

Flathead County, MT Five-Year Transit Development Plan Update



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Flathead County Five-Year Transit Development Plan Update

Final Report

Prepared for:

Eagle Transit
1333 Willow Glen Drive
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 758-2427

Prepared by:

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
516 North Tejon Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
(719) 633-2868

LSC #134240

November 27, 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Title	Page
I	INTRODUCTION	I-1
	Purpose of the Study	I-1
	Report Contents	I-1
	Study Approach	I-2
	Project Team	I-3
	Summary of the Issues and Project Goals	I-3
II	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT	II-1
	Public Meeting Comments	II-1
	Columbia Falls Senior Center	II-1
	Whitefish Senior Center	II-2
	Kalispell Senior Center	II-2
	Driver Meeting Comments	II-3
III	EAGLE TRANSIT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	III-1
	Introduction	III-1
	Long-Range Vision	III-1
	Mission Statement	III-1
	Goals and Objectives	III-2
IV	COMMUNITY CONDITIONS	IV-1
	Community Description	IV-1
	Study Area Location	IV-1
	Transportation System Overview	IV-3
	Highways	IV-3
	Railroads	IV-3
	Airports	IV-3
	Study Area Demographics	IV-3
	2000-2013 Population Estimates	IV-3
	Population Density	IV-4
	Transit-Dependent Population Characteristics	IV-7
	Older Adult Population	IV-9
	Mobility-Limited Population	IV-9
	Low-Income Population	IV-12
	Zero-Vehicle Households	IV-12
	Youth Population	IV-12
	Community Development Characteristics	IV-16
	Historic Unemployment Rates	IV-16
	Employment Sectors	IV-17
	Major Employers	IV-18
	Major Transit Activity Centers	IV-19
	Travel Patterns	IV-24
	Work Transportation Mode	IV-24
	Commute Patterns	IV-26
V	EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES	V-1
	Introduction	V-1
	Eagle Transit	V-1
	Eagle Transit History	V-1
	Description of Transportation Services	V-1

Ridership Patterns	V-9
Ridership Trend	V-9
Monthly Ridership Trend	V-10
Ridership by Route	V-11
Boarding Counts on the City Bus	V-14
Staff	V-16
Vehicle Fleet	V-16
Transit Facility	V-17
Financial Status	V-17
Revenues	V-17
Expenses	V-18
Cost Allocation Model	V-18
Performance Measures	V-20
Systemwide Performance	V-20
2011-2012 Route Performance	V-21
Coordination Activities	V-24
Origin and Destination Analysis	V-24
Other Transportation Providers	V-29
Other Public Transportation	V-29
SNOW BUS - The Shuttle Network of Whitefish	V-29
Day Programs	V-29
Lake View Healthcare Community	V-29
Friendship House	V-30
Discovery Development Center	V-30
Stillwater Christian School	V-30
Vocational Rehabilitation	V-30
Flathead Industries	V-30
Hospital	V-30
Kalispell Regional Medical Center	V-30
University Transportation	V-31
Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC)	V-31
Mental Health	V-31
Sinopah House	V-31
Lamplighter House	V-31
Taxi Companies	V-31
Kalispell Taxi	V-31
Flathead-Glacier Transportation	V-32
Private For-Profit Transportation	V-32
Rocky Mountain Transportation	V-32
Brown Bear Charters	V-32
Wild Horse Limousine Service	V-33
Flathead-Glacier Transportation/Glacier Charters/Glacier Van Rentals	V-33
Other Providers	V-33
Intercity Passenger Rail	V-34
Amtrak	V-34
VI TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT	VI-1
Introduction	VI-1
Greatest Transit Needs	VI-1
Methodology	VI-2
Results	VI-5
Fixed-Route Model	VI-7
ADA Paratransit Demand	VI-12
Commuter Demand Analysis	VI-12

	TCRP Rural Demand Methodology	VI-13
	Non-Program Trips	VI-13
VII	ONBOARD SURVEY RESULTS	VII-1
	Introduction	VII-1
	Survey Methodology	VII-1
	Survey Findings	VII-1
	Rider Characteristics	VII-1
	Age and Gender	VII-1
	Annual Household Income	VII-3
	Vehicle Ownership and Licensed Driver	VII-3
	First Learned about Eagle Transit	VII-5
	Trip Characteristics and Frequency	VII-5
	Perceptions about Eagle Transit	VII-8
	Hours and Days of Operation	VII-9
	Operate Late Enough	VII-9
	Cities and Communities to be Served	VII-10
	Suggestions to Improve Eagle Transit Service	VII-10
VIII	SERVICE ALTERNATIVES	VIII-1
	Introduction	VIII-1
	Types of Transit Service	VIII-1
	Fixed-Route Service	VIII-1
	Service Routes	VIII-3
	Flexible-Route Service	VIII-3
	Route Deviation	VIII-4
	Flex Route	VIII-4
	Checkpoint Service	VIII-4
	Demand-Response Service	VIII-5
	Regional and Commuter Service	VIII-6
	Vanpool Service	VIII-6
	Service Alternatives	VIII-6
	Maintain Status Quo	VIII-6
	Modified Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes	VIII-10
	Option 1 - Two Routes (One Bus on Each Route)	VIII-12
	Option 2 - Two Routes (Two Buses Operating on Each Route)	VIII-12
	Option 3 - Existing City Route with Two Buses Running in Opposite Directions	VIII-13
	Increased Service Hours on the Whitefish City Bus Service	VIII-13
	Increased Service Hours on the Columbia Falls City Bus Service	VIII-14
	Increased Service Hours on the Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter Route	VIII-17
	Increased Service Hours on the Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter Route	VIII-17
	Whitefish-to-Columbia Falls Intercity Routes (New Service)	VIII-18
	Lakeside Commuter Route (New Service)	VIII-18
	Extended Service	VIII-19
	Option 1 - An Earlier Hour of Service on the City Bus and Dial-a-Ride	VIII-19
	Saturday Service	VIII-20
	Option 1 - Saturday Service: City Bus and Dial-a-Ride	VIII-20
	Option 2 - Saturday Service: Demand-Response	VIII-20
IX	INSTITUTIONAL ALTERNATIVES	IX-1
	Introduction	IX-1

	Criteria for the Institutional Structures	IX-1
	Transit Organizational Structure	IX-2
	Option 1: Department of County Government	IX-2
	Option 2: Urban Transportation Districts	IX-2
	Option 3: Intergovernmental Transit Agency	IX-3
	Summary	IX-3
X	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	X-1
	Funding Sources	X-1
	Capital Funding	X-1
	Operations and Maintenance Funding	X-2
	Overall Service Considerations	X-3
	Potential Local and Regional Funding Sources	X-3
	Local Funding Sources	X-3
	College Pass Program	X-3
	Private Support/Merchants in Kalispell	X-4
	Other Local and Regional Funding Sources	X-4
	General Fund Appropriations	X-4
	Advertising	X-4
	Voluntary Assessments	X-5
	Transportation Impact Fees	X-5
	Lodging Tax	X-6
	Sales Tax	X-6
	Property Tax for Special Transportation	X-7
	Urban Transportation District	X-7
	Service Districts	X-7
	Local Option Gas Tax	X-8
	TransADE Program	X-8
	Federal Transit Funding Sources	X-8
	Transit Benefit Program	X-10
	Transportation and Community System Preservation Program	X-10
	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	X-11
	Head Start Program	X-11
	Other Federal Funds	X-11
	Funding Summary	X-12
XI	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	XI-1
	Service Plan	XI-1
	Immediate Actions	XI-1
	Eliminate Saturday Service	XI-1
	Modify Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes	XI-2
	Increase Service Hours on the Whitefish City Bus Service	XI-2
	Increase Service Hours on the Columbia Falls City Bus Service	XI-2
	Establish Vanpool Program	XI-4
	Short-Term Actions	XI-4
	Whitefish-Columbia Falls Intercity Connector	XI-4
	Lakeside Commuter Route	XI-4
	Long-Term Actions	XI-5
	Implement Saturday Service	XI-5
	Additional Two Buses on Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes	XI-5
	Glacier Park Shuttle	XI-5
	Implementation Time Line	XI-5
	Financial Plan	XI-7
	Operating Funding	XI-7
	Organizational Plan	XI-10

Immediate Actions	XI-10
Form Transit Coalition	XI-10
Seek Increased Local Community Funding	XI-10
Develop Financial Support From Private Business	XI-11
Long-Term Action	XI-11
Establish Urban Transportation District	XI-11

APPENDIX A: Survey Questionnaire

APPENDIX B: How First Learned of Eagle Transit

APPENDIX C: Hours of Operation

APPENDIX D: Late Operation

APPENDIX E: Stop Locations

APPENDIX F: Comments and Suggestions

APPENDIX G: Preliminary Route Schedules

LIST OF TABULATIONS

Table	Title	Page
IV-1	Population Projections	IV-4
IV-2	Estimated Population Characteristics using American Community Survey 2011	IV-8
IV-3	Historic Unemployment Rates	IV-17
IV-4	Employment by Sector for Flathead County	IV-18
IV-5	Major Employers in the Flathead County Area	IV-19
IV-6	Means of Transportation to Work - Flathead County	IV-24
IV-7	Travel Time to Work - Flathead County	IV-25
IV-8	Time Leaving Home to Go to Work - Flathead County	IV-26
IV-9	Residents in Kalispell are Employed	IV-27
IV-10	Workers in Kalispell Live	IV-27
IV-11	Residents in Columbia Falls are Employed	IV-28
IV-12	Workers in Columbia Falls Live	IV-28
IV-13	Residents in Whitefish are Employed	IV-29
IV-14	Workers in Whitefish Live	IV-29
V-1	Eagle Transit Ridership	V-10
V-2	Ridership by Market Segment	V-11
V-3	Eagle Transit Route Ridership by Month	V-12
V-4	Eagle Transit Vehicle Fleet	V-17
V-5	Eagle Transit FY2013-14 Budgeted Revenues	V-18
V-6	Eagle Transit FY2013-14 Cost Allocation Model	V-19
V-7	2011-2012 Systemwide Performance	V-21
V-8	Eagle Transit Route Performance (FY2011-2012)	V-22
V-9	Top Pick-Up Locations for Eagle Transit	V-27
V-10	Top Drop-Off Locations for Eagle Transit	V-27

VI-1	Greatest Transit Need Model	VI-3
VI-2	Census Block Groups with Greatest Transit Need	VI-5
VI-3	Calibrated Fixed-Route Demand Model - 40-Minute Headway	VI-8
VI-4	Calibrated Fixed-Route Demand Model - 85-Minute Headway	VI-9
VI-5	Ideal Fixed-Route Demand Model - Kalispell and Evergreen Area	VI-11
VI-6	Daily Commute Demand between Kalispell and Employment Places . .	VI-13
VI-7	2007-2011 ACS Estimated Public Transit Demand using the TCRP Method	VI-15
VII-1	Eagle Transit Quality of Transit Service	VII-8
VIII-1	Transit Service Alternatives for Flathead County	VIII-9
IX-1	Institutional Alternatives Comparison Matrix	IX-4
XI-1	Transit Plan, 2014-2019	XI-9

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Title	Page
IV-1	Flathead County Study Area	IV-2
IV-2	Population Density	IV-6
IV-3	Density of Older Adults	IV-10
IV-4	Density of Mobility-Limited Persons	IV-11
IV-5	Density of Low-Income Persons	IV-13
IV-6	Density of Zero-Vehicle Households	IV-14
IV-7	Density of Youth	IV-15
IV-8	Historic Unemployment Rate	IV-16
IV-9	Kalispell Activity Centers	IV-21
IV-10	Whitefish Activity Centers	IV-22
IV-11	Columbia Falls Activity Centers	IV-23
V-1	Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Route	V-3
V-2	Whitefish City Bus Route	V-5
V-3	Columbia Falls Bus Service	V-7
V-4	Eagle Transit Systemwide Ridership Trend 2009-2012	V-10
V-5	Eagle Transit Monthly Ridership	V-11
V-7	FY2011-2012 Ridership by Route	V-13
V-8	Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Route Boardings	V-15
V-9	Eagle Transit Organization	V-16
V-10	Cost per Trip vs. Cost per Hour	V-23
V-11	Pick-up Locations for Eagle Transit	V-26
V-12	Drop-off Locations for Eagle Transit	V-28
VI-1	Greatest Transit Needs	VI-6
VII-1	Age Cohorts	VII-2
VII-2	Gender	VII-2
VII-3	Household Income	VII-3
VII-4	Licensed Driver and Able to Drive	VII-4

VII-5	Operating Vehicles Available in a Household	VII-5
VII-6	Eagle Transit Service	VII-6
VII-7	Trip Purpose	VII-7
VII-8	Frequency on Eagle Transit	VII-8
VII-9	Operates Late Enough	VII-10
VIII-1	Modified Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes, Options 1 and 2	VIII-11
VIII-2	Various Services Proposed	VIII-16
XI-1	Recommended Transit Service Option	XI-3
XI-2	Implementation Schedule	XI-6



CHAPTER I

Introduction

Flathead County, on behalf of Eagle Transit, contracted with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. to prepare a five-year Transit Development Plan Update. The plan specifically focuses on general public transportation issues throughout Flathead County. The plan also examines transit needs, alternatives, and programs for the communities within Flathead County.



The report focuses on transportation for the general public, elderly, disabled, and education/employment trips. General public transportation service in Flathead County is provided by Eagle Transit which operates several transportation services. For some residents in Flathead County, this service is their only link to work, shopping, health care facilities, education, and other necessary services.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to analyze and recommend strategies for Eagle Transit which will affect the delivery of public transportation services over the next five years. This study describes the existing conditions in the county related to public transit services, discusses service and other alternatives for meeting needs into the future, identifies the locally-preferred set of alternatives, and presents an implementation plan for the next five years.

REPORT CONTENTS

Chapter II presents the public comments received from the open houses and driver meetings conducted at the end of May 2013.

Chapter III presents updated Eagle Transit goals and objectives for service. These goals will become the adopted goals which will help to guide Eagle Transit's system development in the next five years.

Introduction

Chapter IV presents the existing community conditions in Flathead County. A summary of community demographics and economics is also provided.

A discussion of Eagle Transit's existing transit services and other transportation providers within the county is presented in Chapter V. The transportation provider information includes a description of services, ridership, fleet characteristics, and finances.

Chapter VI presents the transit needs assessment for Flathead County. Chapter VII presents a summary of an onboard survey conducted by Eagle Transit as part of the public input process.

Chapter VIII presents the service alternatives for meeting transit demand in Flathead County. The alternatives range from adding buses on the existing city bus fixed-route service to modifying the existing Kalispell-Evergreen City fixed-route service. Each alternative is evaluated in terms of its anticipated costs, ridership, and performance as related to the existing operations. These alternatives were used to develop the Final Preferred Plan.

Chapter IX presents an analysis of the potential institutional alternatives which were considered for Eagle Transit along with their advantages and disadvantages.

Chapter X presents the federal, state, and local funding sources that may be available to provide transit services in the Flathead County area.

Finally, Chapter XI presents the Preferred Operations Plan divided into various phases—Immediate Actions, Short-Term Actions, and Long-Term Actions. This chapter also includes an implementation plan and schedule along with a five-year financial plan.

STUDY APPROACH

Eagle Transit is taking a closer look at how services are provided in the county. A key element in the plan is to clearly evaluate the unmet needs of the local

community residents. The current effort focuses on the continuation of providing public transit services to meet the community's needs. One important step toward providing an integrated community-wide transportation system is involving key players such as the Eagle Transit Board, key stakeholders, the Montana Department of Transportation, human service agencies, other transportation providers, and local residents. The process follows the general planning approach used by LSC as illustrated below.



Project Team

An initial “kick-off meeting” was held in Kalispell, Montana on April 11, 2013. The meeting was attended by members of the Eagle Transit Board. The project team met to discuss project goals, priorities, the public participation process, the identification of locations for public meetings, and a time line for completion of the final study.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES AND PROJECT GOALS

During the April kick-off meeting, the LSC team briefed the Eagle Transit staff, Board, and other agencies on the study process to be undertaken over the four-month period. Major issues and concerns regarding public transportation were discussed. Following are summaries of the major issues which arose through the meeting and during discussions with Eagle Transit Staff:

- There have been requests for midday runs from Whitefish and Columbia Falls.
- There is a need to determine priorities.

Introduction

- Eagle Transit is starting to pick up general public patrons between the ages of 18 and 25 years.
- According to the Montana State Plan on Aging, in 2015, 23 percent of the population will be over 60 years of age. In 2020, the percentage of population over 60 years will increase to 25 percent.
- Based on focus groups, transportation is seen as a major issue. There is also a need to inform people of the various services provided.
- There is a need to assist people in becoming more successful users.
- The current Eagle Transit system is not very flexible.
- Eagle Transit staff is pleased with the current relatively young fleet.
- There are approximately 750 people working in Williston, North Dakota and in the Wyoming area.
- The unemployment rate is misleading.
- With the introduction of the college pass program, Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) is seeing good ridership.
- Eagle Transit is getting more requests for midday medical trips.
- Aging programs have 80-85 percent low-income population.
- The minivan provides medical return trips. Approximately 30-40 medical return trips are done in a day.
- There is a need to get more money for funding transit.



CHAPTER II

Public Involvement

This chapter presents a brief review of the public involvement program conducted at the end of May 2013. Three public meetings were held where citizens were openly welcome to comment on transit services in the county. In addition, driver meetings were held at two different times to receive input from drivers. An opportunity was also given to drivers July 11, 2013 to meet with LSC staff to discuss the preliminary recommendations.

The location of the three public meetings were the Kalispell Senior Center, the Columbia Falls Senior Center, and the Whitefish Senior Center. Attendees were given the opportunity to voice what they felt are transit needs within each of their communities.

PUBLIC MEETING COMMENTS

Listed below are the actual comments received from the citizens that attended these public meetings:

Columbia Falls Senior Center

In general, attendees emphasized the need for longer hours of service and later pick-ups from the Columbia Falls Senior Center than what is currently provided.

- Would like later pick-up after lunch (maybe 12:30 p.m.).
- Longer hours of service. Presently 2:00 p.m. is the last pick-up on the Columbia Falls City bus.
- Love the service provided. Great service.
- Scheduling is sometimes weird.
- Longer hours of service - until 3:00 p.m. at least.
- Wednesday is the busiest day of the week on the bus.
- Do not like the new limit of three-quarter mile from the bus stop, as the bus won't go as far as my hairstylist.
- Driver does an excellent job - courteous, on-time, and friendly.

Public Involvement

- The express service to Kalispell used to be once a week, now it is once a month. Could the service be once a week again?
- Would like later pick-ups from the Senior Center.
- The fare of \$1.50 is not bad.
- Would like open return reservation.
- Need to publicize service for non-seniors and the general public.
- Need for a transit connection between Columbia Falls and Whitefish.
- Need for service to medical appointments in Kalispell.
- Need for shopping trips to Shopko and Kmart.
- Need mobility replacement for private vehicles.

Whitefish Senior Center

In general, attendees emphasized the need for longer hours of service from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. than what is currently provided to the Whitefish Senior Center.

- Cannot make sense of the schedule.
- Need service from Mt. Village to the Senior Center by 9:00 a.m, with a return trip around 1:00 p.m.
- There is low level of service between communities.
- Need for later service in afternoons (3:00 p.m.).
- Activities start at 10:00 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. There was a card group that had to quit because of the schedule.
- Getting different answers from different dispatchers.
- In Stone Creek, there are 8-10 riders that have no other transportation choices.
- Might be able to run more activities at the Senior Center.
- Difficulty in scheduling medical appointments.
- Appreciate curbside pick-up especially in winter.
- Could not live here without the Eagle Transit bus.
- People cannot attend the toenail clinic at 3:00 p.m.

Kalispell Senior Center

In general, attendees at the Kalispell Senior Center had specific stop changes on the Kalispell-Evergreen City bus. They also talked about more connections to Whitefish and Columbia Falls.

- Stops could be closer to actual destinations.

- Stops are too far apart.
- To go to McDonalds, I would have to use Super One or Army/Navy.
- Don't make changes.
- Mark bus stops better, use signs.
- Without the bus, people couldn't get around.
- Would like the bus to go up to Reserve Drive on US Highway 2 (La Salle Lighting).
- Not a comfortable bus ride.
- Possibly more connections to Whitefish and Columbia Falls.
- Connections on schedule aren't always clear.
- Connections can't be made depending on where you are on the route.
- People aren't aware of transfer locations.
- Add westbound stop near Smith's.

DRIVER MEETING COMMENTS

Listed below are the comments received from drivers:

- The demand-response service patterns are not the same day to day. The medical return service has been a life saver.
- Not as busy now as in winter. Last winter there were more than 200 rides scheduled.
- Move from split shifts to more straight shifts. Have gone from five split shifts to two split shifts.
- Eliminating Saturday service would hurt dialysis. However, could shift dialysis patients to Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.
- Most Saturday trips are for convenience, not a necessity.
- Would be better to provide more weekday service.
- Dropping Saturday service would be better use of drivers.
- Columbia Falls may have demand for five-day service.
- People ask about connection to park.
- Could add airport stop. Some of the issues could be schedule and baggage.
- Exit from college to US Highway 93 without a signal is bad.
- At the hospital, the location of the shelter and the location of the crosswalk is a safety issue.
- Could Summit and the hospital stops be combined?
- Need to add a stop for Cabelas.
- Many people and commuters don't know about Eagle Transit.

Public Involvement

- Need better schedules and brochures.
- In Columbia Falls, the 12:15 p.m. time should be kept. However, the route needs to cover more areas.
- Operating with a schedule and stops reduced mileage without dropping riders.
- The City bus-commuter connection does not work for all commuters in the afternoon.
- Request/needs for midday trips from Whitefish-Kalispell and Columbia Falls-Kalispell runs.
- On the Canyon service, the ridership probably wouldn't increase with more service.
- Columbia Heights should be added to service.
- On Whitefish service, there are very demanding passengers. They often want something special such as a taxi service. The route doesn't have enough time for deviations.
- Get requests for meeting the evening train.
- On the City Route, the 1:15 p.m. run is too long a time.
- Need to have bus stop signs.
- Some of the shelters that aren't used include Mountain Villa stop north of Reserve on US Highway 93.
- Need to add a stop at National Flood Services. They are hiring people.
- The current service is not serving driver's license and Social Security offices.
- Would be difficult getting back out on US Highway 2. The timing of lights isn't good to turn onto US Highway 2.
- Have some requests for Saturday service.
- Should have fares for everyone riding. If the service is free, people abuse the service.
- Have had some requests for day passes.
- Request for a southern commuter service.
- Need for service to West Glacier in summer.



Eagle Transit Goals and Objectives

INTRODUCTION

In developing a Short-Range Transit Plan, it is necessary to recognize the mission, goals, and objectives for providing public transportation. The mission and goals set the direction to be taken in the transit plan, and the specific objectives, along with corresponding performance standards, provide the specific direction for implementation. Eagle Transit has established a Mission Statement and Goals for Public Transportation. These are presented in this chapter for adoption in this Transit Development Plan.

LONG-RANGE VISION

It is important to develop a long-range vision for transit service within the county. Such a vision was first adopted by the Flathead County Commissioners in 1987. The vision for Eagle Transit now includes a mission statement, a set of nine action goals, and five operation objectives. The 1987 goals and objectives were updated in the 1990 and 1996 Transportation Development Plans (TDP). The mission statement has been updated since the last TDP.

The Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives typically form a hierarchical structure with the Mission Statement being the most general. Goals support the achievement of the mission, objectives support the goals, and so on until the most specific element is reached—the standards.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission Statement establishes the overarching direction of an agency and enumerates the most generalized set of actions to be achieved by that agency. The mission of Eagle Transit is as follows:

Eagle Transit Mission Statement

We commit ourselves to the pursuit of quality transportation for Flathead County; valuing the safe, cost-effective and efficient movement of people. We will achieve this mission through teamwork, empowerment of staff and excellent customer service.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The direction of the Mission Statement and general actions to achieve are typically expanded and defined by a set of goals. Four goals with corresponding objectives and performance measures were developed in the 1996 TDP. These goals addressed mobility, performance, customer orientation, and land use planning. The goals and objectives were reviewed with the Transit Advisory Board to determine if any changes should be made.

The following constitute the current Goals and Objectives as adopted by the Eagle Transit Board.

- I. GOAL: Flathead County will provide mobility opportunities for those who are dependent on public transportation.**
 - A. Service will be provided to key activity centers within Flathead County, including hospitals, medical clinics, shopping centers, FVCC, schools, and major employment centers.
 - B. Service will comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
 - C. Coordinate with local entities for a more efficient use of local resources.
 - D. Coordinate bus schedules to accommodate the local schools.

- II. GOAL: Eagle Transit will strive to provide efficient and effective services at the lowest cost and highest productivity possible.**
 - A. Increase ridership on all routes and services.
 - B. Productivity standards will be met based on passengers per hour and passengers per mile.
 - C. Make maximum use of facilities and equipment, both public and private.
 - D. The lowest cost alternative will be used to meet identified transit needs.
 - E. Service will be provided on time to meet published schedules.

- F. Requests for new service will be evaluated to ensure that productivity objectives will be met and funding is available.
- G. Stimulate the use of private funds to supplement public subsidies.
- H. Develop a long-term commitment for public funding of transit services and seek sustainable sources of additional funding for operations.

III. GOAL: Provide transportation programs that are consumer-oriented.

- A. Provide service during commute hours at locations of major employment.
- B. Establish a countywide ridesharing program.
- C. Provide intercity services when demand and funding warrant such service enhancements.
- D. Encourage use of Eagle Transit through a continuous marketing campaign and develop general community support for the purpose of generating ridership and funding.

IV. GOAL: Promote land use planning and development which facilitate transportation service provision and minimize energy consumption.

- A. The Transit Advisory Board will comment as appropriate on land use proposals in Flathead County, including those within municipal corporate limits.
- B. The Transit Advisory Board will comment on proposed locations of major transit trip generators. Service to major transit trip generators will be based on the system productivity standards.
- C. Eagle Transit will comment on designs for proposed major transit trip generators.

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CHAPTER IV

Community Conditions

Chapter IV consists of two elements. The first element presents the community conditions and demographics for Flathead County. The second element is the presentation of the economy of Flathead County and local travel patterns. Where appropriate, maps and tables are used to demonstrate pertinent information regarding the characteristics being discussed.

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Study Area Location

Flathead County, shown in Figure IV-1, is located in the northwest area of Montana on the US-Canada border. It is the fourth most populous county in the State of Montana, with 90,317 persons (2011 ACS). The county seat, the City of Kalispell, lies in the fertile Flathead Valley approximately 120 miles north of Missoula and 200 miles northwest of Montana's capital, Helena. Other cities and towns in Flathead County include Apgar, Bigfork, Columbia Falls, Coram, Creston, Essex, Evergreen, Hungry Horse, Kila, Lake McDonald, Lakeside, Marion, Martin City, Niarada, Olney, Polebridge, Somers, West Glacier, and Whitefish. Prominent topographic features of Flathead County include Glacier National Park to the northeast, the Flathead Range of the Rocky Mountains to the east, and Flathead Lake to the south.

Figure IV-1
Flathead County Study Area



Transportation System Overview

Highways

The major north/south highway access to the area is provided by US Highway 93, providing access to Missoula, Interstate 90, and the Blacktail Mountain ski area to the south; and Whitefish, the Big Mountain ski area, and the US-Canada border to the north. Major east/west access is provided by US Highway 2, connecting the area with Glacier County, the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, the cities of Cut Bank and Shelby, and Interstate 15 to the east. To the west, US Highway 2 connects Flathead County to Lincoln County, the City of Libby, and other highways to Spokane, Washington.

Railroads

The Burlington Northern & Santa Fe rail line runs through Flathead County. Passenger service is provided by Amtrak (the Empire Builder) which connects northern Montana to Chicago in the east and Seattle to the west. Amtrak stops at Whitefish in Flathead County. The number of passengers boarding and alighting at the Whitefish Amtrak Terminal during the 2012 fiscal year was 66,614.

Airports

The Kalispell-Glacier Park International Airport lies eight miles northeast of Kalispell on US Highway 2. Commercial airlines serving this airport are Alaska Airlines (operated by Horizon Air), Allegiant Air, Delta Air Lines, Delta Connection (operated by both Compass Airlines and SkyWest Airlines), and United Express (also operated by SkyWest Airlines).

STUDY AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

2000-2013 Population Estimates

The permanent population of Flathead County was reported to be 74,471 people based on the year 2000 US Census. According to the year 2010 US Census, the population of Flathead County was 90,928, an increase of approximately 22 percent from the year 2000. The estimated 2013 population of Flathead County is 89,103 (a 1.7 percent decrease from the year 2010). Table IV-1 shows the population projections for Flathead County, Columbia Falls, Kalispell, and Whitefish.

Table IV-1 Population Projections				
	2000 Census	2010 Census	2013 est	% Change 2000-2013
Flathead County	74,471	90,928	89,103	20%
Columbia Falls	3,701	4,688	4,658	26%
Kalispell	14,160	19,927	19,115	35%
Whitefish	4,991	6,357	6,447	29%
Balance Flathead County	51,619	59,956	58,886	14%

Source: US Census Bureau, LSC 2013.

Population Density

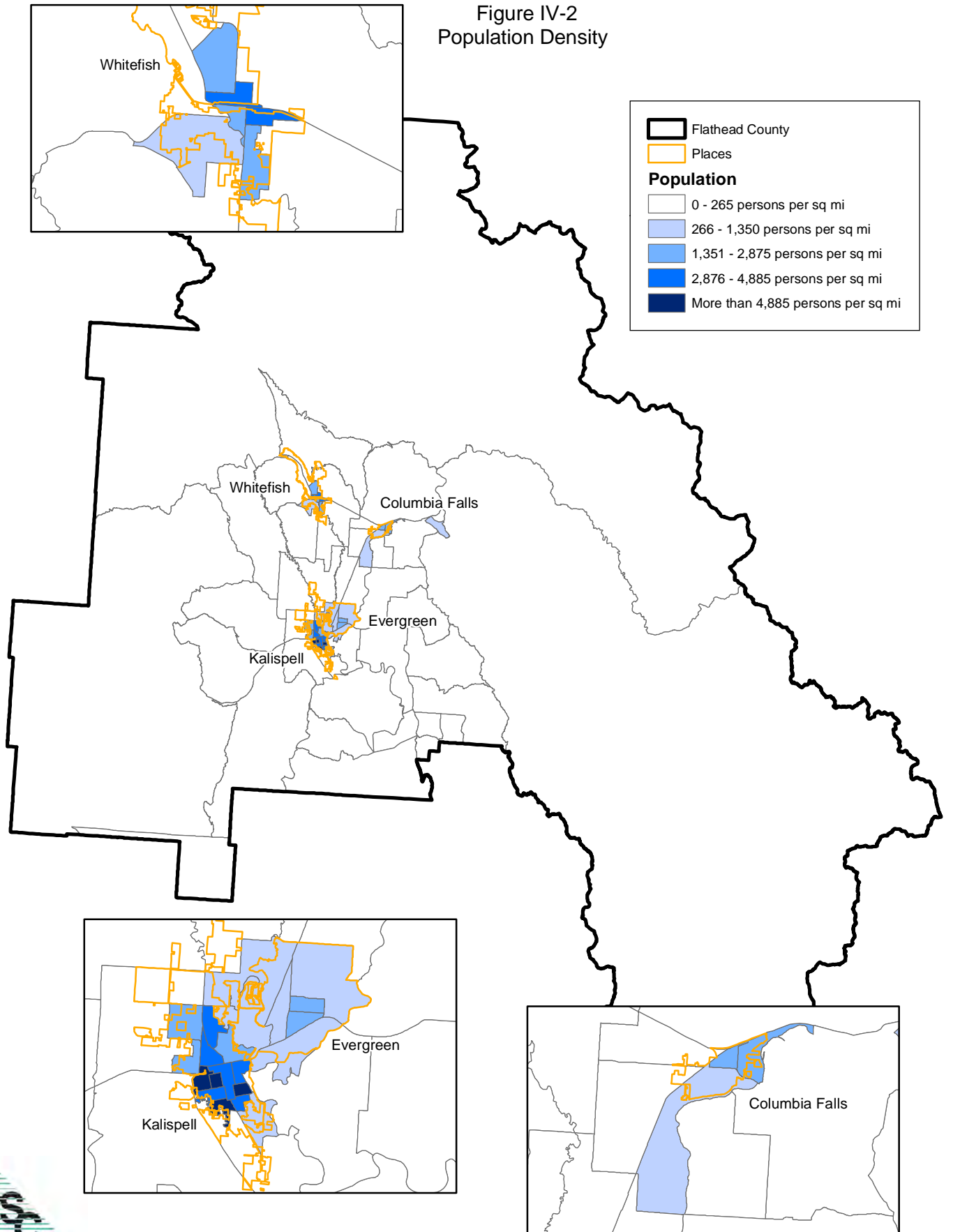
Data were taken from the 2007-2011 American Community Survey (2011 ACS) five-year estimates for most of this demographic analysis, except the mobility-limited population. Since the question on disability was changed in the 2008 ACS data, the 2007-2011 ACS five-year estimates do not contain information about disabilities or the mobility-limited population. The five-year estimates for disability will, however, be available in the ACS 2008-2012 estimates in late 2013. While disability information is available from three-year estimates (2005-2007 ACS), that information is not available at the census block group level. The smallest level of geography for which the three-year estimates are available is at the county level. Therefore, the mobility-limited information was used from the 2000 Census and projected to 2013. The Census boundaries from 2000 were changed in 2010 and so an estimate was used to apportion the mobility-limited population from the 2000 data to the 2010 Census block group boundaries. The information was then projected to the year 2013.

While the low-income population was available at the 2007-2011 ACS level, the smallest level of geographical unit for which information was available was at the tract level. The information from the tract level was then apportioned to the block group level based on the population of the block group compared to the total population in the tract.

Figure IV-2 shows the population density for the county by census block groups using the 2011 ACS data. The population is most dense in the Kalispell area, extending northeast to Evergreen, followed by Whitefish and Columbia Falls. The

area with the next highest population density is Hungry Horse. The remainder of the county is sparsely populated, being covered by expansive national forest and park lands.

Figure IV-2
Population Density



Transit-Dependent Population Characteristics

This section provides information on the individuals considered by the transportation profession to be dependent upon public transit. In general, these population characteristics preclude most such individuals from driving, leaving carpooling and public transit as the only motorized forms of available transportation.

The four types of limitations that preclude people from driving are physical limitations, financial limitations, legal limitations, and self-imposed limitations. Physical limitations may include everything from permanent disabilities such as frailty due to age, blindness, paralysis, or developmental disabilities to temporary disabilities such as acute illnesses and head injuries. Financial limitations essentially include those persons unable to purchase or rent their own vehicle. Legal limitations refer to such limitations as persons who are too young to drive (generally under age 16). Self-imposed limitations refer to those people who choose not to own or drive a vehicle (some or all of the time) for reasons other than those listed in the first three categories.

The US Census is generally capable of providing information about the first three categories of limitation. The fourth category of limitation is currently recognized as representing a relatively small portion of transit ridership, particularly in smaller areas such as Flathead County. Table IV-2 presents the study area's US Census statistics regarding the older adult population, mobility-limited population, low-income population, and zero-vehicle households. These data are important to various methods of transit demand estimation.

**Table IV-2
Estimated Population Characteristics using American Community Survey 2011
Flathead County Study Area**

Census Tract	Census Block Group	Total Population 2011 ACS	Area (sq. miles)	Total Population est. 2013*	Total Number of Households 2011 ACS		Zero-Vehicle Households 2011 ACS		Youth Population 10-19 years 2011 ACS		Total Number of Older Adults 65 and Over 2011 ACS		Mobility-Limited Population est. 2013*		Low-Income Population 2011 ACS	
					#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	1	1,127	2.0	1,039	388	7	1.8%	109	9.7%	121	10.7%	31	3.0%	276	24.5%	
1	2	1,470	1723.3	1,729	591	0	0.0%	177	12.0%	123	8.4%	69	4.0%	360	24.5%	
1	3	816	1810.4	874	282	0	0.0%	244	29.9%	109	13.4%	37	4.2%	200	24.5%	
2.01	1	1,790	57.5	1,960	749	0	0.0%	138	7.7%	337	18.8%	19	1.0%	142	7.9%	
2.01	2	569	3.0	783	228	0	0.0%	35	6.2%	129	22.7%	34	4.4%	45	7.9%	
2.01	3	1,668	5.3	783	614	17	2.8%	276	16.5%	135	8.1%	34	4.4%	133	7.9%	
2.02	1	1,842	6.3	1,160	649	0	0.0%	399	21.7%	54	2.9%	29	2.5%	239	13.0%	
2.02	2	1,366	19.0	1,556	538	11	2.0%	155	11.3%	167	12.2%	71	4.5%	178	13.0%	
2.03	1	1,805	4.0	3,012	814	46	5.7%	338	18.7%	422	23.4%	72	2.4%	264	14.7%	
2.03	2	1,330	0.8	2,103	450	0	0.0%	166	12.5%	183	13.8%	44	2.1%	195	14.7%	
2.03	3	1,049	0.3	516	358	12	3.4%	217	20.7%	42	4.0%	0	0.0%	154	14.7%	
3	1	405	50.0	762	222	14	6.3%	13	3.2%	140	34.6%	0	0.0%	52	12.7%	
3	2	1,005	13.8	1,055	377	0	0.0%	181	18.0%	105	10.4%	35	3.3%	128	12.7%	
3	3	414	0.4	806	243	8	3.3%	33	8.0%	132	31.9%	5	0.6%	53	12.7%	
3	4	1,304	0.3	1,240	637	39	6.1%	132	10.1%	70	5.4%	31	2.5%	166	12.7%	
3	5	1,489	21.5	1,135	545	16	2.9%	177	11.9%	95	6.4%	18	1.6%	190	12.7%	
4.01	1	1,499	9.2	1,725	660	71	10.8%	95	6.3%	244	16.3%	38	2.2%	246	16.4%	
4.01	2	2,609	8.7	1,079	1063	62	5.8%	290	11.1%	332	12.7%	23	2.2%	428	16.4%	
4.01	3	442	0.3	907	198	0	0.0%	42	9.5%	64	14.5%	0	0.0%	73	16.4%	
4.01	4	847	0.6	982	352	0	0.0%	101	11.9%	73	8.6%	17	1.7%	139	16.4%	
4.02	1	1,113	19.4	1,356	499	0	0.0%	175	15.7%	71	6.4%	0	0.0%	53	4.8%	
4.02	2	1,245	2.0	1,554	563	30	5.3%	71	5.7%	230	18.5%	10	0.6%	59	4.8%	
4.02	3	336	0.2	624	207	24	11.6%	0	0.0%	49	14.6%	8	1.3%	16	4.8%	
6.01	1	2,021	16.7	1,532	788	0	0.0%	378	18.7%	291	14.4%	24	1.6%	57	2.8%	
6.01	2	1,316	17.0	1,459	492	0	0.0%	205	15.6%	168	12.8%	26	1.8%	37	2.8%	
6.01	3	840	7.4	839	311	15	4.8%	114	13.6%	67	8.0%	11	1.4%	24	2.8%	
6.02	1	1,282	22.7	1,121	487	0	0.0%	162	12.6%	254	19.8%	2	0.2%	112	8.8%	
6.02	2	1,632	26.4	1,210	615	3	0.5%	242	14.8%	259	15.9%	29	2.4%	143	8.8%	
6.02	3	1,119	8.1	839	373	3	0.8%	192	17.2%	148	13.2%	11	1.4%	98	8.8%	
7	1	1,019	1.3	771	446	32	7.2%	219	21.5%	111	10.9%	6	0.8%	125	12.2%	
7	2	1,517	0.9	1,157	579	12	2.1%	290	19.1%	243	16.0%	6	0.5%	186	12.2%	
7	3	1,254	3.4	1,523	484	9	1.9%	221	17.6%	147	11.7%	48	3.1%	153	12.2%	
7	4	1,166	0.4	1,043	520	0	0.0%	228	19.6%	82	7.0%	34	3.2%	143	12.2%	
7	5	619	0.5	1,181	275	0	0.0%	91	14.7%	119	19.2%	34	2.8%	76	12.2%	
8	1	1,988	7.7	1,626	842	46	5.5%	292	14.7%	233	11.7%	48	2.9%	175	8.8%	
8	2	1,066	2.1	1,236	330	0	0.0%	149	14.0%	127	11.9%	16	1.3%	94	8.8%	
8	3	1,980	14.8	1,710	696	11	1.6%	321	16.2%	261	13.2%	28	1.6%	174	8.8%	
8	4	1,607	1.7	1,236	827	0	0.0%	60	3.7%	474	29.5%	16	1.3%	141	8.8%	
9	1	2,368	1.0	1,766	910	13	1.4%	332	14.0%	349	14.7%	8	0.5%	396	16.7%	
9	2	1,271	0.5	1,782	479	77	16.1%	108	8.5%	482	37.9%	39	2.2%	213	16.7%	
9	3	1,259	0.6	1,223	561	71	12.7%	38	3.0%	273	21.7%	12	1.0%	211	16.7%	
9	4	956	0.4	1,181	394	11	2.8%	179	18.7%	96	10.0%	71	6.0%	160	16.7%	
9	5	1,166	0.5	1,324	562	64	11.4%	128	11.0%	203	17.4%	49	3.7%	195	16.7%	
10	1	814	0.4	1,270	395	102	25.8%	99	12.2%	166	20.4%	50	4.0%	227	27.9%	
10	2	1,118	0.1	1,238	601	131	21.8%	95	8.5%	171	15.3%	75	6.1%	312	27.9%	
11	1	1,217	0.3	1,558	402	27	6.7%	154	12.7%	104	8.5%	17	1.1%	232	19.1%	
11	2	1,365	0.3	1,121	651	35	5.4%	187	13.7%	83	6.1%	26	2.3%	260	19.1%	
11	3	660	0.3	909	315	20	6.3%	134	20.3%	80	12.1%	8	0.9%	126	19.1%	
11	4	554	0.2	685	260	0	0.0%	110	19.9%	24	4.3%	9	1.3%	106	19.1%	
11	5	676	0.3	1,806	300	49	16.3%	47	7.0%	49	7.2%	36	2.0%	129	19.1%	
11	6	749	0.2	975	292	23	7.9%	80	10.7%	103	13.8%	6	0.6%	143	19.1%	
12	1	2,179	1.0	931	850	27	3.2%	200	9.2%	257	11.8%	31	3.3%	142	6.5%	
12	2	2,788	4.6	931	1083	11	1.0%	340	12.2%	295	10.6%	31	3.3%	181	6.5%	
12	3	1,511	8.6	1,417	562	35	6.2%	187	12.4%	185	12.2%	16	1.1%	98	6.5%	
12	4	868	1.9	1,424	385	74	19.2%	141	16.2%	12	1.4%	68	4.8%	56	6.5%	
13.01	1	809	6.2	974	404	21	5.2%	76	9.4%	233	28.8%	10	1.0%	68	8.5%	
13.01	2	1,487	8.9	974	698	45	6.4%	76	5.1%	629	42.3%	10	1.0%	126	8.5%	
13.01	3	1,100	6.6	916	518	12	2.3%	73	6.6%	144	13.1%	35	3.8%	93	8.5%	
13.02	1	1,485	41.2	1,385	571	0	0.0%	154	10.4%	201	13.5%	36	2.6%	173	11.7%	
13.02	2	1,783	38.3	1,526	694	23	3.3%	266	14.9%	248	13.9%	36	2.4%	208	11.7%	
13.02	3	1,761	28.1	1,063	606	4	0.7%	223	12.7%	213	12.1%	16	1.5%	206	11.7%	
14	1	1,158	33.3	1,758	513	0	0.0%	197	17.0%	109	9.4%	0	0.0%	70	6.1%	
14	2	859	20.0	1,204	404	0	0.0%	30	3.5%	290	33.8%	19	1.6%	52	6.1%	
14	3	2,752	41.1	1,824	1024	0	0.0%	307	11.2%	335	12.2%	73	4.0%	167	6.1%	
17	1	1,377	653.5	1,396	602	3	0.5%	182	13.2%	235	17.1%	63	4.5%	189	13.7%	
17	2	8	46.7	22	4	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	100.0%	0	0.0%	1	13.7%	
17	3	1,732	48.6	1,392	641	29	4.5%	328	18.9%	159	9.2%	41	2.9%	238	13.7%	
17	4	1,259	44.9	940	458	9	2.0%	117	9.3%	84	6.7%	20	2.2%	173	13.7%	
17	5	1,857	105.0	1,524	631	0	0.0%	267	14.4%	141	7.6%	36	2.4%	255	13.7%	
17	6	1,415	54.9	1,352	635	20	3.1%	150	10.7%	217	15.4%	24	1.8%	193	13.7%	
Study Area TOTAL:		90,317	5088	87,014	36,697	1,424	3.9%	11,733	13.0%	12,589	13.9%	1,936	2.2%	10,920	12.1%	

Note: * Mobility-Limited Population is not currently available in the 5-year ACS data by block group level, hence the 2000 US Census data were used and projected to 2013.
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey- 2011, LSC 2013.

