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WYOMING INTERCITY BUS SERVICE STUDY

By:

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16. Abstract <p>Intercity bus service funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA's) Section 5311(f) program is a part of the larger 5311 program known as Formula Grants for Other than Urbanized Areas. The Section.5311(f) program requires that 15% of the total Section 5311 program funds given to the state be used to develop and support ICB service. This 15% can be waived if the governor certifies that the intercity bus transportation needs are being met adequately within the state.</p> <p>The goal of this project was to provide the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) with a current assessment of intercity bus services within the state, and provide a methodology that can be used by WYDOT to determine if needs are being adequately met, and, if not, a process to identify potential new routes/services and how to allocate funding for new services. To achieve this goal, the research team first conducted an extensive literature review of intercity bus service studies in other states. Following that, a survey of peer states, with characteristics similar to Wyoming's rural/frontier nature was performed to understand funding practices and perceive barriers of intercity bus service. Surveys were distributed to intercity bus riders in Wyoming to provide insight into the use of intercity bus services and the attitudes toward the services. The research team then examined the connectivity of current intercity bus services with local public transportation providers in Wyoming, as well as other transportation modes. In addition, a survey of local transit agencies in Wyoming was conducted.</p> <p>The results from the network connectivity analysis and the survey were used as a basis to help define "meaningful connections" for intercity bus services in Wyoming. Finally, this research provided a methodology that can be used by WYDOT to determine intercity bus service needs are being adequately met. The methodology consists of an annual process to support existing intercity bus services and a triennial process to determine if there is the need for new services.</p>					
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Intercity bus (ICB) is a regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity. The Federal Transit Administration's Section 5311(f) program provides funding for the ICB. This program requires that each state to expend at least 15 percent of its annual Section 5311 apportionment for ICB services, unless the governor certifies that the intercity bus service needs of the state are being met adequately.

In the state of Wyoming, National ICB service providers travel and serve communities along Interstates 25, 80, and 90, and US Highways 191 and 89. These routes only serve the southern and eastern parts of the state, with little service to the west, but virtually no service is provided in central or northern Wyoming. Analysis shows that approximately 51% of the population of Wyoming (about 300,821 people) is served by national ICB service providers, including 17 of the 28 largest cities in the state. Intercity bus services had been on the decline from the 1980s at the national level and about one tenth of Greyhound's scheduled stops were discontinued. This trend continued into the state of Wyoming, with the discontinuation on December 31, 2014 of a long route connecting central Wyoming to more urbanized cities in the state. To determine whether or not the ICB needs are being adequately met in Wyoming and to determine the allocation of funds to help support and increase ICB service, the Wyoming Department of Transportation commissioned this study.

The goal of this report was to provide a current assessment of Wyoming's ICB services. This study provides a methodology that can be used to determine if the ICB service needs are being adequately met, and if not, provides a process to identify potential routes. This report contains research gathered from previously published literature, survey responses from peer states with attributes similar to the rural/frontier nature of Wyoming, and survey responses from ICB riders traveling through the state. Analysis was performed on the connectivity and existing connections of ICB services, including a survey of managers of the local transit services in the state. An analysis of corridors that previously had ICB service, and those that would be connecting high population rural areas to a more urbanized city, was performed to provide information on routes that could provide "meaningful connections." The research team selected these corridors in collaboration with the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT). Further, the team developed a methodology that will help WYDOT assess ICB services and conduct consultations to determine if ICB services are adequately being met throughout the state. Finally, this report presents conclusions and recommendations to summarize the research and findings recorded throughout the study.

The major findings of the study are as follows:

(1) The rural/frontier states surveyed indicated that the most common challenges facing ICB services were funding and the lack of understanding and clarity about a business model (a funding formula). Funding issues included: policy on the use of in-kind match, potential federal budget cuts that may be detrimental to local ICB services, and lack of DOT support for allocating funds to support private, for profit companies (Chapter 4).

(2) The research team conducted a survey of ICB riders to review the existing ICB services in Wyoming. Results from the survey indicate that:

- Riders of ICB were most often using the service to visit family or friends followed by other purposes such as relocating; returning home; attending a funeral; or going to take care of parents.
- Most riders stated they used an Internet search or word of mouth to get information about the route they were using at the time of the survey.
- 62% of Wyoming residents riding ICB were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with available information about ICB, compared to 38% being somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied.
- 46% Wyoming residents riding ICB were satisfied or at least somewhat satisfied with the frequency of ICB services, with 31% being neutral, and 23% were somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the level of frequency of ICB service.
- Respondents reported that the three leading factors that lead to ICB use are lack of access to a vehicle, lack of ability to drive and gas prices.
- Over two-thirds of those using the ICB services (67%) have a household income of less than \$30,000 per year (Chapter 5).

(3) A survey was conducted of transit managers in Wyoming to obtain their opinions regarding ICB service. The results of this survey, completed by 30 of 48 transit agencies throughout Wyoming, indicate that many respondents believe that intercity services could be improved. While some responses focused more on services within the state, some noted the need to provide enhanced connections to Billings (MT), and to make connections to the intercity bus network from areas such as Cody, Powell and Riverton. Only two of twenty-one respondents noted that intercity bus needs were being “somewhat met”, while the majority (17 of 21) noted that intercity bus needs were being met “Not Very Well” or “Not at All.” Respondents also suggested which corridors/connections needed service, but noted that there needs to be additional funding and vehicles available to implement these connections (Chapter 6).

(4) In Wyoming, a rural and frontier state, only 28 of 99 cities and towns listed by the U.S. Census Bureau have a population estimated in 2014 to be greater than 2,000 people. Only 17 of these cities are connected to ICB services (Chapter 6).

(5) This study provided a process that can occur on a triennial process to determine if intercity bus service needs are being met, and if not, a process to determine where service should be implemented, providing sufficient funding exists (Chapter 7). Currently 17 of 28 of the largest cities in Wyoming have access to intercity bus service and, the proposed new routes would reach an additional 11 communities. If future analyses yield similar results, it is recommended that WYDOT utilizes a partial certification, so that unspent Section 5311(f) funds can be used for other public transportation (transit) services. With the information presented in this report, the Wyoming Department of Transportation should have sufficient information to initiate a consultation process with local and intercity bus providers to determine which routes/services noted herein should be implemented.

(6) This study reviewed various corridors (routes) that were recommended by WYDOT for analysis. All of these potential routes would provide service to at least one of the communities with a population of 2,000 or more people that does not currently have ICB service. In addition to connecting to a city with ICB services, these potential routes also allow smaller communities in Wyoming to connect to larger, more populated cities. It is recommended that WYDOT focus on providing ICB services to these more populated areas and strive for 85% (24 of 28 cities) of these most populated cities in Wyoming to be connected to an ICB service provider or, at a minimum, a more populated city. Based on the information in provided herein, the research team proposes the following routes (Table 1) be considered for implementation.

Table 1: Proposed Routes and Major ICB Destination

Route	Cities	Population	Major ICB Destination
1	Lander	7,642	Casper
	Riverton	10,953	
2	Cody	9,740	Billings (MT)
	Lovell	2,404	
	Powell	6,407	
3	Thermopolis	3,020	Casper
	Worland	5,366	
4	Lusk	1,578	Cheyenne
	Torrington	6,738	
5	Greybull	1,868	Billings
	Worland	5,366	
6	Newcastle	3,513	Gillette

It is important to note that the information in this report, along with the conclusions and recommendations is the end of one process (the study) and the beginning of another (consultation and possible implementation). WYDOT should use the information herein to consult with the communities and transportation providers noted herein about the implementation of the noted routes/services. It will be necessary to verify that FTA/WYDOT funds are available, and that local match can be secured. It is hoped, however, that this report can ultimately lead to the improvement of intercity bus services in Wyoming.

2. INTRODUCTION

The term intercity bus (ICB) is defined by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as, “regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, if such service is available.” ⁽¹⁾

Funding for ICB service stems from FTA’s Section 5311(f) program, which is part of the FTA Section 5311- Formula Grants for Other than Urbanized Areas program. The Section 5311 program provides aid and funding to states to help support public transportation to rural areas with populations less than 50,000. The Section 5311 program supports existing public transportation services and potential expansion of those services to achieve goals such as: access to health care, shopping, education, employment, public services, and recreation; and assisting in the development and support of intercity bus transportation (FTA, 2014). Title 49 of the United States Code, Section 5311(f), requires, “each state to expend at least 15 percent of its annual Section 5311 apportionment to carry out a program to develop and support intercity bus transportation, unless the governor certifies that the intercity bus service needs of the state are being met adequately.” ⁽¹⁾

In the state of Wyoming, National ICB service providers travel and serve communities along Interstates 25, 80, and 90, and US Highways 191 and 89. These routes only serve the southern and eastern parts of the state, with little service to the west, but no service is provided in central or northern Wyoming. Analysis shows that approximately 51% of the population of Wyoming (about 300,821 people) is served by national ICB service providers (Table 2), including 17 of the 28 largest cities in the state. These 28 cities have populations of 2,000 or more people, and two, Cheyenne and Casper, are classified as urban areas, having populations over 50,000.

Table 2: Fifty Largest Cities/Towns in Wyoming

Rank	City/Town	2014 Pop. Estimate	ICB Service
1	Cheyenne	62,845	Yes
2	Casper	60,086	Yes
3	Laramie	32,081	Yes
4	Gillette	31,971	Yes
5	Rock Springs	24,045	Yes
6	Sheridan	17,916	Yes
7	Green River	12,630	Yes
8	Evanston	12,190	Yes
9	Riverton	10,953	No
10	Jackson	10,449	Yes
11	Cody	9,740	No
12	Rawlins	9,227	Yes
13	Lander	7,642	No
14	Torrington	6,736	No
15	Douglas	6,423	Yes
16	Powell	6,407	No
17	Worland	5,366	No
18	Buffalo	4,615	Yes
19	Mills	3,690	Yes
20	Wheatland	3,659	Yes
21	Newcastle	3,513	No
22	Thermopolis	3,020	No
23	Evansville	2,831	Yes
24	Bar Nunn	2,735	Yes
25	Kemmerer	2,732	Yes

Rank	City/Town	2014 Pop. Estimate	ICB Service
26	Glenrock	2,583	Yes
27	Lovell	2,404	No
28	Lyman	2,077	No
29	Afton	1,968	No
30	Pinedale	1,958	No
31	Greybull	1,868	No
32	Wright	1,847	No
33	Saratoga	1,692	No
34	Lusk	1,578	No
35	Star Valley Ranch	1,541	No
36	Mountain View	1,304	No
37	Basin	1,300	No
38	Sundance	1,239	No
39	Guernsey	1,193	No
40	Pine Bluffs	1,146	No
41	Marbleton	1,114	No
42	Upton	1,104	No
43	Moorcroft	1,036	No
44	Dubois	998	No
45	Ranchester	943	No
46	Alpine	845	Yes
47	Hanna	831	No
48	Dayton	794	No
49	Diamondville	740	No
50	Cowley	718	No

Across the country, the ICB industry has discontinued many unprofitable routes due to high operating costs, an increase in ownership of personal vehicles, and lack of ridership through lower population areas. Intercity bus services had been on the decline from the 1980s to about 2005. Within this time frame, there was a decrease in service nationwide of about 12%, and about one tenth of Greyhound's scheduled stops were discontinued. This trend continued into the state of Wyoming, with the discontinuation on December 31, 2014 of a long route connecting central Wyoming to more urbanized cities in the state. Recently, however, ICB service has been on the rise, greatly due to the opportunities that have become available for smaller local services to fill the void that has been left by the discontinuation of these routes.

Although many smaller ICB companies have begun to increase in numbers throughout the country, the intercity bus needs in many rural areas still remain unmet. It is up to the

departments of transportation to determine whether or not the ICB needs are being adequately met in their state and to determine the allocation of funds to help support and increase ICB service.

The goal of this report was to provide a current assessment of Wyoming's ICB services. This study provides a methodology that can be used to determine if the ICB service needs are being adequately met, and if not, provides a process to identify potential routes. This report contains research gathered from previously published literature, survey responses from peer states with attributes similar to the rural/frontier nature of Wyoming, and survey responses from ICB riders traveling through the state.

Analysis was performed on the connectivity and existing connections of ICB services, including a survey of managers of the local transit services in the state. An analysis of corridors that previously had ICB service, and those that would be connecting high population rural areas to a more urbanized city, was performed to provide information on routes that could provide "meaningful connections." The research team selected these corridors in collaboration with the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT). Further, the team developed a methodology that will help WYDOT assess ICB services and conduct consultations to determine if ICB services are adequately being met throughout the state. Finally, this report presents conclusions and recommendations to summarize the research and findings recorded throughout the study.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, a literature review regarding intercity bus (ICB) services was completed to highlight: 1) Current federal regulations concerning intercity bus services; 2) National ICB studies; 3) Review state (or state-wide) ICB service studies that are mainly focused on rural/frontier states similar to Wyoming; and, 4) Methodologies that states use for funding intercity bus programs.

3.1. FEDERAL INTERCITY BUS REGULATIONS

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 program provides funding to states to support public transportation in rural areas (communities/towns) of the state, with populations of less than 50,000 people. Further, regulations state that 15% of the total Section 5311 program funds given to the state must be used to “carry out a program to develop and support ICB transportation.”⁽¹⁾ The objectives for this 15%, known as FTA Section 5311(f) funds, include: 1) support the connection between rural areas and the larger regional or national system of intercity bus service; 2) support services to meet the intercity travel needs of residents in rural areas; and, 3) support the infrastructure of the intercity bus network through planning and marketing assistance and capital investment in facilities.⁽¹⁾

The 5311(f) can be used for other public transportation activities/services if, “the Governor of the State certifies to the Secretary, after consultation with affected intercity bus providers, that the intercity bus service needs of the State are being met adequately.”⁽¹⁾ Prior to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) of 2005, Governors often certified that their ICB needs were being met in order to use the 5311(f) funds in other areas. This certification became harder to justify after SAFETEA-LU, because it required a more stringent consultation process with current ICB providers before certification could be given. The consultation process must now include: 1) identification of ICB providers; 2) activities the state will perform with identified providers and intercity bus organizations; 3) an opportunity for ICB providers to submit proposals for funding as part of the state’s distribution of its annual apportionment; and, 4) a direct correlation between the results of the consultation process and a determination that the state’s ICB needs are being adequately met (FTA, 2014). The new consultation process continued with the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) of 2012, and the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) defines ICB service as “regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, if such service is available.”⁽¹⁾ While not included specifically in the FTA regulations or guidance, a study done for California⁽²⁾ noted that a “meaningful connection” has generally been defined as a connection with a wait time of less than two hours.

3.2. NATIONAL STUDIES

Many states have struggled to find effective ways to support and improve rural ICB transportation using 5311(f) funds, state funds, or a combination of both. Also, little information was available about funded projects to maintain and improve rural ICB services. To address these issues, a Transit Cooperative Research Project (TCRP) was conducted with the goal to identify strategies for initiating, preserving, and enhancing effective rural ICB transportation.⁽³⁾ Seven strategies were identified through the study:

- Strategy 1: Determining the interest in rural intercity service assistance. State and local planners can conduct more formal requests for input concerning rural ICB service needs and interest. These requests can be included as part of the scope of services of planning studies, or they can be separate requests made more frequently or even annually.
- Strategy 2: Planning. An annual survey of rural intercity providers and the use of grant application processes are ways that a state can determine needs for ICB service. However, neither way provides the planner or policymaker with information about the overall level of ICB service. The more comprehensive and effective approach to determine needs involves planning, which includes information gathering, analysis of information, development of policies, and ways to address ICB service needs.
- Strategy 3: Developing a program. This strategy follows the previous two strategies. It includes the steps of: 1) determining whether to certify that the state has no unmet needs for ICB service each year; 2) determining program goals; 3) choosing program elements; 4) identifying funding sources; 5) addressing other federal requirements; 6) evaluating project proposals; and 7) adhering to reporting and compliance requirements.
- Strategy 4: Providing operating assistance. Operating assistance is an effective way to put service on the road in places that do not have it, and to maintain existing services that are not profitable to private for-profit carriers and that may be subject to service reductions of abandonment of service.
- Strategy 5: Providing capital assistance. Capital assistance includes funding for vehicle purchase, wheelchair lift purchase, passenger facilities, and others (e.g. signing, computer and Intelligent Transportation Systems).
- Strategy 6: Providing marketing assistance. A number of approaches and activities can be considered and implemented including development of a marketing plan, market research, development of user information materials, promotional activities, and development of community relations and partnerships.
- Strategy 7: Creating project combinations. It is important to note that the most effective strategy may be a combination of projects. An effective strategy may require several elements (e.g. planning, capital assistance, operating assistance, and marketing).

