: 10%
Farebox vs. Fare Free

- At best, charging fares produces small amounts of net revenue. In many cases the result is a net loss.
- Collecting fares causes time delays
- Fares suppress ridership
- Fares undermine the safety net for some of the most vulnerable transportation-disadvantaged riders.
- Fares make sense for longer distance routes with relatively few stops – especially intercity

- Some states require fares
- Federal matching funds formula creates an incentive for fares if there is state funding, and against fares for communities without state funding
# Local Funding (Government)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons (potential)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>Bozeman Butte Helena</td>
<td>Significant, reliable funding</td>
<td>None – If you don’t have city support you probably don’t have a system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Requires building political support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Butte (combined City/County government)</td>
<td>Significant, reliable funding</td>
<td>It can be hard to build the coalition needed to convince counties that city-based systems benefit them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Requires building political support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mil Levy</td>
<td>None of these three communities but common in for many rural systems</td>
<td>Significant, reliable funding</td>
<td>Complacency – reduces motivation to build partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Requires extensive outreach to build public and political support</td>
<td>Building strong campaign coalition can be daunting and both city and county support usually needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Local Funding (Non-Government)

<table>
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<th>Source</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons (potential)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Bozeman Butte</td>
<td>Significant, reliable funding Students, staff, faculty ride free</td>
<td>University-centric service that leaves other needs unmet to varying degrees (Bozeman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts</td>
<td>Bozeman Butte Helena</td>
<td>Requires building partnerships with important social service providers, employers and businesses</td>
<td>Could skew priorities as with university funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>Bozeman</td>
<td>United Way supports Streamline. If launching a new system local/regional foundations or donors may help. A foundation helped launch North Central MT Transit.</td>
<td>Rarely a significant or reliable funding source and generally not a good priority for time investment. A rider put Bozeman’s paratransit in their will. Don’t bank on this happening in your community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The image is a network diagram illustrating the relationships between various federal agencies and programs. The diagram includes connections between agencies such as HHS (Health and Human Services), Labor, Transportation, and Education, as well as programs like Medicare & Medicaid Services, Office of Disability Employment Policy, Centers for Independent Living, and Rural Operators. The diagram also highlights connections to state governors and cabinet secretaries, federal agencies, and grant funding sources. The source of the diagram is USDOT Mobility Services for All Americans program.
Investment per Capita (Fixed Route)
Cost per fixed route ride (FY 2010)
- Bozeman: $2.27
- Helena: $5.50
- Butte: $5.00

Cost per demand-response (dial-a-ride) ride (FY 2010)
- Bozeman: $15.46
- Peer group: $26
Growing Small City Transit

- Strong Leadership
- Community Involvement
- Entrepreneurial mindset
- Effective Organization
- Engaged Political Leaders
- Adequate Funding
Butte Success: Data-Driven Route Changes

15% Increase in Ridership

- Increased to 30 minute frequency
- Decreased to 60 minute frequency

Legend:
- Harrison-Montana Tech Route
- Walkerville-Harrison Route
- Oregon-Racetrack Route
- Service Route
PLAN A TRIP

Start: Address, placename, or intersection
e.g. [Holmes Ave. and Harrison Ave. Butte, MT]

End: Address, placename, or intersection
e.g. [Montana Tech]

When: Depart at or Arrive by
2/6 6:23pm

Get directions with Google Maps

More about transit in Google Maps and on your mobile phone.

Map Overview

Click a route to see its schedule and detail map. The Saturday route is shown on a separate page.

News & Alerts
Test: Expect snow-related delays today, January 31

See more>>

Your email address

Sign up for News & Alerts

About the Bus
Rider Information
Dial-a-Ride
Link to this website
SUCCESS: Comprehensive Branding Strategy
Partnerships, Partnerships, More Partnerships
SUCCESS: Diverse Funding Sources

Revenue by Type

- FTA 5311: $819,604
- Montana TransADE: $57,500
- ASMSU: $117,000
- MSU: $85,000
- City of Bozeman: $122,400
- Gallatin County: $49,000
- Contract – Bridger/Bohart: $12,600
- City of Belgrade: $8,000
- Contract - Reach: $60,000
- Contract – Right Now: $2,500
- United Way: $25,000
- Title III: $20,000
- Rider donations: $18,000
- Others: $35,000

Total: $1,432,604
Responding to Community Needs

Contracting to provide mass transit to local ski areas

Providing targeted routes to reduce drunk driving
Streamline is Integrated into Downtown

Bridger Park Garage incorporates 435 vehicle spaces, 10,000 square feet of commercial space AND a Streamline transfer station.

The Downtown Bozeman Improvement Plan places emphasis on complete streets, environmental sustainability and public transportation.
Streamline provides downtown transportation alternatives...

...for high attendance special events

and for late night revelry.
SUCCESS: Strong and Growing Ridership

Annual Ridership

- FY07: 0
- FY08: +86%
- FY09: +30%
- FY10: +5%
- FY11: +4%
- FY12: +14%
North Central Montana Transit

Video

- Program of Opportunity Link, a poverty reduction non-profit
- Produced by MSU graduate student
- You Tube Channel: opportunitylink1 (4 videos)