Older Adult Population

The older adult population represents a significant number of the national transit-dependent population and represents 13.9 percent of the total population in the Flathead County study area. The older adult population includes individuals 65 years and older. Figure IV-3 illustrates the density of older adults in Flathead County using the 2011 ACS data. The highest density of older adults is in the City of Kalispell, followed by Whitefish and Columbia Falls. The next highest areas are near Hungry Horse and Bigfork.

Mobility-Limited Population

As discussed above, since mobility-limited information at the census block group level was not available through the ACS data, the 2000 US Census was used and information was projected to the year 2013. Figure IV-4 presents the 2013 estimated mobility-limited population in terms of people-per-square-mile density. An individual is classified as “mobility-limited” if they are between the ages of 16 and 64 years and identify themselves as having some form of mobility impairment that restricts their travel outside the home. Persons age 16-64 years are considered because that age group is more inclined to use transit. Persons over 65 years are considered in the “older adult population” category. Approximately two percent of the population in Flathead County has some type of mobility limitation. The greatest concentration of individuals with mobility limitation is in the City of Kalispell followed by Whitefish, Evergreen, and Columbia Falls.

Figure IV-3
Density of Older Adults

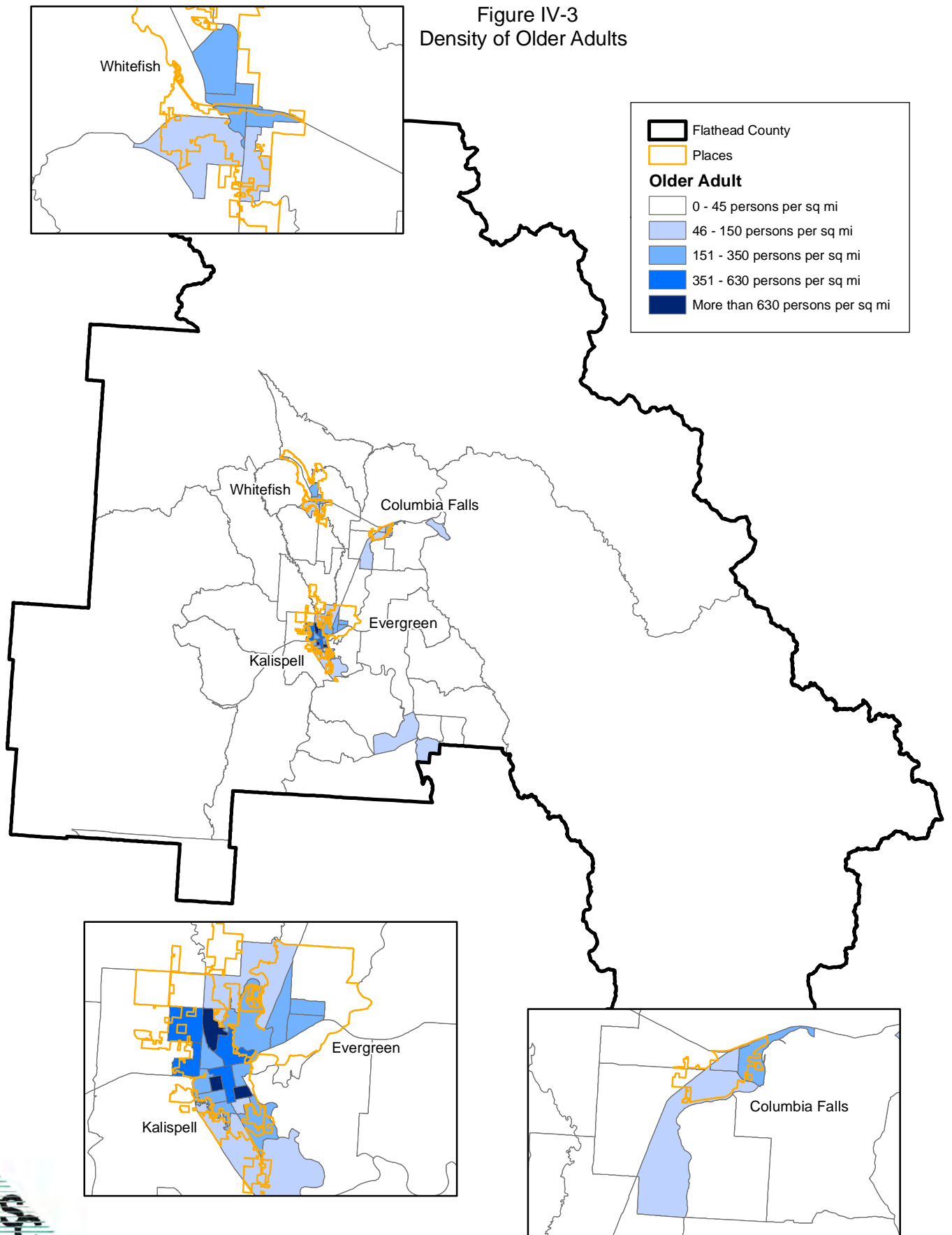
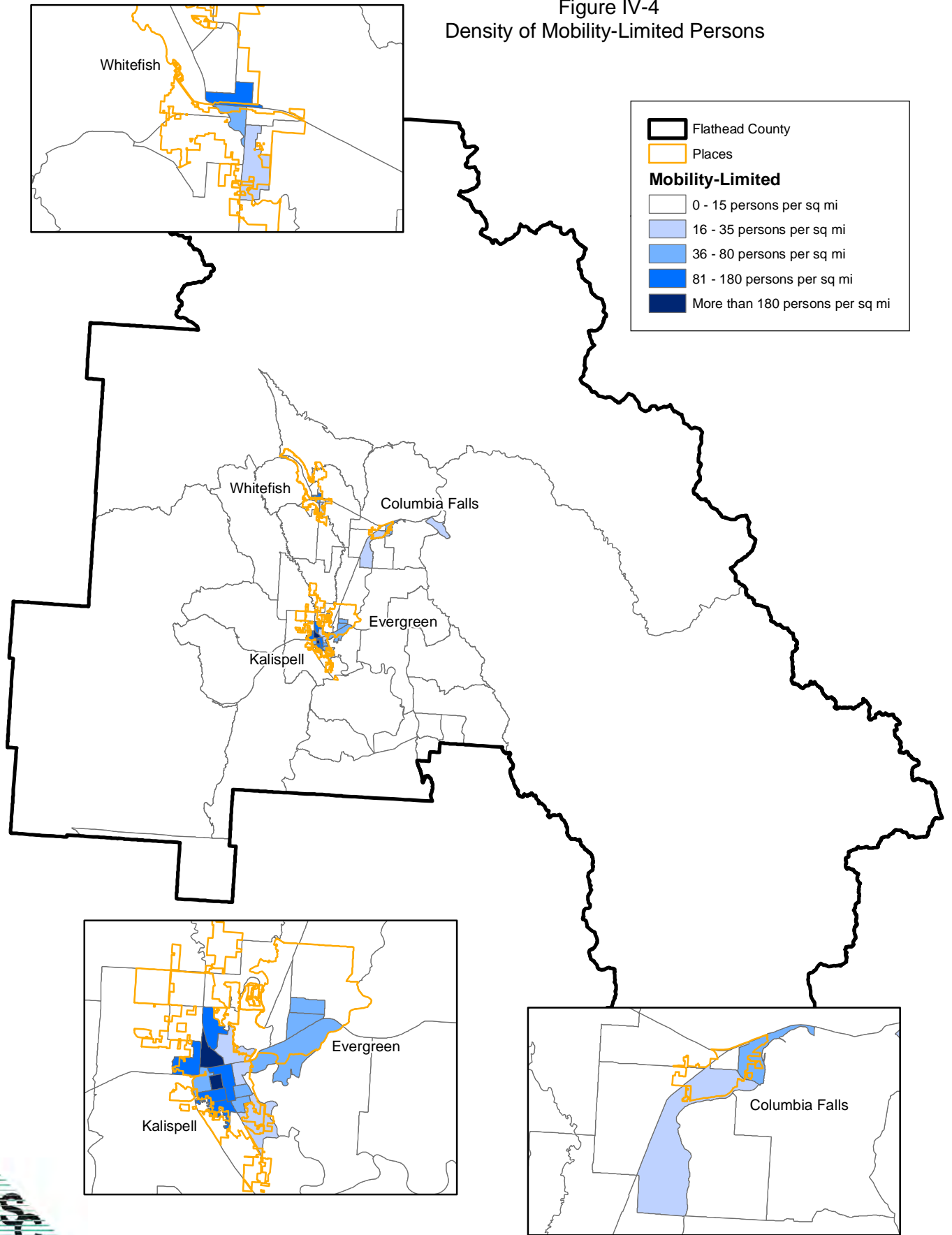


Figure IV-4
Density of Mobility-Limited Persons



Low-Income Population

The low-income population tends to depend upon transit to a greater extent than the wealthy population or those with a high level of disposable income. Figure IV-5 illustrates the density of the low-income population in the Flathead County area using the 2011 ACS data. Low-income population, as defined by the FTA, includes persons whose household income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services' poverty guidelines. The low-income population used in the tables and GIS maps includes those individuals who are living below the poverty line using the Census Bureau's poverty threshold. The highest density of low-income population in the county is in the City of Kalispell. Columbia Falls, Whitefish, and Evergreen were next in density of low-income persons. Approximately twelve percent (10,920 individuals) of the population of the county can be considered low income.

Zero-Vehicle Households

People who do not own or have access to a private vehicle are also considered transit-dependent. A zero-vehicle household is defined as a household in which an individual does not have access to a vehicle. These individuals are generally transit-dependent as their access to private automobiles is limited. Approximately four percent (1,424) of the county's households reported no vehicle available for use. The density of zero-vehicle households for the study area using the 2011 ACS data is shown in Figure IV-6. The highest density of zero-vehicle households in the county is located in the City of Kalispell followed by Whitefish, Columbia Falls, and Evergreen.

Youth Population

The population density of youth (10 -19 years of age) for Flathead County using the 2011 ACS data is shown in Figure IV-7. The largest youth population pockets in the county are in the City of Kalispell followed by Evergreen, Columbia Falls, Whitefish, and Hungry Horse. Approximately thirteen percent (11,733 individuals) of the population of the county are youth.

Figure IV-5
Density of Low-Income Persons

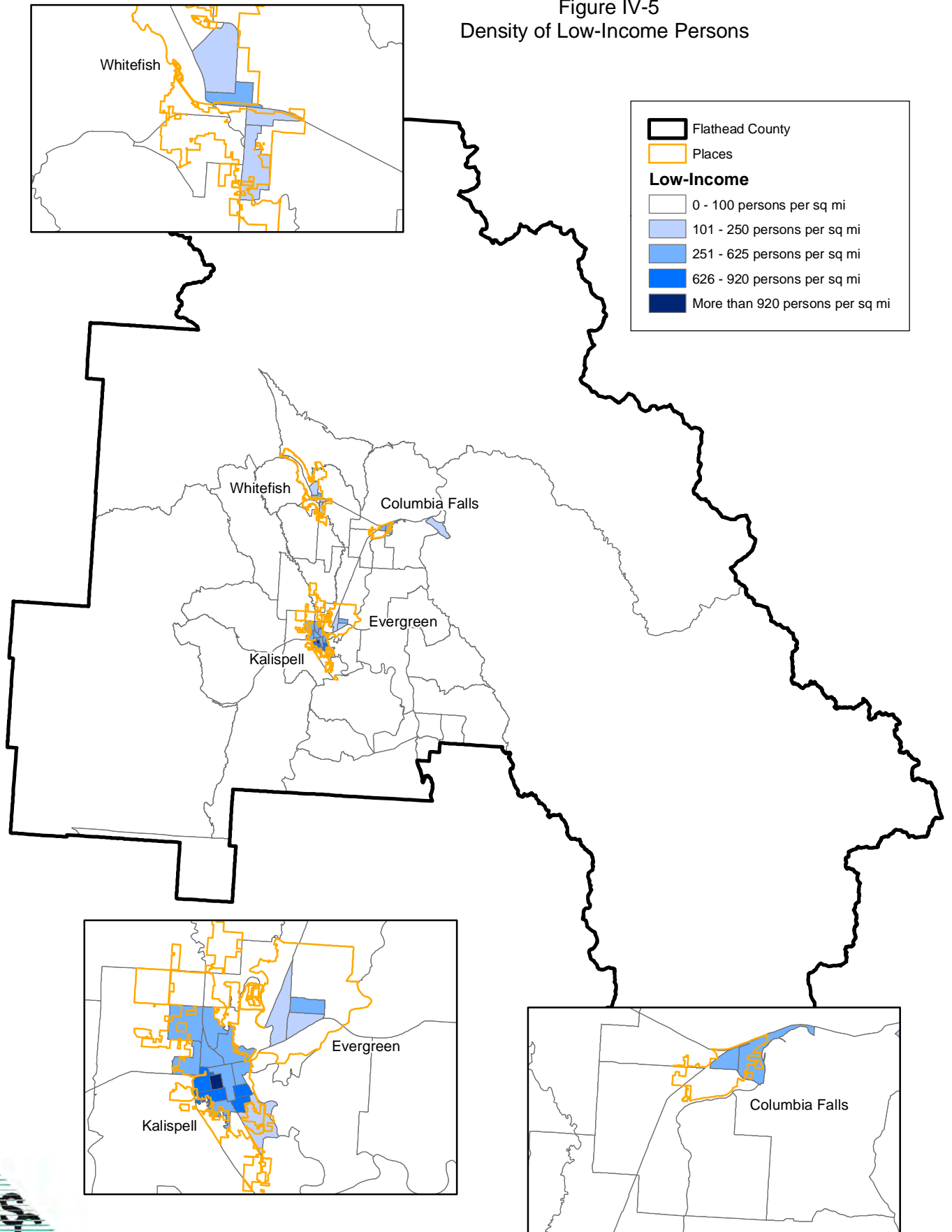


Figure IV-6
Density of Zero-Vehicle Households

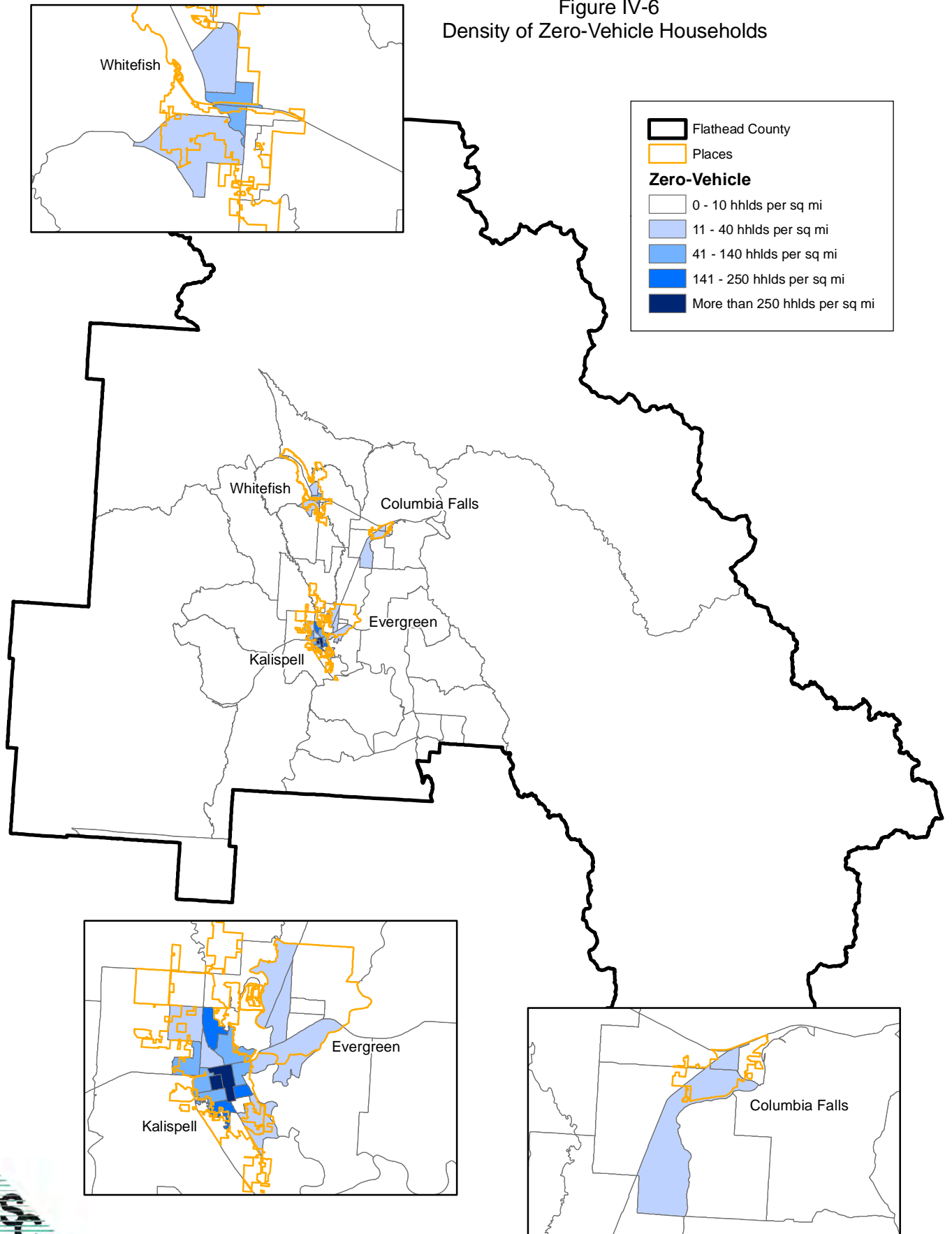
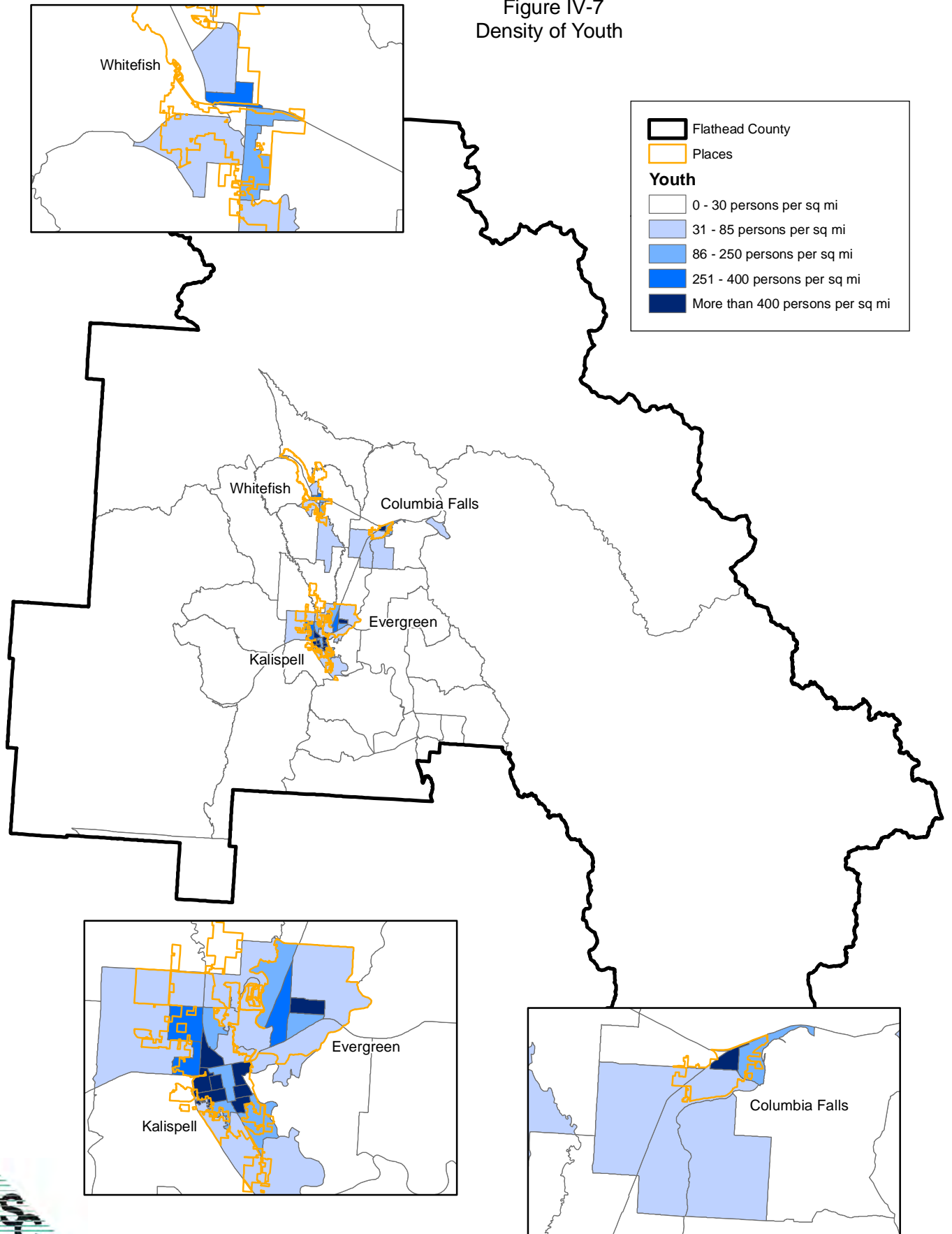


Figure IV-7
Density of Youth



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS

According to Bureau of Labor Statistics data, using the 2012 average, Flathead County has a civilian labor force of 43,055 with 4,730 unemployed. Flathead County has an unemployment rate of 11 percent, which is almost double the Montana unemployment rate of six percent. In 2012, Montana had the 14th highest unemployment rate in the United States.

Historic Unemployment Rates

The amount of unemployment in Flathead County has varied between 1990 and 2011, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Figure IV-8 and Table IV-3 show the data organized by year for Flathead County. The highest unemployment rate over the past 22 years in Flathead County was seen in 2010 when unemployment was 11.2 percent. Conversely, the lowest unemployment for Flathead County was experienced during 2006 with 3.6 percent. Overall, unemployment was trending down from 1991 through 2006, but increased dramatically during the recession from 2008 to 2010. In 2011, the Flathead County unemployment rate was 10.7 percent.

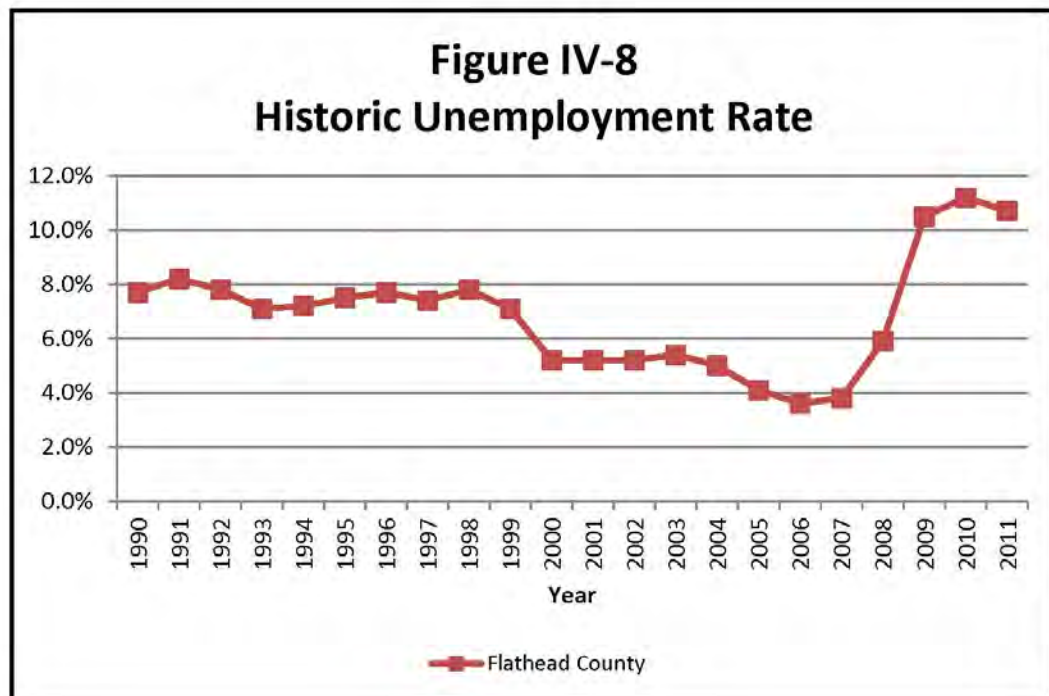


Table IV-3 Historic Unemployment Rates	
Year	Flathead County
1990	7.7%
1991	8.2%
1992	7.8%
1993	7.1%
1994	7.2%
1995	7.5%
1996	7.7%
1997	7.4%
1998	7.8%
1999	7.1%
2000	5.2%
2001	5.2%
2002	5.2%
2003	5.4%
2004	5.0%
2005	4.1%
2006	3.6%
2007	3.8%
2008	5.9%
2009	10.5%
2010	11.2%
2011	10.7%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics: Labor Force Data by County, Annual Averages.

Employment Sectors

Table IV-4 shows the available 2007-2011 American Community Survey five-year estimates on Flathead County's employment sectors. The Educational/Health/Social Services sector is the largest sector in the county, accounting for 18 percent of employment. This could be attributed to the Kalispell Regional Medical Center which is also the largest employer in the county, as well as the presence of Flathead Valley Community College. The next highest industry sectors are Retail Trade (13 percent), Construction (12 percent), and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services (12 percent), followed by Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative and Waste Management Services (10 percent).

Table IV-4 Employment by Sector for Flathead County		
Industry	Employees	Percent
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	7,675	18%
Retail trade	5,543	13%
Construction	5,239	12%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	5,213	12%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4,186	10%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	3,260	8%
Manufacturing	3,219	7%
Other services, except public administration	2,204	5%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	1,738	4%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	1,612	4%
Public administration	1,208	3%
Wholesale trade	1,085	3%
Information	768	2%
TOTAL	42,950	100%
<i>Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey - 2011, LSC 2013.</i>		

Major Employers

Table IV-5 reflects the major employers in the Flathead County area. Information on the largest employers in the Flathead County area was obtained from the Flathead County Chamber of Commerce, April-May 2012. The Kalispell Regional Medical Center is the largest employer in the county, with over 1,000 employees. Plum Creek, Teletech, L.C. Staffing, Whitefish Mountain Resort, and National Flood Service each employ 500-999 employees. Applied Materials, Walmart, Burlington Northern, North Valley Hospital, Immanuel Lutheran Home, and Glacier Bancorp, Inc. follow with 250-499 employees each. Employing between 54 and 99 employees are several retail stores such as Target, Costco, and Lowes as well as Lodges and Building Supply Stores.

Table IV-5 Major Employers in the Flathead County Area	
Employers	Range of Employees
Kalispell Regional Medical Center	Over 1,000 Employees
Plum Creek	500-999 Employees
Teletch	500-999 Employees
L.C. Staffing	500-999 Employees
Whitefish Mountain Resort	500-999 Employees
National Flood Service	500-999 Employees
Applied Materials	250-499 Employees
Walmart	250-499 Employees
Burlington Northern	250-499 Employees
North Valley Hospital	250-499 Employees
Immanuel Lutheran Home	250-499 Employees
Glacier Bancorp, Inc.	250-499 Employees
The Lodge at Whitefish Lake	54-99 Employees
Costco	54-99 Employees
Glacier Bank	54-99 Employees
Western Building Center	54-99 Employees
Flathead Electric Coop	54-99 Employees
Lowe's	54-99 Employees
Sportsman and Ski Haus	54-99 Employees
Target	54-99 Employees
F.H. Stoltze Land and Lumber	54-99 Employees
Northwest Montana Human Resources	54-99 Employees
Grouse Mountain Lodge	54-99 Employees
<i>Source: Montana West Economic Development & Flathead County Economic Development Authority, April & May 2012.</i>	

Major Transit Activity Centers

Major transit activity centers are important in terms of land use, trip generation, and the ability to be served by public transit. Many of these points of interest are clustered together into what can be referred to as “activity centers.” Activity centers are locations that are typically shown to generate transit trips because they are prime origins or prime destinations. There is no set formula that is used to derive a list of activity centers as the process is subjective. Activity centers generally include a wide variety of land uses including shopping/retail areas, as well as commercial, hospital, and education centers. These are the most critical land uses for individuals who use transit. Figures IV-9, IV-10, and IV-11 show the

Community Conditions

locations of major employers and important points of interest/destinations identified within Kalispell, Whitefish, and Columbia Falls respectively.

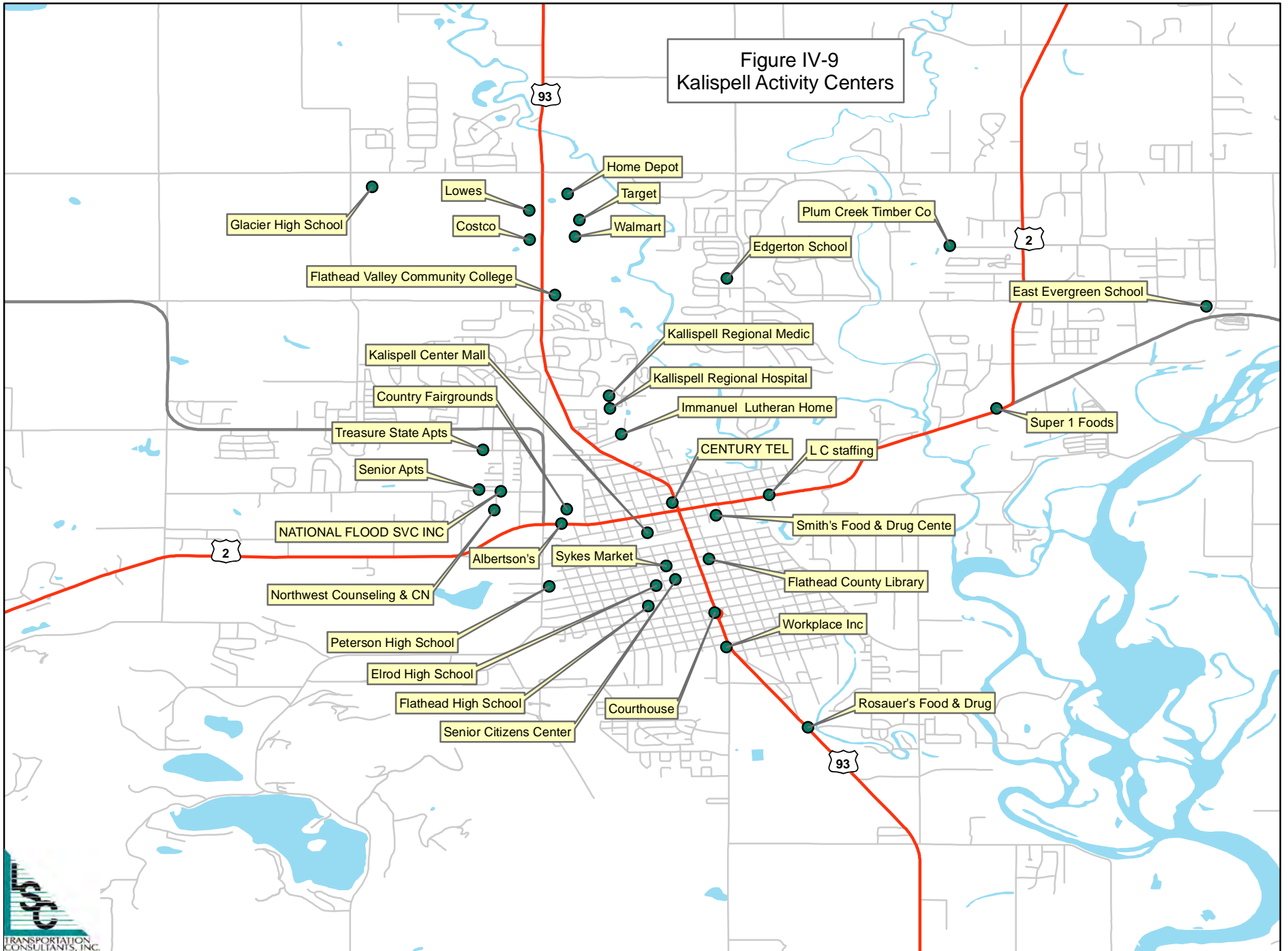


Figure IV-10
Whitefish Activity Centers

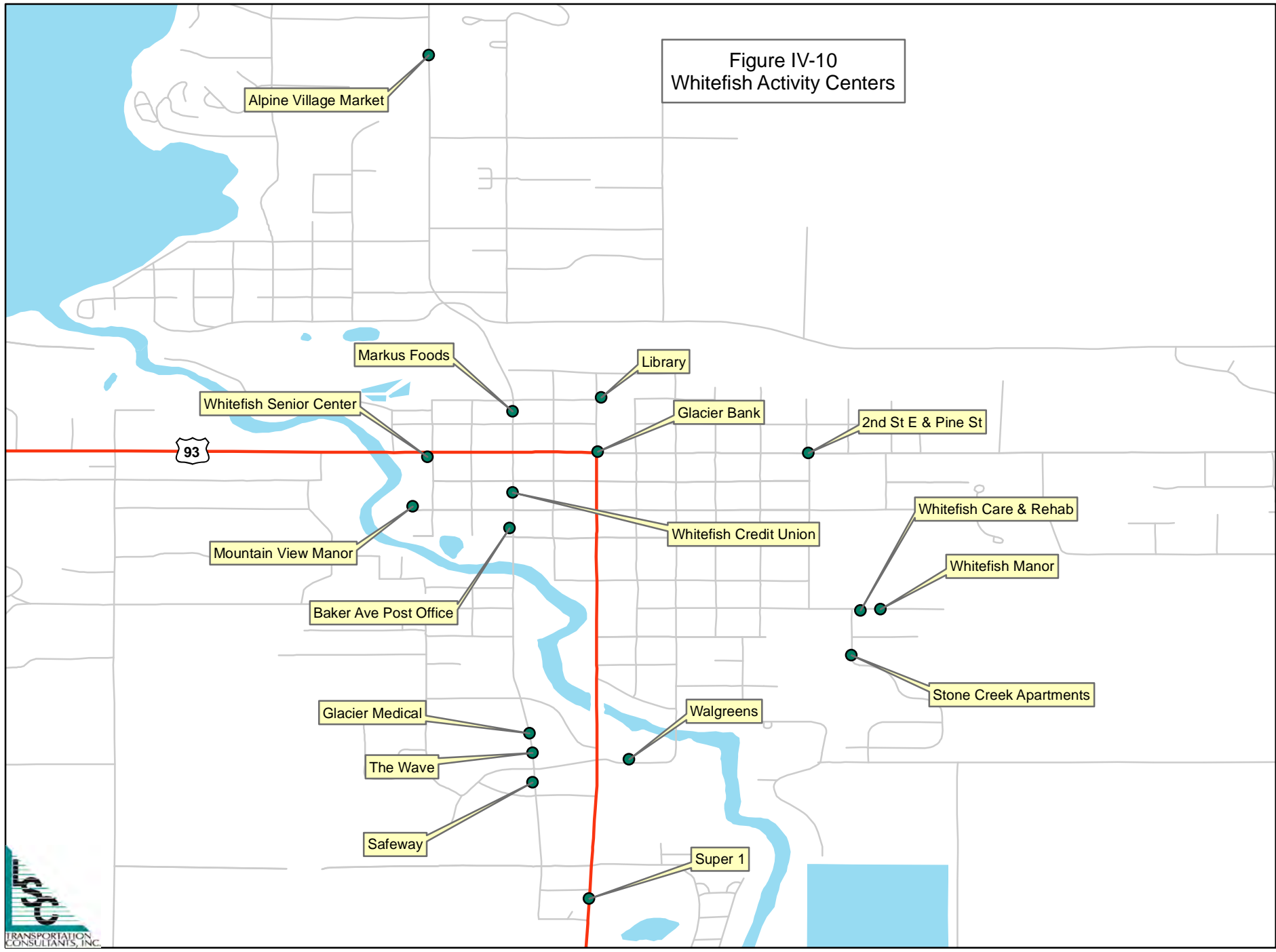
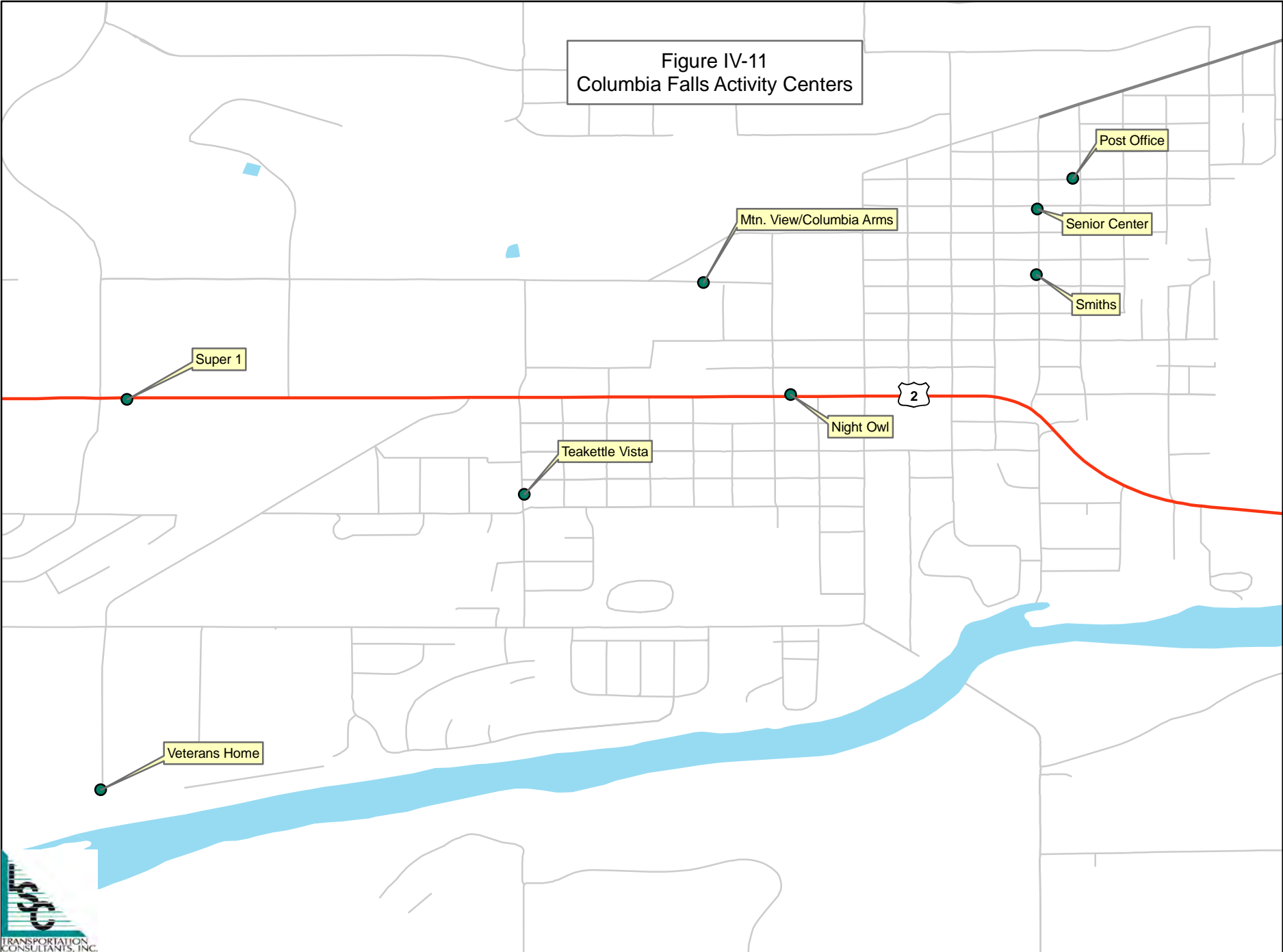


Figure IV-11
Columbia Falls Activity Centers



TRAVEL PATTERNS

Work Transportation Mode

The 2011 American Community Survey from the US Census Bureau yields information useful to the Flathead County area regarding the means of transportation to and from work for the study area’s residents. Table IV-6 shows the number of people in the Flathead County’s workforce and their modes of travel. These data were tabulated for employees 16 years of age and older who were at work when the American Community Survey questionnaire was completed.

Table IV-6 Means of Transportation to Work Flathead County		
Means of Transportation	Workers	Percent
Drove alone	31,808	76.7%
Carpooled	3,900	9.4%
Worked at home	3,417	8.2%
Walked	1,339	3.2%
Bicycle	422	1.0%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	401	1.0%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	195	0.5%
Note: Workers 16 years and over US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011.		