Strategies 1 through 3 are planning type strategies, and strategies 4 through 7 are implementation/operation type strategies.

Approximately nine years after the TCRP report, a National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) study revealed that twenty-eight states were proactive in reaching out to the intercity carriers and including the intercity carriers in the discussion of needs/gaps in service. ⁽⁴⁾ The NCHRP study also identified four characteristics of successful state ICB programs to be correlated to the continued operation of successful rural ICB strategies. These characteristics include: 1) state support for the program; 2) consultation process and efforts to increase participation; 3) funding and ability to meet programs goals; and 4) staff knowledge of existing ICB operators/services in the state.

With an emphasis on intercity bus services under the SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21 Federal Legislation, many states examined their ICB services and programs. The following section highlights the information from some of the states.

3.3. STATE PRACTICES

Many states have begun or completed ICB studies in the last decade to get a better understanding of some of the issues concerning ICB service in their states. These studies usually include a compiling of services that are currently operating, identifying potential areas lacking in ICB connectivity to the rest of the state, developing theories and recommendations to determine where ICB services need to be improved, and helping to determine if the needs of ICB services in the state are being met. Alabama, Colorado, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Washington are just a few states that have recently conducted studies, within the last six years, to analyze the ICB services in their respected states. The findings from these states studies are summarized in this section.

3.3.1. Alabama

The University Transportation Center for Alabama (UTCA) conducted a study in 2014 ⁽⁵⁾ to determine the impact the 5311(f) program has made of the ICB systems in Alabama, since Lindly's 2007 study. ⁽⁶⁾ After implementation of the 5311(f) program in 1995, and after the publication of Lindly's 2007 study, the number of ICB stops in Alabama has tripled. Due to the 5311(f) program's funding the percentage of rural population within a 25 mile radius of an ICB stop increased from 32.2% to 78.1% in 2014, with a projected 85.6% of the rural population if the funding were to be available. Another result from the 5311(f) program are the Western Alabama Public Transportation (WAPT) 5311(f) stops. WAPT works with Greyhound to sell tickets to connections from rural areas to larger cities. WAPT riders buy a Greyhound ticket that has multiple "tears" specific to which system the rider is on at that point. From a rural area the WAPT driver will take the WAPT "tear" then drop the rider off at the Greyhound location, where the Greyhound driver will take the Greyhound "tear." Since the WAPT shuttles are traveling to more rural areas, the shuttle is usually a fifteen-passenger van, while a larger 30-passenger van can be sent if need be. However, due to under usage, only one WAPT 5311(f) non-stop location remains in constant use.

3.3.2. Colorado

In 2012, the Colorado Department of Transportation, Division of Transit and Rail began updating their Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan. As part of the update, a number of Technical Memoranda were developed. The first document, Draft Technical Memorandum 1: Policy Context Update, provided information related to Federal policies and match funds, and noted the most current information as it related to MAP-21. ⁽⁷⁾ Technical Memorandum #4: Potential Network, highlighted the existing network, and potential network expansions and improvements. Of interest is that a series of classifications were created to determine the characteristics between intercity and regional services, and are as follows: ⁽⁸⁾

- Intercity corridors connect rural communities to other bus services for travel to more distant points. Routes on these corridors have very limited frequencies (often one trip in each direction per day), and operate every day of the week (or if not every day, at least on the peak intercity travel days). Typically, a major national intercity carrier would provide service on these corridors.
- Rural regional corridors connect rural communities to the nearest regional city and the intercity bus network. Routes on these corridors have limited frequencies (often one to three trips in each direction per day), and operate every day of the week. These routes would allow a passenger from a rural community to travel to the nearest regional city for a medical appointment or other personal business and make a return trip home in the same afternoon. In most instances, public transit operators or casino buses would provide service on rural regional corridors.
- Emerging regional corridors are located in urbanizing areas in the state with a growing transit demand. Routes on these corridors have moderate frequency (often several trips in each direction per day), and operate at least every weekday if not every day of the week. These routes would allow for passengers to complete a round trip in a day, and in some instances, may be used for commuting purposes, in addition to be a lifeline service. Public transit operators would provide service on emerging regional corridors.
- High capacity regional corridors serve many of the established and urbanized areas of the state with a high transit dependent population. Routes on these corridors operate with a higher frequency, with at least eight round trips a day, throughout the week. Often these routes would be used for commuting purposes, but they would also provide the benefit of being a lifeline for transit dependent populations. Public transit operators would provide service on high capacity regional corridors.

3.3.3. Kansas

The Kansas Statewide Intercity Bus Study, completed in 2012, included a survey that was conducted in Kansas to get a demand of new potential bus routes that could pass through in the state, the surveyed population was the existing ICB users. ⁽⁹⁾ Paper and online surveys were sent to the population of Kansas asking if the individual's ICB needs were being met and what changes they would like to see. Over 2,000 surveys were returned, and the Kansas Department of

Transportation (KDOT) used the results to help come up with some potential ICB solutions and prioritized strategies and solutions. Marketing was identified as an area of weakness for the ICB systems, but kiosks and an updated webpage are planned as potential solutions. KDOT also proposed a possible partnership with statewide or nationwide commercial franchises for agents, marketing, and potential stops for future expansion or to increase service frequency to certain areas.

3.3.4. Michigan

To get a further understanding of the popularity and potential improvements on ICB services three separate surveys were distributed in Michigan: one survey for the Intercity Passenger Rail System, one for the ICB System, and one for the Amtrak Thruway Bus System. Five hundred thirty-three surveys were received from travelers using the ICB system. The survey was intended to get a general demographic of ICB users, and to determine what mode of travel would be most used between airplane flights, motor vehicles, or not to make the trip, if the ICB system was not available. From the 533 respondents, a majority of the ICB users drove themselves to the original bus stop and were expecting to drive in a personal car once their final destination by intercity bus was reached, with the median annual household income recorded to be \$19,100 for ICB users in Michigan. It was also found that 60% of ICB users would drive a personal vehicle if the ICB was not available, and 22% of ICB users surveyed would not make the trip at all. ⁽¹⁰⁾

3.3.5. Minnesota

The 2014 Minnesota Intercity Bus Study reviews and evaluates Minnesota's existing intercity bus network, determines changes and improvements based on needs and service gaps, and provides policy recommendations to meet intercity bus needs. ⁽¹¹⁾ With the ever growing number of national companies, smaller rural areas tend to be overlooked when it comes to ICB services. Jefferson Lines has continuously picked up forgotten routes, connecting rural areas to more populated areas since 2005. Jefferson Lines picks up in rural areas in the early morning and drops off in the late afternoon. Due to the 5311(f) program increasing funding and routes through Minnesota, about 79% of the population is within ten miles of a bus stop and 95% is within twenty-five miles of an ICB stop. In addition to a majority of the population being close to an ICB stop, all 5311(f) routes with an origin or destination in the Twin Cities have service at least once a day.

3.3.6. Montana

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) conducted a study to get a better understanding of the rural ICB needs in the state. Two surveys were conducted, an in-person survey and an over-the-phone survey. The in-person survey was conducted in the larger bus stops in the state so that the most accurate account of needs could be recorded. The phone survey was meant to connect with those that were residents of more rural areas around the state, to see if the introduction of ICB services to the areas would be a good addition or not. After the survey data was collected, the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Toolkit was utilized to estimate ICB demand based on the populations of locations served in order to analyze potential new services. Once the new routes have been projected meetings with local ICB providers are

held to discuss the possibilities of the routes. After the surveys and utilization of the toolkit, it was recommended that MDT focus its funding on the larger cities in the state so that the threshold of 85 % of the largest (most populated) cities in the state are receiving at least some level of intercity service to determine whether or not the state's ICB service needs are being met.⁽¹²⁾

3.3.7. Nebraska

A 2014 Assessment of Intercity Bus Services found that intercity bus service in Nebraska is limited both by the number of providers and potential riders. Based on the assessment, the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) will implement the following action plan to increase and improve intercity bus service in the state:

- Develop a statewide marketing plan for public transportation to include specific strategies for intercity bus service. The marketing plan will also identify and target the demographic populations most impacted by public transportation availability including elderly, disabled, and low income individuals.
- Work with rural transit systems and metropolitan planning organizations to establish additional feeder routes that connect the rural population with transportation opportunities in urbanized areas.
- Increase awareness of available intercity bus funding and actively recruit participation of other providers. NDOR will use the Iowa DOT's intercity bus guidance as a model.
- Assist Ponca Express in Norfolk with both technical assistance and funding to expand their intercity bus service to Lincoln, Omaha, and South Sioux City.⁽¹³⁾

3.3.8. North Dakota

With higher fuel costs and changing economic conditions, travel behavior and the level and allocation of resources in highways, rail, air, and transit service in rural areas, may be changing. The objective of the study, *Assessing Demand for Rural Intercity Transportation in a Changing Environment*, was to determine the attitude of would-be passengers in their choice of mode and the factors determining their choice in rural and small urban areas. A stated preference survey was developed and administered to residents of North Dakota and northwest and west central Minnesota. The survey asked respondents to identify their mode of choice in different hypothetical situations where there were five modes available – automobile, air, bus, train, and van – under differing mode and trip characteristics.

A multinomial logit model was used to estimate the likelihood that an individual would choose a given mode based on the characteristics of the mode, the characteristics of the individual, and the characteristics of the trip. Results show that travelers, especially those of lower income, respond to higher gasoline prices by choosing alternative modes in greater numbers, suggesting rural intercity bus, van, and rail ridership would increase if gasoline prices rose. Results also show that

age, gender, income, transit experience, traveler attitudes, travel time, trip purpose, and party size affect mode choice.⁽¹⁴⁾

3.3.9. Tennessee

A 2012 paper examined the characteristics of intercity bus riders within Tennessee and proposed methods to identify service gaps and prioritize network expansion, particularly focusing on rural-urban connections. Data were collected through an on-board survey and compared with intercity auto trips. Compared to personal auto users, intercity bus riders are more likely to be of minority races, unemployed, unable to drive, and from low-income households. The research provided a new approach to identifying high intercity bus demand areas, evaluating the current and future intercity bus networks as this service continues to grow. It also introduced ways to identify the bus stops that do not have good connectivity to either origins or destinations, and criteria to relocate them.⁽¹⁵⁾

3.3.10. Texas

The Texas DOT noted that highway and air transportation have accounted for the overwhelming majority of intercity travel in Texas for the past several decades. A 2010 study, therefore, examined long distance intercity and interregional corridors to determine which corridors will most likely need additional intercity travel capacity in the coming decades. The study examined corridor characteristics (e.g. corridor length, projected travel times at various average speeds, demographic projections) for 18 intercity corridors. The rankings of the corridors based on these characteristics were to identify those that may need added intercity transit services in the future. Texas will need to spend billions of dollars on transportation infrastructure in the coming decades in order to keep pace with expected population growth and the resulting increase in intercity travel demand. Of the 18 study corridors, 13 are projected to meet or exceed their corridor-calculated volume to capacity ratios by 2040 based on projected traffic growth.⁽¹⁶⁾

3.3.11. Utah

The Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) conducted a study to review their current ICB programs and to provide new recommendations to further develop the ICB program in the state. The study focused mostly on connecting routes and possible changes to connect rural areas to larger populated cities in the state. One idea that has already been put into place is a rural connector that works with the National Bus Traffic Association (NBTA). The rural connector pays an annual membership fee of \$100 to NBTA, allowing the connector to sell interline tickets that are scheduled around other NBTA members, such as Greyhound. Other proposed ideas were private shuttles between larger populated areas to less populated areas. The areas in need were all assessed in an open workshop devoted to the needs of the general population.⁽¹⁷⁾

3.3.12. Washington

Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) conducted a study to determine the extent to which the current ICB service provided for the needs of those that would most benefit from ICB service, called “potentially transit-dependent persons.” The analysis results showed that the

areas with the highest density of potentially transit-dependent persons were mostly congruent with areas of highest population density and already had adequate ICB service. Those identified with the highest need for transit services were persons aged 18-24, persons aged 60 and older, persons living below the poverty line, persons with disabilities, and persons from households without automobiles. The study concluded that areas with the highest population densities should be the areas on which bus network expansion is focused. The study also identified factors that increased ICB travel, such as access to colleges and universities, airports, hospitals, military bases, correctional facilities, and linkages with rail transportation. Finally, the study identified issues with 5311(f) funding for ICB service, such as insufficient personnel with grant writing skills, and difficulties in finding local support, sponsorship, and matching funds. Washington State has not certified that it has no unmet needs, and utilizes the full 15% of funds. ⁽¹⁸⁾

3.4. INTERCITY BUS FUNDING

Aside from the 5311(f) program, a number of states have their own programs for subsidizing ICB services. ⁽³⁾ State funds allow more flexibility than is possible with the federal program. In a national survey conducted in 2009, 44 states affirmed that they did maintain a 5311(f) program. Five states did not maintain a 5311(f) program, and one state had an unknown status. ⁽⁴⁾

Moreover, many types of local funds are used by intercity program sponsors to support ICB services. Local funds are generated at the local level or from different sources that make funds available to localities. ⁽³⁾ For example, one of the projects in Maine serves several communities along a coastal route. Three communities contributed local funds to help meet match requirements for the 5311(f) program. Finally, private funding also is provided through both private non-profit organizations that are involved with ICB transportation, and private ICB carriers that operate such services. ⁽³⁾

The national study revealed that local operating match has been and continues to be a fundamental problem. ICB routes that serve different jurisdictions and need funding will require ongoing assistance from local match, while obtaining ongoing operating assistance match from local governments or private for-profit carriers is very problematic. ⁽⁴⁾

There are two primary methods for funding ICB service. The first is a traditional grant funding process. Many states use this method, which involves ICB providers applying for funding and the state department of transportation (DOT) personnel determining which applicants receive it. Iowa uses this method with the following priority rankings: 1) providing existing ICB service (award \$0.20/mile); 2) adding new feeder routes from non-urban communities (award \$0.50/mile for new service, \$0.20/mile for duplicate routes); 3) increasing public awareness and marketing (award case-by-case); and, 4) upgrading equipment and facilities such as ADA accessibility equipment (award case-by-case). ⁽⁶⁾ In addition to Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania, DOT programs provide assistance in the form of grants to eligible applicants. ⁽⁴⁾

A different approach to ICB service funding is a system that more closely resembles a bid process. For this method, state DOT personnel identify potential ICB service routes in need of upgrades, then issue a request to qualified bidders. The bidders propose a compensation rate for providing services on the identified routes. WSDOT uses the bid method. After WSDOT staff

identify a route in need of service they issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) and ask that bidders provide (1) their qualifications, (2) price, (3) experience, and (4) a proposed business plan. The bids are reviewed by a panel consisting of WSDOT staff, a Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (WUTC) representative, local (non-bidding) transit operators, and representatives of the non-bidding private bus industry. ⁽¹⁸⁾

Some other states, such as California and Oregon, are not limited to one funding approach. Caltrans provides ICB assistance in three forms: 1) grants; 2) RFP; and 3) a mixture of both approaches. In Oregon, funding is provided through a grant under the discretionary program, while an RFP approach is used under a pilot project for service on particular corridors that were identified by an ODOT needs study. Mixed funding can also be awarded in Oregon. ⁽⁴⁾

In Colorado, funding of longer routes between neighboring states, which are in need has been shared between the two states. Colorado and Utah partnered to reinstate intercity bus service on US 40 connecting Denver to Salt Lake City. In this partnership, Colorado provided operating funding while Utah provided vehicle capital. In addition to a partnership with Utah to split the funding of a bus route that was shortcoming, a similar partnership was created with Colorado and Kansas. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) worked with KDOT to provide daily service between Pueblo (CO) and Wichita (KS) by using 5311(f) funding. ⁽⁷⁾

ICB service funds are used for different purposes across states in the United States, depending on their funding priorities. Table 3 shows how ICB funds were allocated in nine states as identified through the literature review. The survey also revealed that almost all of the states required local match and reporting/auditing for ICB projects.