The majority of the Flathead County workforce drives alone to work (31,808 people or 76.7 percent). Carpooling (9.4 percent) and walking (just over three percent) are the next modes of choice. Approximately 195 employees (0.5 percent) reported using public transit as their mode of choice for work. Approximately eight percent of individuals in Flathead County reported working from home.

Table IV-7 shows that the mean commute time for Flathead County residents was 18.6 minutes. The most frequent response for Flathead County residents’ travel time to work was between 10 and 14 minutes (21 percent of the respondents) followed by 5-9 minutes and 15-19 minutes with 17 percent of the respondents each. This is followed by workers commuting between 20 and 24 minutes (16 percent of residents) and workers commuting 30 to 34 minutes (10 percent of residents).

Table IV-7 Travel Time to Work Flathead County		
Travel Time	Workers	Percent
Less than 5 minutes	1,960	5%
5 to 9 minutes	6,398	17%
10 to 14 minutes	7,997	21%
15 to 19 minutes	6,494	17%
20 to 24 minutes	5,909	16%
25 to 29 minutes	2,384	6%
30 to 34 minutes	3,735	10%
35 to 39 minutes	441	1%
40 to 44 minutes	626	2%
45 to 59 minutes	927	2%
60 or more minutes	1,194	3%
Mean travel time to work	18.6 minutes	
<i>Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates.</i>		

Table IV-8 shows the time ranges for county residents leaving home to go to work. The most frequent response was between 7:30 and 7:59 a.m., with 23 percent of the county residents leaving home during that time. The next most frequent response was between 7:00 and 7:29 a.m. (12 percent) and between 8:00 and 8:29 a.m. (12 percent).

Table IV-8 Time Leaving Home to Go to Work Flathead County		
Time Ranges	Workers	Percent
12:00 a.m. to 4:59 a.m.	1,165	3%
5:00 a.m. to 5:29 a.m.	577	2%
5:30 a.m. to 5:59 a.m.	1,052	3%
6:00 a.m. to 6:29 a.m.	2,013	5%
6:30 a.m. to 6:59 a.m.	3,396	9%
7:00 a.m. to 7:29 a.m.	4,565	12%
7:30 a.m. to 7:59 a.m.	8,723	23%
8:00 a.m. to 8:29 a.m.	4,449	12%
8:30 a.m. to 8:59 a.m.	3,942	10%
9:00 a.m. to 9:59 a.m.	2,263	6%
10:00 a.m. to 10:59 a.m.	851	2%
11:00 a.m. to 11:59 a.m.	584	2%
12:00 p.m. to 3:59 p.m.	2,394	6%
4:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.	2,091	5%
Total	38,065	100%
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.</i>		

Commute Patterns

Commuter patterns were analyzed for Kalispell, Whitefish, and Columbia Falls. Table IV-9 shows where Kalispell residents are employed. The table shows that 27 percent of Kalispell residents work within the city. Approximately ten percent of residents work in Evergreen. Three percent of residents reported traveling to Bigfork for employment, and another three percent of residents reported traveling to Whitefish.

Table IV-10 shows where Kalispell workers live. The table shows that the majority of Kalispell workers are from Kalispell (56 percent). Six percent of Kalispell workers come from Missoula and Evergreen, and four percent are from Whitefish.

Table IV-9 Residents in Kalispell are Employed		
Area of Work	Kalispell Residents	
	#	%
Kalispell, MT	4,763	27%
Evergreen, MT	1,782	10%
Bigfork, MT	459	3%
Whitefish, MT	451	3%
Missoula, MT	336	2%
Columbia Falls, MT	332	2%
Lakeside, MT	255	1%
Helena Flats, MT	176	1%
Billings, MT	161	1%
Great Falls, MT	122	1%
All Other Locations	8,641	49%

Source: LEHD; LSC, 2013.

Table IV-10 Workers in Kalispell Live		
Area of Residence	Kalispell Workers	
	#	%
Kalispell, MT	4,763	56%
Missoula, MT	481	6%
Evergreen, MT	472	6%
Whitefish, MT	306	4%
Columbia Falls, MT	207	2%
Bigfork, MT	133	2%
Helena, MT	107	1%
Somers, MT	59	1%
Great Falls, MT	57	1%
Helena Flats, MT	52	1%
All Other Locations	1,874	22%

Source: LEHD; LSC, 2013.

Table IV-11 shows where Columbia Falls residents are employed. The table shows that 14 percent of Columbia Falls residents work within the city. Approximately nine percent of residents work in Kalispell. Six percent of residents reported traveling to Whitefish for employment, and five percent of residents reported traveling to Evergreen.

Table IV-12 shows where Columbia Falls workers live. The table shows that the largest percentage of Columbia Falls workers are from Kalispell (22 percent). Approximately 20 percent of Columbia Falls workers come from within the city. Eleven percent of workers are from Whitefish, and four percent are from Missoula.

Area of Work	Columbia Falls Residents	
	#	%
Columbia Falls, MT	312	14%
Kalispell, MT	207	9%
Whitefish, MT	128	6%
Evergreen, MT	109	5%
Bigfork, MT	54	2%
Great Falls, MT	41	2%
Helena Flats, MT	25	1%
Butte-Silver Bow, MT	20	1%
Missoula, MT	20	1%
Helena, MT	15	1%
All Other Locations	1,332	59%

Source: LEHD, LSC, 2013.

Area of Residence	Columbia Falls Workers	
	#	%
Kalispell, MT	332	22%
Columbia Falls, MT	312	20%
Whitefish, MT	169	11%
Missoula, MT	64	4%
Evergreen, MT	47	3%
Coram, MT	27	2%
Helena, MT	26	2%
Bigfork, MT	24	2%
Great Falls, MT	15	1%
Hungry Horse, MT	11	1%
All Other Locations	510	33%

Source: LEHD, LSC, 2013.

Table IV-13 shows where Whitefish residents are employed. The table shows that 25 percent of Whitefish residents work within the city. Approximately nine percent of residents work in Kalispell. Five percent of residents reported traveling to Columbia Falls for employment, and four percent of residents reported traveling to Evergreen.

Table IV-14 shows where Whitefish workers live. The table shows that the largest percentage of Whitefish workers are from Whitefish (35 percent). Approximately 29 percent of Whitefish workers come from Kalispell. Eight percent travel from Columbia Falls, and another six percent are from Missoula.

Table IV-13 Residents in Whitefish are Employed		
Area of Work	Whitefish Residents	
	#	%
Whitefish, MT	914	25%
Kalispell, MT	306	9%
Columbia Falls, MT	169	5%
Evergreen, MT	139	4%
Bigfork, MT	35	1%
Billings, MT	27	1%
Helena Flats, MT	19	1%
Great Falls, MT	15	0%
Batavia, MT	13	0%
Lakeside, MT	13	0%
All Other Locations	1,942	54%

Source: LEHD; LSC, 2013.

Table IV-14 Workers in Whitefish Live		
Area of Residence	Whitefish Workers	
	#	%
Whitefish, MT	914	35%
Kalispell, MT	451	29%
Columbia Falls, MT	128	8%
Missoula, MT	85	6%
Bigfork, MT	54	4%
Evergreen, MT	49	3%
Helena, MT	32	2%
Great Falls, MT	20	1%
Butte-Silver Bow, MT	16	1%
Coram, MT	16	1%
All Other Locations	877	57%

Source: LEHD; LSC, 2013.

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Existing Transportation Services

INTRODUCTION

Chapter V provides an overview of the various transportation providers in the study area, whether they are public, private, or nonprofit. Not all the providers reviewed here are “transit agencies” in the traditional sense of the word. Rather, the various providers are entities that provide some type of passenger transportation. The services provided by these agencies are presented in the discussion that follows with the primary focus on Eagle Transit.

EAGLE TRANSIT

Eagle Transit is an agency controlled by the Flathead County Area IX Agency on Aging. The Eagle Transit office and bus storage are located at 1333 Willow Glen Drive, on the south side of Kalispell. Eagle Transit is the primary transportation service in the county. Other transportation services are provided within Flathead County, but most of the other operators serve the student or tourist markets.



Eagle Transit History

Eagle Transit began operation in 1987 as a division of the Flathead County Area IX Agency on Aging (AOA). Eagle Transit was originally designed to serve the elderly and has since expanded to serve people with disabilities and the general public within Flathead County.

Description of Transportation Services

Eagle Transit is available to all persons within Flathead County. Several types of service are available and are listed below. Eagle Transit uses Route Match software for scheduling and dispatching rides.

- Kalispell-Evergreen City Route
- Whitefish City Bus Service

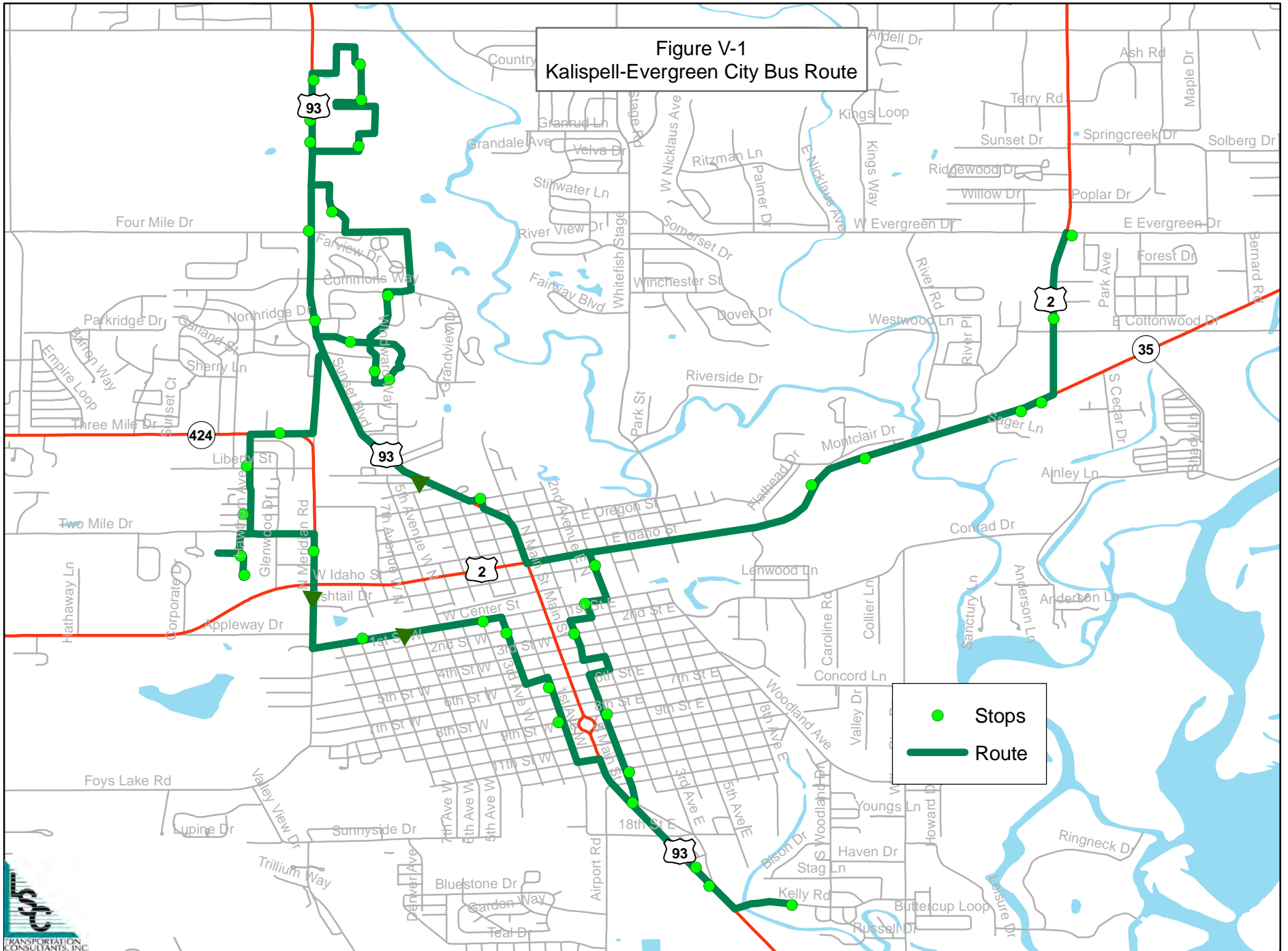
Existing Transportation Services

- Columbia Falls City Service
- Whitefish Express
- Columbia Falls Express
- Canyon Run
- Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter
- Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter
- Countywide Dial-a-Ride “Door-to-Door” Transportation
- SPARKS Service

Kalispell Evergreen City Route – This City Bus Route operates a fixed-route service in Kalispell and provides service to Evergreen. This city fixed-route service operates Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The current one-way fare on the City Bus Route is \$1.00 which can be paid by check or cash. A monthly pass costs \$25 which is good for unlimited rides for the calendar month. Punch cards in the increments of \$10, \$20, and \$40 are also available. Punch cards and monthly passes can be purchased from the driver or the transit office.

Figure V-1 illustrates the Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Route. This service is provided with two buses in the same direction. The City Bus Route operates on a 30-minute or 45-minute headway from 9:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and from 2:15 to 3:30 p.m. The rest of the times—from 7:00 to 9:15 a.m., from 1:00 to 2:15 p.m., and from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m.—the City Bus Route operates on an 85-minute headway. The bus operates primarily in a counterclockwise direction, starting from the Area on Aging providing service to Smith’s Food and Drug then heading east along US Highway 2 to the Evergreen Junior High School; then heading back downtown and north to serve KRMC Hospital, Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC), Walmart, and Home Depot; south along US Highway 93 to serve the VA Clinic and the Senior Apartments; east to the Kalispell Center Mall; and back south to the Area on Aging. The Kalispell Evergreen City Bus Route provided approximately 28,800 trips in the 2011-2012 Fiscal Year (July - June), or approximately 2,400 trips per month. This service provides 31 percent of the total systemwide ridership, the highest ridership of all services.

Figure V-1
Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Route

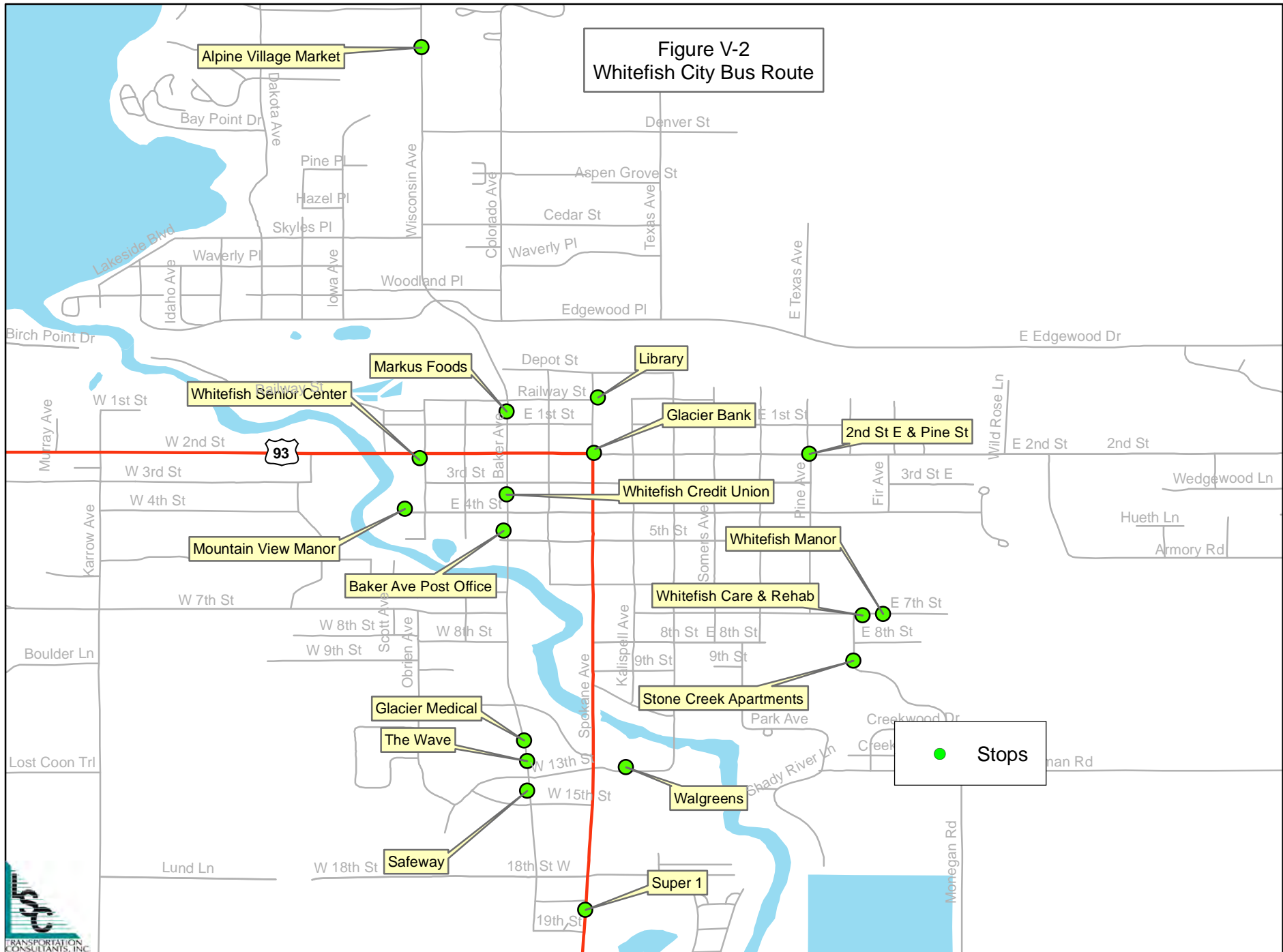


● Stops
— Route



Whitefish City Bus Service– Figure V-2 illustrates the bus stop locations for the Whitefish City Bus Service. This service operates as a checkpoint service with the bus stopping at certain locations at certain times. This service operates Monday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A one-way fare for a passenger that shows up at one of the listed stops is \$1.00. A monthly pass of \$20 is also available which allows a passenger unlimited rides for the calendar month. For passengers that need a ride to and from a stop, other than the stops listed, will need to call and schedule a trip. Reservations made before 3:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled trip are charged a fare of \$1.50 for each one-way trip. Reservations made after 3:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled trip and same-day requests are charged a fare of \$5.00 for each one-way trip. Seniors (60 years and above) are allowed to ride for a donation as long as the ride is scheduled in advance (before the 3:00 p.m. cutoff time). All reservations are considered to be curb-to-curb transportation, unless passengers request a door-to-door transportation at the time of scheduling the trip. Punch cards in the increments of \$10, \$20, and \$40 and monthly passes on this dial-a-ride service are also available. The Whitefish City Bus Service serves the Safeway, Walgreens, Markus Foods, Alpine Village Market, and the Whitefish Senior Center. Some stops such as The Wave, the Glacier Medical, the Whitefish Care and Rehabilitation Center, Whitefish Manor, 2nd Street East and Pine Street, Library, Glacier Bank, and Whitefish Credit Union are listed on the schedule as request stops and will stop on passenger request only. The Whitefish City Bus Service provided approximately 7,100 annual trips for 2011-2012, or approximately eight percent of the total Eagle Transit ridership. This service averages approximately 600 trips per month.

Figure V-2
Whitefish City Bus Route



Columbia Falls City Service – Figure V-3 illustrates the bus stop locations for the Columbia Falls City Bus Service. This service operates as a checkpoint service Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A one-way fare for a passenger that shows up at one of the listed city stops is \$1.00. A monthly pass of \$20 is also available which allows a passenger unlimited rides for the calendar month. Passengers that need a ride to and from a stop other than the stops listed will need to call and schedule a trip. Reservations made before 3:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled trip are charged a fare of \$1.50 for each one-way trip. Reservations made after 3:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled trip and same-day requests are charged a fare of \$5.00 for each one-way trip. Similar to the Whitefish City Services, seniors (60 years and above) are allowed to ride for a donation as long as the ride is scheduled in advance. Similar to the Whitefish City Services, all reservations are considered to be curb-to-curb transportation unless passengers request a door-to-door transportation at the time of scheduling the trip. Punch cards in the increments of \$10, \$20, and \$40 and a monthly pass of \$25 on this dial-a-ride service are also available. The Columbia Falls City Bus Service serves the Veterans Home, Smiths Food and Drug, the Senior Center, and the post office. This service provided approximately 5,900 annual trips for 2011-2012, or approximately six percent of the total Eagle Transit ridership. This service averages approximately 500 trips per month.

Whitefish Express – The Whitefish Express operates from Whitefish to Kalispell on the second Wednesday of every month. A one-way ride on this service is \$3.00. The cost includes pick up from their residence, transfer to the express service, and two destinations of the passenger's choice within Kalispell. This service provided approximately 270 annual trips for 2011-2012, or approximately less than one percent of the total Eagle Transit ridership.

Columbia Falls Express – The Columbia Falls Express Run operates from Columbia Falls to Kalispell on the first Wednesday of every month. A one-way ride on this service is \$3.00. The cost includes pick up from their residence, transfer to the express service, and two destinations of the passenger's choice within Kalispell. This service provided approximately 140 annual trips for 2011-2012, or approximately less than one percent of the total Eagle Transit ridership.

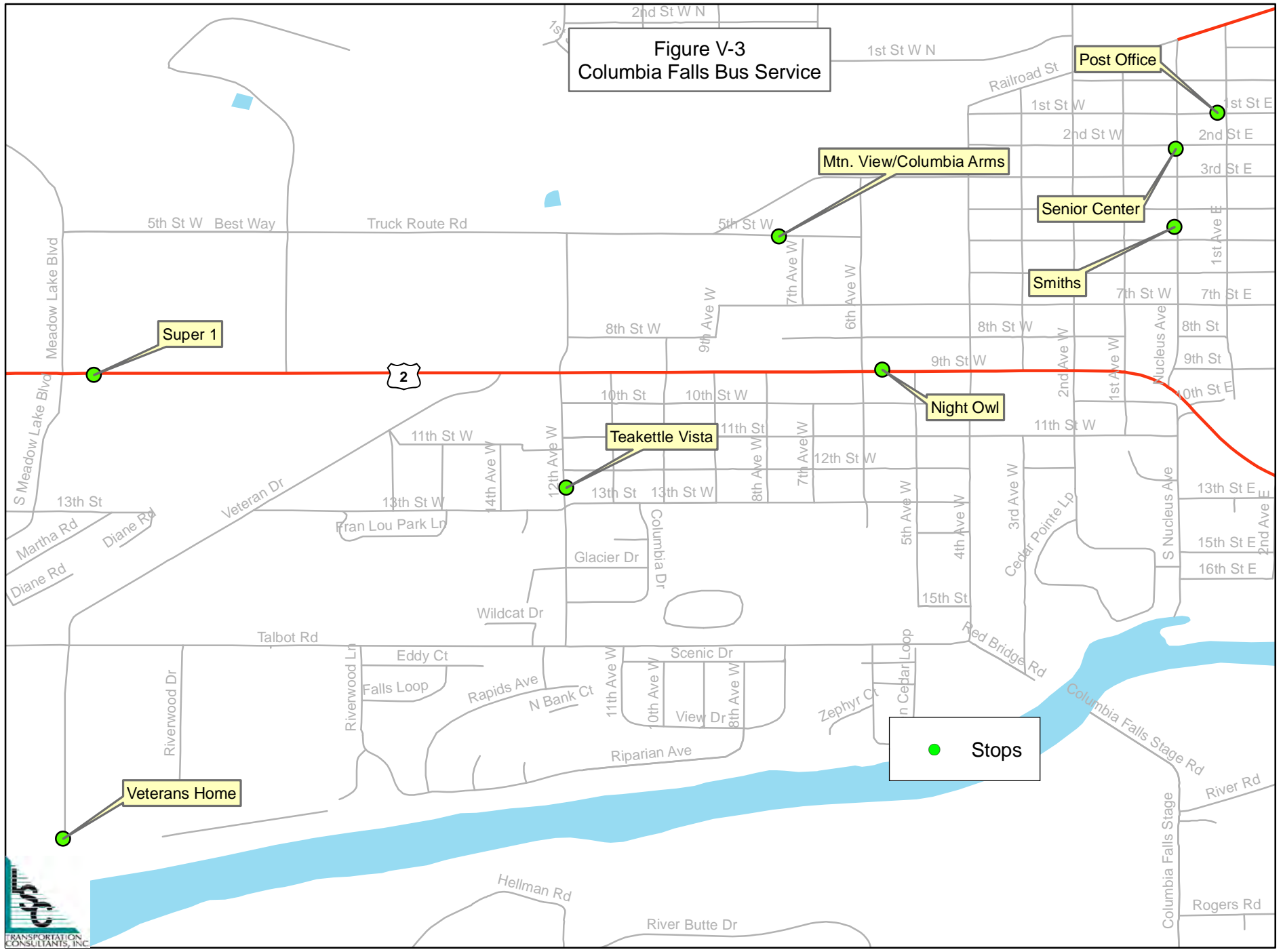


Figure V-3
Columbia Falls Bus Service



Existing Transportation Services

Canyon Run – This service is offered on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. This route operates two trips on the scheduled weekdays. The first run operates at around 8:20 a.m., and the second run operates at around 2:25 p.m. The route operates from Columbia Heights Park-and-Ride to Martin City with service to Hungry Horse back to Columbia Heights (at specific gas and grocery stores). The ridership on this service is added to the Columbia Falls City Service.

Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter – This commuter service operates from Kalispell to Whitefish and back. This service operates Monday through Friday. There are two round-trips offered in the morning. A third morning trip starts in Kalispell and then turns into the Whitefish City Bus Service. There are three round-trips offered in the evening. In Kalispell, some of the commuter stops are Smith's Food and Drug, Kalispell Regional Medical Center (KRMC)/Hospital, and FVCC. The schedule indicates where commuters can transfer onto the Kalispell City Bus Service. In Whitefish, some of the commuter stops include North Valley Hospital, Mountain Mall, and the post office. A one-way trip on the commuter route is \$1.00. Punch cards in the increments of \$10, \$20, and \$30 and a monthly pass of \$25 are available on this commuter service. No discounts are available on the commuter routes. This service provided approximately 8,500 annual trips for 2011-2012, or approximately nine percent of the total Eagle Transit ridership. This service averages approximately 700 trips per month.

Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter – This commuter service operates from Kalispell to Columbia Falls and back. This service operates Monday through Friday. There are two trips offered in the morning and one trip offered in the evening. In Kalispell, some of the commuter stops are Smith's Food and Drug, Kalispell Regional Medical Center (KRMC)/Hospital, and FVCC. The schedule indicates where commuters can transfer onto the Kalispell City Bus Service. In Columbia Falls, some of the commuter stops include Columbia Falls High School and Columbia Heights Park-and-Ride. A one-way trip on the commuter route is \$1.00. Punch cards in the increments of \$10, \$20, and \$30 and a monthly pass of \$25 is available on this commuter service. No discounts are available on the commuter routes. This service provided approximately 4,700 annual trips for

2011-2012, or approximately five percent of the total Eagle Transit ridership. This service averages approximately 390 trips per month.

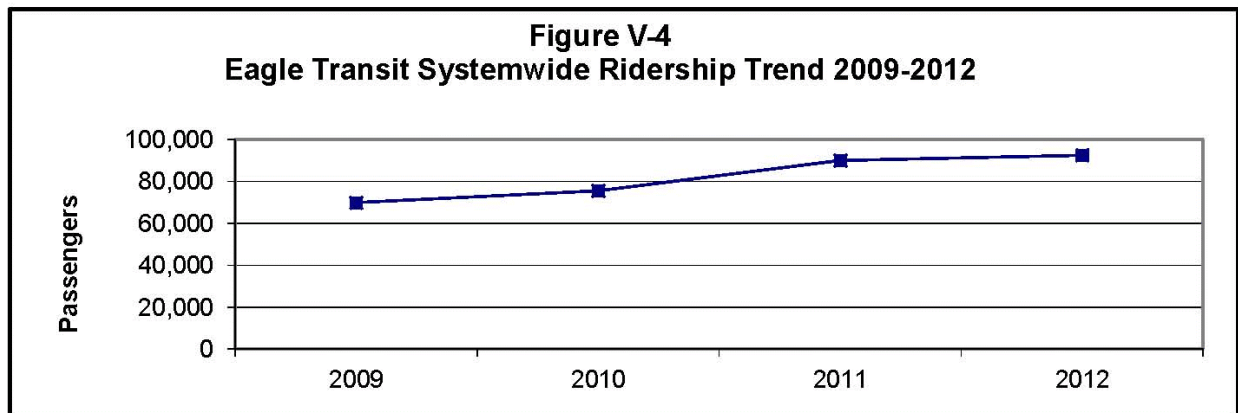
Countywide Dial-a-Ride “Door-to-Door” Service – This countywide door-to-door service is available to seniors (60 years or older) and people with disabilities only. Riders need to complete a certification of eligibility and be approved to use this service. Reservations must be made no later than 3:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled trip. Only passengers whose trips are for a medical purpose can request that their return trip be listed as “On Call Return.” When they are ready to return the next available vehicle will be dispatched to the pick-up location as soon as possible. This service provided approximately 27,500 annual trips for 2011-2012, or approximately 30 percent of the total Eagle Transit ridership. This service averages approximately 2,300 trips per month, the second highest ridership of all services.

SPARKS Service – The SPARKS service is an after-school program for children through The Summit, part of the Regional Medical Center. Children are provided transportation from school to this program. A one-way fare on this service is \$1.00. This service provides scheduled service with pick-up locations at Saint Matthews School, Elrod School, Trinity Lutheran School, West Valley School, Russell School, Peterson School, and Hedges School on SPARKS scheduled days only. Children not enrolled in The Summit SPARKS program can ride to The Summit for the standard \$1.00 fare on SPARKS program days only.

Ridership Patterns

Ridership Trend

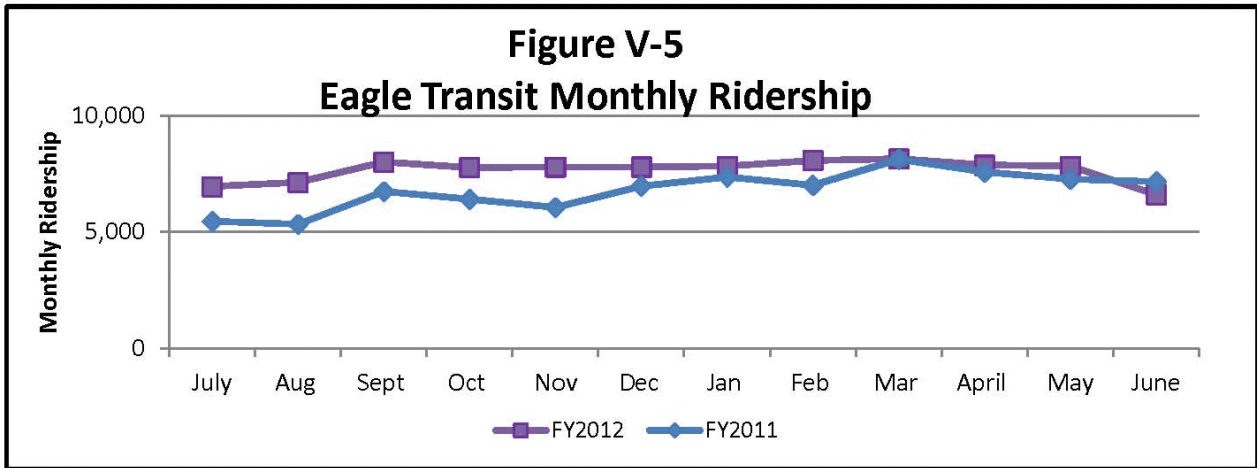
Figure V-4 provides the ridership trends for Eagle Transit since 2009. As shown in the figure, ridership has been consistently increasing. The ridership increased from 2009 to 2010 by approximately eight percent, a significant increase from 2010 to 2011 by 19 percent, and a small increase of three percent from 2011 to 2012. The ridership in 2012 was the highest with approximately 92,500 annual one-way passenger-trips.



Monthly Ridership Trend

Table V-1 and Figure V-5 shows the month-to-month variations in ridership for 2011-2012 and 2010-2011 fiscal years. The figure shows that in both fiscal years, March had the highest ridership with approximately 8,200 trips. Ridership in FY2010-2011 was lowest in August with approximately 5,300 trips, but the ridership in FY2011-2012 was lowest in June with approximately 6,600 trips.

Table V-1 Eagle Transit Ridership		
Month	Ridership (FY2012)	Ridership (FY2011)
July 2011	6,950	5,456
August 2011	7,128	5,334
September 2011	8,008	6,737
October 2011	7,766	6,407
November 2011	7,793	6,057
December 2011	7,795	6,973
January 2012	7,829	7,365
February 2012	8,072	7,009
March 2012	8,143	8,116
April 2012	7,874	7,576
May 2012	7,827	7,271
June 2012	6,603	7,161
TOTAL Ridership	91,788	81,462
<i>Source: Eagle Transit, FY2011-12 and FY-2010-11.</i>		



Eagle Transit currently tracks the different type of passengers using the system. Table V-2 presents the percentage of total ridership by market segment. The general public Elderly patrons make up the highest percentage of riders with 49 percent of the total ridership. Passengers with a disability represent approximately 18 percent of the overall transit riders for Eagle Transit and general public riders are about 33 percent of total passengers.

Market Segments	Yearly Ridership	FY2013
	Total	% of Ridership
Elderly	45,670	49%
Disabled	17,255	18%
General Public	30,908	33%
TOTAL	93,833	100%

*Note: The data were based on ridership for FY2013.
Source: Eagle Transit, 2013.*

Ridership by Route

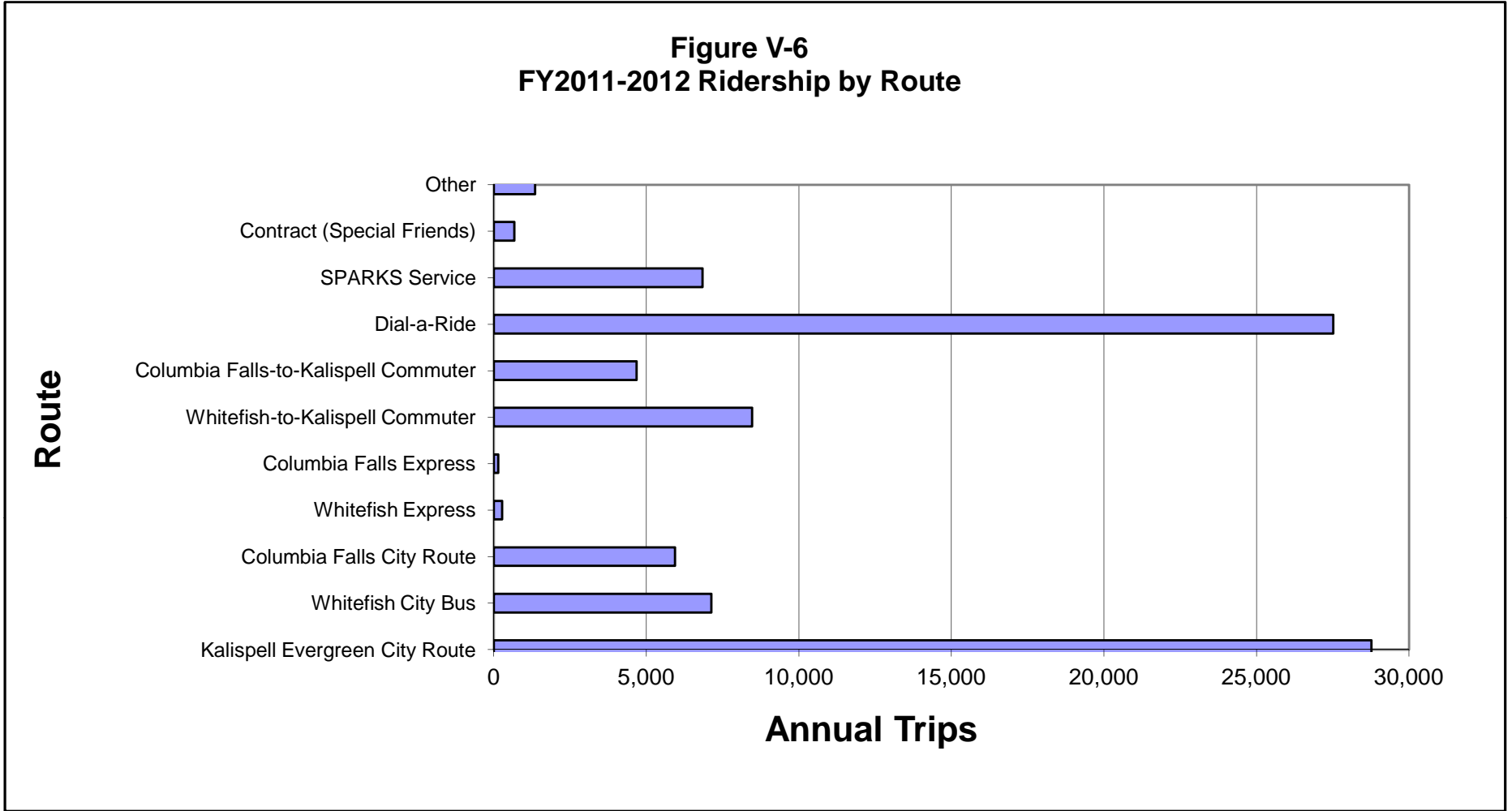
Ridership for each of the Eagle Transit routes is presented in Table V-3 and Figure V-6. The Kalispell Evergreen City Route has the most riders with approximately 31 percent of the ridership using this service. The dial-a-ride service carries the second highest ridership by route with approximately 30 percent of the ridership.

**Table V-3
Eagle Transit Route Ridership by Month**

ROUTE	Jul 11	Aug 11	Sept 11	Oct 11	Nov 11	Dec 11	Jan 12	Feb 12	Mar 12	Apr 12	May 12	Jun 12	TOTALS FY2011-12	AVG per MONTH	% of TOTAL
Kalispell Evergreen City Route	1,722	1,886	2,456	2,291	2,334	2,342	2,491	2,650	2,549	2,783	2,734	2,526	28,764	2,397	31%
Whitefish City Bus	637	810	683	609	650	627	610	614	638	407	449	399	7,133	594	8%
Columbia Falls City Route	459	525	477	501	509	596	454	521	507	458	451	479	5,937	495	6%
Whitefish Express	25	22	22	16	25	26	20	33	22	32	33	0	276	23	0.3%
Columbia Falls Express	11	15	0	13	10	15	11	11	15	9	8	26	144	12	0.2%
Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter	619	767	818	710	613	740	721	729	735	730	759	525	8,466	706	9%
Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter	432	306	316	384	422	376	410	374	432	486	428	318	4,684	390	5%
Dial-a-Ride	2,296	2,588	1,998	2,242	2,153	2,279	2,324	2,359	2,532	2,340	2,268	2,137	27,516	2,293	30%
SPARKS Service	0	88	980	841	880	636	720	731	629	591	675	74	6,845	570	7%
Contract (Special Friends)	44	59	102	82	61	53	68	50	50	38	19	47	673	56	1%
Other	705	62	156	77	136	105	0	0	34		3	72	1,350	123	2%
TOTAL	6,950	7,128	8,008	7,766	7,793	7,795	7,829	8,072	8,143	7,874	7,827	6,603	91,788	7,659	100%

Source: Eagle Transit, 2013.

**Figure V-6
FY2011-2012 Ridership by Route**

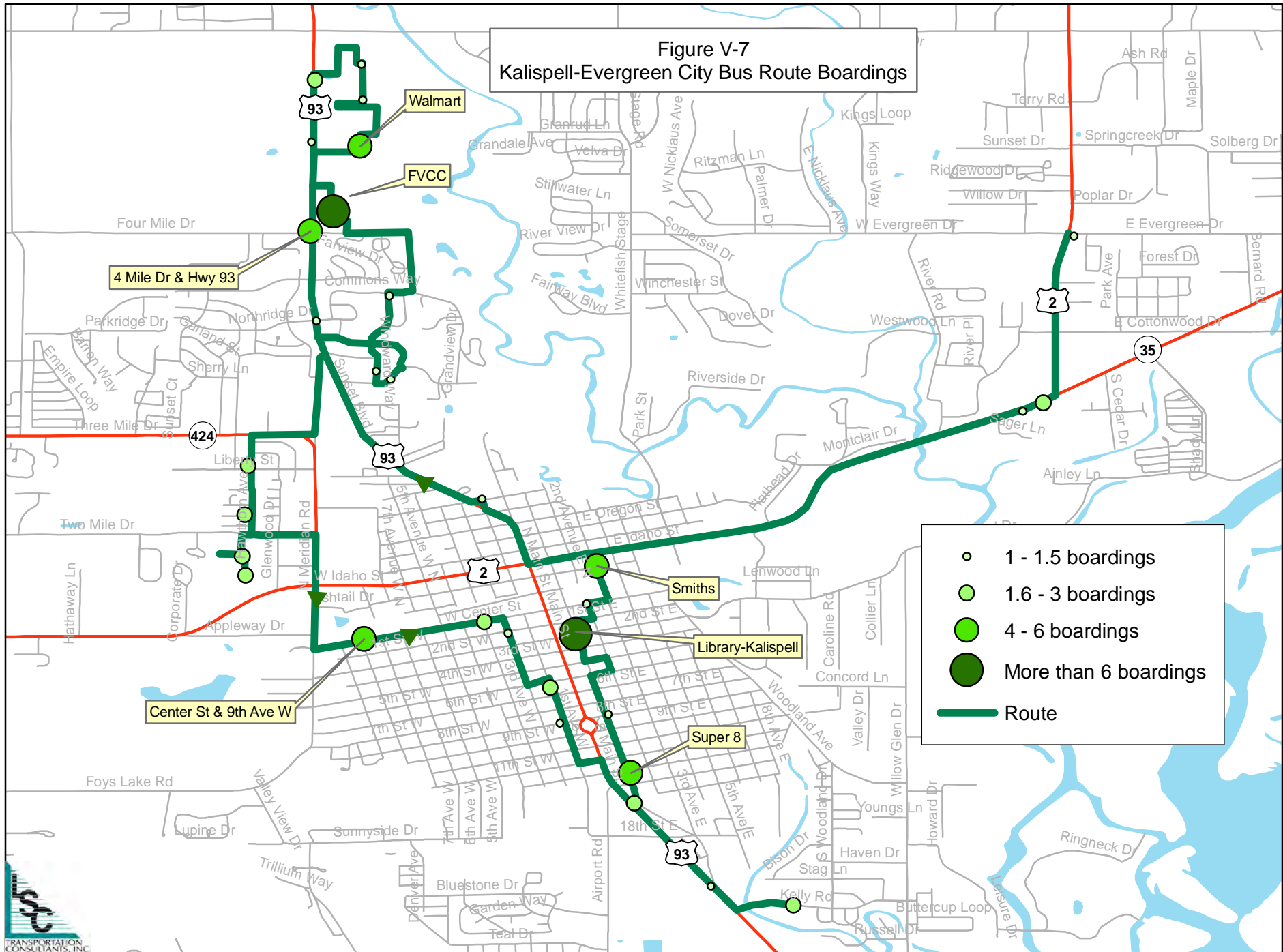


Boarding Counts on the City Bus

This section describes the passenger boarding patterns of the Kalispell-Evergreen City bus service. The information presented on the map is based on a sample of two days—May 20 and May 21, 2012.

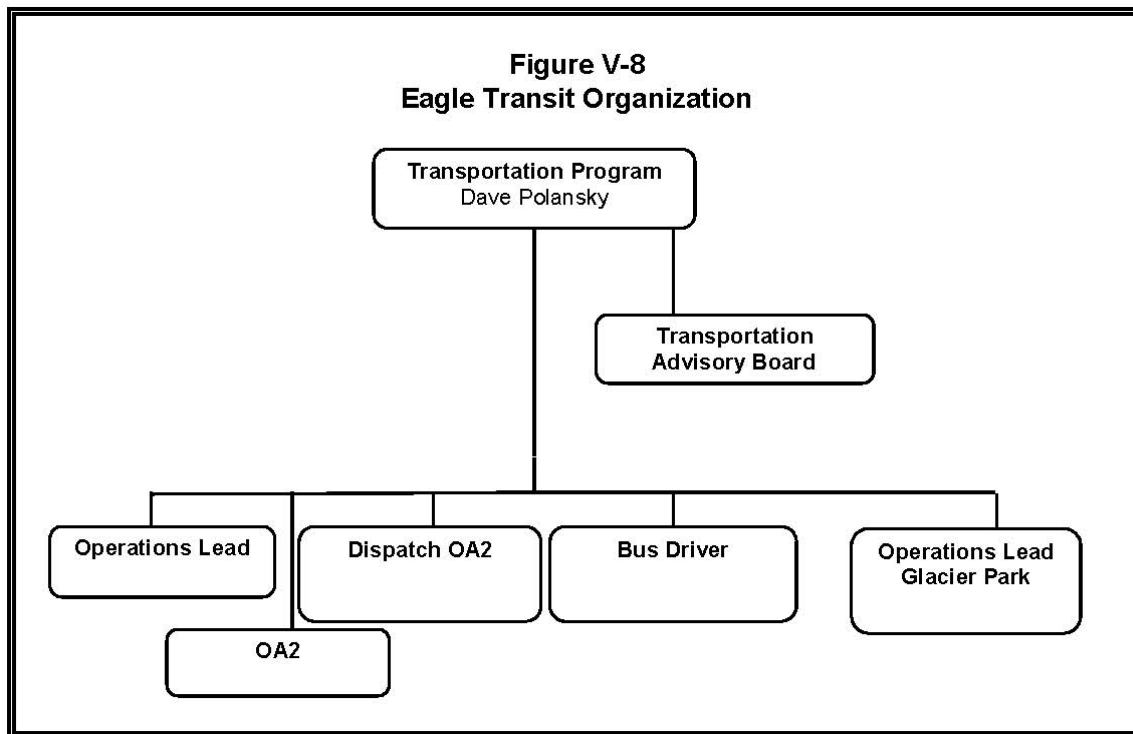
Figure V-7 presents the average boarding counts for the two days on City Bus 1. As illustrated, the highest boarding counts on the City Bus 1 in descending order were the Flathead County Library in Kalispell (25 boardings), Flathead Valley Community College (17 boardings), Walmart (6 boardings), 4 Mile Drive and Highway 93 (5 boardings), Center Street and 9th Avenue West (5 boardings), Super 8 (5 boardings), and Smith's (5 boardings).

Figure V-7
Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Route Boardings



Staff

Eagle Transit's current organization chart is shown in Figure V-8. The Eagle Transit Transportation Advisory Board has 16 board/committee members that review services provided by Eagle Transit. Eagle Transit has a Program Manager that currently supervises 10 drivers, one operation lead, two dispatchers/office assistants, one office assistant, and one operation lead for the Glacier National Park operations.



Vehicle Fleet

Eagle Transit currently has 13 vehicles for passenger transportation. The vehicle inventory for passenger transit is shown in Table V-4. As shown in the table, Eagle Transit has submitted a vehicle replacement request for two 17-passenger body-on-chassis cutaway vehicles (Duramax diesel with Allison transmission) for FY2014. Eagle Transit's replacement plan includes two similar type vehicles each year for FY2015 through FY2018. The transit fleet is maintained by the County.

Table V-4 Eagle Transit Vehicle Fleet		
Vehicle Make/Model	Unit	Condition
2012 Chevrolet Express Cutaway - 15 passengers	1	Excellent
2012 Chevrolet Express Cutaway - 17 passengers	1	Excellent
2011 Low Floor 23-passenger Bus	1	Excellent
2010 Chevrolet Express Cutaway - 15 passengers	1	Excellent
2010 Dodge Caravan	1	n/a
2010 Freightliner M Line Shuttlebus	1	n/a
2009 Ford Bus	1	n/a
2009 Freightliner M Line Shuttlebus	1	n/a
2007 Freightliner Bus	1	n/a
2007 Goshen Buses	2	n/a
2006 Chevy Truck	2	n/a
Replacements Requested for FY2014		
17-Passenger Body-on-Van Chassis Cutaway	1	n/a
17-Passenger Body-on-Van Chassis Cutaway	1	n/a

Transit Facility

Eagle Transit has a facility which houses their administrative offices and bus storage facility. This facility can store up to 12 buses, has three offices for personnel, a driver break room, a conference room, and a reception area. The office is located on the south side of Kalispell at 1333 Willow Glen Road. Scheduling for the various transit services are handled out of these offices.

Financial Status

Revenues

The revenues required to operate and support Eagle Transit are from a variety of funding sources. Table V-5 presents the budgeted revenues for Eagle Transit for FY2013-2014. The table shows the percentage of budgeted revenues that each funding source brings. As shown in the percentages of funding sources, the system's largest single funding source is the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). A large portion of the local match comes from the dedicated transit tax which provides 22 percent of the total operating cost.

Table V-5 Eagle Transit FY2013-14 Budgeted Revenues		
	Budgeted Revenues	Percentage of Budget
FTA grant amount requested	\$564,760	53%
Property Tax - Mil Levy	\$234,672	22%
Transit Fare Revenue	\$45,000	4%
Advertising from Bus Wraps	\$45,000	4%
Department of Public Health & Human Services (DPHHS)	\$42,000	4%
Cities	\$29,800	3%
Montana Department of Transportation	\$27,259	3%
Title III B	\$25,530	2%
Sparks	\$25,000	2%
United Way	\$15,000	1%
State General Funds	\$8,677	1%
Montana State (one-time)	\$7,533	1%
Total Revenues	\$1,070,231	100%
<i>Budgeted Operating Expenditures (incl. capital depreciation)</i>	<i>\$1,038,040</i>	
<i>Budgeted Capital Expenditures</i>	<i>\$19,862</i>	
Total Budgeted Expenditures	\$1,057,902	
<i>Source: Eagle Transit, 2013.</i>		

Expenses

The other half of the total budget equation is, of course, expenditures. The expenditures have increased over the past few years. Total expenditures budgeted for the 2013-2014 fiscal year are \$1,038,040. This budget amount includes cost for capital depreciation of vehicles. The primary expenses for Eagle Transit and all other transit agencies across the United States are salaries and benefits. Operating and administration salaries and benefits represent 76 percent of the cost of operations. The Eagle Transit operating costs for FY2013-2014 are shown in the following section, which presents the cost allocation model.

Cost Allocation Model

Financial, ridership, and service information, presented in Table V-6, can be used to develop internal evaluation tools for the Eagle Transit system. A cost allocation model provides base information against which current operations can be judged. In addition, the model is useful for estimating cost ramifications of any proposed service alternatives.

Table V-6				
Eagle Transit FY2013-14 Cost Allocation Model				
PROPOSED ACCOUNT	Budget FY2014	Vehicle- Hours	Vehicle- Miles	Fixed Cost
Salaries/W ages/Benefits	\$666,058	\$666,058		
Admin. Salaries/W ages/Benefits	\$122,142			\$122,142
Vehicle Maintenance	\$65,000		\$65,000	
Purchased Prof/Contract. Services	\$20,500			\$20,500
Advertising	\$5,000			\$5,000
Utilities	\$20,000			\$20,000
Office Supplies	\$5,000			\$5,000
Travel and Meetings	\$2,500			\$2,500
Fuels and Lubricants	\$80,000		\$80,000	
Operating Supplies	\$5,500	\$5,500		
Insurance	\$23,000			\$23,000
Dues/Subscriptions	\$200			\$200
Vehicle Licensing/Registration	\$200			\$200
Other Repair & Maintenance	\$2,000			\$2,000
Capital Depreciation	\$20,000			20,000.00
Other Miscellaneous Expenses	\$940			\$940
TOTAL OPERATING COSTS	\$1,038,040	\$671,558	\$145,000	\$221,482
Service Variable Quantities <i>Used for Planning Purposes</i>		veh-hrs	veh-mls	Fixed-Cost Factor
		19,739	266,409	
		\$34.02	\$0.54	1.27
TOTAL BUDGET	\$1,038,040			
<i>Eagle Transit, 2013.</i>				

Cost information from the FY2013-2014 budget was used to develop a two-factor cost allocation model of current Eagle Transit operations. In order to develop such a model, each cost line item is allocated to one of two service variables. The two service variables used in this model are hours and miles. In addition, fixed costs are identified as being constant. This is a valid assumption for the short term, although fixed costs could change over the longer term (more than a year or two). Examples of the cost allocation methodology include allocating fuel costs to vehicle-miles and allocating operator salaries to vehicle-hours. The total costs allocated to each variable are then divided by the total quantity (i.e.; total revenue-miles or hours) to determine a cost rate for each variable.

Existing Transportation Services

The allocation of costs for the 2013-2014 Eagle Transit operation yields the following cost equation for the existing bus operations:

$$\text{Total Cost} = \$221,482 + \$0.54 \times \text{revenue-miles} + \$34.02 \times \text{revenue-hours}$$

OR

$$\text{Total Cost} = (\$0.54 \times \text{revenue-miles} + \$34.02 \times \text{revenue-hours}) \times \text{fixed-cost factor (1.27)}.$$

Incremental costs such as the extension of service-hours or service routes/areas are evaluated considering only the mileage and hourly costs:

$$\text{Incremental Costs} = \$0.54 \times \text{revenue-miles} + \$34.02 \times \text{revenue-hours}$$

Performance Measures

This section of performance measures provides an evaluation of the Eagle Transit overall system and by route.

Systemwide Performance

Operating effectiveness and financial efficiency of the transit system are two important factors to the success of the system. The operating effectiveness is the ability of transit service to generate ridership. Financial efficiency is the ability of the system to provide service and serve passenger-trips in a cost-efficient manner. Table V-7 presents systemwide characteristics for 2011-2012.

Table V-7 2011-2012 Systemwide Performance	
Characteristic	
Operating Budget	\$874,112
Ridership	91,788
Vehicle-Miles	266,409
Vehicle-Hours	19,739
Operating Effectiveness	
Pass.-Trips per Mile	0.34
Pass.-Trips per Hour	4.65
Financial Efficiency	
Cost per Pass.-Trip	\$9.52
Cost per Veh.-Hour	\$44.28

2011-2012 Route Performance

The route performance section presents the passengers per hour, passengers per mile, passengers, and approximate cost per route. Table V-8 presents this information. The table also contains the cost per passenger, cost per mile, and cost per hour of service.

Figure V-9 presents a comparison of cost per passenger and cost per hour for each of the Eagle Transit routes.

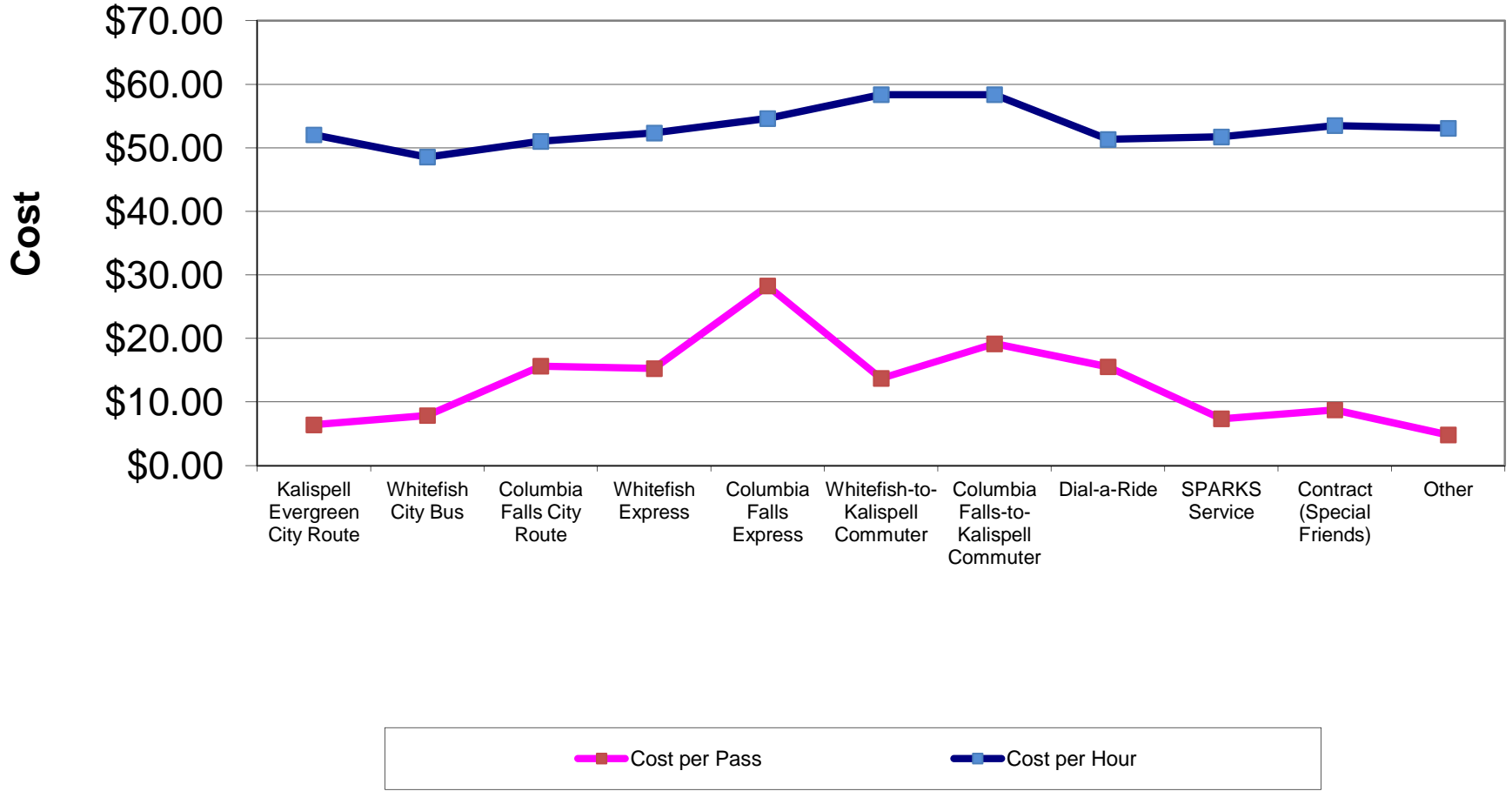
**Table V-8
Eagle Transit Route Performance (FY2011-12)**

Route	Total Route Ridership	Avg Trips per Month	% of Total	Total Route Hours	Pass per Hour	Total Route Miles	Pass per Mile	Total Route Operating Cost*	Cost per Hour	Cost per Pass
Kalispell Evergreen City Route	28,764	2,397	31.3%	3,545	8.1	45,077	0.6	\$184,520.06	\$52.05	\$6.41
Whitefish City Bus	7,133	594	7.8%	1,156	6.2	8,864	0.8	\$56,120.18	\$48.56	\$7.87
Columbia Falls City Route	5,937	495	6.5%	1,820	3.3	20,465	0.3	\$92,862.48	\$51.03	\$15.64
Whitefish Express	276	23	0.3%	80.5	3.4	1,058	0.3	\$4,213.73	\$52.34	\$15.27
Columbia Falls Express	144	12	0.2%	74.5	1.9	1,225	0.1	\$4,069.77	\$54.63	\$28.26
Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter	8,466	706	9.2%	1,989	4.3	43,490	0.2	\$116,134.55	\$58.38	\$13.72
Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter	4,684	390	5.1%	1,537	3.0	33,608	0.1	\$89,732.64	\$58.38	\$19.16
Dial-a-Ride	27,516	2,293	30.0%	8,331	3.3	97,316	0.3	\$427,640.83	\$51.33	\$15.54
SPARKS Service	6,845	570	7.5%	973	7.0	11,933	0.6	\$50,353.82	\$51.73	\$7.36
Contract (Special Friends)	673	56	0.7%	110	6.1	1,632	0.4	\$5,886.78	\$53.52	\$8.75
Other	1,350	123	1.5%	123	11.0	1,741	0.8	\$6,505.43	\$53.08	\$4.82
TOTAL	91,788	7,659	100.0%	19,739	<i>Average</i> 4.7	266,409	0.3	\$1,038,040.25	\$52.59	<i>Average</i> \$11.31

*Note: Taken from Cost Allocation Model.

Source: Eagle Transit, 2005.

Figure V-9 Cost per Trip vs. Cost per Hour



Coordination Activities

Coordination in planning, funding, and service delivery is a major component of Eagle Transit's philosophy. The Eagle Transit Transportation Advisory Board consists of representatives from social service agencies, riders, and government officials. Over the years, Eagle Transit has coordinated with several agencies on different levels. Eagle Transit continues to strive for coordination. Some of the agencies that currently contract with Eagle Transit include:

- The Department of Public Health and Human Services has contracted with Eagle Transit to provide daily transportation for developmentally disabled individuals to Flathead Industries for work and for a return trip back home. This service supplements Flathead Industries' own transportation by bringing everyone to a central point where they can catch industry vans to remote locations.
- The Kalispell Regional Medical Center (KRMC) has contracted with Eagle Transit to provide daily transportation for elementary children from their schools to The Summit for an after-school health program called SPARKS. Eagle Transit is the sole provider of this service.
- Glacier National Park partnered with Eagle Transit to provide daily bus service within the national park and employee transportation to the park during the summer season starting in 2007. The fleet of buses has been purchased through a cooperative agreement with Montana Department of Transportation and Flathead County. Eagle Transit will have access to the buses in the off-season to supplement their service.
- The Special Friends Advocacy Group has contracted with Eagle Transit to provide transportation for developmentally disabled individuals for work, shopping, and appointments. Additionally, transportation is provided for group functions. This service supplements personal cars, but is the primary transportation.
- Other Agencies that coordinate with Eagle Transit are:
 - Kalispell Taxi and Airport Shuttle
 - FVCC
 - North Valley Hospital
 - Others

Origin and Destination Analysis

This section presents maps that detail the origins (pick-up locations) and destinations (drop-off locations) of trips on the Eagle Transit Dial-a-Ride service. The information presented on the maps is based on a report with pick-up and drop-off locations for April 8 and 9, 2013 created by Eagle Transit through their Route Match software. There were 188 entries for pick-up locations and 188 entries for

drop-off locations that were used to analyze the existing ridership and to determine the locations that have the greatest demand and those that are underutilized.

Figure V-10 and Table V-9 present the pick-up locations for Eagle Transit Dial-a-Ride. As shown in the figure and table, the major pick-up locations for Eagle Transit on the two days were Flathead Industries, The Summit, Production (developmentally disabled), and FVCC. Table V-10 and Figure V-11 present the drop-off locations for Eagle Transit. As shown, the major drop-off locations for Eagle Transit on the two days were Flathead Industries, Production (developmentally disabled), housing, Teletech, and Glacier State apartments.

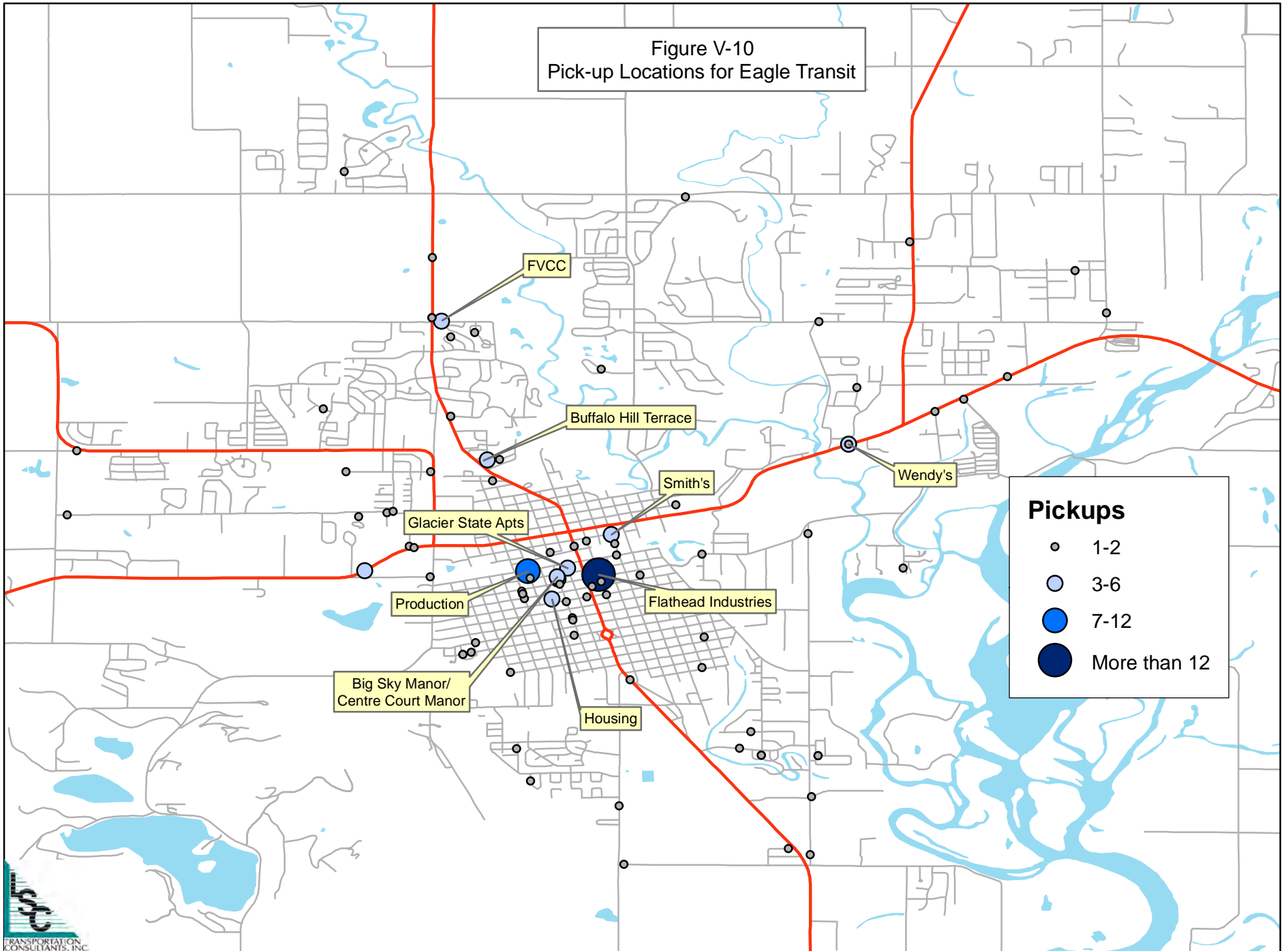
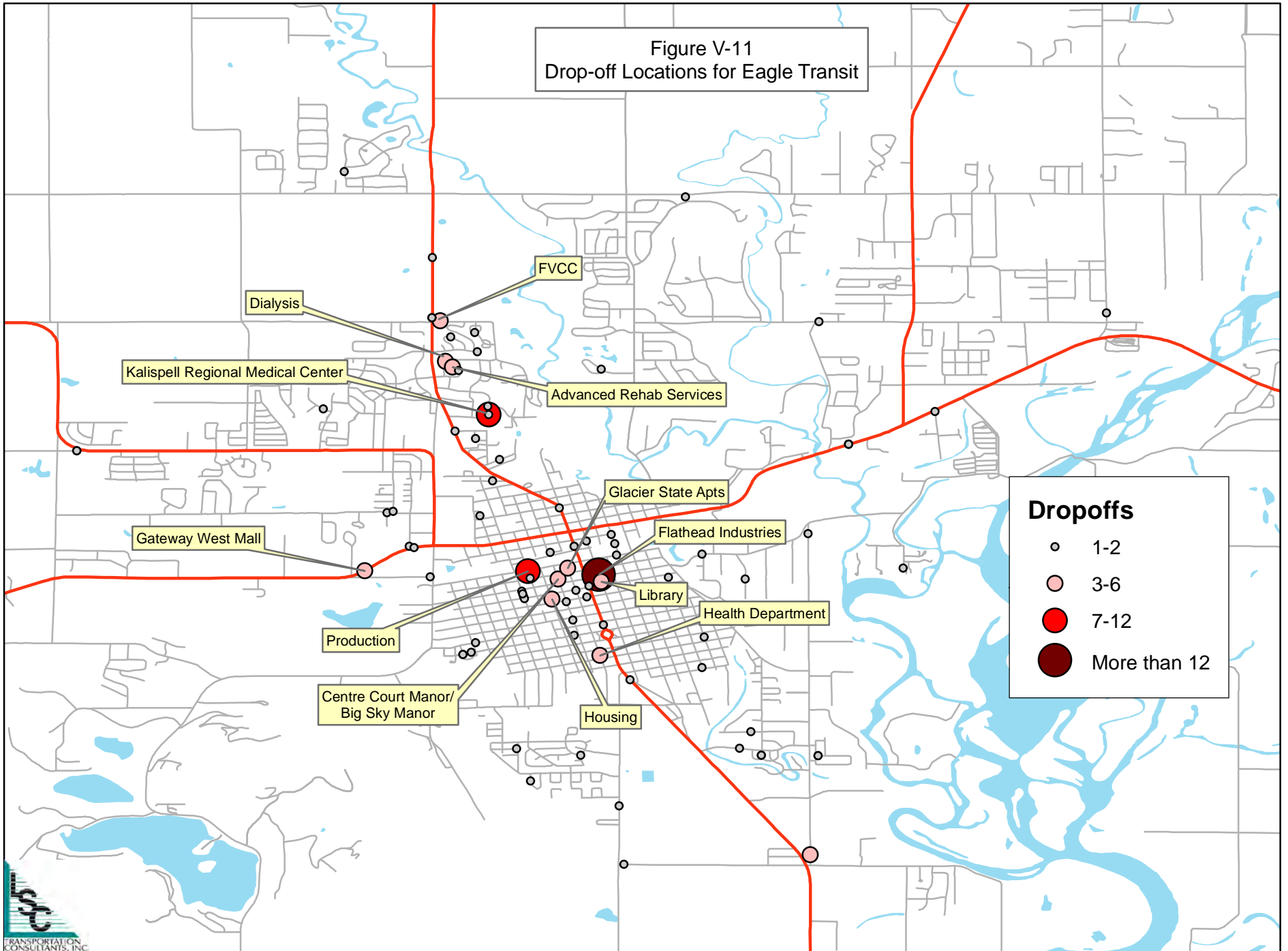


Table V-9 Top Pick-Up Locations for Eagle Transit	
Pick-Up Locations	Total
Flathead Industries	25
Production	11
Housing	6
Teletech	5 rehab
Glacier State Apts	5
Centre Court Manor	4
Wendys	4
Buffalo Hill Terrace	4
Big Sky Manor	3
Smiths	3
FVCC	3
<i>Source: Eagle Transit, 2013.</i>	

Table V-10 Top Drop-Off Locations for Eagle Transit	
Drop-off Locations	Total
Flathead Industries	31
Sum mit	9
Production	7
FVCC	5
County Health Department	4
Dialysis	4
Housing	4
Personal Address	4
Centre Court Manor	3
Advanced Rehab Services	3
Library	3
Glacier State Apts	3
<i>Source: Eagle Transit, 2013.</i>	



OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

The LSC Team updated the existing transportation resources within Flathead County from the last TDP and from Eagle Transit's recent coordination plan. Some agencies and organizations were contacted directly via telephone. A short summary of each agency and organization is presented in the following section.

Other Public Transportation

SNOW BUS - The Shuttle Network of Whitefish

The SNOW Bus service operates only during the ski season. This free service is funded by the member businesses of the Big Mountain Commercial Association (BMCA). The service provides convenient, comfortable, and free transportation to and from the Town of Whitefish and Whitefish Mountain Resort. The schedule for the SNOW Bus is posted online at the BMCA's website and distributed to various businesses in Whitefish and at the Whitefish Mountain Resort Information Center. The agency reported approximately 80,000 trips for the 2012-2013 ski season.

Day Programs

Lake View Healthcare Community

The Lake View Healthcare Community is a nursing home with an 83-bed capacity. It currently operates one lift-equipped van for resident transportation needs. Transportation services are provided from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. On-call weekend service is also available. The majority of the trips are to doctors and dentists in the Kalispell area.

Two employees of Lake View Healthcare Community drive the 2012 van as part of their other full-time duties. The Lake View Healthcare Community estimates that the van travels 10,000 miles per year. The budgeted operating cost for the transportation services is approximately \$4,500 per year. Operating costs come directly out of resident rent. No federal or state grants are available.

Some of the ambulatory residents desire to get out and about more often. Some sort of public transit service, such as Eagle Transit, would be great if available.

Existing Transportation Services

Friendship House

This is an adult day care facility that provides non-medical services to adults and seniors during the day. This agency has a facility located in Kalispell. The agency provides transportation for its clients.

Discovery Development Center

The center has two 6 to 7-passenger capacity vans that are used to transport children in the program to field trips in the Kalispell area. This transportation is provided in summer only with two trips a week.

Stillwater Christian School

The school only provides transportation to students for occasional field trips and sporting events. Stillwater Christian School has one 42-passenger bus and one 84-passenger bus. Drivers are usually staff or the school occasionally hires a driver, usually a parent, to drive the bus. The number of trips is highly variable depending on need. Trips include locations throughout Montana as well as to Idaho and Washington. There is no additional fee for this transportation.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Flathead Industries

Flathead Industries is a community rehabilitation agency. The agency provides transportation Monday through Friday from 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. and from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Vans are located at each of the five group homes in Kalispell and are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week as needed, but are used primarily to get clients to work and back. The agency has a fleet of 23 vehicles, most of which are 12-passenger vans. Two of the vans have wheelchair lifts. Flathead Industries focuses on people with disabilities getting their own jobs rather than working in “sheltered workplaces.”

Hospital

Kalispell Regional Medical Center

Kalispell Regional Medical Center provides transportation with one 15-passenger vehicle. The agency provides transportation Monday through Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and on weekends from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The agency has

a contract with Eagle Transit to provide bus transportation to take kids from school to SPARKS program at The Summit Monday through Friday from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. The agency charters with Rocky Mountain and Brown Bear Charter on an as-needed basis.

University Transportation

Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC)

FVCC provides transportation with six vehicles—four 10-passenger vans, one 17-passenger school bus, and one 22-passenger school bus. Transportation is provided for sports teams and class field trips. Transportation is limited to college students. The agency reports that they do not have enough vans which in turn limits activities. They often rent transportation from Rocky Mountain Transportation.

Mental Health

Sinopah House

Sinopah House is an eight-bed intense level therapeutic group home for girls age 18 and under. The agency provides transportation with two vehicles—an 8-passenger van and a Subaru. Transportation hours are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Lamplighter House

Lamplighter House is a mental health provider that provides transportation for its clients.

Taxi Companies

Kalispell Taxi

Kalispell Taxi, also known as Flathead Area Custom Transportation, is a full-service, private transportation provider. Kalispell Taxi's current service area extends 50 miles from Kalispell in all directions. Kalispell Taxi provides demand-response, scheduled, and non-ambulatory (wheelchair) service. Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Existing Transportation Services

Kalispell Taxi provides transportation with a fleet of 10 vehicles. Vehicles range in seating capacity and include a 31-passenger vehicle, four 12 to 15-passenger vehicles, two vans which are wheelchair accessible, a 3 to 5-passenger vehicle, a four-wheel drive, and a limousine. All the vehicles in their fleet are equipped with radios and safety equipment. This taxi service provides transportation for various purposes such as trips to the airport, for work, for tourists, for shopping, and also for contracts and package delivery.

Flathead-Glacier Transportation

This company provides taxi service between Glacier Park International Airport and northwestern Montana.

Private For-Profit Transportation

Rocky Mountain Transportation

Rocky Mountain Transportation is the largest transportation provider in Flathead County. Rocky Mountain Transportation (RMT) consists of four divisions: school bus operation in Whitefish, charter services including convention and athletic trips, a Hertz franchise, and is also the operator for the free SNOW Bus every winter in Whitefish. For the Snow Bus service, RMT provides 38-passenger buses that provide the free shuttle service between multiple stops in the Whitefish area and Big Mountain Ski Resort. Contract fees are charged for all services based on the cost of providing those services. As a private transportation provider, it does not receive government subsidies. RMT has been providing transportation services in the Whitefish area since 1946.

Brown Bear Charters

Brown Bear Van Charters is a charter van service owned and operated by Dudley and Melody Johnson in Columbia Falls, Montana. The charter service owns a Ford Diamond 25-passenger motor coach, a 14-passenger Ford van, a six-passenger Plymouth Voyager, and a four-wheel drive four-passenger pick-up. They provide charters for Big Mountain; Blacktail; Fernie, British Columbia (BC); and Kimberly, BC ski areas. Charter services are available for golf, skiing, hiking, shopping, office and birthday parties, weddings, anniversaries, and conventions as well as school

and church outings. Charters are available locally as well as to Spokane; Seattle; Calgary, Alberta; and Cranbrook, BC.

Wild Horse Limousine Service

Wild Horse Limousine Service operates with a fleet of three vehicles—a 2005 Ford Excursion, a 2008 Lincoln ECB Icon, and a 2010 Lincoln MKT Town Car. The company offer charters as well as transportation from Glacier Park International Airport to the following Montana destinations: Apgar, Big Mountain, Bigfork, Columbia Falls, Condon, East Glacier, Essex, Eureka, Finley Point, Great Falls, Kalispell, Lake McDonald Lodge, Lakeside, Libby, Many Glacier Valley, Missoula, Polebridge, Polson, Seeley Lake, St. Mary, Swan Lake, West Glacier, and Whitefish. Rates to these locations range from \$75 to \$495 for a direct route. There is an additional charge of \$15 for additional stops. They also offer transportation to Calgary, Alberta; Waterton Park, Alberta; Cranbrook, BC; and Fernie, BC. Rates to locations in Canada range from \$410 to \$975. For areas not listed in either Montana or Canada, a \$4-per-mile fee is assessed from the closest listed location.

Flathead-Glacier Transportation/Glacier Charters/Glacier Van Rentals

Flathead-Glacier Transportation offers for-hire van service in the Flathead-Glacier area. The company provides shuttle and taxi service between Glacier Park International Airport and northwestern Montana. Glacier Charters handles groups, weddings, conventions, and community functions. Glacier Van Rental has a small fleet of passenger vans available. A taxi service is also available to and from Glacier Park International Airport.

Other Providers

According to Flathead County's transportation coordination plan, other agencies that provide transportation are:

Nursing Homes:

- Heritage Place
- Immanuel Lutheran Home
- Brendan House
- Colonial Manor

Existing Transportation Services

Retirement Homes:

- Greenwood Assisted Living
- Prestige
- Wel-Life
- Veteran's Home
- Riverside Senior Living
- Edgewood Vista

Group Homes:

- Transition Homes
- Samaritan House

Boys and Girls Club:

- Boys & Girls Club of Glacier

Head Start:

- Northwest Montana Head Start

Intercity Passenger Rail

Amtrak

Amtrak provides passenger rail service between Seattle and Chicago, one stop along the way being in Whitefish. Amtrak provides service on a daily basis. In the eastbound direction, trains leave Seattle at 4:40 p.m. and arrive in Whitefish at 7:26 a.m. the next morning. The train departs again at 7:46 a.m. and arrives in Chicago at 3:55 p.m. the next afternoon. In the westbound direction, trains leave Chicago at 2:15 p.m., arriving in Whitefish at 8:56 p.m. the next evening. Westbound service continues from Whitefish, departing at 9:16 p.m. and arriving in Seattle at 10:25 a.m. the next morning.



Transit Needs Assessment

INTRODUCTION

A key step in developing and evaluating transit plans is a careful analysis of the mobility needs of various segments of the population and the potential ridership of transit services. Transit demand analysis is the basic determination of demand for public transportation in a given area. There are several factors that affect demand, not all of which can be forecasted. However, as demand estimation is an important task in developing any transportation plan, several methods of estimation have been developed in the transit field. The analysis makes intensive use of the demographic data and Eagle Transit's ridership data discussed previously.

This chapter presents an analysis of the demand for transit services in Flathead County based upon standard estimation techniques. The transit demand identified in this section was used in the identification of transit service alternatives and the evaluation of the various alternatives explored in Chapter VIII. This chapter describes the development of five models used for the Flathead County study area which were used in the identification of transit service alternatives.

- Greatest Transit Needs Index Model
- Fixed-Route Demand Model
- ADA Paratransit Demand
- Commuter Demand Analysis
- Rural Transit Demand Methodology

GREATEST TRANSIT NEEDS

The "greatest transit need" is defined as those areas in the Flathead County area with the highest density of zero-vehicle households, older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income populations. This information was used in the development of service alternatives and the identification of appropriate service constraints.

Methodology

The American Community Survey (ACS) and US Census data were used to calculate the greatest transit need. The categories used for the calculation were zero-vehicle households, older adult population, disabled population, and low-income population. Using these categories, LSC developed a “transit need index” to determine the greatest transit need. The density of the population for each US Census block group within each category was calculated, placed in numerical order, and divided into five segments. Five segments were chosen to reflect a reasonable range. Each segment contained an approximately equal number of US Census block groups to provide equal representation.

Census block groups in the segment with the lowest densities were given a score of 1. The block groups in the segment with the next lowest densities were given a score of 2. This process continued for the remainder of the block groups. The census block groups in the segment with the highest densities were given a score of 5. This scoring was completed for each of the categories (zero-vehicle households, older adult population, disabled population, and below-poverty population). After each of the census block groups was scored for the five categories, the five scores were added to achieve an overall score. Table VI-1 presents the rank for each census block group in the Flathead County area. The scores range from 4 (lowest need) to 20 (highest need).