Table 3: Allocation of 5311(f) Funds

State	Allocation of Funds (Eligible Activities)	Notes
CA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating and capital assistance; and • Construction of facilities (in very limited cases). 	Vehicle project awards are allowed a project period of 2 years, while transit facility projects are allowed multi-year periods to expend funds.
CO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating assistance; • Limited capital for vehicles; and • Potential statewide and route specific marketing. 	<p>For operating assistance, CDOT provides FTA funding for up to 50% of the net operating deficit (up to 100% for pilot project).</p> <p>For capital projects providing ADA accessibility or Clean Air Act compliance, federal funds are available for a maximum of 90% and a 10% local match. For other projects, the maximum federal share is 80%, with a local or carrier share of 20%.</p>
GA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle purchases; • Signage; and • Marketing elements. 	<p>Only private, for-profit intercity providers are eligible for the 5311(f) program.</p> <p>For vehicle purchases, 20% of project cost is local matching funding from the private providers.</p>
IL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating, capital, and technical assistance projects. 	Existing Illinois funding guidelines provide no encouragement for innovative proposals. The current system encourages non-sustainable service.
IA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to preserve the existing interstate system; • Development of new connector/feeder service; • Route-specific marketing projects; and • Vehicle and bus terminal improvements. 	<p>Operating assistance projects generally cover a one-year period.</p> <p>Capital improvement projects are allowed a reasonable period for project implementation based on the nature of the project.</p>
KA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and marketing for ICB transportation; • Promoting already existing ICB routes, and; • Potential partnerships with statewide or nationwide commercial franchises. 	Potential partnerships include collaboration with McDonalds, Walmart, TA Travel Centers of America, for the purpose of more stops, agents, and marketing techniques.
MI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to preserve existing ICB system; 	Currently Michigan's Intercity Passenger Rail System is more popular than Michigan's ICB system.

Table 3: Continued

State	Allocation of Funds (Eligible Activities)	Notes
MN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating assistance for existing routes at risk of being shut down, and new routes; • Capital assistance for the construction of stations, terminals, and shelters or vehicle retrofit costs for accessibility equipment required to meet ADA; • Marketing; and • Planning studies. 	<p>Request for operating assistance must contain locally specific marketing activities.</p> <p>The state does not provide any portion of the local match for operating projects.</p> <p>Capital project requires a 20% local match, with the remaining 80% provided out of federal funds.</p>
OH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase/construction of intermodal facilities; • Administrative cost of ticketing agents; • Marketing expenses; and • Route-specific operating assistance. 	No state funds used toward the nonfederal matching requirements.
OR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning; • Capital assistance; • Operating assistance; and • Pilot project grants for operating assistance for specific service in specific corridors. 	<p>To be eligible for financial support, services must have limited stops over longer distances and be part of the national ICB or rail network.</p> <p>Operating funds are normally awarded for two years. Operating projects are funded with maximum 50% Federal and minimum 50% local shares.</p> <p>Capital projects are funded with 80% Federal funds and a 20% local match.</p>
PA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating assistance; and • Limited capital assistance. 	<p>Operating projects are eligible for 50% Federal funding, 25% State, with 25% local/carrier match required.</p> <p>Capital projects making ADA (Americans with Disability Act) improvements are funded with 90% Federal funds and 10% local match.</p> <p>Any other capital projects are funded with 80% Federal funds, 10% state funds, and a 10% local match.</p>
WA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle purchase; • Equipment to provide accessibility; • Computers and other equipment to provide interline ticketing; • Signage; and • Facilities at the receiving station that are used by the 5311(f) riders. 	<p>No match funding is required.</p> <p>Use private sector in-kind match for feeder routes.</p> <p>Washington provides an ICB program through an RFP process; contracts for service in particular corridors identified by the State.</p>

3.5. BEST PRACTICES OF INTERCITY BUS SERVICE FUNDING

As part of the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) study, state ICB program managers were surveyed for input on specific ICB projects funded in each state. The survey received information on 267 ICB projects from 26 states. State program managers were further contacted to identify those projects that they thought would be good case studies. As a result, 50 best practices were identified. These projects were categorized by the following:

- The primary *type* of project (e.g. planning, operating, capital, and marketing).
- Whether the local agency served as a commission agent for an intercity carrier.
- Whether the project involved a terminal.

The operating assistance includes intercity service and regional/feeder service. It should be noted that many of the 50 projects crossed categories; a number of them included both operating and capital components, and the local agent served as a commission agent. Some of the projects used funding solely from 5311(f) funds, while others used funds from multiple sources. Table 4 summarizes a few of the best practices that had different project types. TCRP Report 79 provides more details about these examples and other best practices.⁽³⁾

Two main methods for allocating 5311(f) funds have been identified through the literature review. Some states such as Iowa, Colorado, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania use a grant application process. Some other states (e.g. Washington) use a RFP/contracts process. California and Oregon use grants, RFPs, and a mixture of both approaches for ICB funding.

Federal 5311(f) funds were used primarily by states for operating assistance, capital assistance, and marketing. States also used the funds for planning studies, administration, and other purposes. Many ICB service projects were funded for a combination of purposes, such as operating and capital assistance. In addition, some states assessed the highest priority to providing more ICB service routes and feeder service, while other states prioritized planning and marketing for ICB service. Hence, the allocation of funds depends on the state's interests and priorities in improving ICB service.

States seem to be constantly reviewing the ICB services in their state, and how the state provides funding for ICB services. States need to review and react to changes in Federal policies, regulations and funding, and the services that may change from ICB providers. The information in Chapter 4 provides updated information from states that participated in a survey conducted in 2015 as part of this project.

Table 4: Examples of Best Practices of Intercity Bus Service Funding

No.	Project Title (Agency)	Project Type	Project Description	Funding
1	Washington state's planning study to identify an intercity network of statewide significance and guide funding assistance (WSDOT)	Planning Assistance	<p>This project mainly included the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inventory of existing services and facilities; • An identification of deficiencies in the current network and an analysis of future deficiencies; • A recommended list of projects to address service and facility deficiencies in the network; • A review of institutional barriers and opportunities; • A summary of resources that could be used to finance improvements; and • Recommendations and implementation strategies. 	<p>The majority of this study was funded with federal Section 5311(f) funds for a total project cost of \$101,531. State funds provided the 20% local match.</p>
2	Jefferson Lines, southern Minnesota marketing project (Jefferson Lines, Minnesota)	Marketing Assistance	<p>Jefferson Lines conducted an ICB marketing study that involved passenger surveys, onboard interviews, and focus groups. This project also included the development of Jefferson's website, media advertising, and a computer and information system for select rural Minnesota agencies.</p>	<p>The budget for this project was \$262,000 with 80% from the federal Section 5311(f) program and the remainder from Jefferson Lines.</p>

3.6. SUMMARY

This chapter provided information on Federal intercity bus regulations, national ICB studies, and state studies on ICB services. Funding of ICB services was also reviewed. At the national level, some trends in ICB services were identified as significant. First, there is overall growth in utilization of the 5311(f) program among states, due to needs and opportunities identified through the consultation process and additional FTA funding. Second, the majority of states are in the process of needs analysis, consultation (to support certification), or program implementation. Third, the number of states receiving certification of having no unmet rural ICB services appears to be declining. ⁽⁴⁾ Under SAFETEA-LU and subsequent Federal legislation, states planning to certify are required to undergo a consultation process. In many states, such a consultation process ended up identifying unmet rural ICB needs.

The literature review found that many states have conducted studies to assess their ICB services and needs. However, a limited number of studies in rural/frontier states (Montana, North Dakota, Texas, and Washington) were identified. The Montana ICB study provided criteria for defining a “meaningful connection” in a rural/frontier state such as Montana (or Wyoming), and noted that the goal of the state should be to provide some level of intercity service to 85% of the largest (most populated) communities in the state. The Montana study noted that this would equate to 26 of the 31 largest communities/towns receiving some form of ICB service. The North Dakota study investigated the factors effecting mode choices. It was found that increasing fuel cost would increase ICB ridership, especially among those in lower income groups. Through examining the characteristics of 18 intercity corridors, the Texas study ranked the corridors to decide which ones may need added intercity transit services in the future. The Washington study assessed the extent to which current ICB services served needs. The study concluded that areas with the highest population densities should be the areas on which bus network expansion is focused.

In addition to the above state studies, the literature review summarized eligible activities for funding and funding requirements in several states as presented in Table 4, which includes the rural/frontier states of Oregon, Colorado, and Washington. Match funding requirements vary among those states; Washington requires no local match, while Colorado and Oregon require 50% match of operating expenses and 10-20% of capital expenses. Colorado, however, will provide 100% of funding for pilot projects. These three states indicated that they have used 15% of their 5311 funds toward ICB service. In Colorado, however, if the amount requested (by providers) or awarded is less than the full 15%, the policy is to request a partial Governor’s Certification, and reprogram the balance of funding to other 5311 projects.

4. STATE SURVEY RESULTS

In addition to the literature review, a survey was created and sent to thirteen different state departments of transportation (DOTs), seeking similar funding practices to Wyoming. An introductory email, which included a link to the online (Survey Monkey) survey, was emailed to the Transit Managers (or similarly titled people) at the DOTs. The email noted that participation in the survey was completely voluntary, and the respondents had the choice to skip (not answer) any question. Of the 13 states emailed, seven responses were received for a 54% response rate. The states that responded are California, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, and Washington.

4.1. CURRENT FUNDING PRACTICES

The survey began with a brief introduction, and then asked for the contact information of the person completing the survey in case clarification of information they provided was necessary. The survey then asked what percentage of the state's 5311 funds is used for ICB services. Six states responded that they used 15% of 5311 funds as directed by federal policy for ICB services. The Washington State DOT (WSDOT) reported that they tried to use the 15% but lacked projects to do so. When asked to clarify this further, the WSDOT respondent stated that in previous years they had spent all of the funding allocated for ICB services, however, the funding allocated for FY 2015 had not been fully spent at the time of the survey.

The survey then asked about the process (or processes) that states used to determine the percentage of 5311 funding used for ICB services. Most states indicated that they use the 15% of their FTA Section 5311 funding for intercity bus services as noted in FTA policies. Nevada stated that before 2015, an application process was implemented where the applicant basically received the amount of funding that was being asked for. For FY 2015, Nevada said it was spending 15% of its FTA Section 5311 funding for intercity bus service. The Washington DOT also reported that they develop their budget based on the applications for the intercity bus service funds. As previously noted, WSDOT has not spent the 15% of their FY 15 FTA Section 5311 funds on ICB services, yet.

The next survey question asked how the states prioritized funding allocations. Washington stated that each intercity route has equal status, and with sufficient funding there has been no need for prioritization. WSDOT did note that if funding were to drop below the required level, then a process for prioritizing funding of the various ICB services would have to be developed. Other states, including California, have created a scoring criteria where no more than a certain level of funding was awarded per sub-recipient. Some states, such as Oregon and Utah use the population along ICB routes (services) to help determine where to spend their funding. Nevada stated that all applicants had been funded up to date, but a scoring system was also used in the funding process. In case of Colorado, a Call for Projects for 5311(f) operating is utilized as a tool. As a pre-condition of the call, a project must be noted as a priority project on the 2014 Colorado Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan and the 2014 Statewide Transit Plan. The respondent from Colorado noted that in CY 2017, they plan to transition to the "Washington

State Model" that entails identifying the key routes that should be funded, instead of the current "call for projects" process.

The survey asked a related question, which asked how ICB service funds (FTA Section 5311f) were awarded. For this question, the choices provided were "Using a grantor/grantee system with potential services applied for similarly to a grant," or "Using a RFP/bid system with potential projects identified by DOT, then issuing a RFP on which service providers then bid," or "Other Option," where states were asking to explain their methods. Colorado, Nevada, and South Dakota responded by stating that they used a grantor/grantee system. Utah and Washington shared that they use a RFP/bid system to award funds. California and Oregon both selected "Other" as their response. California uses a scoring criteria, while Oregon uses both a grant and RFP system to award funds.

The survey then asked respondents to provide any information on any methods used that they would consider a "best practice" for determining the allocation of FTA 5311(f) funds. While six states noted that they did not consider their process "best practices," Colorado responded by saying that the RFP/Bid system is considered a best practice amongst the state for determining the allocation of 5311(f) funds. Table 5 provides a summary of the responses to the first four questions of the survey.

Table 5: State Survey Results

State	% of 5311 Funds Used for ICB	ICB Funding Mechanism	ICB Funds Prioritization and Determination Process	Best Practice
California	15%	Scoring Criteria	Developed scoring criteria to award contracts. Funding should not exceed \$300,000 per sub-recipient.	N/A
Colorado	15%	Using a grantor/grantee system	A Call for Projects for 5311(f) is accepted as a standard method to allocate the ICB operating grant. A proposed project must be listed as a priority project on the 2014 Colorado Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan and the 2014 Statewide Transit Plan. In calendar 2017, Colorado intends to transition to the "Washington State Model" which entails identifying the key routes and going for a competitive bid on one or a bundle of routes.	RFP/Bid system
Nevada	15%	Using a grantor/grantee system	Nevada has a ranking and scoring process based on several different factors.	N/A
Oregon	15%	Both (grantor/grantee and RFP/bid systems)	Prioritization based on gaps in network connectivity to connect communities to 2,500+ to the transit network corridors underserved by transit	N/A
South Dakota	15%	Using a grantor/grantee system	N/A	N/A
Utah	15%	Using a RFP/bid system	Performed a statewide evaluation to assess priority routes	Marketed Transit Program
Washington	15%	Using a RFP/bid system	All four routes have equal status thus no prioritization is needed. If the funding level drops below to the current level, WSDOT will develop a process for scaling back the level of service.	N/A

4.2. PROMOTING INTERCITY BUS SERVICES

The survey asked if ICB services were actively promoted by the DOT. Five of the seven states responded that they actively promote ICB services. Oregon reported that they promote intercity bus services on different websites regulated by the Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and awards market contracts for promotion of state contracted services. In addition, WSDOT noted that they include various transportation information on their website, and feel that the public utilizes the site to obtain information on various transportation modes in the state. In addition, Washington requires all of their contractors to have websites with similar content to promote the various intercity bus and transit options, and to market the websites using various media. Table 6 provides a summary of how states note they promote ICB services.