Table VI-1
Greatest Transit Need Model
Flathead County

Census Tract	Census Block Group	Land area (sq. miles)	Total Population ACS-2011 ACS	Total Population est. 2013*	Total Number of Households 2011 ACS	Zero-Vehicle Households 2011 ACS				Total Number of Older Adults 65 & Over 2011 ACS				Mobility-Limited Population est. 2013*				Low-Income Population 2011 ACS				Overall Score (4-20)	Final (1-5)
						#	#	Density (Hhlds. Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank		
1	1	2.0	1,127	1,039	388	7	3.6	3	121	61.6	3	31	15.8	4	276	140.4	4	14	4				
1	2	1,723.3	1,470	1,729	591	0	0.0	1	123	0.1	1	69	0.0	1	360	0.2	1	4	1				
1	3	1,810.4	816	874	282	0	0.0	1	109	0.1	1	37	0.0	1	200	0.1	1	4	1				
2.01	1	57.5	1,790	1,960	749	0	0.0	1	337	5.9	1	19	0.3	1	142	2.5	1	4	1				
2.01	2	3.0	569	783	228	0	0.0	1	129	43.6	3	34	11.6	4	45	15.3	3	11	3				
2.01	3	5.3	1,668	783	614	17	3.2	3	135	25.3	3	34	6.4	3	133	24.8	3	12	3				
2.02	1	6.3	1,842	1,160	649	0	0.0	1	54	8.5	2	29	4.5	3	239	37.8	3	9	2				
2.02	2	19.0	1,366	1,556	538	11	0.6	2	167	8.8	2	71	3.7	3	178	9.3	2	9	2				
2.03	1	4.0	1,805	3,012	814	46	11.4	4	422	104.9	4	72	17.8	4	264	65.7	4	16	4				
2.03	2	0.8	1,330	2,103	450	0	0.0	1	183	241.3	4	44	58.4	5	195	256.9	4	14	4				
2.03	3	0.3	1,049	516	358	12	36.6	4	42	128.2	4	0	0.0	1	154	469.3	5	14	4				
3	1	50.0	405	762	222	14	0.3	2	140	2.8	1	0	0.0	1	52	1.0	1	5	1				
3	2	13.8	1,005	1,055	377	0	0.0	1	105	7.6	2	35	2.5	3	128	9.3	2	8	2				
3	3	0.4	414	806	243	8	19.5	4	132	321.4	5	5	11.7	4	53	128.4	4	17	5				
3	4	0.3	1,304	1,240	637	39	116.3	5	70	208.8	4	31	92.8	5	166	495.3	5	19	5				
3	5	21.5	1,489	1,135	545	16	0.7	2	95	4.4	1	18	0.8	2	190	8.8	2	7	2				
4.01	1	9.2	1,499	1,725	660	71	7.7	3	244	26.5	3	38	4.2	3	246	26.7	3	12	3				
4.01	2	8.7	2,609	1,079	1,063	62	7.1	3	332	38.2	3	23	2.7	3	428	49.3	3	12	3				
4.01	3	0.3	442	907	198	0	0.0	1	64	203.0	4	0	0.0	1	73	230.1	4	10	3				
4.01	4	0.6	847	982	352	0	0.0	1	73	121.0	4	17	27.8	4	139	230.4	4	13	4				
4.02	1	19.4	1,113	1,356	499	0	0.0	1	71	3.7	1	0	0.0	1	53	2.7	1	4	1				
4.02	2	2.0	1,245	1,554	563	30	14.9	4	230	114.4	4	10	4.8	3	59	29.5	3	14	4				
4.02	3	0.2	336	624	207	24	102.8	5	49	209.8	4	8	35.9	4	16	68.5	4	17	5				
6.01	1	16.7	2,021	1,532	788	0	0.0	1	291	17.4	2	24	1.4	2	57	3.4	1	6	1				
6.01	2	17.0	1,316	1,459	492	0	0.0	1	168	9.9	2	26	1.5	2	37	2.2	1	6	1				
6.01	3	7.4	840	839	311	15	2.0	3	67	9.0	2	11	1.5	2	24	3.2	1	8	2				
6.02	1	22.7	1,282	1,121	487	0	0.0	1	254	11.2	2	2	0.1	1	112	4.9	2	6	1				
6.02	2	26.4	1,632	1,210	615	3	0.1	2	259	9.8	2	29	1.1	2	143	5.4	2	8	2				
6.02	3	8.1	1,119	839	373	3	0.4	2	148	18.3	2	11	1.4	2	98	12.1	3	9	2				
7	1	1.3	1,019	771	446	32	25.3	4	111	87.7	3	6	4.7	3	125	98.5	4	14	4				
7	2	0.9	1,517	1,157	579	12	14.0	4	243	283.4	5	6	7.0	3	186	216.4	4	16	4				
7	3	3.4	1,254	1,523	484	9	2.7	3	147	43.7	3	48	14.2	4	153	45.6	3	13	4				
7	4	0.4	1,166	1,043	520	0	0.0	1	82	192.5	4	34	78.7	5	143	334.9	4	14	4				
7	5	0.5	619	1,181	275	0	0.0	1	119	258.9	4	34	72.9	5	76	164.8	4	14	4				
8	1	7.7	1,988	1,626	842	46	6.0	3	233	30.2	3	48	6.2	3	175	22.6	3	12	3				
8	2	2.1	1,066	1,236	330	0	0.0	1	127	61.7	3	16	7.8	3	94	45.4	3	10	3				
8	3	14.8	1,980	1,710	696	11	0.7	2	261	17.6	2	28	1.9	3	174	11.7	2	9	2				
8	4	1.7	1,607	1,236	827	0	0.0	1	474	278.2	5	16	9.5	4	141	82.8	4	14	4				
9	1	1.0	2,368	1,766	910	13	13.3	4	349	355.8	5	8	8.5	4	396	403.7	5	18	5				
9	2	0.5	1,271	1,782	479	77	158.9	5	482	994.6	5	39	81.5	5	213	438.6	5	20	5				
9	3	0.6	1,259	1,223	561	71	115.3	5	273	443.2	5	12	19.4	4	211	341.8	4	18	5				
9	4	0.4	956	1,181	394	11	28.6	4	96	249.4	4	71	183.4	5	160	415.4	5	18	5				
9	5	0.5	1,166	1,324	562	64	125.4	5	203	397.7	5	49	96.1	5	195	382.0	5	20	5				
10	1	0.4	814	1,270	395	102	251.3	5	166	408.9	5	50	123.8	5	227	559.4	5	20	5				
10	2	0.1	1,118	1,238	601	131	907.7	5	171	1,184.9	5	75	522.3	5	312	2161.2	5	20	5				

Table VI-1 Greatest Transit Need Model Flathead County																				Final (1-5)
Census Tract	Census Block Group	Land area (sq. miles)	Total Population ACS-2011 ACS	Total Population est. 2013*	Total Number of Households 2011 ACS	Zero-Vehicle Households 2011 ACS			Total Number of Older Adults 65 & Over 2011 ACS			Mobility-Limited Population est. 2013*		Low-Income Population 2011 ACS			Overall Score (4-20)			
						#	#	Density (Hhlds. Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#		Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	
11	1	0.3	1,217	1,558	402	27	84.7	4	104	326.2	5	17	52.5	5	232	728.3	5	19	5	
11	2	0.3	1,365	1,121	651	35	123.6	5	83	293.1	5	26	92.9	5	260	919.5	5	20	5	
11	3	0.3	660	909	315	20	75.4	4	80	301.5	5	8	31.6	4	126	474.5	5	18	5	
11	4	0.2	554	685	260	0	0.0	1	24	142.0	4	9	53.1	5	106	625.4	5	15	4	
11	5	0.3	676	1,806	300	49	154.8	5	49	154.8	4	36	113.4	5	129	407.5	5	19	5	
11	6	0.2	749	975	292	23	142.0	5	103	635.8	5	6	36.9	4	143	882.0	5	19	5	
12	1	1.0	2,179	931	850	27	26.4	4	257	251.1	4	31	30.4	4	142	138.3	4	16	4	
12	2	4.6	2,788	931	1,083	11	2.4	3	295	64.6	3	31	6.8	3	181	39.7	3	12	3	
12	3	8.6	1,511	1,417	562	35	4.1	3	185	21.6	3	16	1.8	2	98	11.4	2	10	3	
12	4	1.9	868	1,424	385	74	39.4	4	12	6.4	2	68	36.3	4	56	30.0	3	13	4	
13.01	1	6.2	809	974	404	21	3.4	3	233	37.4	3	10	1.6	2	68	11.0	2	10	3	
13.01	2	8.9	1,487	974	698	45	5.1	3	629	71.0	3	10	1.1	2	126	14.2	3	11	3	
13.01	3	6.6	1,100	916	518	12	1.8	3	144	21.9	3	35	5.3	3	93	14.2	3	12	3	
13.02	1	41.2	1,485	1,385	571	0	0.0	1	201	4.9	1	36	0.9	2	173	4.2	2	6	1	
13.02	2	38.3	1,783	1,526	694	23	0.6	2	248	6.5	2	36	0.9	2	208	5.4	2	8	2	
13.02	3	28.1	1,761	1,063	606	4	0.1	2	213	7.6	2	16	0.6	2	206	7.3	2	8	2	
14	1	33.3	1,158	1,758	513	0	0.0	1	109	3.3	1	0	0.0	1	70	2.1	1	4	1	
14	2	20.0	859	1,204	404	0	0.0	1	290	14.5	2	19	1.0	2	52	2.6	1	6	1	
14	3	41.1	2,752	1,824	1,024	0	0.0	1	335	8.1	2	73	1.8	2	167	4.1	2	7	2	
17	1	653.5	1,377	1,396	602	3	0.0	1	235	0.4	1	63	0.1	1	189	0.3	1	4	1	
17	2	46.7	8	22	4	0	0.0	1	8	0.2	1	0	0.0	1	1	0.0	1	4	1	
17	3	48.6	1,732	1,392	641	29	0.6	2	159	3.3	1	41	0.8	2	238	4.9	2	7	2	
17	4	44.9	1,259	940	458	9	0.2	2	84	1.9	1	20	0.5	1	173	3.8	2	6	1	
17	5	105.0	1,857	1,524	631	0	0.0	1	141	1.3	1	36	0.3	1	255	2.4	1	4	1	
17	6	54.9	1,405	1,352	635	20	0.4	2	217	4.0	1	24	0.4	1	193	3.5	1	5	1	
Study Area TOTAL:		5,088	90,317	87,014	36,697	1,424	0.3		12,589	2.5		1,936	0.4		10,920					
Note: * Mobility-Limited Population is not currently available in the five-year ACS data, hence the 2000 US Census data were used and projected to 2013. Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2000 US Census Bureau, LSC 2013.																				

Results

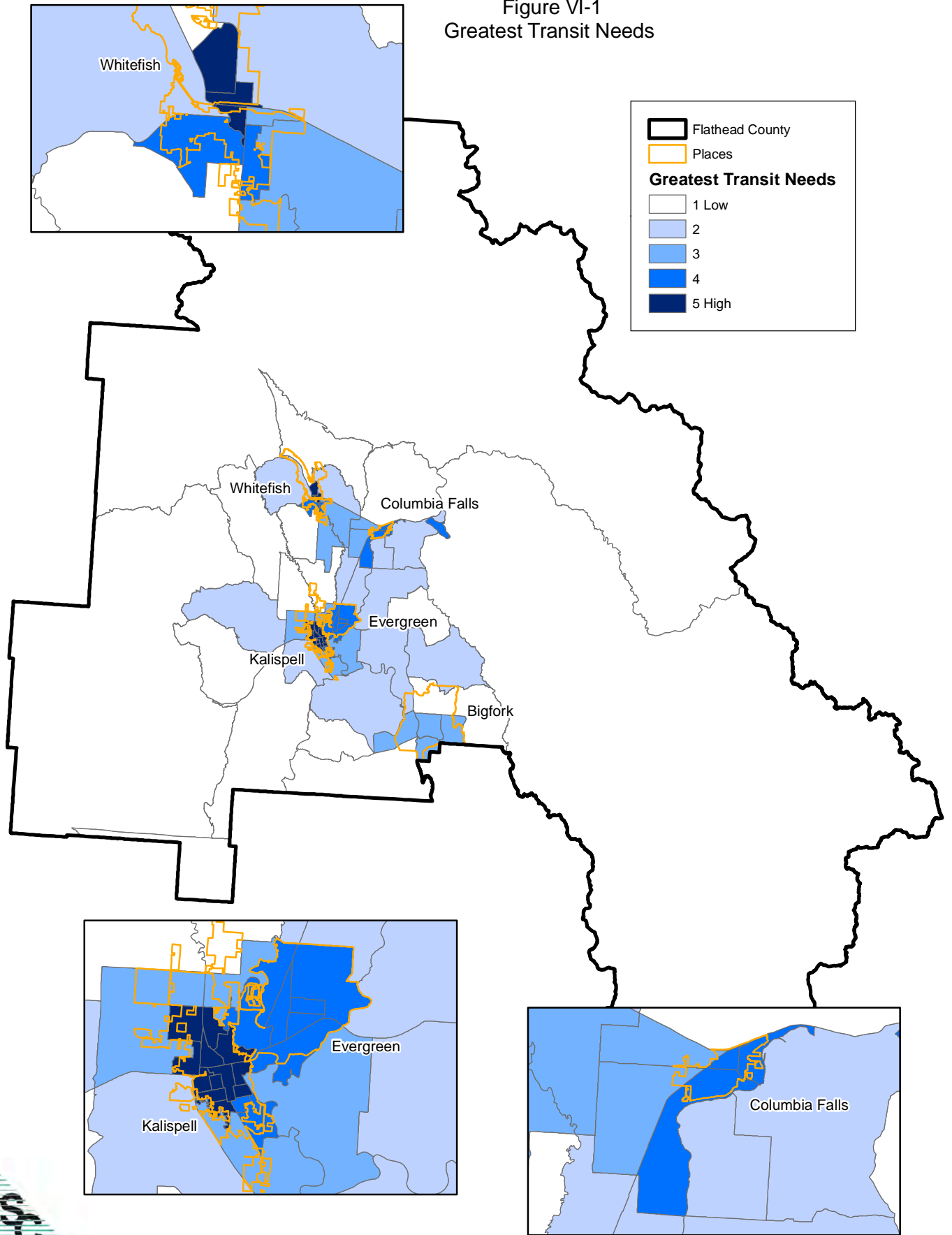
Figure VI-1 presents the Flathead County study area’s US Census block groups with the greatest transit need, along with the transit need index. Fifteen block groups were determined to have the greatest transit needs based on zero-vehicle households, older adult population, disabled population, and low-income population. Table VI-2 presents information on these 15 block groups. As shown in Figure VI-1, the greatest transit need is mainly in Kalispell and the Whitefish urban area followed by Evergreen and Columbia Falls areas. The other areas of high transit needs are the areas between Whitefish and Columbia Falls and the Big Fork area.

Table VI-2 Census Block Groups with Greatest Transit Need			
Census Tracts	Census Block Groups	Overall Score	Community
3	3	17	Whitefish
3	4	19	Whitefish
4.02	3	17	Whitefish
9	1	18	Kalispell
9	2	20	Kalispell
9	3	18	Kalispell
9	4	18	Kalispell
9	5	20	Kalispell
10	1	20	Kalispell
10	2	20	Kalispell
11	1	19	Kalispell
11	2	20	Kalispell
11	3	18	Kalispell
11	5	19	Kalispell
11	6	19	Kalispell

Source: LSC, 2013.

By identifying those areas with a high need for public transportation, LSC was able to uncover a pattern for the areas with the highest propensity to use transit service. As LSC examined service alternatives, Figure VI-1 was used in the analysis to ensure that areas with a high transit need would be adequately served. Those US Census block groups not scoring in the highest category, but still having a high score, could still be considered a high priority for transit service.

Figure VI-1
Greatest Transit Needs



FIXED-ROUTE MODEL

In order to analyze whether the existing transit service is meeting the community's needs based on the type of service, LSC created a fixed-route demand model. The model format is based on household vehicle ownership, average walking distance to bus stops, and frequency of operation. The basic approach is described in the paper, *Demand Estimating Model for Transit Route and System Planning in Small Urban Areas*, Transportation Research Board, 730, 1979. This model incorporates factors for walking distance, the distance traveled on the bus, and the frequency of service or headway.

The model used for Kalispell and the Evergreen area is shown in Tables VI-3 and VI-4. Table VI-3 shows the demand on a fixed-route model that operates on a 40-minute headway. Table VI-4 shows the demand on a fixed-route model that operates on an 85-minute headway. These models reflect the 2011 ACS data for Kalispell and the Evergreen area and were calibrated to the existing ridership data for FY2011-2012. Since the model shown in Table VI-3 operates 40 percent of the time and the model shown in Table VI-4 operates 60 percent of the time, the ridership from each table is calculated accordingly. As shown in Tables VI-3 and VI-4, the two models combined generated 115 daily trips and approximately 28,800 annual trips--consistent with Eagle Transit's current Kalispell-Evergreen City ridership. This model does not include those trips where people would still need a ride on the paratransit/dial-a-ride service due to the FTA's ADA requirements.

The percentage of households with transit access was determined by the number of households within a quarter-mile of the transit service. Census block groups located entirely within a quarter-mile show 100 percent transit access.

This fixed-route model was used to estimate ridership for the alternate service concepts. The alternate concepts may be incorporated into the model by changing the percentage of households served by transit, the walking distance, and frequency of service. This model was applied to each of the service alternatives presented in Chapter VIII.

**Table VI-3
Calibrated Fixed-Route Demand Model - 40-Minute Headway**

Census Tract	Census Block Group	Total # of Hhlds 2011 ACS	# of Hhlds with		% of Hhlds with Transit Access	Hhlds Served by Transit		Basic Transit Trip Rates		Walk Distance (ft)	Walk Factor		Headway (min)	Headway Factor		Daily Transit Trips		Daily Trip # of	
			0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto	0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto	0 Auto	1 Auto		
7	2	579	12	133	25%	3	33	0.15	0.02	1,700	0.70	0.90	40	1.40	1.50	0	1	1	
7	4	520	0	105	5%	0	5	0.15	0.02	2,200	0.50	0.70	40	1.40	1.50	0	0	0	
7	5	275	0	106	20%	0	21	0.15	0.02	1,600	0.70	0.90	40	1.40	1.50	0	1	1	
8	1	842	46	266	10%	5	27	0.15	0.02	4,700	0.20	0.03	40	1.40	1.50	0	0	0	
8	2	330	0	13	20%	0	3	0.15	0.02	4,900	0.20	0.03	40	1.40	1.50	0	0	0	
8	4	827	0	272	5%	0	14	0.15	0.02	1,700	0.70	0.90	40	1.40	1.50	0	0	0	
9	1	910	13	288	20%	3	58	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	40	1.40	1.50	1	2	3	
9	2	479	77	134	90%	69	121	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	40	1.40	1.50	18	4	23	
9	3	561	71	274	50%	36	137	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	40	1.40	1.50	9	5	14	
9	4	394	11	139	75%	8	104	0.15	0.02	900	1.25	1.20	40	1.40	1.50	2	4	6	
9	5	562	64	386	75%	48	290	0.15	0.02	1,000	1.00	1.10	40	1.40	1.50	10	10	20	
10	1	395	102	161	100%	102	161	0.15	0.02	600	1.25	1.20	40	1.40	1.50	27	6	33	
10	2	601	131	248	75%	98	186	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	40	1.40	1.50	26	7	33	
11	1	402	27	105	75%	20	79	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	40	1.40	1.50	5	3	8	
11	2	651	35	348	25%	9	87	0.15	0.02	1,500	0.70	0.90	40	1.40	1.50	1	2	4	
11	3	315	20	177	75%	15	133	0.15	0.02	1,200	0.90	1.05	40	1.40	1.50	3	4	7	
11	4	260	0	107	50%	0	54	0.15	0.02	1,500	0.70	0.90	40	1.40	1.50	0	1	1	
11	5	300	49	138	50%	25	69	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	40	1.40	1.50	6	2	9	
11	6	292	23	122	25%	6	31	0.15	0.02	1,200	0.90	1.05	40	1.40	1.50	1	1	2	
12	1	850	27	192	25%	7	48	0.15	0.02	1,600	0.70	0.90	40	1.40	1.50	1	1	2	
12	2	1,083	11	321	10%	1	32	0.15	0.02	3,000	0.20	0.03	40	1.40	1.50	0	0	0	
12	4	385	74	90	15%	11	14	0.15	0.02	2,400	0.50	0.70	40	1.40	1.50	1	0	1	
Subtotal		36,697	1,424	8,935		465	1,704	Estimated Daily Ridership (40-minute headway)											169
Estimated Daily Ridership (operates 40% of the time)																		67	
Estimated Annual Ridership (operates 40% of the time)																		16,853	
Estimated TOTAL Annual Ridership (from Tables V-3 and V-4)																		28,826	

Source: LSC, 2013.

Table VI-4

Calibrated Fixed-Route Demand Model - 85-Minute Headway

Census Tract	Census Block Group	Total # of Hhlds 2011 ACS	# of Hhlds with		% of Hhlds with Transit Access	Hhlds Served by Transit		Basic Transit Trip Rates		Walk Distance (ft)	Walk Factor		Headway (min)	Headway Factor		Daily Transit Trips		Daily Trip # of	
			0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto	0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto	0 Auto	1 Auto		
7	2	579	12	133	25%	3	33	0.15	0.02	1,700	0.70	0.90	85	0.60	0.85	0	1	1	
7	4	520	0	105	5%	0	5	0.15	0.02	2,200	0.50	0.70	85	0.60	0.85	0	0	0	
7	5	275	0	106	20%	0	21	0.15	0.02	1,600	0.70	0.90	85	0.60	0.85	0	0	0	
8	1	842	46	266	10%	5	27	0.15	0.02	4,700	0.20	0.03	85	0.60	0.85	0	0	0	
8	2	330	0	13	20%	0	3	0.15	0.02	4,900	0.20	0.03	85	0.60	0.85	0	0	0	
8	4	827	0	272	5%	0	14	0.15	0.02	1,700	0.70	0.90	85	0.60	0.85	0	0	0	
9	1	910	13	288	20%	3	58	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	85	0.60	0.85	0	1	1	
9	2	479	77	134	90%	69	121	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	85	0.60	0.85	8	2	10	
9	3	561	71	274	50%	36	137	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	85	0.60	0.85	4	3	7	
9	4	394	11	139	75%	8	104	0.15	0.02	900	1.25	1.20	85	0.60	0.85	1	2	3	
9	5	562	64	386	75%	48	290	0.15	0.02	1,000	1.00	1.10	85	0.60	0.85	4	5	10	
10	1	395	102	161	100%	102	161	0.15	0.02	600	1.25	1.20	85	0.60	0.85	12	3	15	
10	2	601	131	248	75%	98	186	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	85	0.60	0.85	11	4	15	
11	1	402	27	105	75%	20	79	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	85	0.60	0.85	2	2	4	
11	2	651	35	348	25%	9	87	0.15	0.02	1,500	0.70	0.90	85	0.60	0.85	1	1	2	
11	3	315	20	177	75%	15	133	0.15	0.02	1,200	0.90	1.05	85	0.60	0.85	1	2	4	
11	4	260	0	107	50%	0	54	0.15	0.02	1,500	0.70	0.90	85	0.60	0.85	0	1	1	
11	5	300	49	138	50%	25	69	0.15	0.02	700	1.25	1.20	85	0.60	0.85	3	1	4	
11	6	292	23	122	25%	6	31	0.15	0.02	1,200	0.90	1.05	85	0.60	0.85	0	1	1	
12	1	850	27	192	25%	7	48	0.15	0.02	1,600	0.70	0.90	85	0.60	0.85	0	1	1	
12	2	1,083	11	321	10%	1	32	0.15	0.02	3,000	0.20	0.03	85	0.60	0.85	0	0	0	
12	4	385	74	90	15%	11	14	0.15	0.02	2,400	0.50	0.70	85	0.60	0.85	1	0	1	
Subtotal		36,697	1,424	8,935		465	1,704	Estimated Daily Ridership (85-minute headway)											80
Estimated Daily Ridership (operates 60% of the time)																		48	
Estimated Annual Ridership (operates 60% of the time)																		11,973	
Estimated TOTAL Annual Ridership (from Tables V-3 and V-4)																		28,826	
Source: LSC, 2013.																			

Transit Needs Assessment

LSC also created an ideal fixed-route model based on several assumptions. The assumptions included the headways, the destinations of the route structure throughout the community, and access to the transit routes. Based on these assumptions, LSC generated the estimated demand for an ideal fixed-route service. LSC used 60-minute headways on all routes, an average walking distance to the route of 500 feet, and 100 percent of all households having access to transit. These data are shown in Table VI-5. The model generated 174 daily trips and approximately 43,500 annual trips, as presented in Table VI-3.

Census Tract	Census Block Group	Total # of Hhlds 2011 ACS	# of Hhlds with		% of Hhlds with Transit Access	Hhlds Served by Transit		Basic Transit Trip Rates		Walk Distance (ft)	Walk Factor		Headway (min)	Headway Factor		Daily Transit Trips		Daily Trip # of		
			0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto	0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto	0 Auto	1 Auto			
7	2	579	12	133	100%	12	133	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	1	3	4		
7	4	520	0	105	100%	0	105	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	0	2	2		
7	5	275	0	106	100%	0	106	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	0	2	2		
8	1	842	46	266	100%	46	266	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	5	5	11		
8	2	330	0	13	100%	0	13	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	0	0	0		
8	4	827	0	272	100%	0	272	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	0	6	6		
9	1	910	13	288	100%	13	288	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	1	6	7		
9	2	479	77	134	100%	77	134	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	9	3	11		
9	3	561	71	274	100%	71	274	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	8	6	14		
9	4	394	11	139	100%	11	139	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	1	3	4		
9	5	562	64	386	100%	64	386	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	7	8	15		
10	1	395	102	161	100%	102	161	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	12	3	15		
10	2	601	131	248	100%	131	248	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	15	5	20		
11	1	402	27	105	100%	27	105	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	2	5		
11	2	651	35	348	100%	35	348	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	4	7	11		
11	3	315	20	177	100%	20	177	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	2	4	6		
11	4	260	0	107	100%	0	107	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	0	2	2		
11	5	300	49	138	100%	49	138	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	6	3	8		
11	6	292	23	122	100%	23	122	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	2	5		
12	1	850	27	192	100%	27	192	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	4	7		
12	2	1,083	11	321	100%	11	321	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	1	7	8		
12	4	385	74	90	100%	74	90	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	8	2	10		
Subtotal		36,697	1,424	8,935		793	4,125											Estimated Daily Ridership		174
Source: LSC, 2013.																				

ADA PARATRANSIT DEMAND

Estimating the demand for ADA complementary paratransit service is an important part of the transit demand process. *TCRP Report 119: Improving ADA Complementary Paratransit Demand Estimation* established a demand estimation tool developed from statistical analysis of transit systems across the country. The model uses the peer comparison data along with multiple factors to help predict paratransit ridership. The input variables include population, percentage of households below the poverty line, and fare. The model predicts that 27,978 annual trips will need to be provided within the county to meet the demand. This breaks down to roughly 111 daily trips. This certified paratransit population (which includes elderly population and people with disabilities) estimate is consistent with Eagle Transit's dial-a-ride ridership of 27,516.

COMMUTER DEMAND ANALYSIS

The demand estimation technique established by the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Project B-36 involves applying a trip rate to the number of workers traveling to employment centers for work. The resulting formula is as follows:

Commuter Trips by Transit from Place A to Place B per Day = Proportion using Transit for Commuter Trips from Place A to Place B x Number of Commuters x 2

Proportion using Transit for Commuter Trips from Place A to Place B = 0.024 + (0.0000056 x Workers Commuting from Place A to Place B) - (0.00029 x Distance in Miles from Place A to Place B) + 0.015 (if the Urban Place is a state capital)

Percent Transit for Commuter Trips from Place A to Place B = 0.024 + (0.0056 workers in the central place) - (0.00029* distance in miles) + 0.015 (if the central place is a state capital)*

Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data were used to determine how many individuals were commuting from the Kalispell area to

various employment places in the region. Table VI-6 shows this number with the associated demand estimate.

Table VI-6 Daily Commute Demand between Kalispell and Employment Places			
Place	Count	Percent Transit	Demand
Evergreen, MT	1,782	3%	118
Whitefish, MT	757	2%	36
Columbia Falls, MT	539	2%	24
Bigfork, MT	459	2%	20
Lakeside, MT	255	2%	11
Helena Flats, MT	176	2%	8
Source: LEHD; LSC, 2013.			

As shown in Table VI-6, transit service from Kalispell to the areas of Evergreen, Whitefish, Columbia Falls, and possibly the Bigfork area shows a greater potential for commuter service.

TCRP RURAL DEMAND METHODOLOGY

Non-Program Trips

TCRP rural demand methodology estimates demand for non-program trips. This method uses the elderly population, mobility-limited population, and low-income population to determine demand in an area. The methodology uses vehicle-miles per square mile which is then used to calculate demand by market segment.

A maximum level of service for the Flathead County area would be to serve every portion of the county with four round-trips (eight one-way trips) daily Monday through Friday. This equates to approximately 2,400 vehicle-miles of transit service per square-mile per year. In order to calibrate the model to the existing service levels, LSC adjusted the vehicle-miles per square mile to 1,375 per year. The demand estimates for the Flathead County study area, based on the TCRP methodology, are provided in Table VI-7. The annual demand of 91,820 one-way passenger-trips is calibrated close to Eagle Transit’s existing ridership (includes all

Transit Needs Assessment

the various transit services provided by Eagle Transit). This model was used to estimate ridership based on the increased level of service.

**Table VI-7
2007-2011 ACS Estimated Public Transit Demand using the TCRP Method
Flathead County**

Census Tract	Block Group	Estimated Annual Passenger-Trip Demand					Estimated Daily Transit Demand	
		Older Adults	Mobility-Limited	Older Adults+ Mobility-Limited	Low-Income	TOTAL	#	%
1	1	490	110	600	850	1,450	6	1.6%
1	2	500	240	740	1,110	1,850	7	2.0%
1	3	450	130	580	620	1,200	5	1.3%
2.01	1	1,380	70	1,450	440	1,890	8	2.1%
2.01	2	530	120	650	140	790	3	0.9%
2.01	3	550	120	670	410	1,080	4	1.2%
2.02	1	220	100	320	740	1,060	4	1.2%
2.02	2	680	240	920	550	1,470	6	1.6%
2.03	1	1,720	240	1,960	820	2,780	11	3.0%
2.03	2	730	150	880	590	1,470	6	1.6%
2.03	3	190	0	190	510	700	3	0.8%
3	1	570	0	570	160	730	3	0.8%
3	2	430	120	550	400	950	4	1.0%
3	3	560	20	580	170	750	3	0.8%
3	4	300	110	410	540	950	4	1.0%
3	5	390	60	450	590	1,040	4	1.1%
4.01	1	1,000	130	1,130	760	1,890	8	2.1%
4.01	2	1,350	80	1,430	1,320	2,750	11	3.0%
4.01	3	250	0	250	210	460	2	0.5%
4.01	4	290	60	350	420	770	3	0.8%
4.02	1	290	0	290	160	450	2	0.5%
4.02	2	950	30	980	190	1,170	5	1.3%
4.02	3	190	30	220	50	270	1	0.3%
6.01	1	1,190	80	1,270	180	1,450	6	1.6%
6.01	2	690	90	780	110	890	4	1.0%
6.01	3	270	40	310	70	380	2	0.4%
6.02	1	1,040	10	1,050	350	1,400	6	1.5%
6.02	2	1,060	100	1,160	440	1,600	6	1.7%
6.02	3	600	40	640	300	940	4	1.0%
7	1	450	20	470	380	850	3	0.9%
7	2	1,010	20	1,030	580	1,610	6	1.8%
7	3	600	160	760	470	1,230	5	1.3%
7	4	340	120	460	450	910	4	1.0%
7	5	470	110	580	230	810	3	0.9%
8	1	950	160	1,110	540	1,650	7	1.8%
8	2	520	50	570	290	860	3	0.9%
8	3	1,070	90	1,160	540	1,700	7	1.9%
8	4	1,910	50	1,960	430	2,390	10	2.6%
9	1	1,390	30	1,420	1,200	2,620	10	2.9%
9	2	2,040	140	2,180	680	2,860	11	3.1%
9	3	1,070	40	1,110	630	1,740	7	1.9%
9	4	380	230	610	480	1,090	4	1.2%
9	5	830	170	1,000	600	1,600	6	1.7%
10	1	720	180	900	740	1,640	7	1.8%
10	2	700	260	960	970	1,930	8	2.1%
11	1	400	50	450	680	1,130	5	1.2%
11	2	350	90	440	820	1,260	5	1.4%
11	3	350	30	380	420	800	3	0.9%
11	4	90	30	120	300	420	2	0.5%
11	5	190	120	310	380	690	3	0.8%
11	6	390	20	410	410	820	3	0.9%
12	1	1,050	110	1,160	440	1,600	6	1.7%
12	2	1,210	110	1,320	560	1,880	8	2.0%
12	3	760	50	810	300	1,110	4	1.2%
12	4	50	230	280	180	460	2	0.5%
13.01	1	960	30	990	210	1,200	5	1.3%
13.01	2	2,570	30	2,600	390	2,990	12	3.3%
13.01	3	590	120	710	290	1,000	4	1.1%
13.02	1	820	120	940	540	1,480	6	1.6%
13.02	2	1,010	120	1,130	650	1,780	7	1.9%
13.02	3	870	50	920	640	1,560	6	1.7%
14	1	450	0	450	220	670	3	0.7%
14	2	1,190	70	1,260	160	1,420	6	1.5%
14	3	1,370	250	1,620	520	2,140	9	2.3%
17	1	960	220	1,180	590	1,770	7	1.9%
17	2	30	0	30	0	30	0	0.0%
17	3	650	140	790	740	1,530	6	1.7%
17	4	340	70	410	540	950	4	1.0%
17	5	580	120	700	790	1,490	6	1.6%
17	6	890	80	970	600	1,570	6	1.7%
Total		51,430	6,610	58,040	33,780	91,820	367	100%

Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, LSC 2013.

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CHAPTER VII

Onboard Survey Results

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides analysis of data collected through an onboard survey of Eagle Transit patrons. Information is provided about passenger demographics, trip characteristics, and perceptions of the quality of service. These questionnaires were distributed by Eagle Transit drivers. A total of 61 usable responses were received from patrons during this survey effort. Riders on all Eagle Transit services were solicited for input.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

A survey instrument was developed by LSC with input from the Eagle Transit. This instrument is provided in Appendix A. The questionnaire was distributed in English on 8 ½" x 11" paper.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Responses from the usable questionnaires were entered into a survey program for analysis. The responses are summarized in the following sections.

Rider Characteristics

There were a number of questions asked to determine the demographic characteristics of the riders using Eagle Transit.

Age and Gender

Figure VII-1 illustrates the age cohorts. As shown, the largest percentage of respondents (34 percent) were between 60 years and 79 years. This is followed by 15 percent of respondents that each belonged to age groups of 19-25 years, 36-45 years, and 46-59 years. As illustrated in the figure, none of the respondents reported to be under 18 years of age.

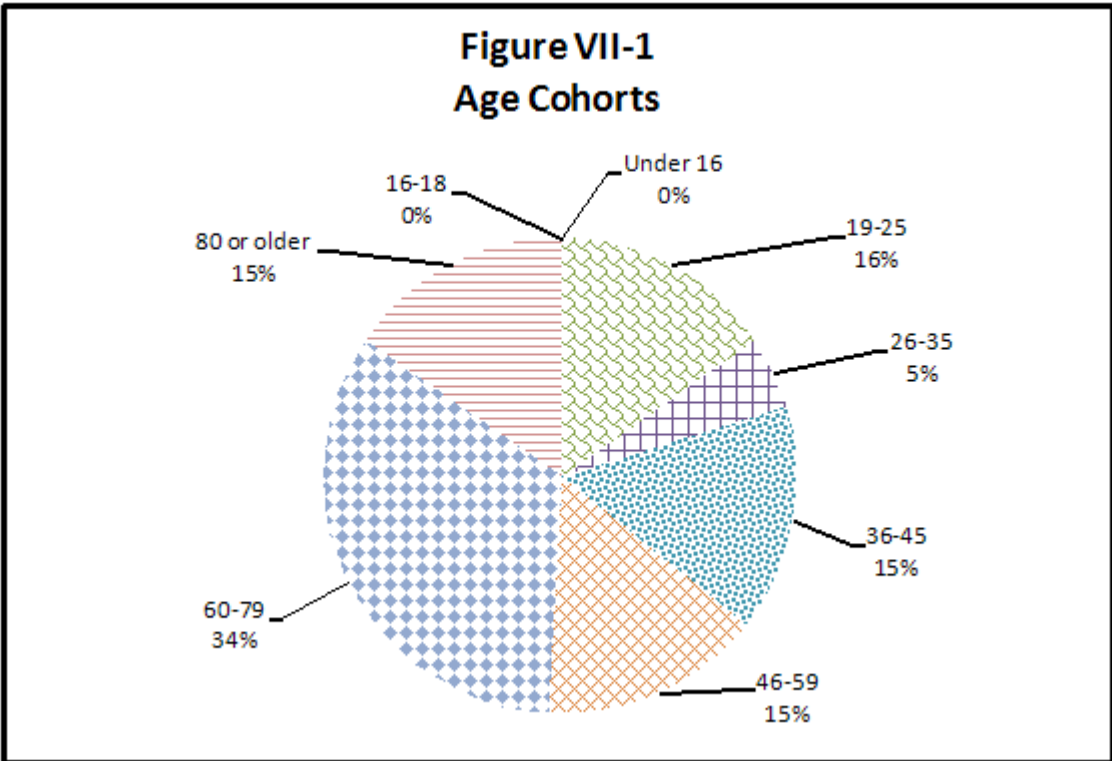
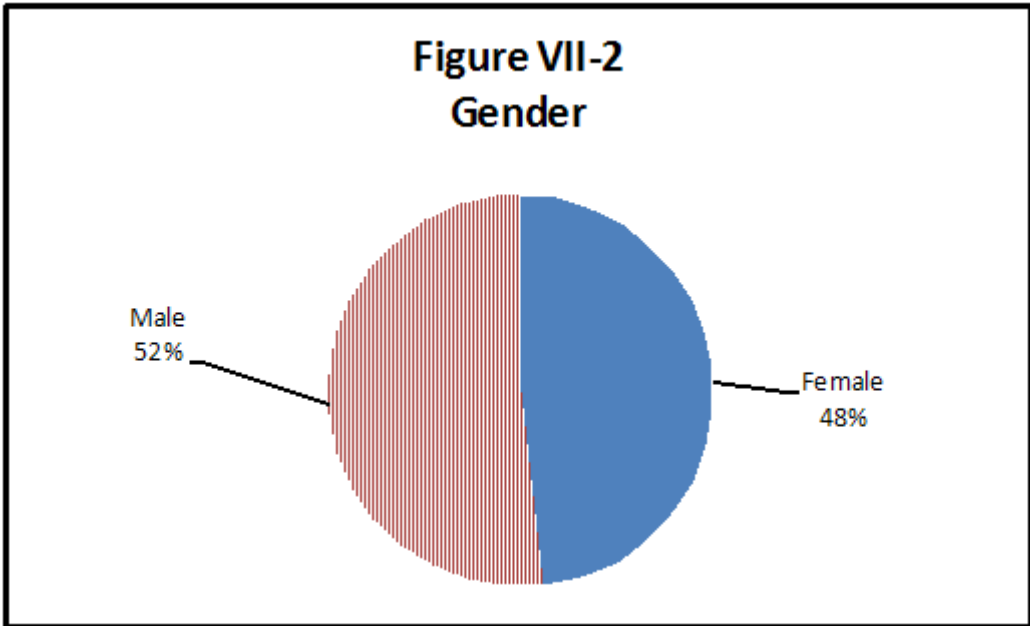
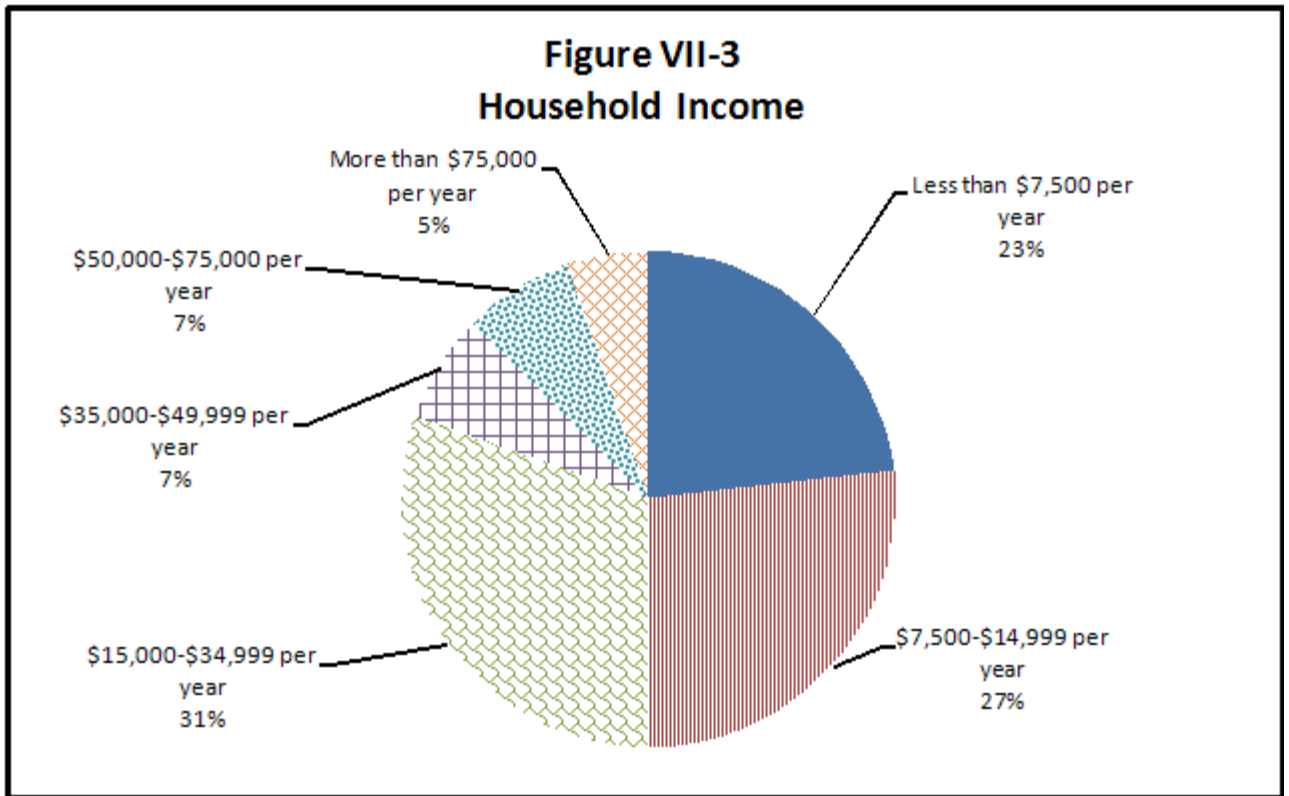


Figure VII-2 illustrates the gender split. Fifty-two percent of the respondents were male and 48 percent were female.



Annual Household Income

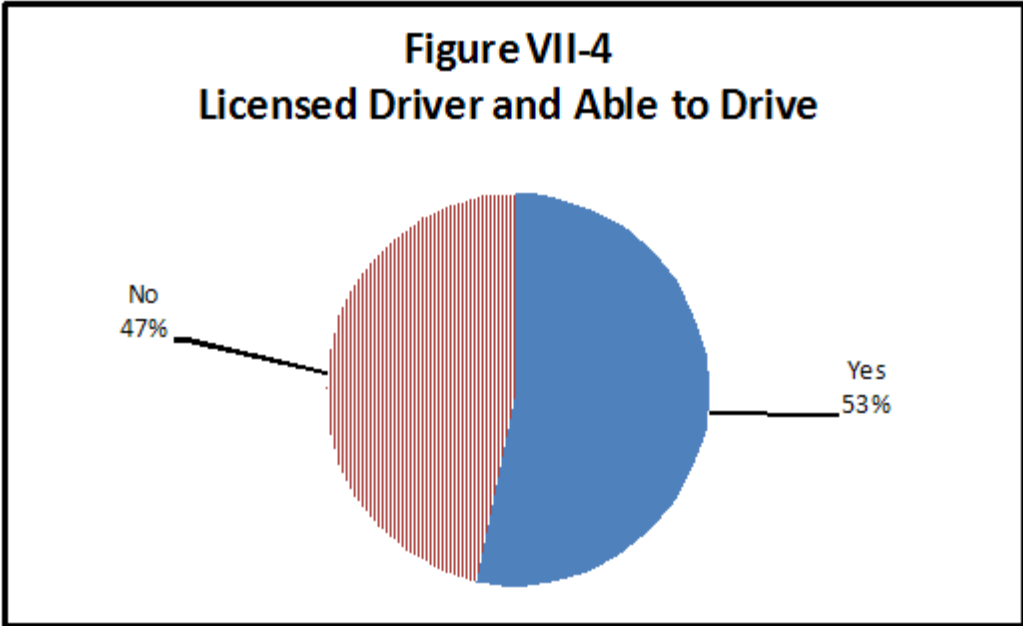
Income plays an important role in determining transit ridership and transit needs in any area across the United States. Figure VII-3 illustrates the annual household income ranges. As shown, the largest income groups are between \$15,000 and \$34,999 with 31 percent of all respondents reporting that household income range. This is followed by 27 percent of patrons who reported having household incomes between \$7,500 and \$14,999 and 23 percent of patrons indicating they have a total annual household income of less than \$7,500 per year. Therefore, 50 percent of respondents indicated that they belonged to households with incomes below \$15,000 per year. Only five percent of patrons reported an annual household income of more than \$50,000 per year.