Table 6: Summary of Strategies in Promoting Intercity Bus Services

State	Strategies in Promoting ICB Services
California	General outreach and the annual “call for projects” letter.
Colorado	No particular strategy.
Nevada	No particular strategy.
Oregon	Web content, marketing contract for promotion of state contracted services.
South Dakota	No particular strategy.
Utah	In concert with Greyhound, providing meaningful connection with Greyhound.
Washington	Include information on the state DOT website and require all of ICB providers to have similar sites and to advertise using multiple media.

4.3. UNIQUE AND EXCEPTIONAL PROJECTS

The survey asked respondents to share any unique ICB projects that were recently completed or are underway. Each of the seven responding states answered this question, with four states providing a detailed description. The respondent from the Colorado DOT noted that they collaborate with the DOTs from surrounding states, such as Kansas and Utah, to establish different connecting routes from larger populated cities with the aid of 5311(f) funds. The respondent from the Utah DOT noted that they have a new system in place called *Elevated Transit*, in which there are buses departing from high traffic areas daily to make meaningful connections within the state, such as from the Salt Lake City Airport to Moab. The respondent from (WSDOT) stated that they had provided vehicles for ICB services during the last round of contracts. The WSDOT respondent noted, however, that they are transitioning to having the transit systems themselves own the vehicles used on ICB services.

4.4. RIDERSHIP AND SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS

The next three questions on the survey asked about any increases or decreases in routes and services; changes in ridership; and any other significant changes in ICB services in the last two years. Table 7 shows a summary of the responses to the first two questions. Of note is that Washington noted a decrease in ridership even without any changes in level of ICB services.

Table 7: Intercity Bus Service and Ridership Analysis

State	Services	Ridership
California	N/A	N/A
Colorado	N/A	N/A
Nevada	Increased	Increased
Oregon	Increased	Increased
South Dakota	No Change	No Change
Utah	Increased	Increased
Washington	No Change	Decreased

In response to the question about any significant changes in ICB services, Nevada had reported that there was a 100% increase in service on one of their routes. This is to say that they started a new route where there was no prior service, and they were able to do this by using match from Greyhound miles that are unsubsidized. The respondent from Utah noted that they have established a new route within the last two years, although they noted that only one provider is serving the route, and that they would like the route to be more efficient.

4.5. ISSUES AND BARRIERS

The second to last question on the survey asked, “What do you believe are the most important issues/barriers facing ICB service in your state (i.e., funding, regulations, reduced service, etc.)? Further, what are the opportunities/strategies to address the issues/barriers?” Nevada stated that the biggest issues facing intercity bus service in Nevada was the lack of understanding of business models and profitability of private ICB service providers. After studying the business models and profitability, the Nevada DOT now pays a flat cost per mile for support of ICB services, and allows private companies to make a profit. The respondent from Oregon noted that the issue/opportunity that they are facing is around strengthening their over-all transit network. They are looking at policies and funding resources to determine how to address local and regional needs, while being able to strengthen the intercity services as well. It is clear that Oregon is looking at the overall public transportation network, and not intercity services as a standalone service/entity. It should be noted that Oregon’s Trip Check program (www.tripcheck.com) does show the connection between various modes within the state. The respondents from the South Dakota and Utah DOTs noted challenges to funding vehicles, the overall cost to provide intercity services, and marketing (attracting passengers). The respondent from the Washington DOT noted that one barrier was limited matching funds. In Washington, they use the unsubsidized miles from Greyhound as match, which has some limits. They noted that there is no state funding that can be used as match for the FTA Section 5311(f) ICB funds.

The final question of the survey was open-ended and allowed respondents to provide any other comments they had on ICB services, either from a national perspective, or from a state-level perspective. The respondent from Utah noted that their ICB services are funded entirely from the 5311(f) funds (15% of their FTA Section 5311 funds) and unsubsidized Greyhound miles for match. State or local funds are not utilized in the Utah public transit program. They also noted

that while some new ICB routes in Utah have completed the first year of a five-year operation, maintenance and operational expenses are above anticipated levels. This could lead to the contract being cancelled before the five-year period, unless additional funding can be identified.

It was noted that the provider is making operational and maintenance adjustments to try and keep costs in line with projections. The respondent from Washington noted that western Washington is well served by transit systems that interconnect, so ICB services have much less of a role in that region. The respondent noted that eastern Washington has low population densities, and it is likely that there is no funding to add services to that region beyond what is currently provided. It should be noted that many states that have regions with low population densities, like Wyoming, face similar challenges to provide cost-effective services in areas with very few people.

4.6. SUMMARY

The purpose of the survey was to gather information from states that are similar to Wyoming to determine if the states had any practices or policies that could be implemented to benefit the ICB services in Wyoming. The survey was sent to thirteen states, and a total of seven states responded to the survey. Of the seven states that responded, all noted that they use 15% of their FTA Section 5311 funds to support ICB services. Washington noted that at the time of the survey, they hadn't yet expended all of their FY 15 ICB funds.

Respondents from three states (Nevada, Oregon, and Utah) noted that they have been able to increase intercity bus services in the last two years, and ridership had increased as well. The respondent from Washington noted, while there has been no change in ICB services, ridership has decreased over the past two years. In general, it appears that funding is an issue, whether for vehicles (buses) or operations, and that sufficient funding, including sufficient matching funds, is an issue. According to the responses, many of the states are dealing with the limited funding by using a process that identifies key routes/connections, and then uses a competitive bidding process to implement services on those routes.

5. RIDER SURVEY RESULTS

The purpose of this survey was to provide insight into the users of the intercity bus (ICB) services, and their level of satisfaction with the services in and through Wyoming. The survey was administered at the Cheyenne and Buffalo bus depots in Wyoming, and the full survey is presented in Appendix B. Individuals riding the ICB were approached to complete the survey as they waited for their bus to arrive, were departing the bus, or on a layover between buses. All riders were asked if they would be interested in helping with the study by completing the survey, and that their participation was strictly voluntary. Before taking the survey, the riders were also informed that the survey was completely anonymous and that there would be no attempt to try and link any survey responses to a particular individual. There were a few individuals who wanted to participate in the survey, but could not independently complete the survey due to physical or mental reasons. In these few instances, the individuals conducting the survey read the questions to the riders, and noted their responses on the survey form (questionnaire).

A total of 136 surveys were partially or totally completed. For each response, the number of responses is noted (“N”), and the percentage noted in the graphs is based on that number. Further, responses are categorized as being from “All Respondents” (all who responded to that question), “Wyoming residents” (those respondents who indicated they were currently a Wyoming resident), and “Other Respondents” (those respondents who were not Wyoming residents). Out of 136 respondents, 13 (around 10%) of the passengers surveyed were Wyoming residents and 90% (123) were from elsewhere (“other respondents”). Of the 13 Wyoming residents, 77% were male and 23% were female, while 71% of the other respondents were male and 29% were female.

As noted in Figure 1 most respondents (43%) noted that they started their current ICB trip by being driven to the bus station by someone else. This choice was consistent with both Wyoming residents (54%) and other respondents (42%). The second most noted method of arriving to the boarding bus station was by taxi (16%), followed closely by using another ICB service. Other methods used by respondents to access the ICB station included local bus service, walking, and driving their own vehicles. Other modes were used by less than 4% of the respondents.

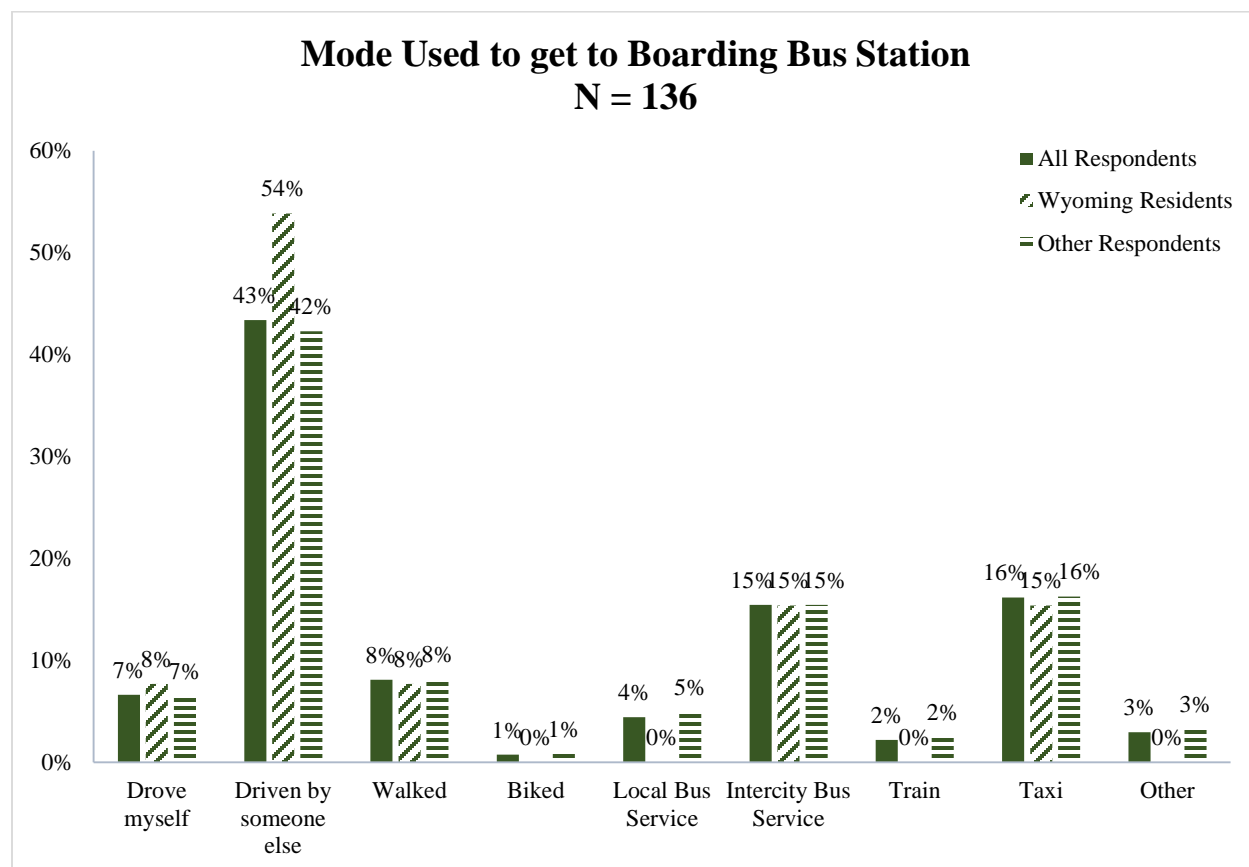


Figure 1: Mode Used to Arrive at Bus Station

The survey then asked riders how they would arrive at their final destination once they exited the ICB. As shown in Figure 2, a majority of all respondents (67%) indicated that they would be driven by another person to their final destination. More Wyoming residents (85%) noted this response in comparison to other respondents (65%). Further, 15% of Wyoming residents indicated that they would be taking a taxi to their final destination while only 5% of other respondents noted using a taxi to get to their final destination. Other respondents indicated that they were more likely than Wyoming residents to use additional ICB services or local bus services to reach their final destination.

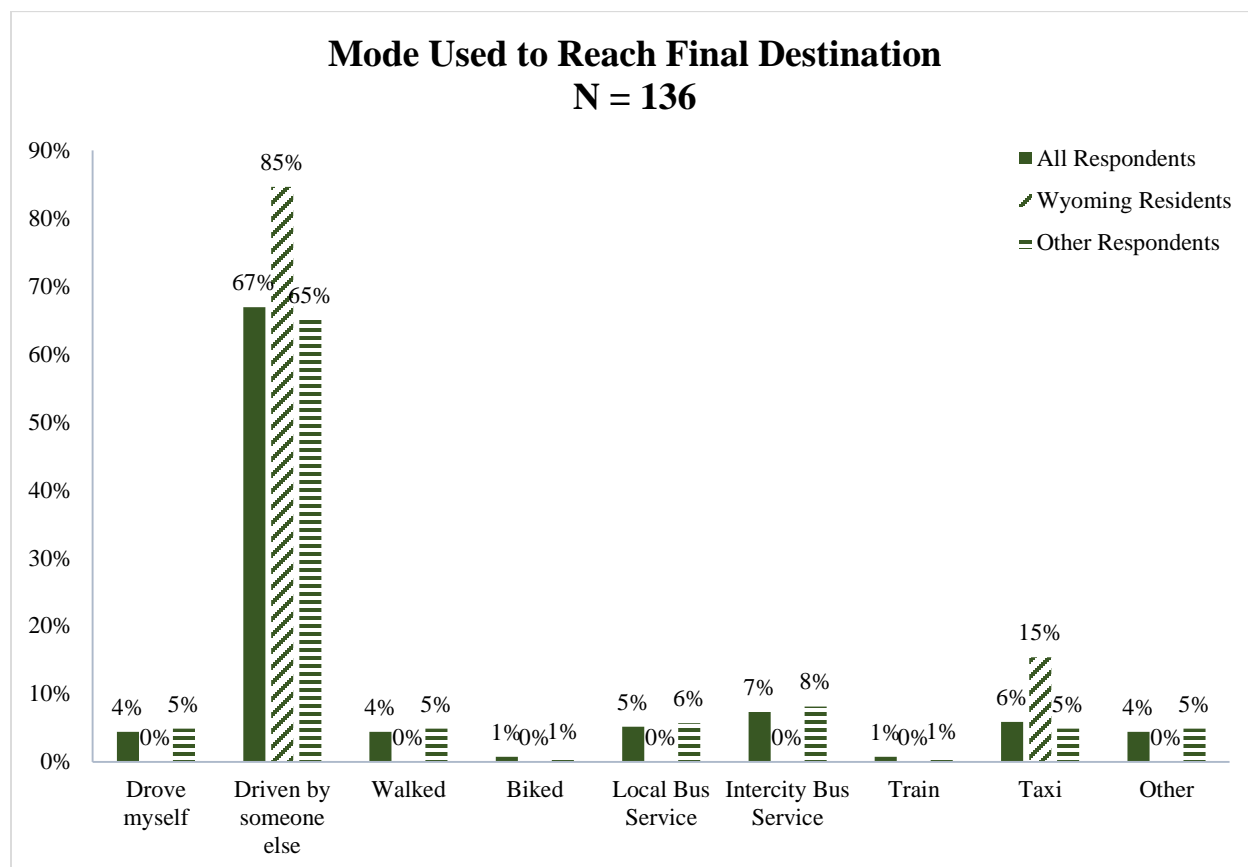


Figure 2: Mode Used to Reach Final Destination

As indicated in Figure 3, the main purpose for most people for riding the ICB was to visit family and friends (39% of all respondents). This purpose for traveling was more prominent among Wyoming residents (54%) as compared to 37% of the other respondents. While 19% of all respondents noted “work” as another specific purpose for riding the bus, “other” purposes was noted by 29% of respondents as the purpose of why they were riding the bus. These “other” uses were further noted to include: relocating somewhere; returning to home; returning/leaving to prison for furlough; taking child custody; attending a funeral; going to take care of parents; and other individual reasons. The range of answers indicates that ICB services provide mobility (transportation) for a range of activities, and could be considered a “life-line service” for many individuals.

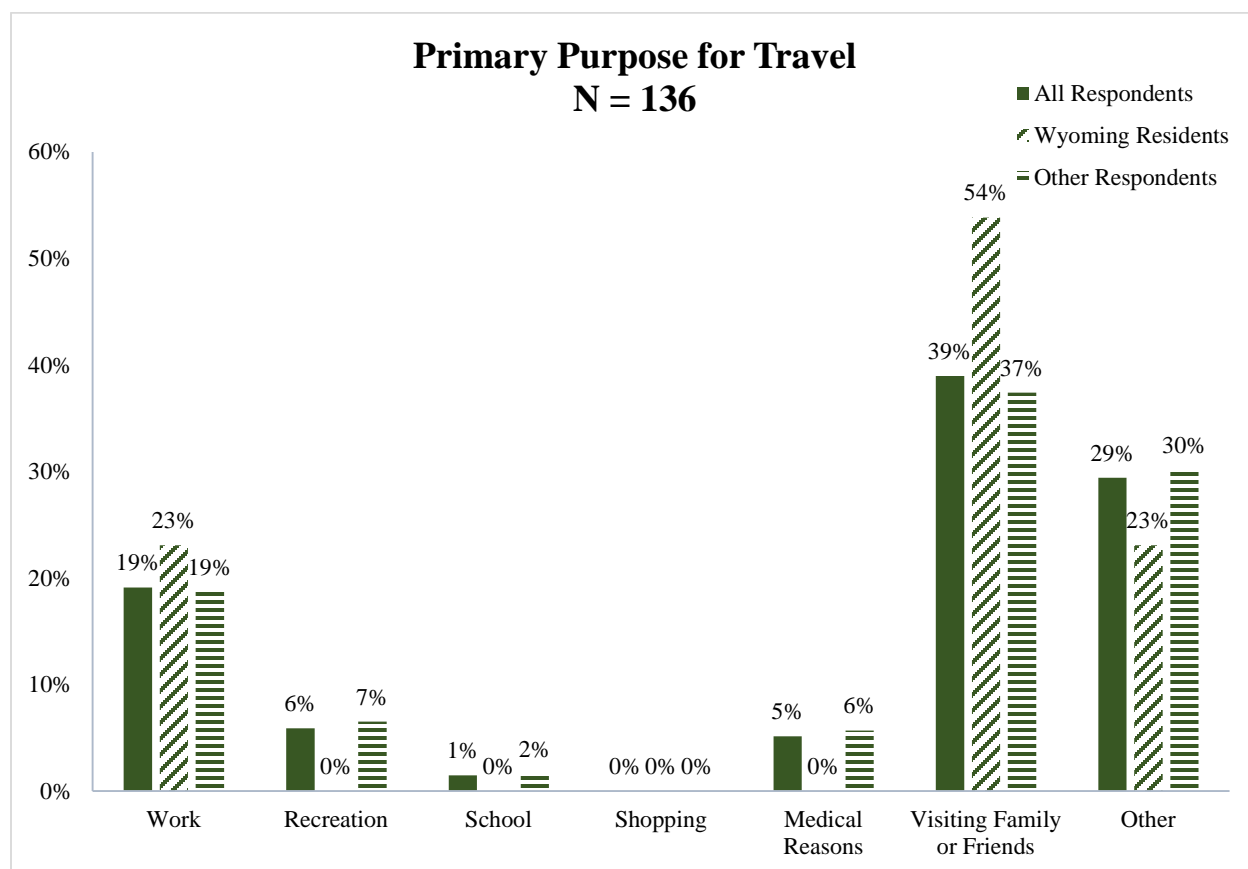


Figure 3: Primary Purpose for Travel

The survey then asked the respondents how they were made aware of the specific route that they were traveling on. The sources of information noted by all respondents included: internet search (45%); word of mouth (25%), and “other” (19%). Wyoming residents noted use of the internet (75%) and print advertisements (17%), much more than other respondents (42% and 5%, respectively). As indicated by Figure 4, other respondents were more likely to be made aware of the specific route by word of mouth (28%) and other sources (20%), compared to Wyoming residents (0% and 8%, respectively).

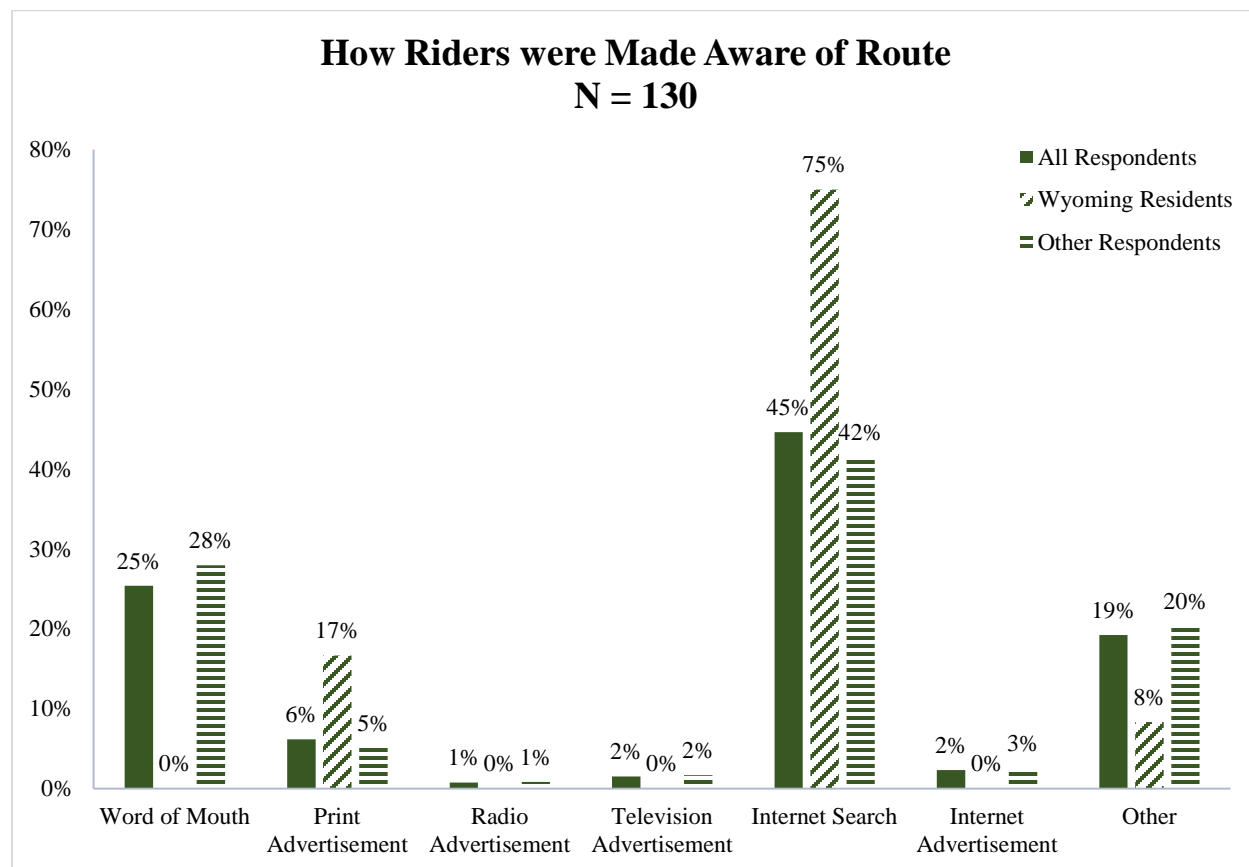


Figure 4: How Riders Were Made Aware of Route

Respondents were then asked how satisfied they were with the information available about ICB services in and through Wyoming. Sixty-seven percent of all respondents indicated that they were either satisfied or somewhat satisfied with available information, while 16% were either somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied. As shown on Figure 5, 62% of Wyoming residents were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with available information, compared to 38% being somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied. Sixty-eight percent other respondents were satisfied or somewhat satisfied, and, only 13% were somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied.

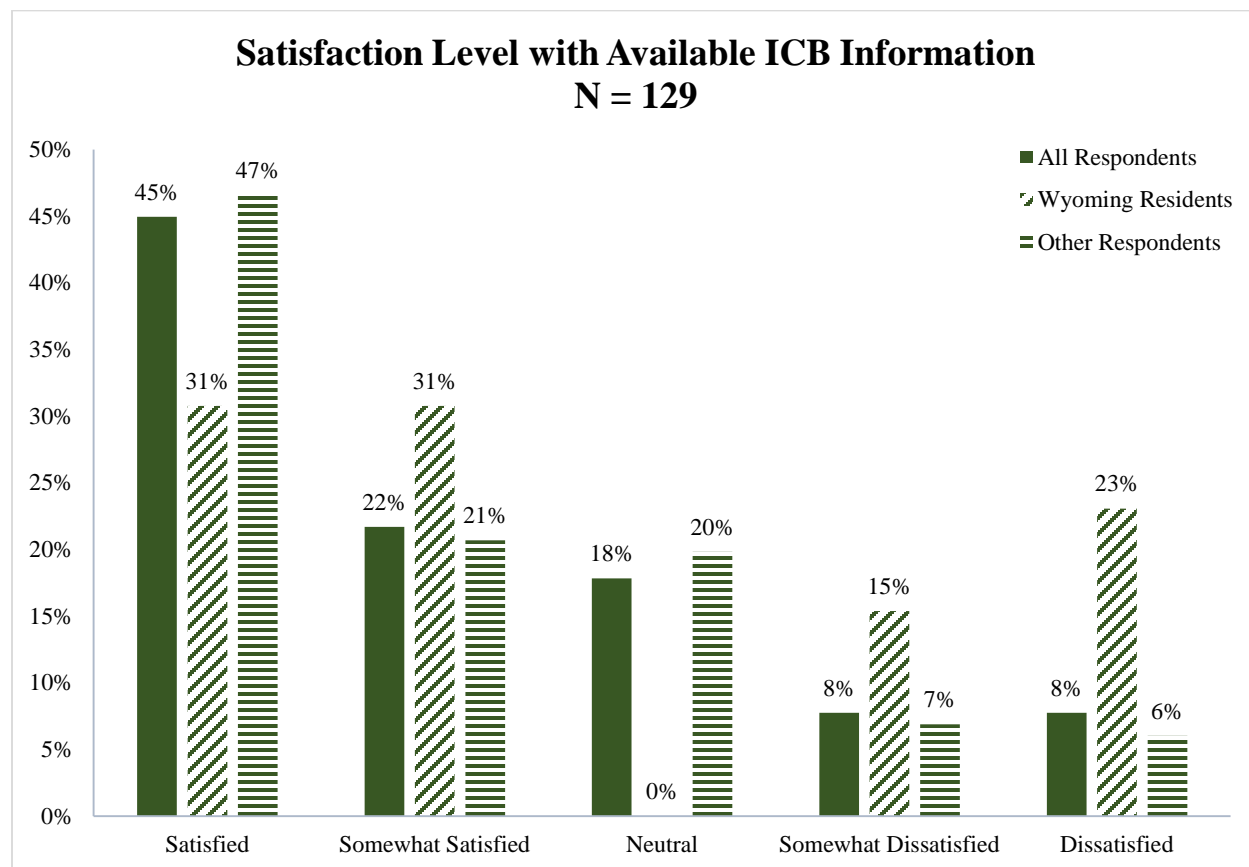


Figure 5: Satisfaction Level with Available ICB Information

When respondents were asked about the main factors that lead them to use the ICB service for their trip, the three main reasons noted included the lack of access to a vehicle (20%), gas prices (18%), and the cost of the service (17%). As shown in Figure 6, in the case of Wyoming Residents, gas prices (23%), lack of ability to drive (23%), and lack of access to a vehicle (23%) were the primary reasons for using ICB services. Safety of service, enjoyment of service, and ease of use were other leading factors for ICB use, although the latter two factors were not noted by Wyoming residents.

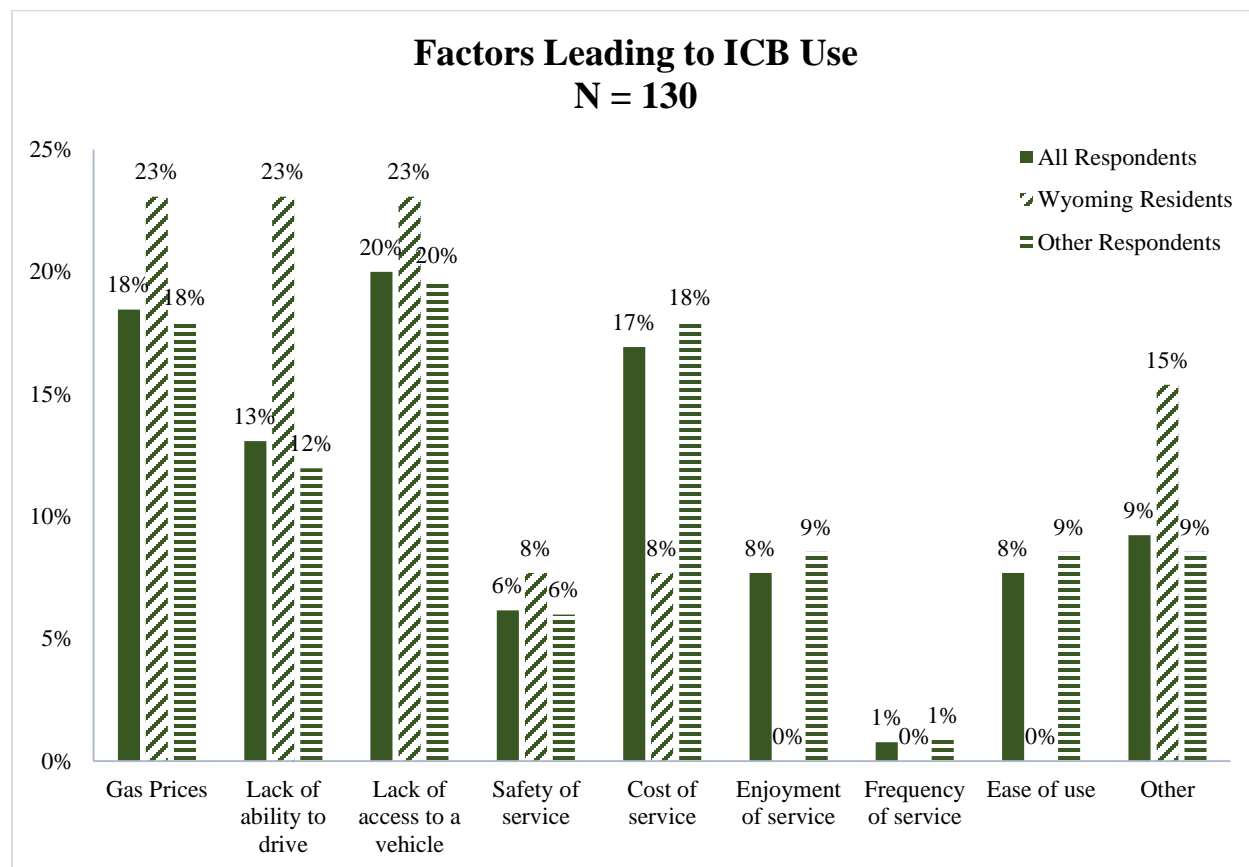


Figure 6: Factors Leading to ICB Use

A majority of all responders (28%) [Wyoming residents (62%), other respondents (24%)] would not have made the trip if the ICB service they were riding that day was not available (Figure 7). If the ICB service was not available, other respondents indicate that they would complete the trip by taking an airplane (28%), ride with someone else (14%), or take a train (13%). Wyoming residents noted to complete the trip they would drive by themselves (15%), and then take an airplane, take a train, or ride with someone else (8% each).