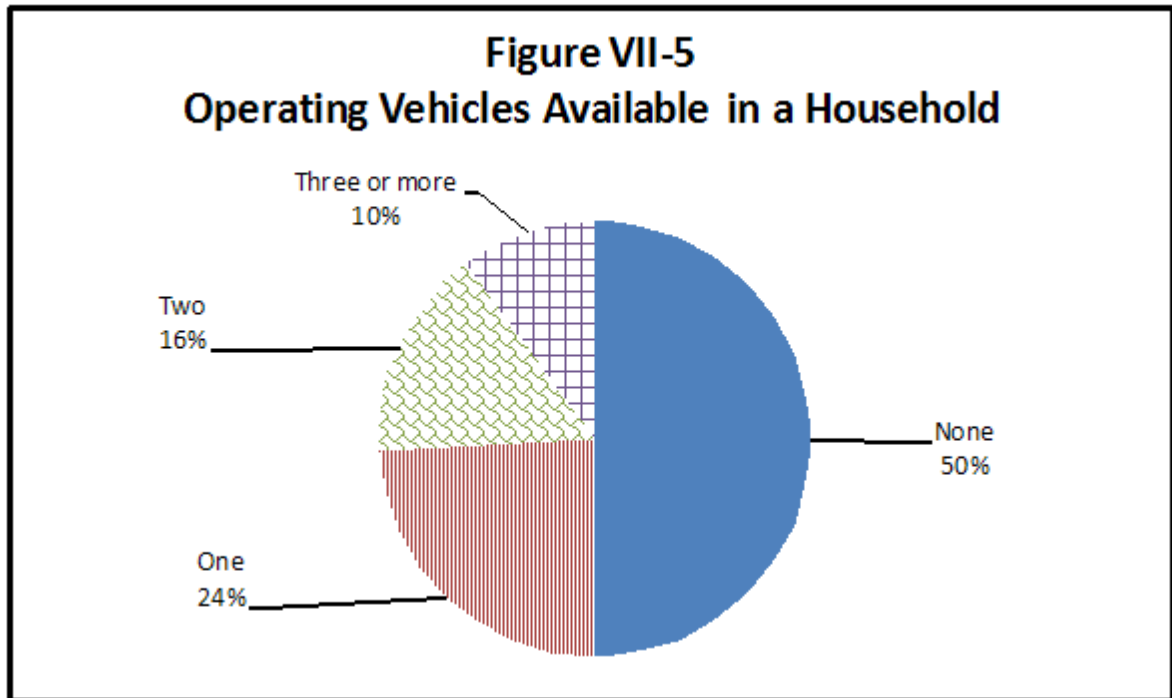
Vehicle Ownership and Licensed Driver

Vehicle ownership for households and the ability to drive play key roles in the demand for public transportation. Lack of a private vehicle or the inability to drive influence people to use public transportation. This comparison provides an indication of the number of *choice riders* compared to those who are transit-dependent.

Respondents were asked if they were a licensed driver and were able to drive. The largest percentage of passengers (53 percent) reported that they were a licensed driver and were able to drive, as shown in Figure VII-4. The remaining 47 percent of passengers indicated that they were not a licensed driver and were not able to drive.



Respondents were asked how many vehicles in operating condition their household has. Figure VII-5 shows the proportion of passengers with operating vehicles available in their household. As illustrated, the largest percentage of passengers (50 percent) live in households with no vehicles. This percentage of patrons is considered transit-dependent. Another 24 percent live in single-vehicle households. Approximately 16 percent live in households with two vehicles. The three-or-more-vehicle household category had the smallest percent with 10 percent of respondents reporting belonging to that category.



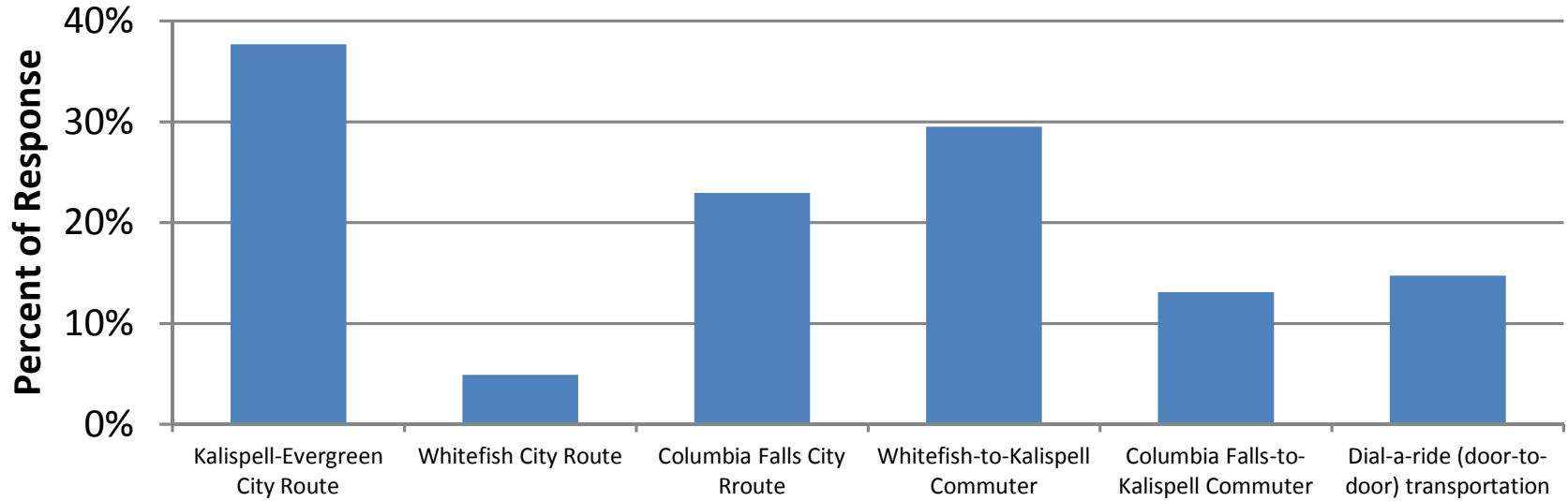
First Learned about Eagle Transit

Passengers were asked to indicate how they first learned about Eagle Transit. The actual comments received on this question are presented in Appendix B. The primary sources of information for a large percentage of passengers are word of mouth from a friend or coworker or through visibility of buses. Other sources of information indicated by patrons include the Internet, the newspaper, and the College. This information is useful to Eagle Transit to understand the extent to which marketing and public outreach programs help attract new riders.

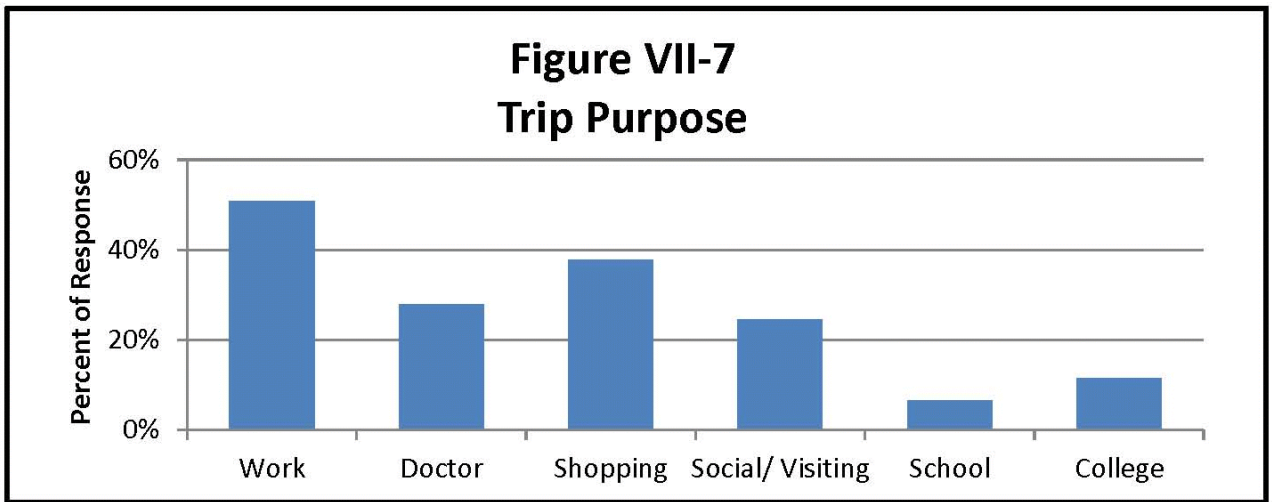
Trip Characteristics and Frequency

Passengers were asked to select the Eagle Transit service that they were currently riding. Some passengers selected multiple services as an indication of the services they use to complete their trip. Figure VII-6 shows the results. As shown, the largest percentage of responses (38 percent) was from patrons that use the Kalispell-Evergreen City route. This is followed by the Whitefish-to-Kalispell commuter route (30 percent responses) and the Columbia Falls City Route (23 percent responses).

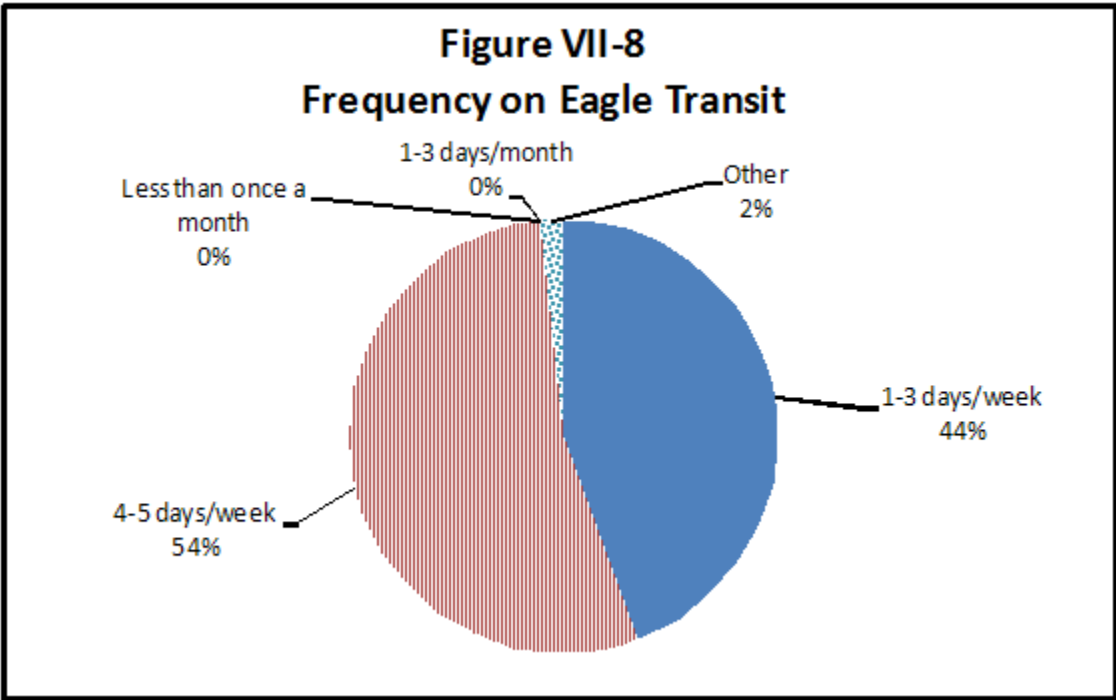
Figure VII-6 Eagle Transit Service



The onboard survey asked passengers to provide information about their trip purposes when using Eagle Transit service. In some cases, passengers gave multiple trip purposes. Figure VII-7 shows the trip purposes for which Eagle Transit patrons use the service. The primary trip purpose was work, indicated by 51 percent of responses. This was followed by respondents who reported using the service for shopping (38 percent), doctor's appointments (28 percent), and social/visiting purpose (25 percent).



The onboard survey asked passengers how often they use the service. Figure VII-8 presents the results. As illustrated, 54 percent of respondents indicated that they use the bus four to five days a week. Another 44 percent of respondents indicated that they use the bus one to three days a week. This indicates that there are more regular riders on Eagle Transit that use the service four to five days a week compared to infrequent riders. Only one respondent indicated that they use the service infrequently, about ten days a month.



Perceptions about Eagle Transit

Passengers were asked to rate the present bus service provided by Eagle Transit on several categories including timeliness, cleanliness, driver courtesy, fares, reliability, and overall service quality. Each category was rated on a numerical scale from one to five, one being the best service provided in that category and five being the worst service provided in that category. The average response was then calculated for each attribute. The responses are shown in Table VII-1. All characteristics of Eagle Transit were scored very highly and positively as shown in Table VII-1. Cleanliness received a slightly lower score compared to the other attributes.

Attribute	2013
Timeliness	1.3
Cleanliness	1.5
Driver Courtesy	1.3
Fares	1.3
Reliability	1.3
Overall Service Quality	1.3

Hours and Days of Operation

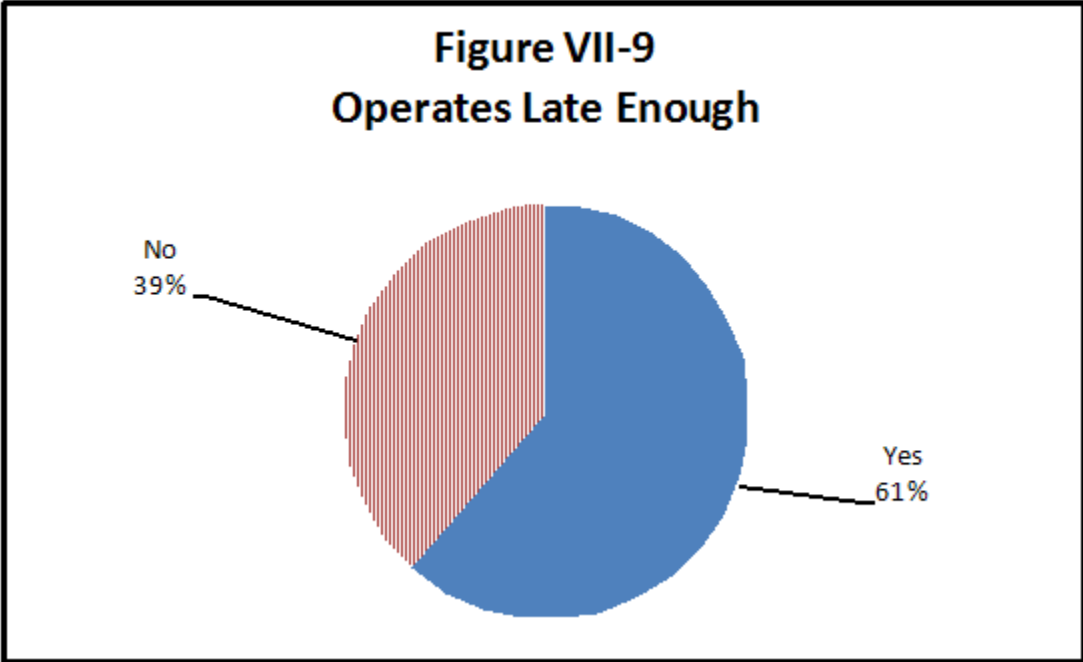
Passengers were asked what they thought should be the days and hours of operation. Both of these questions were open ended. Appendix C presents the actual responses on these questions. In this appendix, the actual responses are separated by the Eagle Transit routes that the respondent was riding. On the Kalispell-Evergreen City Route, the largest percentage of respondents (11 responses) indicated that they would like to have a service from Monday to Saturday. This was followed by the respondents (four responses) who were happy with the current days of service (Monday to Friday). On the Whitefish City Route, the largest percentage of respondents (13 responses) indicated that they would like to have service Monday to Saturday. On the Columbia Falls City Route, the responses were split between the current service provided and a service that operated Monday through Saturday. On the Whitefish-to-Kalispell commuter route, the responses were also split between the current service provided and a service that operated Monday through Saturday. On the Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell commuter route, three respondents indicated that they would like to see the service operate Monday through Saturday. On the dial-a-ride transportation, two respondents indicated that they would like to see the service operate Monday through Saturday, and two respondents indicated that they would like to see the service operate seven days a week.

On the question regarding the desired hours of operation, on the Kalispell-Evergreen City Route, patrons reported that they would like to have the bus service start earlier at 6:00 a.m. On the Whitefish City Route, patrons reported that they would like to have longer hours of operation from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. On the Columbia Falls City Route, most patrons reported that they were happy with the current service provided. On the commuter routes, patrons indicated that they would like to see more frequent trips. On the dial-a-ride service, patrons were happy with the current level of service.

Operate Late Enough

Passengers were asked whether the system operated late enough. Figure VII-9 shows the results. Sixty-one percent of respondents thought that the service operated late enough. The remaining 39 percent of respondents thought that the

service did not operate late enough. Respondents that responded “no” were asked a follow-up question—if the service did not operate late enough, how late should it operate? Appendix D presents the actual responses received on that question separated by the Eagle Transit routes.



Cities and Communities to be Served

Passengers were asked which communities or stop locations should be served. Appendix E presents the actual responses received on that question. Some passengers need more service within the Kalispell area. Most of the comments suggested specific stop locations that respondents would like to see served.

Suggestions to Improve Eagle Transit Service

Passengers were given the opportunity to make suggestions for improving Eagle Transit or provide any other comments they had regarding Eagle Transit service. The actual suggestions are included in Appendix F. In this appendix, the actual responses are separated by the Eagle Transit route that the respondent was riding. Most of the comments are very positive about the service provided. Respondents are very thankful for the service provided to them.



CHAPTER VIII

Service Alternatives

INTRODUCTION

Chapter VIII examines the possible service alternatives for Eagle Transit. These potential service alternatives are based on the origins (pick-up locations) and destinations (drop-off locations) analysis on Eagle Transit’s dial-a-ride service and boarding counts on the Kalispell-Evergreen City bus presented in Chapter V. Input was received from the public meetings and driver meetings (input received from these meetings is presented in Chapter II of this report). Other input was also received from key stakeholder interviews, Eagle Transit staff, Eagle Transit Board members, and stakeholders. Based on input from the various sources mentioned above, various service options for Eagle Transit are explored in this chapter. The information in this chapter and report was presented to Eagle Transit staff and the stakeholder group for review and comment. The changes received were incorporated and the input was then used to develop the preferred service alternative.

TYPES OF TRANSIT SERVICE

The term “transit service” encompasses a wide range of alternatives. A number of other transit service alternatives exist, such as route-deviation service and flex route.

Fixed-Route Service

Fixed-route transit service fits the popular description of a bus system, with transit vehicles operating on specified routes and following set schedules. Specific transit stops are typically identified for the locations where passengers will be picked up and dropped off. Routes are usually laid out in either a radial or grid pattern.



Fixed-Route Service

Service Alternatives

In a radial route structure, all of the routes originate from a common point and extend to outlying areas. The central location serves as a transfer point and is frequently located at a destination with high transit activity. In many communities, this is the central business district or downtown area.

In a grid route structure, all of the routes function along a two-way direction (either north/south or east/west). The routes are normally spaced at equal distances if the roadway structure permits. This structure has no center transfer location. The transfers are conducted at route intersections. This type of service is mainly used in urban areas where the population density is greater and equally distributed across the area.

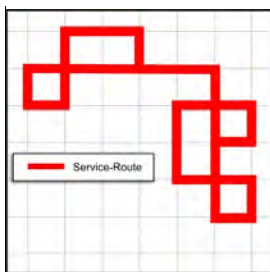
Fixed-route service is particularly convenient for passengers without disabilities. Research has shown that fixed-route passengers are willing to walk up to one-quarter of a mile to reach the bus stop. Therefore, a fixed-route service pattern may be efficiently laid out with routes having one-half-mile spacing. However, individuals with mobility impairments may have difficulty in accessing the fixed-route system.

The advantages of fixed-route service are that it can be provided at a relatively low cost on a per-passenger-trip basis, schedule reliability is high since buses do not deviate from their routes, service does not require advance reservations, and service is easy to understand.

Fixed-route transit service is seldom attractive for people with automobiles in smaller communities and rural areas. A private automobile offers flexibility compared to the rigid schedule of a fixed-route system. The need to walk even a few hundred feet to a bus stop, wait for the vehicle, and the comparatively slow travel time make the option of a private automobile an easy choice. Where there are significant congestion issues or limited parking availability, fixed-route transit service becomes a more attractive alternative. The low cost of transit as compared to owning and operating a private automobile can also be attractive, especially to young working couples who may be able to use the bus rather than own two vehicles.

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that communities with fixed-route transit service also provide complementary paratransit service that operates, at a minimum, in a three-quarter-mile radius of each fixed route. Paratransit service is typically much more costly to operate than fixed-route service because of the characteristics of the service. Fixed routes are established to meet the highest demand travel patterns, while paratransit service must serve many origins and destinations in a dispersed pattern.

Service Routes



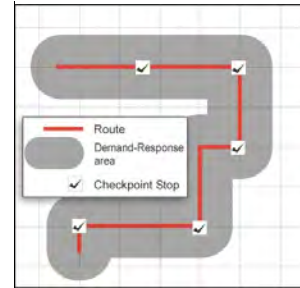
One concept which is being implemented in some communities as an alternative to traditional fixed-route or demand-response service is the service route. A service route is essentially a fixed route specifically designed to serve the elderly and disabled. Typically, a service route winds through residential neighborhoods with high concentrations of elderly and disabled persons in a pattern that passes within a block or two of all houses. It also directly serves important destinations, such as senior centers and commercial areas. The service provides a higher in-vehicle travel time and a longer wait for the bus than would normally be acceptable to the general public. The Bus (operating in Butte, Montana) and MET (in Billings, Montana) provide successful service routes to their local residents.

Flexible-Route Service

Another alternative is flexible-route service such as route deviation, flex routes, or checkpoint service. With flexible routes, vehicle dispatching and scheduling must be done carefully to ensure that vehicles are available to serve the designated stops at the scheduled times. To provide a reasonable amount of flexibility, a lenient definition of on-time performance is typically used. A reasonable policy for flexible-route service is a 10- to 15-minute window at each designated stop. Flexible-route service is used to expand the potential service area and is commonly used in low-density areas. The following sections detail the different types of flexible-route service that are commonly used.

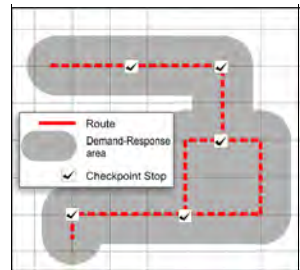
Route Deviation

With route deviation, transit vehicles follow a specific route, but leave the route to serve demand-response origins and destinations. The vehicles are required to return to the designated route within one block of the point of deviation to ensure that all of the intersections along the route are served. The passengers on the bus may have a longer travel time than for fixed-route service and the service reliability is lower. However, the ADA-mandated complementary paratransit service is not necessary since the bus can deviate from the route to pick up disabled passengers. Those customers that need the bus to deviate must make an advance reservation with the transit service up to 24 hours ahead of time. Advance reservations are needed so that the vehicles can be scheduled for pick-up and drop-off along the scheduled run.



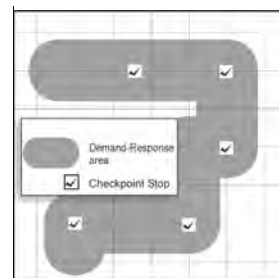
Flex Route

Flex route is very similar to deviation service in that the transit vehicle follows a specific route, but leaves the route to serve demand-response origins and destinations. The difference is that, in the flex-route service, the vehicle must return to the route only before the next transit stop. The distance between transit stops will determine the size of the deviation that the vehicle could make. For flex-route service, the demand-response rider must make advance reservations. The ADA-mandated complementary paratransit service is not necessary since the bus can deviate from the route to pick up disabled passengers.



Checkpoint Service

Under checkpoint service, the vehicles make periodic scheduled stops at centers of activity (such as program sites, shopping areas, or residential communities). The specific routes are not established between checkpoints, thereby allowing the vehicles to provide demand-response service and alleviate the need for the ADA-complementary



Checkpoint Service

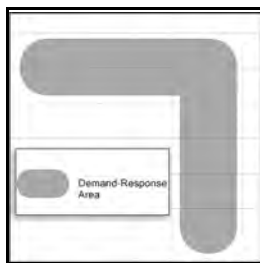
paratransit service. Riders are picked up, typically at a reduced fare, at the checkpoints and are taken either to another checkpoint or to a demand-response specific destination. Service between the checkpoints does not require advance reservations. However, service from any other location on a demand-response basis requires advance reservations so that the vehicles can be scheduled for pick-up and drop-off. Checkpoint service offers an advantage over route deviation because there is no specified route for the vehicles to use. Checkpoint service requires only that the vehicle arrive at the next checkpoint within the designated time window. Eagle Transit currently operates a checkpoint service in Whitefish and Columbia Falls.

Demand-Response Service

Demand-response service, frequently termed dial-a-ride, is characterized as door-to-door transit service scheduled by a dispatcher. With demand-response service, advance reservations are typically required, although some immediate requests may be filled if time permits and if the service is particularly needed. Eagle Transit currently operates the countywide dial-a-ride service that is available for ADA-eligible passengers including seniors (60 years and older) and people with disabilities.



Demand-Response Service in Small Communities



Demand-Response Service

The concept of demand-response service was originally developed in the early 1970s as an alternate form of public transportation for the general public. The original efforts proved to be more expensive than envisioned and did not attract the ridership that was forecast. As a result, demand-response service has been used in the United States almost exclusively for elderly and disabled passengers. However, many communities are beginning to recognize the advantages of demand-response service for low-density areas with low levels of transit demand. Improved technology has led to improvements in dispatching and scheduling, which has increased the efficiency of demand-response service and allows for real-time dispatching.

Regional and Commuter Service

With regional and commuter service, the route is primarily designed to link different communities for employment purposes. These communities may be within the same geographic area. In urban areas, this type of service is commonly known as express or limited express service. In rural areas, the regional and commuter service links communities across the study area with each other and with communities outside the study area.

Vanpool Service

Vanpool service operates more of a point-to-point function. Vanpool service gathers riders within a community and then travels directly to a major employment center (such as Kalispell). Normally, a transit agency owns and maintains the vehicles. Individuals using the vanpool share the travel cost and may even share the driving responsibilities. The schedule and route of the vanpool service depends upon the individuals participating in the vanpool. Vanpool service is limited to individuals within the program and has limited service for medical or shopping trips. Vanpool service is primarily for employment trips for non-disabled individuals since there are liability issues with disabled individuals riding on vanpool service.

SERVICE ALTERNATIVES

Based on the information derived from the trip origins and destinations analyses of existing Eagle Transit patrons, the onboard survey, public input, and input from stakeholders, the following service options are explored. Table VIII-1 shows a comparison of the various service alternatives. These service alternatives are not autonomous and may be altered or combined to better fit the needs of local residents. Providing various levels of service (local, regional, etc.) is often the most appropriate mix of service for residents. The following discussion evaluates both the potential for new services as well as the modification of existing services.

Maintain Status Quo

A good starting point for the evaluation of transit service alternatives is the consideration of the “status quo.” The status quo option involves no change in Eagle

Transit services. This option is a viable alternative which may be appropriate when the current service meets the community's needs and satisfies the goals and objectives for public transportation services.

The status quo includes the following:

- **Kalispell-Evergreen City Route** which is provided Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- **Whitefish City Bus Service** that operates as a checkpoint service with service provided at specific bus stops at certain times. This service is provided Monday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- **Columbia Falls City Service** also operates as a checkpoint service with the bus stopping at certain locations at certain times. This service is provided Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- **Whitefish Express** operates from Whitefish to Kalispell on the second Wednesday of every month.
- **Columbia Falls Express** operates from Columbia Falls to Kalispell on the first Wednesday of every month.
- Trips to **Canyon Run** are provided on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. This route has two trips on the scheduled weekdays leaving from Columbia Falls Park-and-Ride at 8:20 a.m. and 2:25 p.m.
- **Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter** service is provided Monday through Friday and operates from Kalispell and Whitefish and back. There are two round-trips in the morning. A third morning trip provides service in Kalispell and then heads to Whitefish to serve as the Whitefish City Bus Service. The first trip in the evening provides service from Whitefish to Kalispell and there are two round-trips offered in the evening.
- **Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter** service is provided Monday through Friday and operates from Kalispell and Columbia Falls and back. There are two trips offered in the morning and one trip offered in the evening.
- **Countywide Dial-a-Ride "Door-to-Door" Service** is provided Monday through Friday.
- **SPARKS Service** is an after-school program for children through The Summit. This service operates on SPARKS program days from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. with various school pick-up locations.

The largest single factor expected to impact Flathead County over the next 10-year planning period is the aging of the population which will result in an increase in the demand for transit service. Overall ridership has been consistently increasing over the last few years. The capacity of the existing service could accommodate this increase in ridership.

Service Alternatives

One of the disadvantages in maintaining the existing City Bus service is that City Bus patrons have longer travel times because of its route structure which tends to discourage patrons.

Table VIII-1 Transit Service Alternatives for Flathead County														
Alternative	Hours	Headways	Total Daily			Total Annual					Performance Measures			
			# of Veh.	Rev. Hrs.	Rev. Miles	Rev. Hrs.	Rev. Miles	Days	Annual Estimated Ridership	Total Operating Cost	Pass/Hr.	Cost/Hr.	Cost/Pas.	
Status Quo														
Kalispell-Evergreen City Route	M-F, 7:00a to 7:00p	30-min, 45-mins, and 85-mins	2	14	180	3,545	45,077	250	28,764	\$184,520	8.1	\$52.05	\$6.41	
Whitefish City Bus Service	M-F, 11:00a to 2:00p	60-minutes	0.5	5	35	1,156	8,864	250	7,133	\$56,120	6.2	\$48.56	\$7.87	
	M-F, 8:00a to 2:00p;													
Columbia Falls City Service and the Canyon Runs	M, W and F, 2 trips	varies	0.5	7	82	1,820	20,465	250	5,937	\$92,862	3.3	\$51.03	\$15.64	
Whitefish Express	2nd Wednesday of the month	n/a	0.5	2	20	81	1,058	52	276	\$4,214	3.4	\$52.34	\$15.27	
Columbia Falls Express	1st Wednesday of the month	n/a	0.5	1	24	75	1,225	52	144	\$4,070	1.9	\$54.63	\$28.26	
Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter	M-F, 5 Trips a Day	n/a	0.5	8	174	1,989	43,490	250	8,466	\$116,135	4.3	\$58.38	\$13.72	
Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter	M-F, 3 Trips a Day	n/a	0.5	6	134	1,537	33,608	250	4,684	\$89,733	3.0	\$58.38	\$19.16	
Countywide Dial-a-Ride	M-F, 7:00a to 7:00p	varies	5	28	322	8,331	97,316	302	27,516	\$427,641	3.3	\$51.33	\$15.54	
SPARKS Service	M-F, 3:00p to 4:00p	n/a	0	5	66	973	11,933	181	6,845	\$50,354	7.0	\$51.73	\$7.36	
Other	varies	n/a	0	3	44	233	3,373	77	2,023	\$12,392	8.7	\$53.19	\$6.13	
Total Status Quo			10			19,739	266,409		91,788	\$1,038,040	4.7	\$52.59	\$11.31	
Modified Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes														
Option 1- Two Routes: North-South Route (1 bus)	M-F, 7:00a to 7:00p	1 hour	1	12	163	3,000	40,800	250	6,345	\$157,982	2.1	\$52.66	\$24.90	
Option 1- Two Routes: East-West Route (1 bus)	M-F, 7:00a to 7:00p	1 hour	1	12	139	3,000	34,800	250	25,000	\$153,831	8.3	\$51.28	\$6.15	
Total Option 1: One bus on each of the two routes			2	24	302	6,000	75,600	250	31,345	\$311,813	5.2	\$51.97	\$9.95	
Option 2- Two Routes: North-South Route (2 buses)	M-F, 7:00a to 7:00p	30 minutes	2	24	653	6,000	163,200	250	13,536	\$372,424	2.3	\$62.07	\$27.51	
Option 2- Two Routes: East-West Route (2 buses)	M-F, 7:00a to 7:00p	30 minutes	2	24	557	6,000	139,200	250	24,028	\$355,818	4.0	\$59.30	\$14.81	
Total Option 2: Two buses on the two routes			4	48	1,210	12,000	302,400	250	37,564	\$728,242	3.1	\$60.69	\$19.39	
Option 3: Existing city route with two buses running in opposite directions	M-F, 7:00a to 7:00p	75-minutes	2	24	363	6,000	90,725	250	30,000	\$322,278	5.0	\$53.71	\$10.74	
Increased Service Hours on the Whitefish City Bus Service														
Option 1: 3 additional trips a day	M-F, 2 trips in the morning; 1 trip in the evening	60-minutes	1	3	13	750	3,150	250	4,500	\$34,618	6.0	\$46.16	\$7.69	
Increased Service Hours on the Columbia Falls City Service														
Option 1: 1 additional hour of service	Service provided until 3:00 pm	varies	1	1	7	250	1,650	250	750	\$11,954	3.0	\$47.82	\$15.94	
Increased Service Hours on the Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter Route														
Option 1: 1 Additional trip a day and changes in existing trip times	M-F, 1 RT in the afternoon; changes in existing trip times	varies	1	1.5	31	375	7,650	250	2,500	\$21,512	6.7	\$57.37	\$8.60	
Increased Service Hours on the Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter Route														
Option 1: 1 Additional trip a day	M-F, 1 RT in the afternoon	varies	1	1.75	34	438	8,550	250	1,250	\$24,838	2.9	\$56.77	\$19.87	
Whitefish-to-Columbia Falls Intercity Routes (new service)														
Option 1: 3 Trips a Day	M-F, 1 RT in the morning; 1 RT in the afternoon; 1 RT in the evening	varies	1	2	60	495	15,000	250	1,120	\$31,788	2.3	\$64.22	\$28.39	
Lakeside Commuter Route (new service)														
Option 1: 4 Trips a Day	M-F, 2 RT in the morning; 2 RT in the evening	varies	1	4	118	1,000	29,400	250	3,169	\$63,593	3.2	\$63.59	\$20.07	
Extended Service														
Option 1: An earlier hour of service on the City Bus (weekday)	M-F, 6:00a to 7:00 a	same as status Quo	1	1	13	250	3,175	250	2,055	\$13,010	8.2	\$52.04	\$6.33	
Option 1: An earlier hour of service on the dial-a-ride (weekday)	M-F, 6:00a to 7:00 a	varies	1	1	12	250	3,000	250	750	\$12,888	3.0	\$51.55	\$17.18	
Total Option 1- Extended Service: City Bus and Dial-a-Ride			2	2	25	500	6,175	250	2,805	\$25,898	5.6	\$51.80	\$9.23	
Saturday Service														
Option 1-Saturday Service: City Bus	Sat, 10:00 a to 5:00 p	75-minutes	1	12	152	624	7,925	52	2,991	\$32,472	4.8	\$52.04	\$10.85	
Option 1-Saturday Service: Dial-a-ride	Sat, 10:00 a to 5:00 p	varies	1	12	144	624	7,488	52	1,872	\$32,169	3.0	\$51.55	\$17.18	
Total Option 1- Saturday Service: City Bus and Dial-a-Ride			2	24	296	1,248	15,413	52	4,863	\$64,641	3.9	\$51.80	\$13.29	
Option 2-Saturday Service: dial-a-ride	Sat, 10:00 a to 5:00 p	varies	1	12	144	624	7,488	52	2,496	\$32,169	4.0	\$51.55	\$12.89	

Source: LSC, 2013

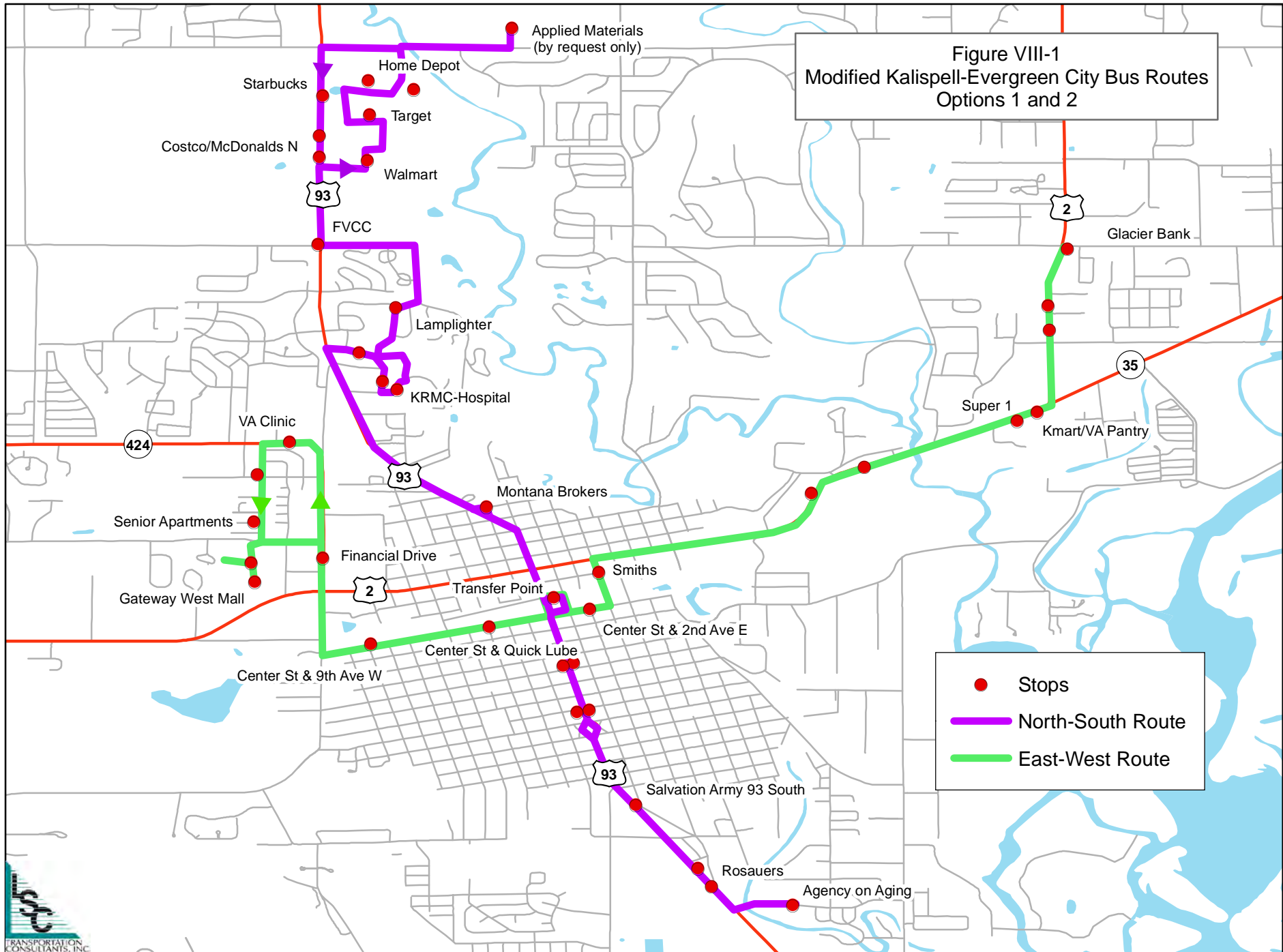
Modified Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes

Figure VIII-1 illustrates the modified Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus routes. As illustrated in the figure, there would be two routes—the North-South Route and the East-West Route. The North-South Route would start south at the Agency on Aging, head north along US Highway 93 (South Main Street) serving the Salvation Army and other stops along the way, then serve the proposed transfer point and head north along US Highway 93 to serve the KRMC Hospital, FVCC, Walmart, and Target, go back south to serve the FVCC and the KRMC-Hospital, and then head back to the transfer point.

Trips to Applied Materials will be served on a request basis from Home Depot. This will most likely be a trip in the morning to get employees to the business and a trip in the evening to get employees home. The limited number of trips to/from this business does not justify a regular fixed-route stop and hence will be served on a request basis only.

The East-West Route would start in Evergreen at the Glacier Bank, head south along US Highway 2 to serve Kmart/VA Pantry on US Highway 2 (East Idaho Street), take a left on 3rd Avenue EN to serve Smith's, turn right on East Center Street to serve the transfer point, and then head west to serve the VA Clinic, the Senior Apartments, and the Gateway West Mall before heading back to the transfer point. Breaking the single City Bus route into two different routes allows patrons to transfer between the two routes to get to their destination more quickly.

Figure VIII-1
Modified Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes
Options 1 and 2



- Stops
- North-South Route
- East-West Route



Service Alternatives

There are three options for operating the Kalispell-Evergreen City routes as described below:

Option 1 - Two Routes (One Bus on Each Route)

As shown in Figure VIII-1, Option 1 has two routes with one bus operating on each route. The North-South Route will operate on a 60-minute headway. With 12 round-trips per day, this North-South Route is estimated to cost \$157,982 per year. The East-West Route will also operate on a 60-minute headway. With 12 round-trips per day, this East-West Route is estimated to cost \$153,831 per year. With both the City Bus routes, this service option would cost \$311,813 per year.

The proposed Kalispell-Evergreen City routes (Option 1) would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 2 (existing vehicles)
- Annual operating cost: \$311,813
- Annual ridership: 31,345 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$9.95
- Passengers per hour: 5.2

Option 2 - Two Routes (Two Buses Operating on Each Route)

As shown in Figure VIII-1, Option 2 also has two routes. In this option, there are two buses operating on each route. The North-South Route will operate on a 30-minute headway. With 48 round-trips per day, this North-South Route is estimated to cost \$372,424 per year. The East-West Route will also have a 30-minute headway. With 48 round-trips per day, this East-West Route is estimated to cost \$355,818 per year. With the two buses on the two proposed City Bus routes, this service option would cost \$728,242 per year.

The modified Kalispell-Evergreen City routes (Option 2) would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 4 vehicles - (2 existing and 2 new vehicles)
- Annual operating cost: \$728,242
- Annual ridership: 37,564 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$19.39
- Passengers per hour: 3.1

Option 3 - Existing City Route with Two Buses Running in Opposite Directions

This option retains the existing route structure and has two buses operating in opposite directions. This option helps patrons choose which bus they want to go depending on the direction of their destination. This route will operate on a 75-minute headway. With 19 round-trips per day, both these routes are estimated to cost \$322,278 per year.

One disadvantage to this option is that passengers could be confused about the two buses running in opposite directions and may not be sure which bus to catch. The proposed Kalispell-Evergreen City route (Option 3) would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 2 (existing vehicles)
- Annual operating cost: \$322,278
- Annual ridership: 30,000 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$10.74
- Passengers per hour: 5.0

Increased Service Hours on the Whitefish City Bus Service

Based upon public comment, it appears that expanded weekday service on the Whitefish City Bus may be warranted. Currently, the Whitefish City Bus service is provided Monday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. However, many of the seniors living in the area stated that increased hours of service are needed and desired. Many of the activities at the Whitefish Senior Center starts at 10:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. The increased services would include two additional trips in the morning and one additional trip in the evening. The increased service hours would allow seniors to get additional rides to/from the senior center at 9:57 a.m., 10:57 a.m., and the last trip from the senior center

Service Alternatives

would be 2:57 p.m. With three round-trips per day, the increased service on the Whitefish City Bus service is estimated to cost \$34,618 per year.