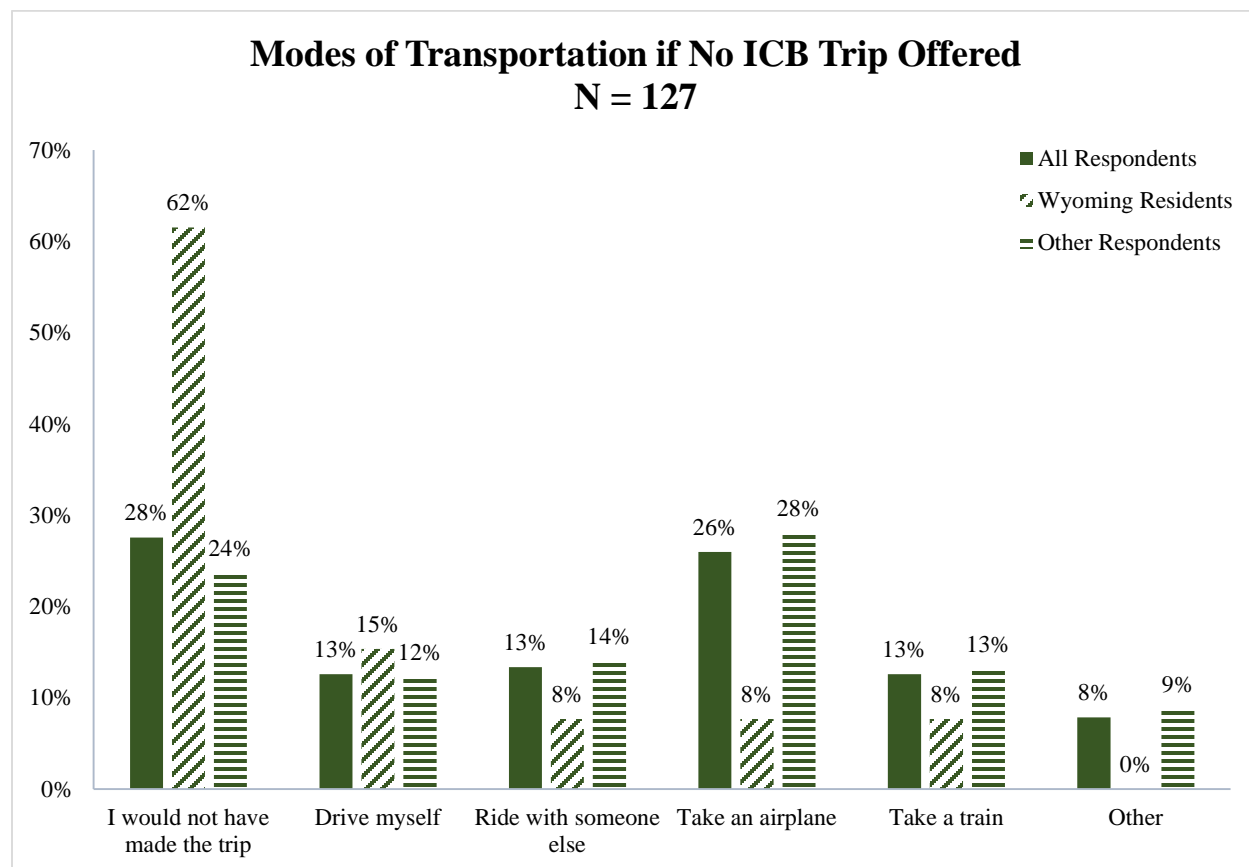


Figure 7: Modes of Transportation in No ICB Offered

As shown in Figure 8, 56% of all respondents are satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the level of frequency of ICB services in and through Wyoming. While an equal percentage of Wyoming residents and other respondents are neutral about the level of frequency, more Wyoming residents (23%) are somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the level of frequency of ICB service compared to other respondents (11%).

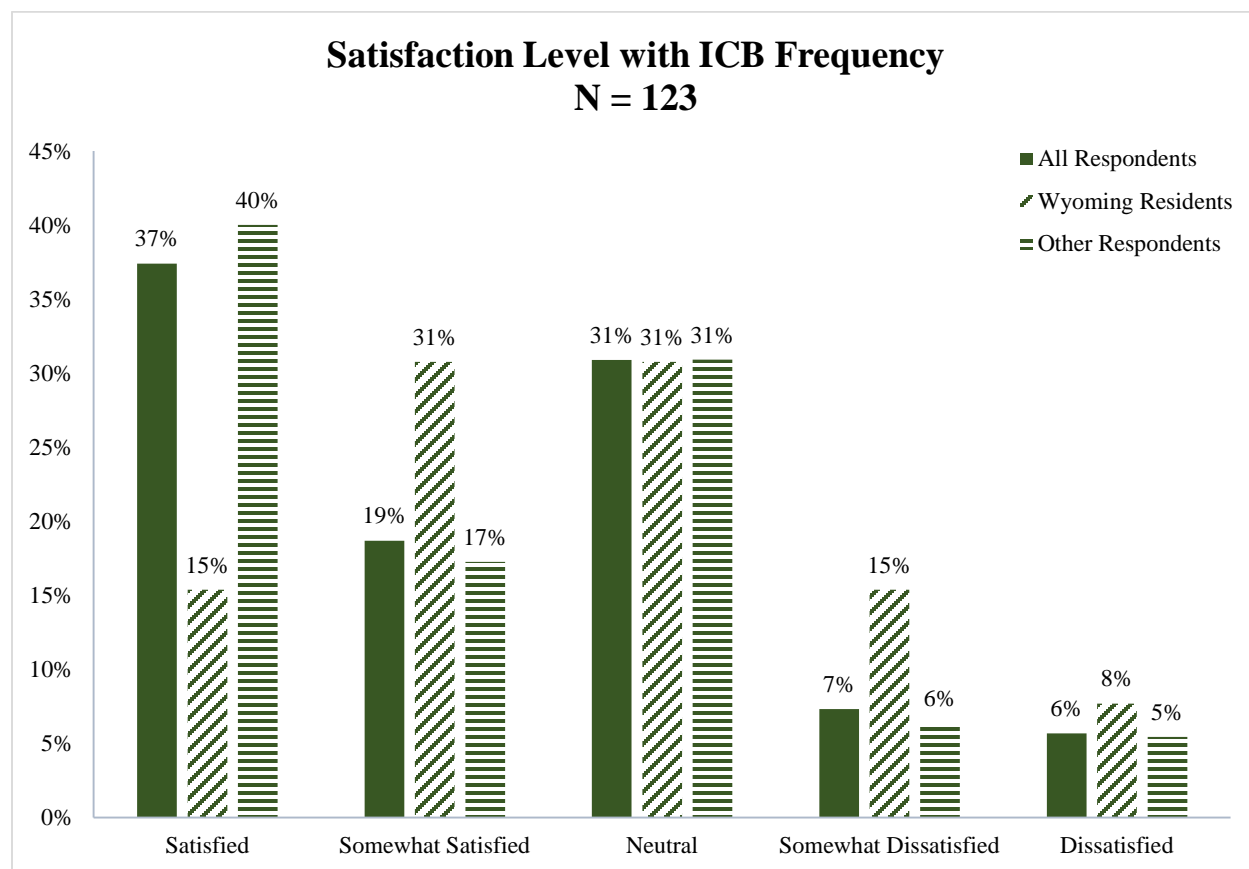


Figure 8: Level of Satisfaction with ICB Frequency

The level of satisfaction in regards to ICB routes is similar to that of the satisfaction for frequency. Figure 9 shows that 58% of all respondents are satisfied or somewhat satisfied with ICB routes in and through Wyoming. However, Wyoming residents are more likely to be somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied (23%) with the ICB routes compared to other respondents (11%). Further, many more Wyoming residents are neutral in their response (38%) compared to other respondents (28%). This may be a case where other respondents are more focused on their final destinations, and don't necessarily care about their routing through Wyoming, where Wyoming residents may be more interested in the routes (destinations) within Wyoming.

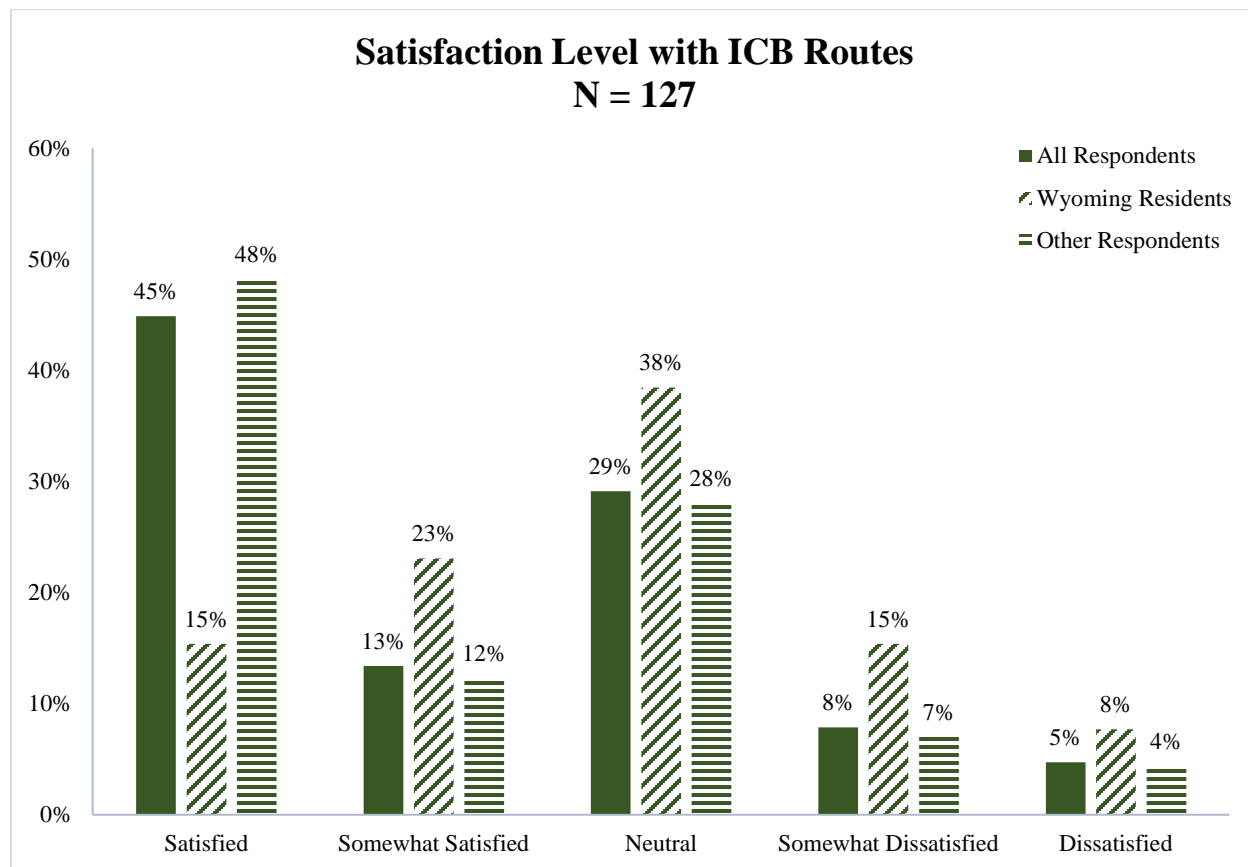


Figure 9: Level of Satisfaction with ICB Routes

Figure 10 indicates that Wyoming residents make less one-way ICB trips (1.62) per year, than the other respondents, who take nearly three (2.91) one-way ICB trips per year. It is important to remember that only ten respondents to the survey were Wyoming residents, so the actual number of trips made by Wyoming residents may be different than indicated herein.

A one-way trip is defined as a trip from an origin to a destination, so a roundtrip would be considered two one-way trips. The numbers shown are averages and are calculated based on the total number of one-way trips divided by the number of respondents. For example, the 113 respondents noted that they take a total of 312 one-way trips per year, so the average is 2.76 ($312/113 = 2.76$).

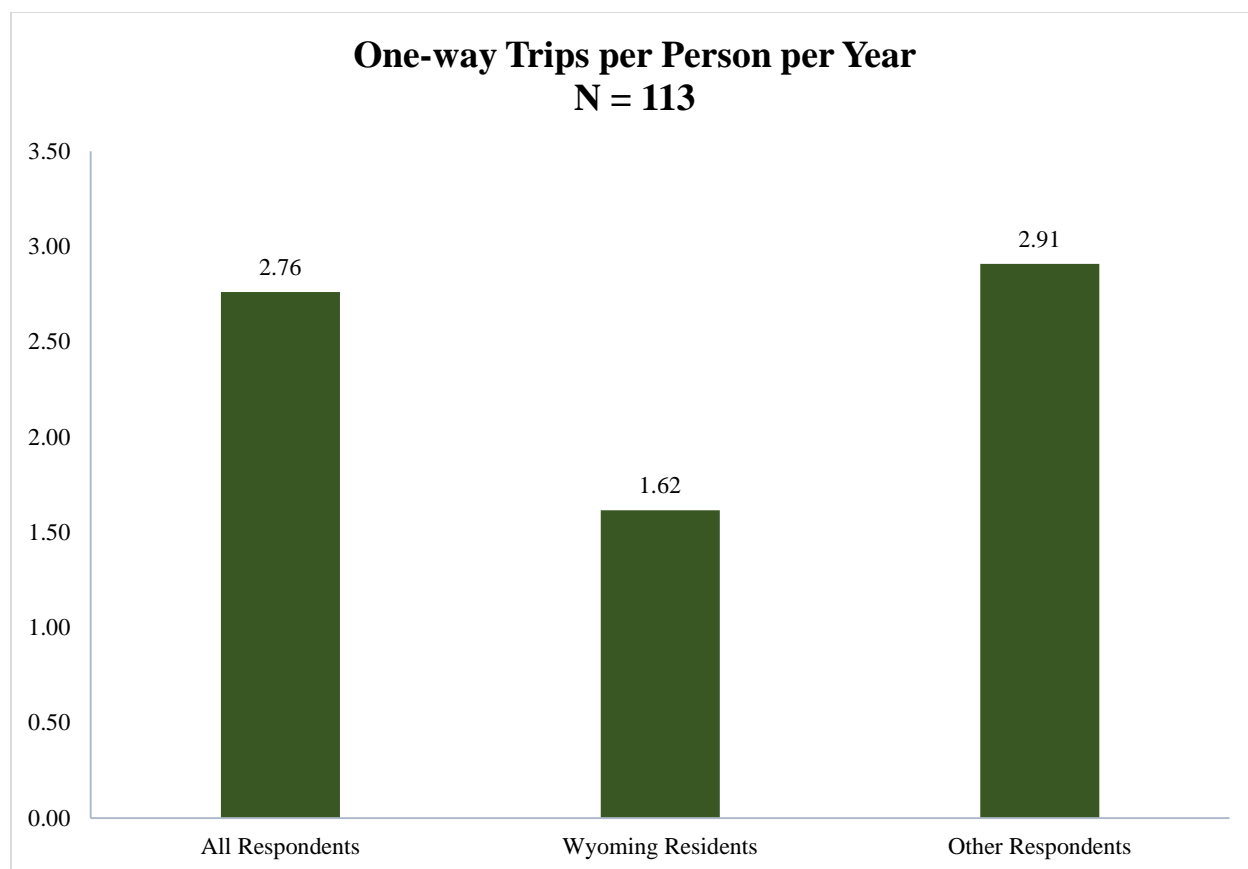


Figure 10: One-Way Trips per Person per Year

It can be seen from Figure 11 that the majority of respondents are more likely to use the ICB services to travel from Wyoming to other states, rather than using the ICB service to travel within Wyoming. It is also logical, as indicated by the responses, that Wyoming residents are more likely to use the ICB services to travel within Wyoming (23%) versus other respondents (8%).

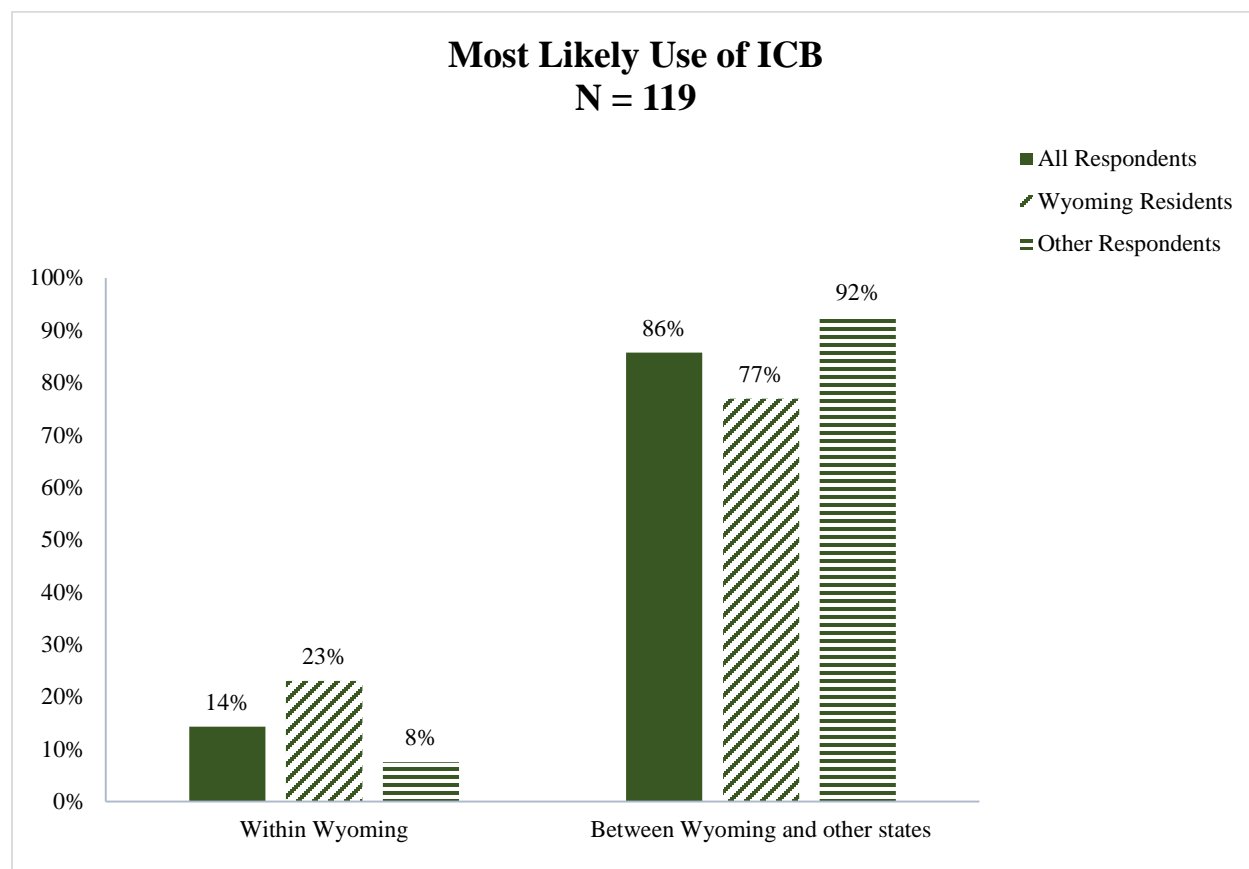


Figure 11: Most Likely Use of ICB

Given the fact that the respondents to the survey were using an ICB service, it was anticipated that these people would also use local bus services for transportation. However, as shown by Figure 12, 64% of all respondents indicate that they never, or infrequently use public transportation (transit). Seventeen percent of Wyoming residents did indicate that they use public transportation on a daily or weekly basis, compared to 24% of other respondents. Further, 12% of other respondents indicated that they use public transit on a monthly basis, compared to 0% of Wyoming residents.

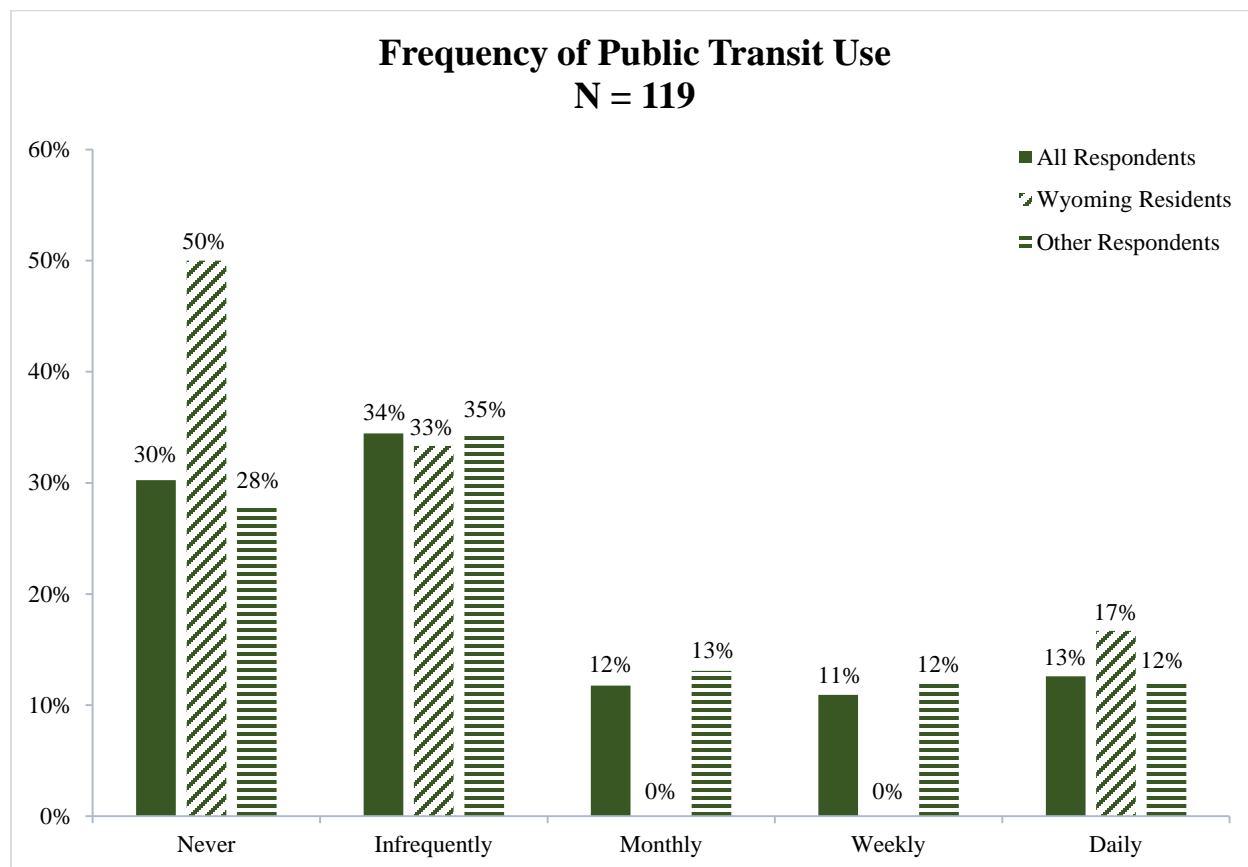


Figure 12: Frequency of Public Transit Use

Figure 13 shows the age distribution of the survey respondents. As shown, only 2% of the respondents were younger than 18, although there was a higher percentage of Wyoming residents (8%) who were under 18 compared to other respondents (1%). Very few respondents were between 66 and 79 years old (5%), and none were older than 80 years old. While the majority of other respondents (38%) were between 25 and 35 years old (compared to 15% of Wyoming residents), the majority (31%) of Wyoming resident respondents were 36 to 45 years old.

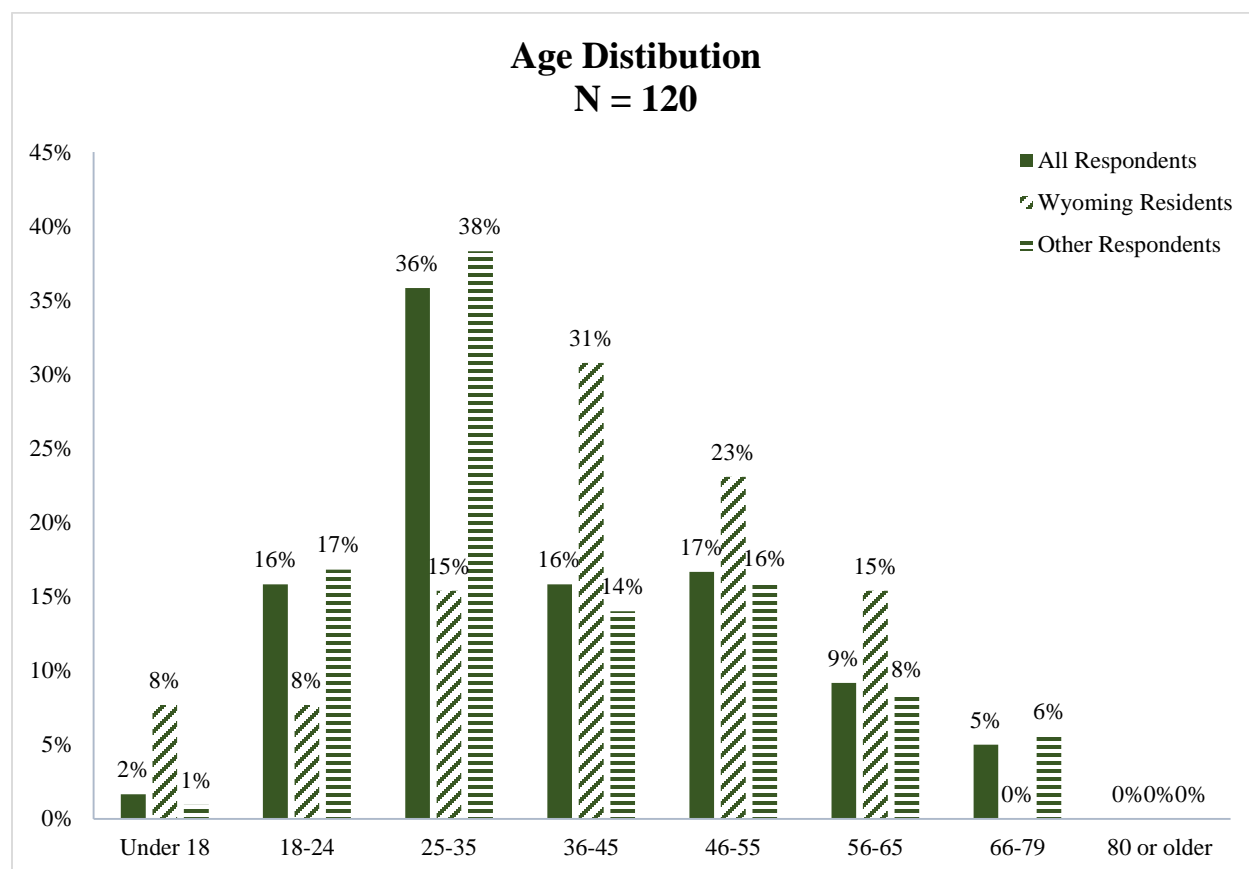


Figure 13: Respondent's Age Distribution

Figure 14 shows the distribution of the annual household income of the respondents. The majority (36%) of the respondents have an annual household income of under \$15,000, and nearly another third of respondents (31%) have an income between \$15,000 and \$29,999. Only 9% of respondents who are Wyoming residents had a household income above \$50,000 per year, compared to 14% of other respondents.

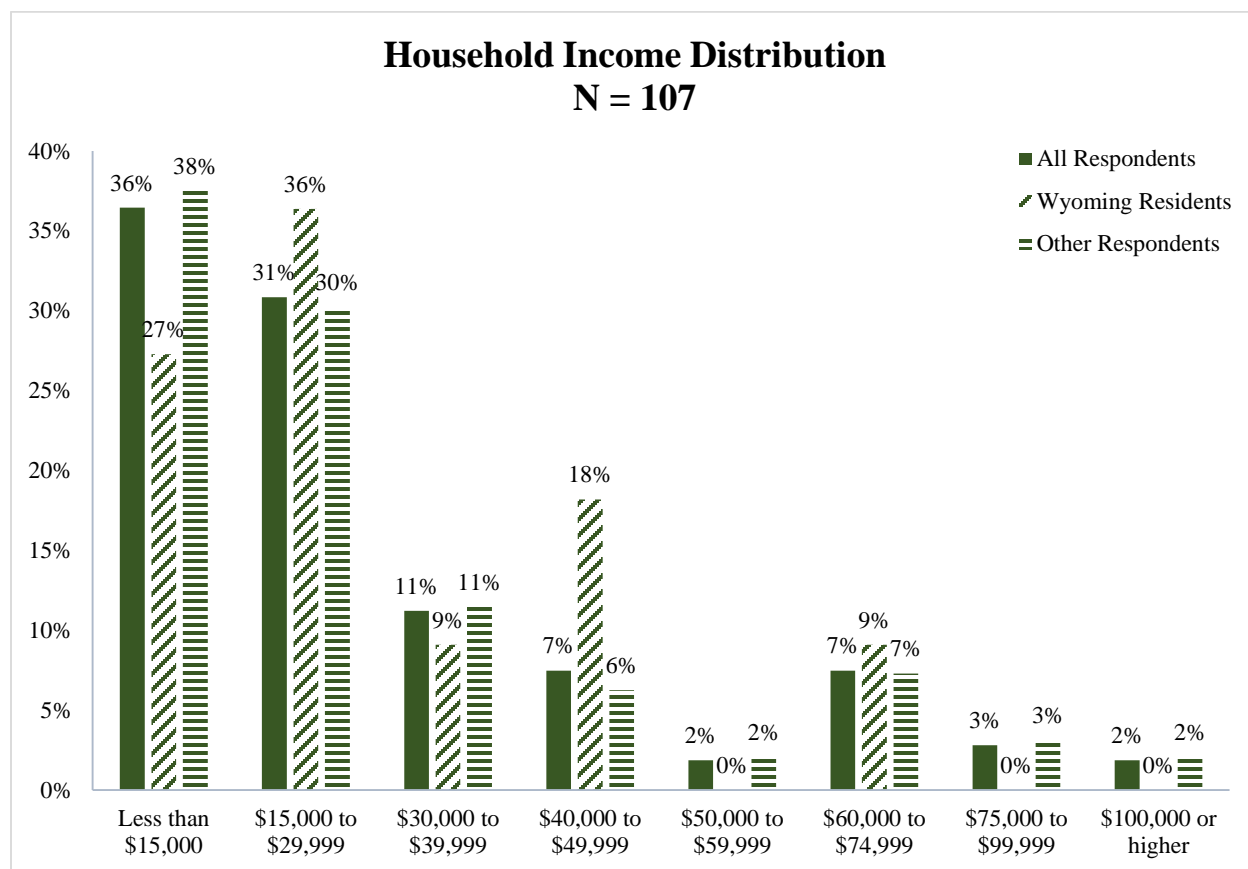


Figure 14: Distribution of Respondents Household Income

In conclusion, the survey results indicate that individuals using ICB services in and through Wyoming are predominately male (71% of respondents) and are mostly between 18 and 55 years old (although twice as likely to be between 25 and 35 years old). Just over two-thirds of those using the ICB services (67%) have a household income of less than \$30,000 per year. A majority of the respondents learned about the intercity service through the internet or by word of mouth. In general, respondents were satisfied (or at least somewhat satisfied) with the information that was available regarding ICB services in and through Wyoming. According to the survey results, the main reasons for using ICB services are lack of access to a vehicle, gas prices, and the cost of the intercity services. If the ICB services were not available, 28% of people would not have taken the trip they were on, although 26% would have used a more expensive option of airline service. Finally, most (39%) of those completing the survey noted that they were using the ICB services to visit family or friends, with 29% saying they were using the service for “other” but similar purposes such as: relocating somewhere; returning home; attending a funeral; or going to take care of parents.