The increased service on the Whitefish City Bus Service would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1 (existing vehicle)
- Annual operating cost: \$34,618
- Annual additional ridership: 4,500 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$7.69
- Passengers per hour: 6.0

Increased Service Hours on the Columbia Falls City Bus Service

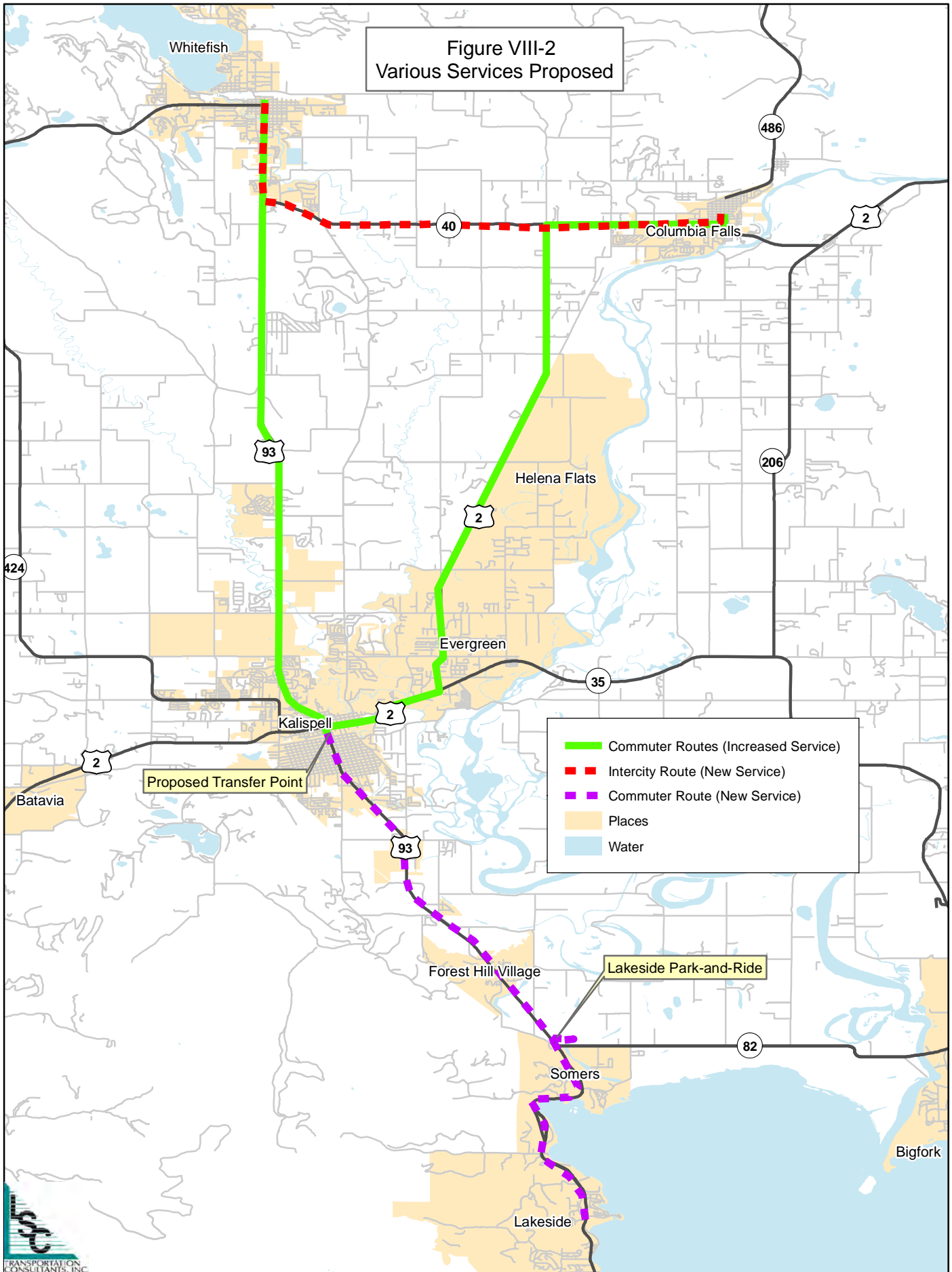
Based upon public comment, it appears that expanded weekday service on the Columbia Falls City Bus may also be warranted. Currently, the Columbia Falls City Bus service is provided Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. However, many of the seniors living in the area stated that longer hours of service until 3:00 p.m. are needed and desired. The increased service hours would include one additional trip in the afternoon. The current schedule of the Columbia Falls City Bus does not have a consistent schedule. This is confusing to many of the patrons and it serves the senior center only twice a day. In this option, we recommend a consistent schedule at all the stop locations, especially to the Columbia Falls Senior Center. Eagle Transit may need to eliminate some of the stops based on low ridership to give enough time for deviations from the checkpoint stops and to create a consistent schedule which serves the same stops throughout the day. The increased service hours and the consistent schedule would allow seniors to get additional rides to/from the senior center at around 8:45 a.m., 9:45 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 1:45 p.m., and the last trip from the senior center would be 2:45 p.m. With an additional hour of service, the increased service on the Columbia Falls City Bus Service is estimated to cost \$11,954 per year.

The increased service hours on the Columbia Falls City Bus service would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1 (existing vehicle)
- Annual operating cost: \$11,954
- Annual additional ridership: 750 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$15.94
- Passengers per hour: 3.0

Figure VIII-2 illustrates the various services proposed—the increased service hours on the Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter route, increased service hours on the Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter route, the proposed intercity route between Whitefish and Columbia Falls, and the proposed Lakeside-to-Kalispell Commuter route.

Figure VIII-2
Various Services Proposed



Increased Service Hours on the Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter Route

Based upon public comments and input from the driver, there is a need for mid-day trips from Whitefish to Kalispell. The service offered on the Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter route should be broadened to an intercity route with midday trips. This service could then be used by commuters, for medical trips, and trips for other purposes. This proposed service would include a midday trip and would change some of the existing trip times. The Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter/intercity route would then have two morning trips, two midday trips, and two evening trips. With an additional trip on this commuter/intercity route, the increased service on this route is estimated to cost \$21,512 per year.

The increased service hours on the Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter route would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1 (existing vehicle)
- Annual operating cost: \$21,512
- Annual additional ridership: 2,500 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$8.60
- Passengers per hour: 6.7

Increased Service Hours on the Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter Route

Based upon public comments, there is also a need for midday trips from Columbia Falls to Kalispell. Similar to the Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter route, the service offered on the Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter route should be broadened to an intercity route with midday trips. This service could then be used by commuters, for medical trips, and trips for other purposes. A stop could be added at the airport, primarily to serve airport employees. This proposed service would include a midday trip. The Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter/intercity route would then have two morning trips, one midday trip, and one evening trip. With an additional trip on this commuter/intercity route, the increased service on this route is estimated to cost \$24,838 per year.

Service Alternatives

The increased service hours on the Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter route would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1 (existing vehicle)
- Annual operating cost: \$24,838
- Annual additional ridership: 1,250 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$19.87
- Passengers per hour: 2.9

Whitefish-to-Columbia Falls Intercity Routes (*New Service*)

Based upon public comments, there is also need for a new service to provide trips between Whitefish and Columbia Falls. For planning purposes, the bus stop identified in Whitefish for this intercity route is the Whitefish Community Library and the stop identified in Columbia Falls is Smith's Food and Drug.

This proposed intercity service would be offered Monday through Friday with one trip in the morning, one midday trip, and one evening trip. With three round-trips, this intercity route is estimated to cost \$31,788 per year.

The proposed Whitefish-to-Columbia Falls intercity route would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1 (new vehicle)
- Annual operating cost: \$31,788
- Annual ridership: 1,120 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$28.39
- Passengers per hour: 2.3

Lakeside Commuter Route (*New Service*)

Based upon public comments, there is also a need for a new commuter service to provide trips from Lakeside to Kalispell. A stop would be included at the park-and-ride lot near the intersection of US Highway 93 and State Highway 82. This proposed intercity service would be offered Monday through Friday with two trips in the morning and two trips in the evening. With four round-trips, this commuter route is estimated to cost \$35,568 per year.

The proposed Lakeside commuter route would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1 (new vehicle)
- Annual operating cost: \$63,593
- Annual ridership: 3,169 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$20.07
- Passengers per hour: 3.2

Extended Service

Option 1 - An Earlier Hour of Service on the City Bus and Dial-a-Ride

In this option, the Kalispell-Evergreen City bus would start an hour earlier at 6:00 a.m.—consistent with the current commuter routes. This service option would be provided Monday through Friday. An earlier hour of service on the City Bus may encourage more people to use the transit service to get to work. The estimated cost for an earlier hour of service on the City Bus is \$13,010 per year.

With the introduction of an earlier hour of service on the City Bus (Monday through Friday), this option would also need an earlier hour of service on the dial-a-ride service consistent with the City Bus hours of service. The cost of providing the dial-a-ride service for one hour on weekdays would be \$12,888.

An earlier hour of service on the City Bus route and dial-a-ride would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 2 (existing vehicles)
- Annual operating cost: \$25,898
- Annual ridership: 2,805 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$9.23
- Passengers per hour: 5.6

Saturday Service

Option 1 - Saturday Service: City Bus and Dial-a-Ride

In this option, Eagle Transit would extend the Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus route to Saturdays. This service would operate from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The estimated increase in cost to add the City Bus route to Saturdays is about \$32,472 per year.

With the introduction of Saturday service, this option would also need a dial-a-ride service that would be required during the hours of operation of the Saturday City Bus route service. The cost of providing the dial-a-ride service during those hours would be \$32,169.

The proposed Saturday service, which includes both the City Bus and the dial-a-ride service, would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 2 (existing vehicles)
- Annual operating cost: \$64,641
- Annual ridership: 4,863 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$13.29
- Passengers per hour: 3.9

Option 2 - Saturday Service: Demand-Response

In this option, Eagle Transit would extend demand-response service only to the Kalispell city limits. This demand-response service would operate from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and would be open to the general public. The estimated cost to add this service is about \$32,169 per year. The proposed demand-response service on Saturdays would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1 (existing vehicle)
- Annual operating cost: \$32,169
- Annual ridership: 2,496 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$12.89
- Passengers per hour: 4.0



Institutional Alternatives

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an evaluation of institutional alternatives for transit in Flathead County. The identification of a cost-effective and geographically appropriate institutional form for the provision of transit is a key element in the improvement of public transportation services. This Plan approaches institutional alternatives from a practical standpoint rather than from a theoretical one. As the population in the region grows and changes, so will the demands upon the existing agencies.

An important objective of this study is to present recommendations for an institutional framework for Eagle Transit which are acceptable to the parties involved and which can be realistically implemented. With this goal in mind, the following discussion presents an analysis of the most appropriate alternatives and a basis for making a decision.

Eagle Transit is operated under Flathead County through the Agency on Aging. This current organizational structure has worked well in the past.

First, while the Agency on Aging is the FTA grant recipient on behalf of the county, Eagle Transit is not a separate county agency. Eagle Transit continues to report to the Agency on Aging Board of Directors as well as County Commissioners.

Criteria for the Institutional Structures

The history of transit organizations serving scattered urban areas and areas with low population densities indicated the following criteria should guide the selection of the institution for managing and improving operating transportation services in Flathead County. It should be an entity:

- Whose structure is legitimate and whose policy-making actions are authorized and defensible;

Institutional Alternatives

- Which can limit the exposure of the participants to suits and claims of liability;
- Which can be responsive to the complete policy-making and management needs of the transit organization;
- Which has political and financial support and can endure more than one year at a time; and
- Which can annually perform proactive planning to improve the system, and effectively identify and implement improvements regularly and easily.

TRANSIT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Option 1: Department of County Government

A department of county government, which reflects the current system, is one alternative to consider and has worked well in the past. The current transit system with Flathead County can contract with human service agencies or private entities to provide specified transportation services. Advantages to this type of organizational structure are that the County has an established name for providing transportation for the elderly and the disabled populations and the County system has the broadest possible tax base. Disadvantages of a county-operated system are that the elected officials have final decisions regarding management, operation, and financing of transportation services, which may or may not be high priority and may provide little long-term stability in the funding for transit services. In the past, as Eagle Transit has received more funding from local entities, the County has decreased the amount allocated to Eagle Transit based upon the policy of a balanced-budget. This does not make seeking additional non-county sources of local funding that desirable for Eagle Transit. If additional funding becomes available, this should be set aside for the following fiscal year's match for service. However, it is never known what the additional funds may be as these are not budgeted annually.

Option 2: Urban Transportation Districts

Urban Transportation Districts are complex organizations. The organizational structure is determined in part by statute and in part by the intergovernmental agreement creating the district. There is considerable flexibility to design an organization that has the support of the member governments and the public. One significant advantage of the district is the capability to extend across city and

county boundaries and bring them together in funding and operating a transit system. The UTD must be approved by the local residents, which requires a significant grassroots effort to rally support for public transportation. Section 7-14-201 of the Montana Code allows counties the authority to establish UTDs, provided that residents within the proposed district vote in favor of the measure. Creating a UTD is initiated by a petition signed by no less than 20 percent of the registered electors who reside within the proposed district. The localities then conduct a public hearing and establish the makeup of the transportation board's membership (including whether it will be an elected or an appointed body). The commissioners shall annually fix and levy a mill levy tax upon all property within the transportation district sufficient to operate the district, taking into account the amount requested by the board. Examples of urban transportation districts in Montana are the Great Falls Transit District, the Dawson County Urban Transportation District, and the Missoula (Mountain Line) Urban Transportation District.

Option 3: Intergovernmental Transit Agency

An Intergovernmental Transit Agency is the last alternative presented for Flathead County. The agency would be formed by Flathead County, the City of Kalispell, the Town of Whitefish, and the Town of Columbia Falls. The governing board would have equal representation from each entity. This type of agency has been successfully implemented in other locations and would build upon the service already established by Flathead County. If provided with a dedicated local funding source, this structure provides stability and helps ensure the continuation of transit service within the community. This type of organization would require cooperation from each entity and approval by voters to establish a dedicated local funding source to support the agency.

Summary

Table IX-1 ranks each institutional alternative according to four factors: legal capability, revenue generation capacity, administrative impacts, and political acceptability. Legal capability refers to the existence of statutory authority. Revenue generation capacity refers to the capability of funding sources to generate adequate funding levels relative to projected subsidy requirements. Administrative impacts refer to the level of effort involved in implementing a funding mechanism

and the ability to provide coordinated service throughout Flathead County. Political acceptability refers to the likelihood of a given funding mechanism to be accepted by the public and the local, elected officials.

Table IX-1 Institutional Alternatives Comparison Matrix				
Institutional Alternative	Legal Capability	Revenue Generation Capacity	Admin. Impacts	Political Acceptability
County Department	■	■	■	◐
Urban Transportation District	■	■	◐	◐
Intergovernmental Agency	■	◐	◐	◐
Legend: ■ = strong/acceptable ◐ = moderate/satisfactory □ = weak/unacceptable				
<i>Source: LSC, 2013.</i>				

As the table shows, all of the alternatives are permitted legally, with each alternative having the same authority to engage in certain activities related to revenue generation. The second column, Revenue Generation, shows that all of the alternatives have moderate or strong abilities to generate funding. The third column in the table indicates there would be some administrative impacts to providing transit under a new framework. The County Department is rated strongly because it is the existing system for Eagle Transit. All the alternatives are rated as having moderate political acceptability. Based on the institutional alternative comparison presented in Table IX-1, the Urban Transportation District would be recommended as it has political advantages such as coordinating multiple agencies into a single one, and although there are disadvantages related to the strong powers.



Potential Funding Sources

Chapter X provides an evaluation of potential funding options for transit services within the Flathead County area. One of the principal challenges facing any transit service is developing a funding system that supports capital investment (such as buses, bus stops, shelters, etc.) and provides a stable source of revenue for operations and maintenance. An important objective of this study is to present recommendations for a financing plan for public transit that are acceptable to the parties involved and that can be realistically implemented. With this goal in mind, the following discussion presents an analysis of the most appropriate funding sources and a basis for making a decision.

FUNDING SOURCES

Successful transit systems are strategic about funding and attempt to develop funding bases that enable them to operate reliably and efficiently within a set of clear goals and objectives according to both short-range and long-range plans. Potential strategies for funding the transit services within the Flathead County area are described below.

Capital Funding

The existing and future transit services will require capital funding for bus fleet procurement, bus stops, dispatching software, computers, and other administration capital. The following strategies for funding the capital development should be considered:



- Federal funding (along with any state matching funds) should be applied for, both within the existing Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Sections 5310 and 5311 programs and through the pursuit of discretionary grants from the FTA channels and direct Congressional earmarked funding. Small transit systems often underachieve their potential for federal grant assistance because they assume that they cannot compete in this arena. Close coordination with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) will

Potential Funding Sources

help Eagle Transit remain aware of funding opportunities and compete for funding.

- In general, the best use of federal discretionary grant funding is for capital needs since this is a highly speculative source of money that requires extensive political effort at a level that is feasible only as a one-time or occasional undertaking.
- Planning for capital facilities (such as vehicles and transit and maintenance facilities) examines the long-range transit system's development needs. Many transit systems outgrow their facilities quickly and face costly relocation and expansion needs because of inadequate space or other constraints. The financial management system of any future organization overseeing the regional transit service should include specific provisions for fleet replacement and other capital investments. Note that buses and certain other capital facilities purchased with federal participation (80 percent under SAFETEA-LU) are also eligible for federal participation toward replacement costs once the buses and facilities reach maturity (as defined in the FTA rules).

Operations and Maintenance Funding

Over time, the primary financial requirement of a local or regional transit system will be funding routine operations and maintenance, including daily transit service, vehicle maintenance, and system administration. In general, labor represents about 75 percent of the costs of operating transportation, with much of that going to drivers' salaries. The following strategies for funding operations and maintenance should be considered:

- Reliance on general fund appropriations from local governments should be avoided, if possible. It is common for local and regional transit agencies to be dependent on annual appropriations from their constituent towns, cities, and/or counties. As a practical matter, this means it will not be possible to forecast future funding levels, given the exigencies of local government funding. Such an agency will be unable to undertake capital planning and will continually face potential service cutbacks. This, in turn, makes it difficult or impossible for the transit agency to enter into partnership arrangements with other agencies or with private entities. Transit agencies, like highway agencies, require that most or all of their operations and maintenance funding comes from dedicated sources so that they can undertake responsible planning and offer reliable, consistent service.
- Eagle Transit collects fares as part of the transit system funding, although this is not an ideal source of revenue. Due to the realities of a transit system's cost and financing structure, it is generally not possible to recoup more than 10 to 20 percent of operations and maintenance costs from the



farebox revenues within rural areas, for example. Fare collection itself incurs costs for farebox maintenance, cash management, and auditing. Fare collection slows down vehicle boarding and increases the operating costs by increasing the time required to run each route. Finally, fare collection deters ridership.

- Operations and maintenance funding mechanisms should be designed to anticipate transit system growth. Successful rural and small urban transit systems around the country are experiencing annual growth in ridership. It is important to be able to respond to such growth by increasing the service levels to meet the transit demand. This means that the ideal funding sources for operations and maintenance are those that have the flexibility to be increased or expanded as the transit demand grows. Such flexibility will, in most cases, require voter approval. The important consideration is that the need for growth has been anticipated, and that the potential for larger budgets is not precluded by the choice of a specific funding source.

OVERALL SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS

There are also a few overarching considerations in developing a coherent transit system funding strategy including the following.

- Issues of funding and service equity are of paramount importance in designing funding systems. Informal systems based on annual appropriations and systems without **specific accounting for the distribution of costs and benefits** struggle with local elected bodies to find acceptable allocations of cost responsibility. This can become a significant barrier to coordinated system establishment and, later, to system growth.
- The strongest transportation systems are those that make extensive use of partnerships. Examples include partnerships with private companies, partnerships with national parks or other major public facilities, and partnerships with adjacent jurisdictions. Partnership arrangements enable a transit system to broaden its base of beneficiaries, expand its funding source alternatives, achieve better governance, and improve public support.

POTENTIAL LOCAL AND REGIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

Local Funding Sources

College Pass Program

A strategy successfully applied in several similar communities to generate transit funding from college campuses is to levy a student activity fee for transit services or an established amount from the college general fund. A similar college pass program could be possibly evaluated for Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) students. An activity fee will have to be approved by a majority of the

Potential Funding Sources

FVCC students and will be applied each school semester or quarter. This would encourage students to use Eagle Transit and reduce the College's need for creating and maintaining parking lots. Having more college students using the service will improve Eagle Transit's image as a transit service "open to the general public" and promote a positive image of transit in the community.

Private Support/Merchants in Kalispell

Financial support from private industries is essential to providing adequate transportation services within Flathead County. The major employers in Flathead County and Kalispell are potential sources of revenue. These firms may be willing to help support the cost of alternative fuel vehicles or the operating costs for employee transportation. Possible private support could come from the Kalispell Regional Medical Center. Merchants in Kalispell could also be asked to pay for patrons' rides to shop at their facilities. Some of these merchants include Walmart, Target, Smith's Food and Drug, and other businesses in the area. This could also be extended to businesses and merchants in Whitefish and Columbia Falls. This has been currently done in Sheridan, Wyoming where merchants, including banks, pay for patrons' rides to shop at their facilities.

Other Local and Regional Funding Sources

In Montana, statutory municipalities and counties have the power to fund transit that are explicitly created by a state statute. The principal funding sources for local and regional transit systems in Montana are described below.

General Fund Appropriations

Counties and municipalities may appropriate funds for transit operations and maintenance and for transit capital needs. Monies to be appropriated generally come from local property taxes and sales taxes. Competition for such funding is high, and local governments generally do not have the capacity to undertake major new annual funding responsibilities for transit.

Advertising

One modest but important source of funding for many transit agencies is on-vehicle advertising. The largest portion of this potential is for exterior advertising,

rather than interior “bus card” advertising. The potential funds generated by advertising placed within the vehicles are comparatively low. Advertising on bus shelters has been used to pay for the cost of providing the shelter.

Voluntary Assessments

The voluntary assessments alternative requires each participating governmental entity and private business to contribute to the funding of the transit system on a year-to-year basis. This alternative is common with transit agencies that provide regional service, rather than service limited to a single jurisdiction. The main advantage of voluntary assessment funding is that it does not require voter approval. However, the funding is not steady and may be cut off at any time.

Transportation Impact Fees

The traditional methods of funding the transportation improvements required by new development raise questions of equity. Sales taxes and property taxes are applied to both existing residents and to new residents attracted by the development. However, existing residents then inadvertently pay for the public services required by the new residents. As a means of correcting this inequity, many communities nationwide (faced with strong growth pressures) have implemented development impact fee programs that place a fee upon new developments equal to the costs imposed upon the community.

Previous work by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. indicates that the levy of impact fees on real estate development has become a commonplace tool in many regions to ensure that the costs associated with a development do not fall entirely upon the existing residents. Impact fees have been used primarily for highways and roads, followed by water and sewer projects. A program specifically for mass transit has been established in San Francisco. However, this is not a likely source for transit funding in rural Montana.

A number of administrative and long-term considerations must be addressed. It is necessary to legally ensure that the use on which the fees are computed would not change in the future by placing a note restricting the use on the face of the plat recorded in public records. The transportation impact fee program should be

Potential Funding Sources

reviewed annually. The validity of the program and its acceptability to the community is increased if a time-limit is placed upon the spending of collected funds. Transportation impact fee funds need to be strictly segregated from other funds. Fees should be collected at the time that a building permit is issued. The imposition of such a fee program could constrain capital funding sources developed in the future as a new source may result in a double payment.

Lodging Tax

The appropriate use of lodging taxes (occupancy taxes) has long been the subject of debate. Historically, the bulk of lodging taxes are used for marketing and promotion efforts for conferences and general tourism. In other areas, such as resorts, the lodging tax is an important element of the local transit funding formula. A lodging tax can be considered a specialized sales tax placed only upon lodging bills. As such, it shares many of the advantages and disadvantages of a sales tax. Taxation of this type has been used successfully in Park City, Utah; Sun Valley, Idaho; Telluride, Colorado; and Durango, Colorado. A lodging tax creates inequities between different classes of visitors as it is only paid by overnight visitors. The day visitors (particularly prevalent in the summer) and condominium/second home owners, who may use the transit system as much as the lodging guests, do not contribute to this transit funding source.

Sales Tax

A sales tax could be created to fund transit service. A sales tax is the financial base for many transit agencies in the western United States. The required level of sales tax would depend upon the transit service alternatives chosen. The advantages are that sales tax revenues are relatively stable and can be forecast with a high degree of confidence. In addition, sales tax can be collected efficiently and allows the community to generate revenues from visitors to the area. The disadvantages are that a sales tax would require legislative approval and a vote of the people to implement. In addition, a sales tax increase could be seen as inequitable to residents not served by transit. This disadvantage could be offset by the fact that sales taxes could be rebated to the incorporated areas not served by transit. Another disadvantage is that transit agencies would face competition from other services which may seek to gain financial support through sales taxes.

Property Tax for Special Transportation

Section 7-14-111 of the Montana Code states that a county, urban transportation district, or municipality may, in addition to all other property tax levies authorized by law, levy up to one mill of property taxes to fund special transportation services for senior citizens and handicapped persons. The proceeds of the levy may be used to contract with public or private transportation providers for services for senior citizens and disabled individuals, or to augment or subsidize provisions for the transportation of senior citizens and disabled individuals provided by the public transportation providers.

Urban Transportation District

Section 7-14-201 of the Montana Code provides Montana counties the authority to establish urban transportation districts. The urban transportation district may be created if the residents within the proposed district boundaries vote in favor of the measure. The district is administered by a transportation board. The board members are elected by the public during the general election process. The board has the power to establish, operate, improve, maintain, and administer the urban transportation district. Revenue may be generated through a mill levy to cover the costs of the district. A Transportation District shall primarily serve the residents within the boundaries, but may authorize service outside the district where deemed appropriate. The district may borrow money by the issuance of general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, or a combination thereof to provide funds for the district.

Service Districts

The service district funding option was authorized in 1985 by the State Legislature. This procedure requires the establishment of a special district—special improvement district, rural special improvement district, or multi-jurisdictional service district. These districts would operate similarly to the urban transportation district discussed previously. The funding structure consists of bonds issued with the backing of the local governments that would be used to pay for transit improvement costs. Revenue to pay for the bonds would be raised through assessments against property owners within the district.

Local Option Gas Tax

State law allows for the establishment of a countywide local option gas tax of up to two cents per gallon if the measure is approved by the voters within the county. A fund of this nature could provide for the implementation of the recommended transit improvements contained within this plan. The primary advantage offered by this funding mechanism is that only the users (both residents and visitors) of the transportation system are taxed. Fees paid by the individual users would vary according to their use of the transportation system.

The best and most versatile of the above funding sources for local and regional transit services is the urban transportation district, which offers more options for funding sources and much greater flexibility in designing the boundaries of a multi-jurisdictional transit system. Future planning for Eagle Transit may involve an urban transportation district that serves the transportation needs within its boundaries.

TransADE Program

In April 2001, the Montana State Legislature passed Senate Bill 448, which established the Transportation Assistance for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (TransADE) Program. This grant program provides operating funds for transportation for seniors and people with disabilities throughout Montana. The grant provides up to 50 percent of operating costs. Eligible recipients are counties, incorporated communities, transportation districts, and nonprofit organizations.

FEDERAL TRANSIT FUNDING SOURCES

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and extended the current law Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) providing \$10.578 billion in authorized funding for federal surface transportation programs for FY2013. MAP-21 and the new provisions of the law went into full effect October 1, 2012. It authorized programs for two years, through September 30, 2014.

MAP-21 builds on many of the strengths of rural transit's favorable treatment in SAFETEA-LU, TEA-21, and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), the preceding highway and transit authorizations. Some of the desirable aspects of the rural transit program are brought into other elements of federal transit investment and an increased share of the total federal transit program will be invested in rural areas under this new legislation.

The highlights of MAP-21 for FTA grantees are listed below:

- It is a steady and predictable funding.
- It consolidates certain transit programs to improve efficiencies.
- There are targeted funding increases particularly for improving the state of good repair.
- There are new reporting requirements.
- It requires performance measures for the state of good repair, planning, and safety.

Information provided below was gathered from FTA's implementation of MAP-21. Listed below are descriptions of federal funding programs that may be used by the area's providers:

- **Safety Authority 5329:** This is a new program under MAP-21.FTA granted new Public Transportation Safety Authority. It provides additional authority to set minimum safety standards, conduct investigations, audits, and examinations. It overhauls state safety oversight. There are new safety requirements for all recipients.
- **State of Good Repair Grants 5337:** This is a new program under MAP-21. It provides formula-based funding to maintain public transportation systems in a state of good repair. Funding is limited to fixed guideway investments (replaces 5309 Fixed Guideway program). It defines eligible recapitalization and restoration activities. The new formula is comprised of three elements—former Fixed Guideway formula, new service-based formula, and new formula for buses on HOV lanes. In fiscal years 2013 and 2014, \$2.1 billion are authorized in each year.
- **FTA Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (New Freedom):** This grant consolidates the 5310 and New Freedom program eligibilities into a single formula program. In fiscal years 2013 and 2014, \$255 million and \$258 million in funding are authorized, respectively.
- **FTA Section 5311 Rural Area Formula Grants:** This program consolidates the 5311 and JARC-eligible activities into a single program. This program pro-

vides funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in rural areas (population less than \$50,000). The program establishes a \$5 million discretionary and \$25 million formula tribal grant program. In fiscal years 2013 and 2014, there are \$600 million and \$608 million in funding authorized, respectively.

- **FTA Section 5312 Research, Development, Demonstration, and Deployment:** This grant separates research from technical assistance, training, and workforce development. It creates a competitive deployment program dedicated to the acquisition of low- or no-emission vehicles and related equipment and facilities. In fiscal years 2013 and 2014, there are \$70 million in general fund authorization each year.

Transit Benefit Program

The Transit Benefit Program is a provision within the Internal Revenue Code that permits an employer to pay for an employee's cost to travel to work in other than a single-occupancy vehicle. The program is designed to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and conserve energy by encouraging employees to commute by means other than single-occupancy vehicles. Under Section 132 (f) of the Internal Revenue Code, employers can provide up to \$245 per month to those employees who commute to work by transit or vanpool. A vanpool vehicle must have a seating capacity of at least six adults, not including the driver, to qualify. The employer can deduct these costs as business expenses. Employees do not report the subsidy as income for tax purposes since the subsidy is considered a qualified transportation fringe benefit.

Under TEA-21 and SAFETEA-LU, the Transit Benefit Program has become more flexible. Prior to TEA-21, the program could only be provided in addition to the employee's base salary. With TEA-21 and SAFETEA-LU, the transit benefit program may be provided as before or can be provided in lieu of salary. In addition, the program may be provided as a cash-out option for employer-paid parking for employees. The Transit Benefit Program may not necessarily reduce an employer's payroll costs. Rather, it enables employers to provide additional benefits for employees without increasing the total payroll expenses.

Transportation and Community System Preservation Program

The Transportation and Community System Preservation Program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration to provide discretionary grants for developing

strategic transportation plans for local governments and communities. The goal of the program is to promote livable neighborhoods. Grant funds may be used to improve the safety and efficiency of the transportation system; reduce adverse environmental impacts caused by transportation; and encourage economic development through access to jobs, services, and centers of trade.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

States receive the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grants to provide cash assistance, work opportunities, and necessary support services for needy families with children. States may choose to spend some of their TANF funding on transportation and related services for program beneficiaries.

Head Start Program

Head Start is a program of comprehensive services for economically-disadvantaged preschool children. Funds are distributed to local public and nonprofit agencies to provide child development and education services, as well as supportive services such as transportation. Head Start funding can be used to provide transportation service, acquire vehicles, and provide technical assistance to local Head Start centers.

Other Federal Funds

The US Department of Transportation funds other programs, including the Research and Special Programs Administration and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's State and Community Highway Grants Program (which funds transit projects that promote safety). A wide variety of other federal funding programs provide support for elderly and handicapped transportation programs, including the following:

- Retired Senior Volunteer Program
- Title IIIB of The Older Americans Act
- Medicaid Title XIX
- Veterans' Affairs
- Job Training Partnership Act
- Developmental Disabilities

Potential Funding Sources

- Housing and Urban Development - Bridges to Work and Community Development Block Grants
- Department of Energy
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Senior Opportunity Services
- Special Education Transportation
- Justice Department - Weed and Seed Program
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Agriculture Department - Rural Enterprise Community Grants
- Department of Commerce - Economic Development and Assistance Programs
- Environmental Protection Agency - Pollution Prevention Projects

FUNDING SUMMARY

Experience with transit systems across the nation underscores the critical importance of dependable (preferably dedicated) sources of funding if the long-term viability of transit service is to be assured. Transit agencies that are dependent upon annual appropriations and informal agreements have suffered from reduced ridership (because passengers are not sure if service will be provided from one year to the next), high driver turnover (contributing to low morale and a resulting high accident rate), and inhibited investment in both vehicles and facilities.

The advantages of financial stability indicate that a mix of revenue sources is prudent. The availability of multiple revenue sources helps to avoid large swings in available funds which can lead to detrimental reductions in service. As the benefits of transit service extend over more than one segment of the community, dependence upon more than one revenue source helps to ensure that costs and benefits are equitably allocated.

Due to the varying amount of state transit funding within Montana and the limited amount of federal funding, it is evident that transit funding must be addressed at the local level. State and federal funding are not consistent. Only a strong local transit subsidy funding source will allow the many plans and proposals for trans-

portation improvements to reach implementation with an assurance of ongoing operating funding. Though all of the options regarding local funding have drawbacks, it is clear that a hybrid of these alternatives will be necessary if the short-term and long-range goals of the transit system and the community are to be met.

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CHAPTER XI

Implementation Plan

This chapter describes a phased implementation plan for enhanced and expanded services to be provided by Eagle Transit. This incorporates a review of organizational arrangements, service plan timing, responsibilities, and the steps taken to implement changes. This implementation plan should act as a guide or “blueprint” for service design and timing. This chapter also includes a five-year financial plan for providing services in Flathead County.



SERVICE PLAN

This preferred service plan for Eagle Transit was divided into three phases—immediate actions, short-term actions, and long-term actions. Each of these service options is presented with a brief description. These options, along with their performance measures, are not discussed in detail in this chapter—refer to Chapter VIII for more details on each of these elements. Figure XI-1 presents the various elements of the preferred transit service option.

Immediate Actions

The immediate actions establish transit services which will be provided by Eagle Transit over the next one to two years. This includes the following service components:

Eliminate Saturday Service

Eagle Transit provides service on Saturdays for medical trips by using New Freedom funds. Under MAP-21, the New Freedom funds are no longer available. The ridership on Saturday is much lower than the ridership on a weekday. Based on input from the drivers and on the low usage of the service on Saturday, it would be useful to eliminate Saturday service and use the hours on other services needed. Most of the medical trips, including trips for dialysis, could be shifted to weekdays.

Modify Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes

Figure XI-1 presents the routes and service area for the modified Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus routes. Two fixed routes are designed to run both generally north/south and east/west with a transfer point in downtown Kalispell located at the intersection of Main Street and Railroad Street (Market Place Street) near the Depot Park. This north/south route will also serve Applied Materials on West Reserve Drive on a request basis. This fixed-route service will be operated with one bus operating on each of the two routes, similar to the existing hours of operation from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Each of these routes would operate with a 60-minute headway. Preliminary operating schedules are shown in Appendix G.

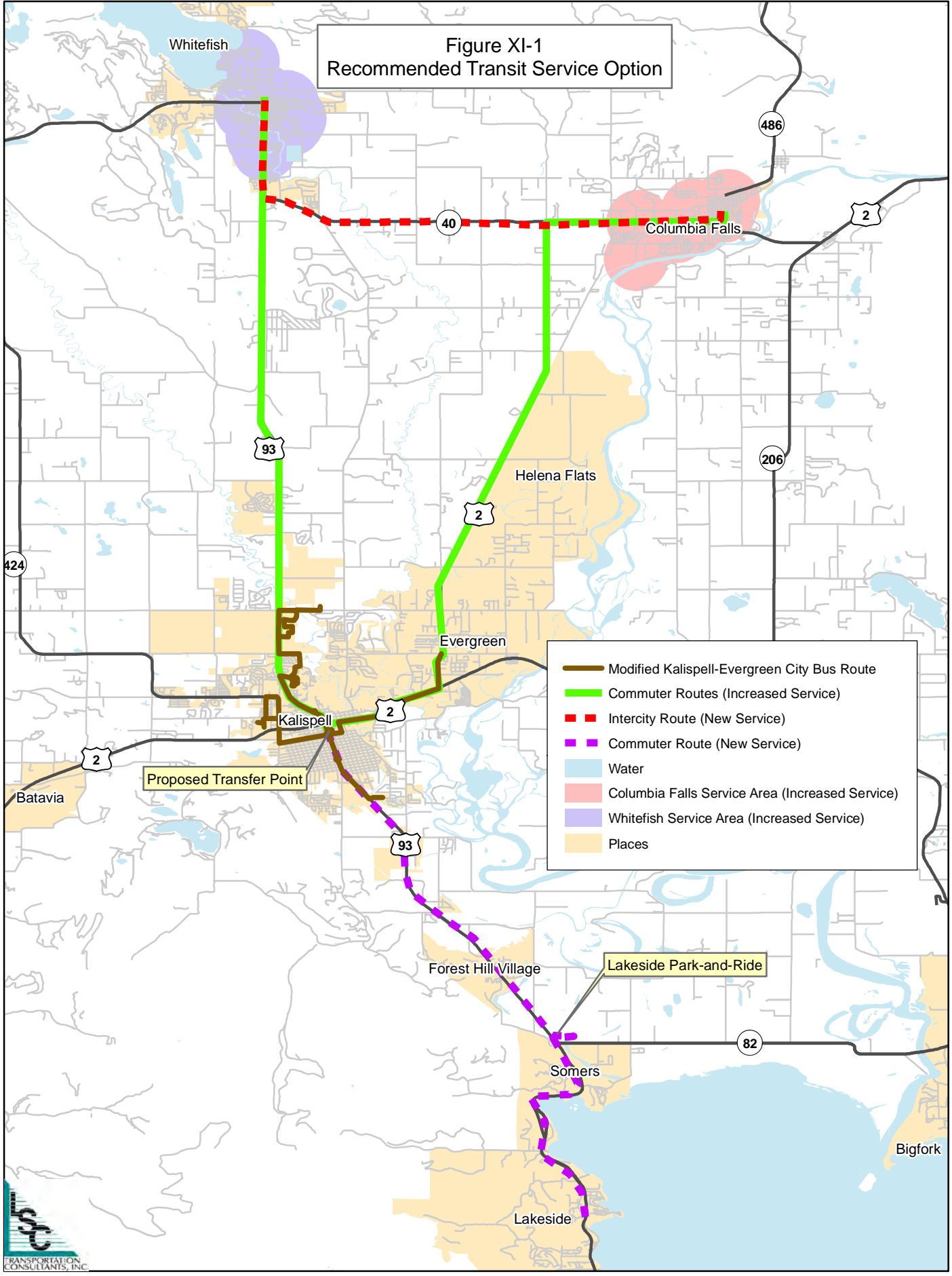
Increase Service Hours on the Whitefish City Bus Service

The Whitefish City bus would have increased weekday service hours that would include two additional trips in the morning and one additional trip in the evening. These increased service hours would help serve many of the activities at the Whitefish Senior Center which begin at 10:00 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. The increased service hours would allow seniors to get additional rides to/from the senior center at 9:57 a.m. and 10:57 a.m., and the last trip from the senior center would be 2:57 p.m.

Increase Service Hours on the Columbia Falls City Bus Service

Columbia Falls City bus would have increased weekday service hours that would include one additional trip in the afternoon. The new service would have a consistent schedule at all the stop locations, especially to the Columbia Falls Senior Center. The increased service hours and the consistent schedule would allow seniors to get additional rides to/from the senior center at around 8:45 a.m., 9:45 a.m., 10:45 a.m., and 1:45 p.m., and the last trip from the senior center would be 2:45 p.m.

Figure XI-1
Recommended Transit Service Option



Establish Vanpool Program

This vanpool service specifically targets commuters within the Flathead County area. Missoula-Ravalli Transportation Management Association (MR TMA) could assist in vanpool matching services helping people participate in the Flathead County vanpool program. MR TMA is currently the designated Rideshare Program operator in the Five Valley region that includes Flathead County. MR TMA has the necessary software package that would be needed to match recipients of the proposed vanpool program as well as a designated toll-free number. MR TMA would assist in vanpool matching services, but the actual trips would be provided by Eagle Transit. Eagle Transit could fund a portion of TMA's vanpool matching service.

Passengers using the proposed vanpool service would have to make a month-to-month commitment only. The monthly fare paid by passengers would include the cost of a van, insurance, comprehensive maintenance, roadside assistance, customer support services, and gasoline expenses. A minimum of five riders, one primary driver, and one alternate driver would be required to start a vanpool group.

The vanpool capital and operating costs could be partially funded through Federal Transit Administration programs. These funding programs would help reduce the cost for the user. Approximately \$15,000 annually would need to be reserved for expenses for each van operating as part of this vanpool program.

Short-Term Actions

The short-term actions establish transit services which will be provided by Eagle Transit over the next three to five years.

Whitefish-Columbia Falls Intercity Connector

This would be a new service to provide trips between Whitefish and Columbia Falls. This proposed intercity service would be offered Monday through Friday with one trip in the morning, one midday trip, and one evening trip.

Lakeside Commuter Route

This new commuter service would be offered Monday through Friday with two trips in the morning and two trips in the evening.

Long-Term Actions

The long-term actions establish transit services which will be provided by Eagle Transit beyond five years.

Implement Saturday Service

This service would include demand-response on Saturdays within the Kalispell city limits. This demand-response service would operate from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and would be open to the general public.

Additional Two Buses on Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes

This would include two additional buses on the Kalispell-Evergreen City bus routes. Thus, this option would have two buses operating on each route. The North-South Route and the East-West Route would be reduced to a 30-minute headway.

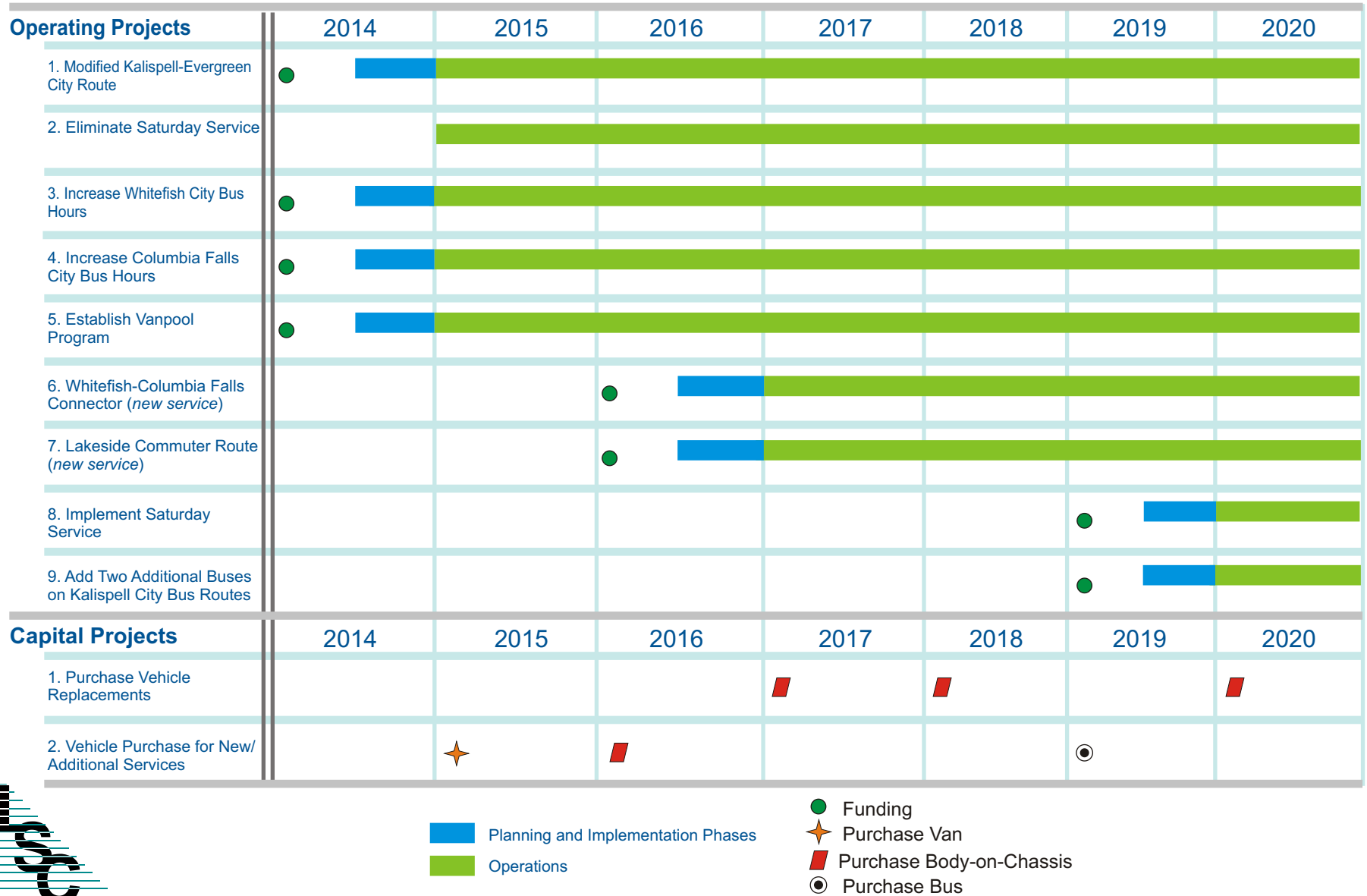
Glacier Park Shuttle

In addition to the local community services, Eagle Transit should continue to serve as the operator for the Glacier Park Shuttle service. The Shuttle is operated under an agreement of the National Park Service, the Montana Department of Transportation, and Flathead County. The operating cost should be determined annually based on Eagle Transit's cost structure with funding from the National Park Service. The agreement provides for full cost recovery of the annual operating costs. Eagle Transit will be responsible for maintaining and operating the vehicles, but vehicle replacement will be provided under the agreement and funded by the National Park Service and the Department of Transportation.

IMPLEMENTATION TIME LINE

Figure XI-2 presents a time line for implementation and steps to be taken for system changes. The LSC team has recommended a planning phase for each recommended project and program to aid in the development of the projects and programs. Evaluation of projects and programs should follow implementation of each program.

Figure XI-2 Implementation Schedule



FINANCIAL PLAN

Operating Funding

The six-year operations and capital budget is provided in Table XI-1. The financial plan shown in Table XI-1 does not include the Glacier Park Shuttle which should be treated as a separate cost center with full recovery of operating costs through the agreement with the National Park Service and the Montana Department of Transportation. Capital costs vary year to year based on the type and number of vehicles purchased. The capital cost is estimated at approximately \$100,000 per year. The cost in 2014 is based on maintaining current services except for the Saturday service with a projected increase of three percent in operating costs. Vehicle purchases have been identified for vehicle replacement. Subsequent years incorporate the proposed enhancements to service with an underlying annual increase of three percent in operating costs. The cost projection incorporates the individual elements discussed in Chapter VIII:

- Eliminate Saturday Service
- Modified Kalispell-Evergreen Fixed-Route - Two Buses
- Whitefish City Bus (status quo) + Increase Whitefish City Bus Hours
- Columbia Falls City Bus (status quo) + Increase Columbia Falls City Bus Hours
- Establish Vanpool Program
- Whitefish-Columbia Falls Connector
- Lakeside Commuter Route
- Implement Saturday Service
- Add Two Additional Buses on Kalispell-Evergreen City Bus Routes
- Continue Countywide Dial-a-Ride, Express Services, and Other Services

Implementation of the full service plan will *not* require a local financial contribution of the entire increase in operating costs. Increases in revenue from the FTA program and the mill levy are anticipated. The local match for operating assistance may be provided as a cash match, or through contract revenue. If the transit program provides services for other entities and organizations under contract, the revenue derived from provision of these services may be used as local match. Contract revenues may be used as match, even if they are derived from federal sources. Title IIIB funding is another source of federal funding that can be used as local match. The only federal funds that may not be used to match Federal Transit Administration grants are other FTA funds. The contract match is most

Implementation Plan

effective when the contract service passengers are carried on the existing public transit services, without the need to operate additional services.

Table XI-1 also indicates the appropriate equitable contribution of each community based on the service provided to that community. The equitable share has been calculated based on the cost of providing the specific service less any fare revenues, grants, and other local revenue used to support the service.

**Table XI-1
Transit Plan, 2014-2019 (assumed 3% inflation)**

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
EXPENSES						
OPERATING						
Status Quo						
Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter	\$119,622	\$123,211	\$126,907	\$130,714	\$134,636	\$138,675
Whitefish Express	\$4,340	\$4,471	\$4,605	\$4,743	\$4,885	\$5,032
Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter	\$92,425	\$95,198	\$98,054	\$100,995	\$104,025	\$107,146
Columbia Falls Express	\$4,192	\$4,318	\$4,447	\$4,581	\$4,718	\$4,860
County Dial-a-Ride and Other Services	\$505,099	\$520,252	\$535,859	\$551,935	\$568,493	\$585,548
Immediate Actions						
Modified Kalispell-Evergreen City Route <i>(Fixed-route service was modified into two routes - one bus operating on each route.)</i>	\$190,056	\$330,802	\$340,726	\$350,948	\$361,477	\$372,321
Eliminate Saturday Service	(\$32,169)	(\$32,169)	(\$32,169)	(\$32,169)	(\$32,169)	(\$32,169)
Existing Whitefish City Bus + Increase Whitefish City Bus Hours <i>(Three additional trips a day - M-F.)</i>	\$57,804	\$96,264	\$99,152	\$102,126	\$105,190	\$108,346
Existing Columbia Falls City Bus + Increase Columbia Falls City Bus Hours <i>(One additional hour of service - M-F.)</i>	\$95,648	\$111,199	\$114,535	\$117,971	\$121,510	\$125,156
Establish Vanpool Program <i>(MR TMA would match vanpool participants.)</i>	\$15,000	\$15,450	\$15,914	\$16,391	\$16,883	\$17,389
Short-Term Actions						
Whitefish-Columbia Falls Connector <i>(This new service would provide three trips a day - M-F.)</i>			\$34,735	\$35,777	\$36,851	\$37,956
Lakeside Commuter Route <i>(This new service would provide four trips a day - M-F.)</i>			\$69,490	\$71,574	\$73,722	\$75,933
Long-Term Actions						
Implement Saturday Service						\$38,412
Add Two Additional Buses on Kalispell City Bus Routes						\$497,238
Subtotal	\$1,052,016	\$1,268,995	\$1,412,255	\$1,455,587	\$1,500,220	\$2,081,842
CAPITAL						
Vehicle Purchase and Replacement	\$50,000	\$140,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$160,000	\$70,000
Subtotal	\$50,000	\$140,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$160,000	\$70,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,102,016	\$1,408,995	\$1,482,255	\$1,525,587	\$1,660,220	\$2,151,842
REVENUES						
FTA/MDT PROGRAM FUNDS						
FTA 5311 Program <i>(Operating with 55% match)</i>	\$434,425	\$494,854	\$559,665	\$576,913	\$594,679	\$867,411
FTA 5311 or 5309 Program <i>(Capital with 20% match)</i>	\$40,000	\$112,000	\$56,000	\$56,000	\$128,000	\$56,000
Subtotal FTA Funding	\$474,425	\$606,854	\$615,665	\$632,913	\$722,679	\$923,411
LOCAL MATCH/SYSTEM REVENUE						
Local Match Capital						
Kalispell - Capital			\$14,000		\$32,000	
Evergreen - Capital						
Whitefish - Capital		\$7,000		\$14,000		
Columbia Falls - Capital		\$7,000				\$14,000
Lakeside - Capital		\$14,000				
County - Capital	\$10,000					
Local Match Capital (subtotal)	\$10,000	\$28,000	\$14,000	\$14,000	\$32,000	\$14,000
Local Match by Community - Operating						
Kalispell - Operating	\$29,862	\$51,977	\$53,536	\$55,142	\$56,797	\$142,664
Evergreen - Operating	\$8,920	\$15,526	\$15,991	\$16,471	\$16,965	\$42,614
Whitefish - Operating	\$37,091	\$64,232	\$71,041	\$73,995	\$77,038	\$93,590
Columbia Falls - Operating	\$39,233	\$60,437	\$66,844	\$69,624	\$72,486	\$88,061
Lakeside - Operating			\$21,402	\$22,292	\$23,208	\$28,195
County/Other - Operating	\$57,994	\$119,710	\$147,226	\$155,089	\$163,193	\$286,583
Local Match by Community - Operating (subtotal)	\$173,100	\$311,881	\$376,039	\$392,614	\$409,687	\$681,706
Fares (5 percent farebox recovery)	\$41,572	\$52,090	\$58,912	\$60,728	\$62,598	\$91,306
Other Sources of Revenues						
Title IIB	\$25,530	\$25,530	\$25,530	\$25,530	\$25,530	\$25,530
Property Tax- Mill Levy	\$241,712	\$248,964	\$256,432	\$264,125	\$272,049	\$280,211
DPHHS	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$42,000
Sparks	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
United Way	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
State General Funds	\$8,677	\$8,677	\$8,677	\$8,677	\$8,677	\$8,677
Advertising	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
Other Sources of Revenues (subtotal)	\$402,919	\$410,171	\$417,639	\$425,332	\$433,256	\$441,418
Subtotal Local Funding	\$627,591	\$802,141	\$866,590	\$892,674	\$937,541	\$1,228,430
TOTAL REVENUES	\$1,102,016	\$1,408,995	\$1,482,255	\$1,525,587	\$1,660,220	\$2,151,842

*Vehicle purchase costs are based upon \$80,000 for bus, \$70,000 for body-on-chassis, and \$50,000 for van. May vary depending on selected vehicle and specifications.
Source: LSC, 2013.*

ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN

This organizational plan includes some immediate actions and some long-term actions for Eagle Transit.

Immediate Actions

Form Transit Coalition

Eagle Transit should take the lead to identify key participants who are interested in improving transit's level of service and are committed to coordinating transportation services in Flathead County. Then, Eagle Transit should set up a meeting of these individuals to understand the needs and issues that face the agencies. The coalition should include local stakeholders, providers, decision makers, business leaders, users, and others as appropriate. It would be useful to include Flathead Industries, Kalispell Regional Medical Center, and Flathead Valley Community College as some of the stakeholders and business leaders in the community. The coalition could be either an informal or formal group that is recognized by the decision makers and that has some standing within the community. Coalitions can be established for a specific purpose (such as to obtain specific funding) or for broad-based purposes (such as to educate local communities about transportation needs). Organization of the coalition should begin immediately.

Some of the benefits of creating a transit coalition are developing a broad base of support for improving transit services in the region and such a coalition is able to speak with community and regional decision makers, thereby increasing local support for local funding.

Seek Increased Local Community Funding

Formation of a transit coalition will help identify some of the agency's transportation needs and find ways that Eagle Transit can provide transit services to meet their needs. The formation of a transit coalition in turn will help to increase the local community funding. An equitable allocation of local community support has been identified in Table XI-1 using the cost allocation formula for Eagle Transit.

Eagle Transit should estimate the local community's share of funding by estimating the total hours and miles of service provided to a community and using that information in the cost allocation model to calculate the total cost to provide transit service to that community. This calculation should be made each year using the upcoming year's budget. This cost can then be reduced by the amount of estimated fare revenues generated and the amount of federal/state funding property tax revenue, other grants, and Title IIIB funding received to support transit operations.

Develop Financial Support From Private Business

Eagle Transit should develop financial support from private businesses within Flathead County. The major employers in Kalispell, Whitefish, and Columbia Falls could be potential sources of revenue. These businesses may be willing to help support the operating cost for employees. Possible private support could come from the Kalispell Regional Medical Center. Merchants in Kalispell could also be asked to pay for patrons' rides to shop at their facilities. Some of these merchants include Walmart, Target, Smith's Food and Drug, and other businesses in the area.

Long-Term Action

Establish Urban Transportation District

It is recommended that in the long-term Eagle Transit work toward creating an Urban Transportation District. This has political advantages such as coordinating transportation among multiple agencies into a single provider. This organization structure has a strong ability to generate funding and could provide all of the local revenue required to match grants and provide the level of service in the preferred plan. More information on setting up an Urban Transportation District is described in Chapter IX.

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Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire



INDIVIDUAL TRANSPORTATION SURVEY



1. Check the Eagle Transit route you are currently riding:

- Kalispell-Evergreen City route
- Whitefish City route
- Columbia Falls City route
- Whitefish to Kalispell commuter
- Columbia Falls to Kalispell commuter
- Dial-a-ride (door-to-door) transportation

2. For what purpose do you use the service?

- Work Doctor Shopping Social/Visiting School College

3. What should be the hours of operation? _____

4. Does the service operate late enough? Yes No

If not, how late should it operate? _____

5. What do you think should be the days of operation?

6. What other communities or stop locations should be served?

7. How do you rate the present bus service? (On the scale from 1 (best) to 5 (worst))

	1	2	3	4	5
. Timeliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. Cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. Driver's Courtesy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. Fares	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. Reliability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
. Overall Service Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Are you a licensed driver and able to drive? Yes No

9. How many vehicles in operating condition does your household have?

- None One Two Three or more

10. How often do you use the service?

- 1-3 days/week
- 4-5 days/week
- Less than once a month
- 1-3 days/month
- Other

11. How did you first learn about Eagle Transit? _____

12. **Age in Years:** Under 16 16-18 19-25
 26-35 36-45 46-59
 60-79 80 or older

13. **Gender:** Male Female

14. **Household Income:**
 Less than \$7,500 per year \$35,000 - \$49,999 per year
 \$7,500 - \$14,999 per year \$50,000 - \$75,000 per year
 \$15,000 - \$34,999 per year More than \$75,000 per year

15. **What are your suggestions to improve Eagle Transit service/any other comments?**

Thank you!



Appendix B: How First Learned of Eagle Transit



Appendix B

Q11. How did you first learn about Eagle Transit?

- Friend 15 responses
- Saw bus 6 responses
- Internet 5 responses
- Newspaper 3 responses
- College 2 responses
- Ad at Work 1 response
- ADS 1 response
- Agency on Aging 1 response
- Amtrak 1 response
- Been using 1 response
- Comm. Action Partnership 1 response
- Co-worker 1 response
- Dialysis 1 response
- Doctor 1 response
- Family 1 response
- Hungry Horse 1 response
- On my own 1 response
- Physician 1 response
- School 1 response
- Train station 1 response
- Word of mouth 1 response
- Work 1 response
- Work/Website 1 response

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Appendix C: Hours of Operation



Q3. What should be the hours of operation?

Kalispell-Evergreen City Route

- 9-5
- 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- 10 a.m. - midnight
- 6 a.m. to catch commuters; 7 a.m. OK for Kalispell; Sat 9-4 Kalispell
- Good as is
- 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.
- More
- 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- Add Sat. 9 a.m. - p.m.
- Same plus Sat.

Whitefish City Route

- 5 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- Same
- 9-5
- 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- 10 a.m. - midnight
- 6 a.m. to catch commuters; 7 a.m. OK for Kalispell; Sat 9-4 Kalispell
- Good as is
- 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.
- More
- 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- Add Sat. 9 a.m. - p.m.
- Same plus Sat.

Columbia Falls City Route

- 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- all day
- Same
- Same
- Same
- Same
- Fine as is
- 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Same
- 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter

- 6 a.m. to catch commuters; 7 a.m. OK for Kalispell; Sat 9-4 Kalispell
- 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- 7:30 arrive in Kalispell
- 6 a.m. - 9 p.m.
- Same
- 2 am, 2 pm, 1 midday
- All day
- Fairly good now
- Same start M-F until 8 or 9 p.m.; Sat/Sun til 5 p.m.
- Later buses may get more work commute
- 6 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter

- 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- Good like they are
- More frequent
- Present hours are good, but more trips

Dial-a-Ride Transportation

- Same
- 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- 6 a.m. - 8 p.m.
- Same

Q5. What should be the days of operation?**Kalispell-Evergreen City Route**

- Same
- M-F
- 7 days
- M-Sat
- M-F
- 7 days
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- Weekends on Whitefish to Kalispell route
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- 7 days
- M-Sat
- M-F
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- M-Sat

Whitefish City Route

- M-F
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- Same
- M-F
- 7 days
- M-Sat
- 7 days
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- Weekends on Whitefish to Kalispell route
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- 7 days
- M-Sat
- M-F
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- M-Sat
- M-Sat

Columbia Falls City Route

- M-Sat
- 7 days
- M-Sat
- 7 days
- 7 days
- M-F
- M-F
- M-F
- Some Saturdays
- Same plus holidays
- M-Sat

Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter

M-F
M-Sat
M-Sat
Weekends on Whitefish to Kalispell route
M-F
M-F
7 days
6 days/week
7 days
M-Sat
M-Sat or Sun
M-F, Saturday Kalispell City would be nice
M-F okay; Sat would be nice
M-Sat

Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter

M-Sat

M-Sat

7 days

M-F

Same

M-Sat

M-F

7 days if possible

Dial-a-Ride Transportation

7 days

M-F

M-Sat

7 days

M-Sat

Appendix D: Late Operation



Appendix D

Q4. Does the service operate late enough? If not, how late should it operate?

Kalispell-Evergreen City Route

No, does not operate late enough: 9 responses

Yes, the service does operate late enough: 13 responses

Suggested times:

- NB Whitefish Commuter dep Glenwood/2-Mile Dr @ 7:18 or 8:18 p.m. for late work shifts.
- 10 a.m. - midnight
- 7:30 p.m.
- 9 p.m.
- 9 p.m.
- 9 p.m. in summer
- 10 p.m.
- 9 p.m. in summer
- 7 p.m.
- 6-7 p.m.

Whitefish City Route

No, does not operate late enough: 11 responses

Yes, the service does operate late enough: 13 responses

Suggested times:

- 7 p.m.
- 7 p.m.
- NB Whitefish Commuter dep Glenwood/2-Mile Dr @ 7:18 or 8:18 p.m. for late work shifts.
- 10 a.m. - midnight
- 7:30 p.m.
- 9 p.m.
- 9 p.m.
- 9 p.m. in summer
- 10 p.m.
- 9 p.m. in summer
- 7 p.m.
- 6-7 p.m.

Columbia Falls City Route

No, does not operate late enough: 4 responses

Yes, the service does operate late enough: 8 responses

Suggested times:

- 6-7 p.m.
- 3:30-4 p.m.
- 9 p.m.
- 4 p.m.
- 7-9 p.m.

Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter

No, does not operate late enough: 9 responses

Yes, the service does operate late enough: 8 responses

Suggested times:

- NB Whitefish Commuter dep Glenwood/2-Mile Dr @ 7:18 or 8:18 p.m. for late work shifts.
- 9 p.m.
- 9 p.m.
- 9 p.m.
- 1 after 6:00 p.m.
- Past 8 p.m.
- 7-8 p.m.
- 8 p.m.

Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter

No, does not operate late enough: 2 responses

Yes, the service does operate late enough: 6 responses

Suggested times:

- 6-7 p.m.
- 10 a.m. - midnight
- 5:30 would be OK if a 2nd return route to C.Falls could be arranged

Dial-a-Ride Transportation

No, does not operate late enough: 2 responses

Yes, the service does operate late enough: 5 responses

Suggested times:

- 7:30 p.m.
- 8 p.m.
- 7 p.m.

Appendix E: Stop Locations



Q6: What other communities or stop locations should be served?

- Wild Geese and Plantland (nurseries) during spring.
- Kalispell more often.
- Big Fork.
- Whitefish to Columbia Falls; Big Fork.
- Big Fork, Somers, Lakeside.
- Smiths in Columbia Falls.
- Big Fork, West Valley.
- Helena Flats area.
- Proposed senior services complex.
- Albertsons, Finnagan, Paper Chase.
- Ashly Creek Apartments or Ashly Creek Court, Target, Ross, and down that line to Home Depot.
- Rosauer's to Armory; JCS, Ace Hardware.
- No service on Rimrock Stages from Whitefish/Kalispell to Missoula. Need north/south services from Amtrak, Whitefish to Missoula.
- Westbound between Office Max and Smiths.
- Albertson's.
- 1.5-mile radius around Columbia Falls.
- Kalispell Center Mall; Columbia Falls Pizza Hut needs a bus shelter.
- A stop between VA and Office Max.
- Kila? South, Lakeside, Somers.
- Big Fork? Airport?
- More stops at senior apartments on 2 Mile.
- Reserve in Evergreen.

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Appendix F: Comments and Suggestions



Appendix F

Q15: What are your suggestions to improve Eagle Transit service/any other comments?

Kalispell-Evergreen City Route

- Longer time between stops so driver has time to slow for bumps. Bumps are very bad.
- Needs weekend service so I don't have to take taxi in the winter to work at Sizzler. Thank you.
- Thanks for the great service! A later evening departure at/near Gateway West would help me become a five-day commuter, but I realize that you need the riders to make it feasible. Poll your major employment areas to find the best ways to increase service sustainably. Maybe a smart phone app to poll existing riders and an incentive/contest to get them to share it with non-riding friends. Does your schedule show park-n-ride pickups? Had to discover the Whitefish P.O. parking lot from other riders (at park near river on Baker).
- Just don't stop it. I use it for shopping and doctor appointments.
- Expansion would be great. Adult children would ride if ran later. More from Columbia Falls. More of a city-to-city route as opposed to commuter. You offer a great service and I love it!!
- 1) Better bus equipment -- similar to the units loaned to Eagle by Glacier Nat'l. Park, which are easily accessed and perhaps 35-foot units that can better accommodate grocery carts, strollers, wheelchairs and the like. 2) Consider reversing the direction of the current counter-clockwise direction of the loop at such time as the proposed senior services building is constructed on the fairgrounds property north side of Wyoming and with a scheduled stop for this site. Clockwise direction would better facilitate seniors coming from Evergreen, Kalispell and South Kalispell. 3) Above all, keep the service solvent and not deficit ridden. Perhaps the Chamber of Commerce might offer some assistance on how to ensure the system's stability, vibrancy. 4) Ensure solvency and justifiable need and benefit before engaging in extension or expansion. 5) If a new attraction opens, review costs/benefits of providing service considering economic and cross-generational needs of those without cars. 6) Due to summer tourism and the loss of Rimrock Transit's Whitefish to Missoula service, there is a big hole in Amtrak's southbound bus service. Consider contacting Amtrak for possible subsidy of service between Whitefish and Kalispell. 7) Review possibilities for Eagle to engage in localized chartering opportunities that could lessen dependence on grants. Note: Should Flathead's population become large enough, examine the Kenosha, WI bus system, which is excellent.

- The bus system is pretty good for the most part, but if a stop requested is pulled, you can only get off at scheduled stops. Sometimes, even at a scheduled stop, you can be passed by if the driver doesn't see you. Sometimes the drivers are too far or too close to the curb. You can twist an ankle. I guess you can't be perfect all the time. Maybe if more people wanted to be drivers, we could have more bus runs. It would be nice if the commuter buses would pick up people other than scheduled riders -- sometimes need to go to their stops. Commuter buses would be better if more than once in, once out. Note: The bus goes most places in Kalispell, but you still have a lot of walking before or after a stop.
- 1. Increased hours at night to get from Kalispell to Whitefish and back for people who work evenings and do not have a vehicle. 2. More midday return service from Kalispell to Whitefish for people not wanting to wait until 4 p.m. to return to Whitefish. 3. Weekend service for Whitefish to Kalispell. 4. The Flathead community needs service from Amtrak to Missoula to replace Rimrock Stages. There is no way to get north/south now from Amtrak for people without vehicles.
- Outside of longer hours of service during the longer days in late spring to late summer, I really don't know of anything else that could be improved.
- The system is wonderful and helps me greatly. The only problem I have is paying a dollar every time I get on. Maybe pay once and have some kind of ticket for that day to get home.
- I work 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. the morning bus gets me in by 8 a.m. but in the afternoon I either have to take the 3:35 p.m. bus from the library or the 5:15 p.m. from the library, neither of which is very convenient. More buses that connect with commuter buses running every half hour perhaps during the commuting hours of, say, 6-9 a.m. and 4-7 or 3:30-6:30 p.m. would be helpful.
- Get a terminal and run in a figure 8 format downtown.
- Nobody is perfect, but you are close.
- The bus needs better shocks, the ride is rough.
- 1) Please have buses leave stops no more than 2 minutes early! "Watches may vary" is a ridiculous, outdated policy since the advent of cellphones and satellite time. It is an easy matter for everybody to know the real time and is unprofessional and unfair for those of us who do so and who can follow a written schedule to have to guess what the schedule is today. 2) The bus routes are much too long and infrequent. If it was more useful, more people would ride. Two ways to do this: A- Have a fleet of buses running out on small loops in one direction/area each and all come back to a central hub. Lower rates or allow transfers. Or you could hold off the eventual yet certain need for this by, B-Offer an express shuttle. I would suggest from Lion's Park to Reserve along 93 & Main, turning around, turning right on Meridian, left on Idaho, right on Main and back down to Rosauers then Lion's Park. I would suggest that disabled/assisted service be eliminated, although the right bus (like the Glacier Park shuttle with the low flat entrance, the steps to a second level of seating, and the handstraps behind the driver would allow stroller and walker access. Eliminated from express only. You could have a "frequent stops" sign and have stops 2-6 blocks apart along side of road or could have the bus do

little loops like at the Montana Brokers stop. From 2-4 loops/routes back-to-back and then a driver break with a relief driver for lunch. This bus should operate M-Fri 8 a.m.-7 p.m. and Sat 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 3) Place posts with attached stop schedule at exact places where the bus will stop. Some stops are ambiguous and the drivers may not stop if you're not in the right place. You could even have a "touching the post" policy to avoid confusion.

Whitefish City Route

- Just don't stop it. I use it for shopping and doctor appointments.
- A middle of the day, like noon, from Whitefish to Kalispell.
- Have signs for the designated stops and the times. Also, the bus drivers need to have a little more time to do their routes. Safety should be most important instead of worrying about being on time for their route.
- Longer time between stops so driver has time to slow for bumps. Bumps are very bad.
- Needs weekend service so I don't have to take taxi in the winter to work at Sizzler. Thank you.
- Thanks for the great service! A later evening departure at/near Gateway West would help me become a five-day commuter, but I realize that you need the riders to make it feasible. Poll your major employment areas to find the best ways to increase service sustainably. Maybe a smart phone app to poll existing riders and an incentive/contest to get them to share it with non-riding friends. Does your schedule show park-n-ride pickups? Had to discover the Whitefish P.O. parking lot from other riders (at park near river on Baker).
- Expansion would be great. Adult children would ride if ran later. More from Columbia Falls. More of a city-to-city route as opposed to commuter. You offer a great service and I love it!!
- 1) Better bus equipment -- similar to the units loaned to Eagle by Glacier Nat'l. Park, which are easily accessed and perhaps 35-foot units that can better accommodate grocery carts, strollers, wheelchairs and the like. 2) Consider reversing the direction of the current counter-clockwise direction of the loop at such time as the proposed senior services building is constructed on the fairgrounds property north side of Wyoming and with a scheduled stop for this site. Clockwise direction would better facilitate seniors coming from Evergreen, Kalispell and South Kalispell. 3) Above all, keep the service solvent and not deficit ridden. Perhaps the Chamber of Commerce might offer some assistance on how to ensure the system's stability, vibrancy. 4) Ensure solvency and justifiable need and benefit before engaging in extension or expansion. 5) If a new attraction opens, review costs/benefits of providing service considering economic and cross-generational needs of those without cars. 6) Due to summer tourism and the loss of Rimrock Transit's Whitefish to Missoula service, there is a big hole in Amtrak's southbound bus service. Consider contacting Amtrak for possible subsidy of service between Whitefish and Kalispell. 7) Review possibilities for Eagle to engage in localized chartering opportunities that could lessen dependence on grants. Note: Should Flathead's

population become large enough, examine the Kenosha, WI bus system, which is excellent.

- The bus system is pretty good for the most part, but if a stop requested is pulled, you can only get off at scheduled stops. Sometimes, even at a scheduled stop, you can be passed by if the driver doesn't see you. Sometimes the drivers are too far or too close to the curb. You can twist an ankle. I guess you can't be perfect all the time. Maybe if more people wanted to be drivers, we could have more bus runs. It would be nice if the commuter buses would pick up people other than scheduled riders -- sometimes need to go to their stops. Commuter buses would be better if more than once in, once out. Note: The bus goes most places in Kalispell, but you still have a lot of walking before or after a stop.
- 1. Increased hours at night to get from Kalispell to Whitefish and back for people who work evenings and do not have a vehicle. 2. More midday return service from Kalispell to Whitefish for people not wanting to wait until 4 p.m. to return to Whitefish. 3. Weekend service for Whitefish to Kalispell. 4. The Flathead community needs service from Amtrak to Missoula to replace Rim-rock Stages. There is no way to get north/south now from Amtrak for people without vehicles.
- Outside of longer hours of service during the longer days in late spring to late summer, I really don't know of anything else that could be improved.
- The system is wonderful and helps me greatly. The only problem I have is paying a dollar every time I get on. Maybe pay once and have some kind of ticket for that day to get home.
- I work 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. the morning bus gets me in by 8 a.m. but in the afternoon I either have to take the 3:35 p.m. bus from the library or the 5:15 p.m. from the library, neither of which is very convenient. More buses that connect with commuter buses running every half hour perhaps during the commuting hours of, say, 6-9 a.m. and 4-7 or 3:30-6:30 p.m. would be helpful.
- Get a terminal and run in a figure 8 format downtown.
- Nobody is perfect, but you are close.
- The bus needs better shocks, the ride is rough.
- 1) Please have buses leave stops no more than 2 minutes early! "Watches may vary" is a ridiculous, outdated policy since the advent of cellphones and satellite time. It is an easy matter for everybody to know the real time and is unprofessional and unfair for those of us who do so and who can follow a written schedule to have to guess what the schedule is today. 2) The bus routes are much too long and infrequent. If it was more useful, more people would ride. Two ways to do this: A- Have a fleet of buses running out on small loops in one direction/area each and all come back to a central hub. Lower rates or allow transfers. Or you could hold off the eventual yet certain need for this by, B-Offer an express shuttle. I would suggest from Lion's Park to Reserve along 93 & Main, turning around, turning right on Meridian, left on Idaho, right on Main and back down to Rosauers then Lion's Park. I would suggest that disabled/assisted service be eliminated, although the right bus (like the Glacier Park shuttle with the low flat entrance, the steps to a second level of seating, and the handstraps behind the driver would allow stroller and walker

access. Eliminated from express only. You could have a "frequent stops" sign and have stops 2-6 blocks apart along side of road or could have the bus do little loops like at the Montana Brokers stop. From 2-4 loops/routes back-to-back and then a driver break with a relief driver for lunch. This bus should operate M-Fri 8 a.m.-7 p.m. and Sat 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 3) Place posts with attached stop schedule at exact places where the bus will stop. Some stops are ambiguous and the drivers may not stop if you're not in the right place. You could even have a "touching the post" policy to avoid confusion.

Columbia Falls City Route

- Get a terminal and run in a figure 8 format downtown.
- I've had problems getting Christina to follow through to call the driver to cancel rides. She often hasn't done it and I'm blamed wrongly for not calling dispatch to cancel a ride! Often, I don't know how my arthritis is going to affect me on the day A.M. I'm scheduled to catch the bus, until I get up in the morning. I don't like cancelling a ride but find it sometimes necessary. I wish you had a bus once a month that picked up passengers to take them to Glacier Park and drop them off and pick them up at a set time to go back home.
- Glacier Park visits (once a year)
- For my needs, all is great, but I use one day a week for now. It is a wonderful benefit for needy people. Thank you.
- This survey is great! Input from other passengers.
- Doing well except hours and town perimeter.
- Need noon service - Kalispell to Columbia Falls.
- Columbia Falls to Kalispell more than once a month - some Saturdays. It used to be every Wednesday. Bus drivers are great! Sometimes scheduling is off from what was called in.
- Have later bus hours for people who work past 5 in the evenings.

Whitefish-to-Kalispell Commuter

- Just don't stop it. I use it for shopping and doctor appointments.
- Thanks for the great service! A later evening departure at/near Gateway West would help me become a five-day commuter, but I realize that you need the riders to make it feasible. Poll your major employment areas to find the best ways to increase service sustainably. Maybe a smart phone app to poll existing riders and an incentive/contest to get them to share it with non-riding friends. Does your schedule show park-n-ride pickups? Had to discover the Whitefish P.O. parking lot from other riders (at park near river on Baker).
- The bus system is pretty good for the most part, but if a stop requested is pulled, you can only get off at scheduled stops. Sometimes, even at a scheduled stop, you can be passed by if the driver doesn't see you. Sometimes the drivers are too far or too close to the curb. You can twist an ankle. I guess you can't be perfect all the time. Maybe if more people wanted to be drivers, we

could have more bus runs. It would be nice if the commuter buses would pick up people other than scheduled riders -- sometimes need to go to their stops. Commuter buses would be better if more than once in, once out. Note: The bus goes most places in Kalispell, but you still have a lot of walking before or after a stop.

- 1. Increased hours at night to get from Kalispell to Whitefish and back for people who work evenings and do not have a vehicle. 2. More midday return service from Kalispell to Whitefish for people not wanting to wait until 4 p.m. to return to Whitefish. 3. Weekend service for Whitefish to Kalispell. 4. The Flathead community needs service from Amtrak to Missoula to replace Rim-rock Stages. There is no way to get north/south now from Amtrak for people without vehicles.
- I work 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. the morning bus gets me in by 8 a.m. but in the afternoon I either have to take the 3:35 p.m. bus from the library or the 5:15 p.m. from the library, neither of which is very convenient. More buses that connect with commuter buses running every half hour perhaps during the commuting hours of, say, 6-9 a.m. and 4-7 or 3:30-6:30 p.m. would be helpful.
- Whitefish Commuter could arrive in Kalispell between 7:30 and 8:00 a.m. Eliminate stops in Whitefish that are not utilized (Baker @ Curve). Overall, service is great for such a small community!
- On the city routes, have buses that go directly from downtown out to the hill. I ride the city bus in Kalispell and the commuter to Whitefish and sometimes Dial-a-Ride. Work on better pick-up time for Dial-a-Ride.
- Doing great!
- More buses and times would be helpful but otherwise thanks ET!
- Hours are fine for me but it would be nice to have a bus that worked with KRMC's 7 to 7 shifts. Ridership would probably increase significantly. I love the service as it exists today but I'm lucky to have a flexible schedule. Would like to see more options but can live with what's available now.

Columbia Falls-to-Kalispell Commuter

- Get a terminal and run in a figure 8 format downtown.
- Expansion would be great. Adult children would ride if ran later. More from Columbia Falls. More of a city-to-city route as opposed to commuter. You offer a great service and I love it!!
- Would like to see an earlier afternoon route to Columbia Falls. Columbia Falls route in evening has become quite crowded. More seats needed.
- Tim and Ernie are a great asset to your company! They are always prompt, courteous and dependable.
- Do not get rid of the wifi. I use it to do my college homework. Include more routes back to Columbia Falls from college. Have some at 11:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

- Would be nice to have a second route back to Columbia Falls for riders who have to ride early bus in order to be at work by 8 a.m. but then have to stay after work 45 minutes to an hour to ride home.
- Keep the wifi! One of the buses also had hand sanitizer once and that was pretty cool. I would appreciate more routes back and forth from C. Falls and perhaps something better than sitting on the floor for dealing with extra passengers. Sometimes it gets pretty tight in here.

Dial-a-Ride Transportation

- I've had problems getting Christina to follow through to call the driver to cancel rides. She often hasn't done it and I'm blamed wrongly for not calling dispatch to cancel a ride! Often, I don't know how my arthritis is going to affect me on the day A.M. I'm scheduled to catch the bus, until I get up in the morning. I don't like cancelling a ride but find it sometimes necessary. I wish you had a bus once a month that picked up passengers to take them to Glacier Park and drop them off and pick them up at a set time to go back home.
- For my needs, all is great, but I use one day a week for now. It is a wonderful benefit for needy people. Thank you.
- Longer time between stops so driver has time to slow for bumps. Bumps are very bad.
- Come to my door and help me to the bus and pick me up at Sykes. Customer first is #1.
- I've enjoyed my experiences with Eagle Transit. The drivers are all very helpful.

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Appendix G: Preliminary Route Schedules



**Appendix G
Preliminary Route Schedules - Kalispell**

Route 1- North/South

	Transfer Center	KRMC- Hospital	FVCC	Walmart	FVCC	KRMC- Hospital	Transfer Center	Salvation Army	Agency on Aging	Transfer Center
7:00 AM	7:09 AM	7:14 AM	7:16 AM	7:25 AM	7:30 AM	7:39 AM	7:44 AM	7:47 AM	7:55 AM	
8:00 AM	8:09 AM	8:14 AM	8:16 AM	8:25 AM	8:30 AM	8:39 AM	8:44 AM	8:47 AM	8:55 AM	
9:00 AM	9:09 AM	9:14 AM	9:16 AM	9:25 AM	9:30 AM	9:39 AM	9:44 AM	9:47 AM	9:55 AM	
10:00 AM	10:09 AM	10:14 AM	10:16 AM	10:25 AM	10:30 AM	10:39 AM	10:44 AM	10:47 AM	10:55 AM	
11:00 AM	11:09 AM	11:14 AM	11:16 AM	11:25 AM	11:30 AM	11:39 AM	11:44 AM	11:47 AM	11:55 AM	
12:00 PM	12:09 PM	12:14 PM	12:16 PM	12:25 PM	12:30 PM	12:39 PM	12:44 PM	12:47 PM	12:55 PM	
1:00 PM	1:09 PM	1:14 PM	1:16 PM	1:25 PM	1:30 PM	1:39 PM	1:44 PM	1:47 PM	1:55 PM	
2:00 PM	2:09 PM	2:14 PM	2:16 PM	2:25 PM	2:30 PM	2:39 PM	2:44 PM	2:47 PM	2:55 PM	
3:00 PM	3:09 PM	3:14 PM	3:16 PM	3:25 PM	3:30 PM	3:39 PM	3:44 PM	3:47 PM	3:55 PM	
4:00 PM	4:09 PM	4:14 PM	4:16 PM	4:25 PM	4:30 PM	4:39 PM	4:44 PM	4:47 PM	4:55 PM	
5:00 PM	5:09 PM	5:14 PM	5:16 PM	5:25 PM	5:30 PM	5:39 PM	5:44 PM	5:47 PM	5:55 PM	
6:00 PM	6:09 PM	6:14 PM	6:16 PM	6:25 PM	6:30 PM	6:39 PM	6:44 PM	6:47 PM	6:55 PM	

Route 1- a primarily north/south route is designated to serve KRMC Hospital, FVCC, Walmart, Lamplighter, and Salvation Army

Route 2- East/ West

	Transfer Center	Smiths	Kmart/VA Pantry	Glacier Bank	Smiths	Transfer Center	VA Clinic	Senior Apartments	Gateway West Mall	Transfer Center
7:00 AM	7:04 AM	7:14 AM	7:20 AM	7:34 AM	7:39 AM	7:45 AM	7:46 AM	7:47 AM	7:58 AM	
8:00 AM	8:04 AM	8:14 AM	8:20 AM	8:34 AM	8:39 AM	8:45 AM	8:46 AM	8:47 AM	8:58 AM	
9:00 AM	9:04 AM	9:14 AM	9:20 AM	9:34 AM	9:39 AM	9:45 AM	9:46 AM	9:47 AM	9:58 AM	
10:00 AM	10:04 AM	10:14 AM	10:20 AM	10:34 AM	10:39 AM	10:45 AM	10:46 AM	10:47 AM	10:58 AM	
11:00 AM	11:04 AM	11:14 AM	11:20 AM	11:34 AM	11:39 AM	11:45 AM	11:46 AM	11:47 AM	11:58 AM	
12:00 PM	12:04 PM	12:14 PM	12:20 PM	12:34 PM	12:39 PM	12:45 PM	12:46 PM	12:47 PM	12:58 PM	
1:00 PM	1:04 PM	1:14 PM	1:20 PM	1:34 PM	1:39 PM	1:45 PM	1:46 PM	1:47 PM	1:58 PM	
2:00 PM	2:04 PM	2:14 PM	2:20 PM	2:34 PM	2:39 PM	2:45 PM	2:46 PM	2:47 PM	2:58 PM	
3:00 PM	3:04 PM	3:14 PM	3:20 PM	3:34 PM	3:39 PM	3:45 PM	3:46 PM	3:47 PM	3:58 PM	
4:00 PM	4:04 PM	4:14 PM	4:20 PM	4:34 PM	4:39 PM	4:45 PM	4:46 PM	4:47 PM	4:58 PM	
5:00 PM	5:04 PM	5:14 PM	5:20 PM	5:34 PM	5:39 PM	5:45 PM	5:46 PM	5:47 PM	5:58 PM	
6:00 PM	6:04 PM	6:14 PM	6:20 PM	6:34 PM	6:39 PM	6:45 PM	6:46 PM	6:47 PM	6:58 PM	

Route 2- a primarily east/west route is designated to serve the VA Clinic, Gateway West Mall, Smiths, Kmart/VA Pantry, and the Glacier Bank

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