6. CONNECTIVITY ANALYSIS

This chapter includes an examination of the connectivity of current intercity bus (ICB) services with local public transportation providers in Wyoming (FTA Section 5307, 5310 and 5311 providers), as well as with other transportation modes (i.e., Amtrak and Essential Air Service). The network connectivity analysis includes a review of current ICB routes and schedules within Wyoming. The research team collected initial data through a review of ICB websites and other documentation of service providers (intercity, 5307 – urban transit providers, 5311 – rural public transit providers), Amtrak and Great Lakes Airlines. In addition, researchers developed an electronic survey and sent it to Section 5307 and 5311 providers.

Based on the connectivity analysis and literature review, the team developed a working definition of “meaningful connections” for ICB in Wyoming based on the results of the data from the provider surveys, discussions with WYDOT and other stakeholders, and a review of standard practice.

6.1. ICB NETWORK CONNECTIVITY ANALYSIS

Researchers conducted the network connectivity analysis by performing a spatial network analysis and schedule analysis. The existing bus services in the state of Wyoming were separated into three categories for the purposes of the connectivity analysis: (1) major ICB service, (2) minor ICB service, and (3) rural (or demand response/limited connectivity services). The categories also tend to describe the different levels of bus services. Details of these categories are discussed in the next section.

6.1.1. Spatial Network Analysis

Major ICB services include those bus routes that connect to the larger national bus network and operate daily throughout the state of Wyoming. The major ICB carriers in Wyoming include Greyhound, Jefferson Lines, Black Hills Stages, and Mountain States Express. Minor ICB services include bus routes that are scheduled for multiple trips during a week between communities not served by the major ICB network. The minor ICB carriers include All Trans and senior center transit systems such as Washakie County Senior Citizen's Center, Sheridan Mini Bus, and Buffalo Area Transit System (BATS). The “rural/minor ICB” routes provide access to larger cities one or more times a month, but typically less than once-a-week/month (although some offer service twice-a week).

In addition to the major and minor ICB services, there is some air service in Wyoming. The Essential Air Service or “EAS” operator Great Lakes Airlines serves Riverton and Worland, and SkyWest serves Cody and Laramie. During the spring of 2016, Great Lakes Airlines discontinued service to Riverton due to a pilot shortage. It is uncertain how long this lack of service may continue. The ICB networks and EAS service locations are shown in Figure 15.

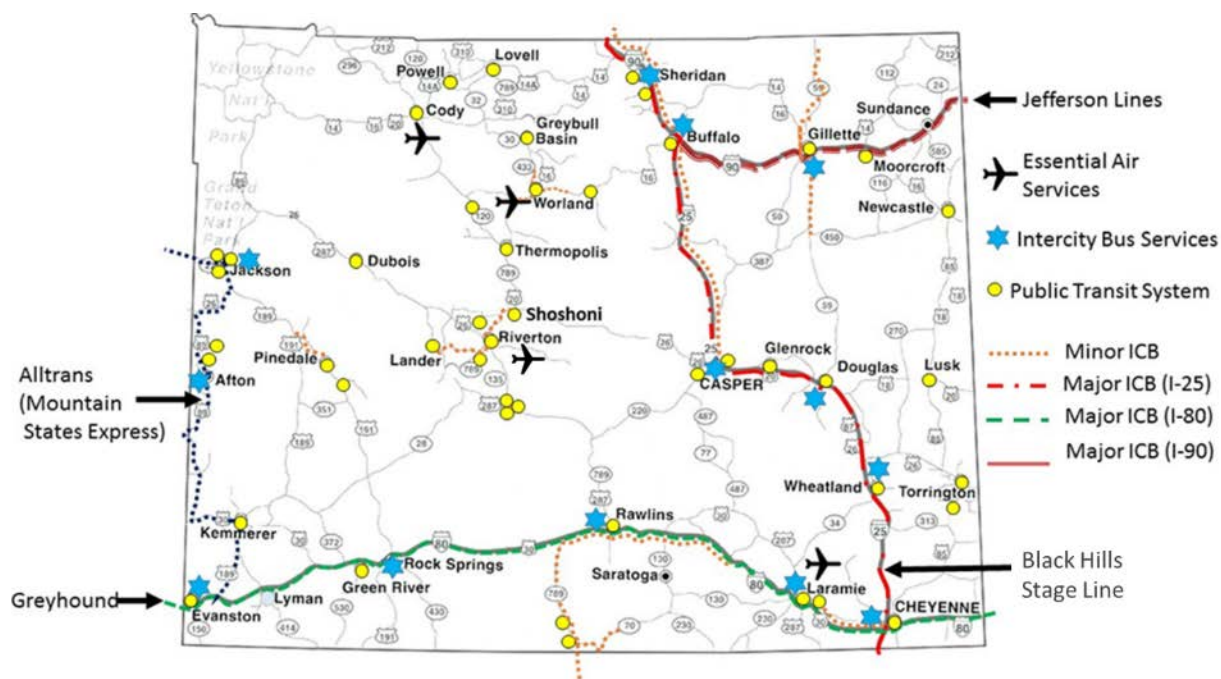


Figure 15: ICB Networks and EAS Locations

Major ICB services run one or more times daily, seven days a week. Minor ICB services are scheduled for certain days of the week. Table 8 shows the days of operation for minor ICB services. A majority of minor ICB are offered by rural transit systems and make trips to larger cities when a trip is requested by a person (or people) in that community. Often rural transit providers make a certain number of trips to larger cities each month. Some of the services shown in Table 8 are seasonal. For example, the services provided by START in Jackson typically operate seven days per week during the winter, the busiest season in the Jackson area.

All of the EAS airports are connected by local transit providers, on a demand response basis. Further, when Great Lakes Airlines discontinued service to the Riverton airport, the Wind River Transportation Authority (WRTA) began more frequent service to Casper, so people could connect to airline service there. WRTA had always provided on-demand service to Casper and other communities, such as Jackson and Rock Springs, but the service to Casper became more popular with the loss of air service from Riverton.

Table 8: Minor ICB Days of Operation

Provider	Route	Days Operated
Southern Teton Area Rapid Transit - START	Driggs, ID to Jackson	M, T, W, Th, F
	Etna to Jackson	M, T, W, Th, F
Washakie County Senior Citizen's Center	Worland and surrounding areas	Demand-Response
Sheridan Mini Bus	Sheridan to Billings, MT for medical trips	Wednesdays
STAR Transit	Rock Springs to Green River	Demand Response
Goshen County Senior Friendship Center- Torrington	Torrington, WY to Scottsbluff, NE for medical trips	Demand Response
Buffalo Senior Center, Inc. - Buffalo Area Transit System (BATS)	Buffalo to Sheridan	Monday, Wednesday, Friday
	Buffalo to Casper	1 trip per month
Assisted Care Facility	Little Snake River Valley- Baggs, Dixon, Savery	Demand Response
	Rawlins, WY and Craig, CO	Demand Response
Carbon County Senior Services, Inc.	Rawlins, Sinclair, Saratoga, and Elk Mountain Wyoming	M, T, W, Th, F

6.1.2. Schedule Analysis

To determine the connectivity of intercity transportation services, layover times were determined from the schedules of the providers. For daily intercity transportation, some long layover times (e.g., longer than 2 hours) on major ICB stops exist that may be an inconvenience to riders. A layover time of more than two hours is considered herein as a “long layover” based on how other states have defined a “meaningful connection.” A further discussion of this topic is presented in Section 6.3. The layover times for daily intercity transportation is shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Layover Times for Daily Services

City	Carriers	Layover Time
Evanston	Greyhound WB - Alltrans SB	55 min
Evanston	Greyhound EB - Alltrans SB	1 hr 15 min
Evanston	Alltrans NB - Greyhound WB	6 hr 30 min
Evanston	Alltrans NB - Greyhound EB	7 hr 30 min
Cheyenne	Black Hills Stages NB - Greyhound SB	3 hr 45 min
Cheyenne	Black Hills Stages NB - Greyhound SB	4 hr 55 min
Cheyenne	Black Hills Stages NB - Greyhound SB	15 min
Cheyenne	Greyhound WB - Greyhound SB	10 min
Cheyenne	Greyhound WB - Greyhound SB	8 hr 15 min
Cheyenne	Greyhound WB - Greyhound NB	6 hr 30 min
Buffalo	Black Hills Stages SB - Black Hills Stages NB	7 hr 30 min
Buffalo	Black Hills Stages SB - Jefferson Lines NB	12 hr 30 min
Buffalo	Jefferson Lines WB - Black Hills Stages SB	1 hr 5 min
Buffalo	Jefferson Lines WB - Black Hills Stages NB	8 hr 35 min
Buffalo	Jefferson Lines WB - Jefferson Lines NB	13 hr 35 min
Sheridan	Black Hills Stages SB - Black Hills Stages NB	9 hr 5 min
Sheridan	Black Hills Stages SB - Black Hills Stages NB	13 hr 55 min

Layover times were determined for daily minor ICB to major ICB connections. Some long layover times were found from provider's schedules. For example, at Evanston, a lay over time for the northbound buses to Jackson is 6 to 7 hours.

Local transit agencies including senior centers' typically operate their services from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Many of these transit services coordinate with other modes of transportation. However, ICB riders on routes operated outside of normal operating hours are not able to take advantage of local bus services to complete their journey. According to our analysis, 39 percent of transit ICB routes (22 out of 56) are operated outside of a 7:30 am to 5:30 pm timeframe. The scheduling issue is most prevalent in Alpine and Jackson (Table 10).

Table 10: ICB Routes and Operating Hours

City	Number of Routes 7:30 am to 5:30 pm	Number of Routes 5:30 pm to 7:30 am
Afton	2	0
Alpine	3	3
Buffalo	3	1
Casper	2	0
Cheyenne	4	2
Cokeville	2	0
Evanston	4	2
Gillette	1	1
Hoback Junction	0	2
Jackson	2	3
Kemmerer	2	0
Laramie	2	2
Rawlins	2	2
Rock Springs	2	2
Sheridan	1	2
Thayne	2	0
Wheatland	2	0

This section provided an overview of existing ICB and other transportation services for the public in Wyoming. It highlighted the fact that there is some connectivity between transit and some of the other modes, but that nearly 40 percent of the “major ICB” services operate outside a 7:30 am to 5:30 pm transit timeframe.

6.2. TRANSIT MANAGERS’ SURVEY

Local transit managers often know the needs of their riders, whether the need for rides is within the current service area, or if there is demand for rides outside of the current service area. These managers understand the demand for connections to other communities and other services, including intercity bus (ICB) services. In order to understand what managers of local transit systems in Wyoming thought of current ICB services, a survey was distributed. The online survey, utilizing Survey Monkey, consisted of twelve quantitative and qualitative questions (Appendix C). The survey covered topics such as services offered by the transit agency; population groups served; local transit agencies' connections to ICB, airports, and commuter services; and fares charged for any services other than local services.

An introductory email, including a link to the survey, was sent to forty-eight transit managers and/or administrators at the public transportation agencies who were identified by the Wyoming Department of Transportation. Within the introductory email, and the survey itself, it was noted that participation in the survey was completely voluntary, and transit managers could choose to

skip any questions they wanted to. A total of 30 surveys were partially or totally completed for a response rate of 62.5% (30 out of 48). In the analysis of the survey, the actual number of agencies that responded to each question is noted as “N”. In the analysis of the survey data a number is shown versus a percentage, as most questions allowed for multiple answers. Finally, while some questions of the survey focused on aspects of the local transit system, the primary focus of the survey was to understand transit systems’ connections with, and views on, intercity bus services.

6.2.1. Transit Services

The survey began with a question asking what types of services were provided by the transit system. As shown in Figure 16, a majority of the transit providers provide a demand-response service (21 responses), followed by fixed route services (10 responses) and paratransit (8 responses). Commuter bus services was only noted by five respondents, and only two respondents noted that they operate intercity bus services. The ‘Other’ responses included services such as a van pool (1 response); medical transportation, including voucher program for individuals with a disability (3 responses); and transportation services for children with a disability (2 responses).

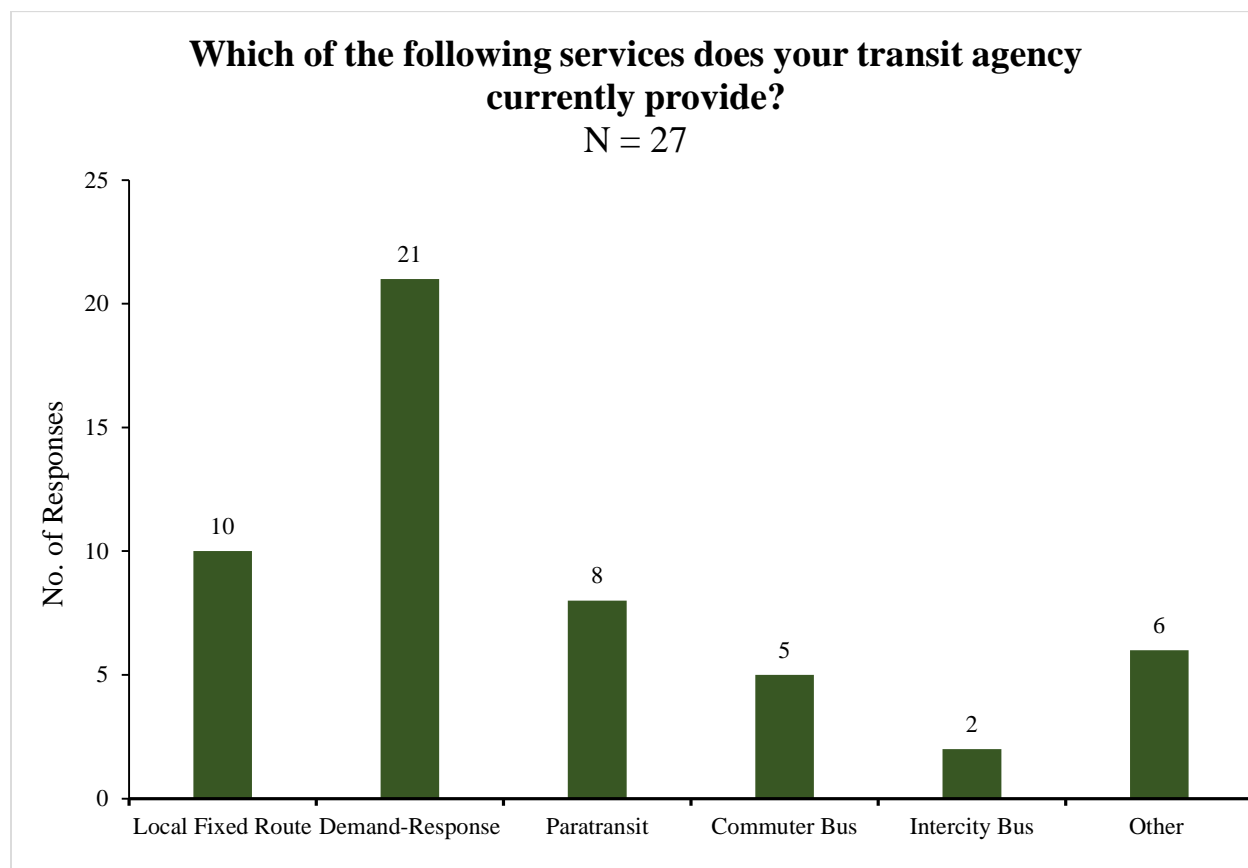


Figure 16: Transit Services Offered in Wyoming

Transit managers were then asked about the population groups who use their services. As shown in Figure 17, the three main population groups using transit services are: persons with a disability

(28 responses), senior citizens (26 responses), and the general public (24 responses). Five systems noted that they provides services to “commuters” and the three responses noted in the “Other” category consisted of “children,” “children with a disability,” and “those who receive a transportation reimbursement.”

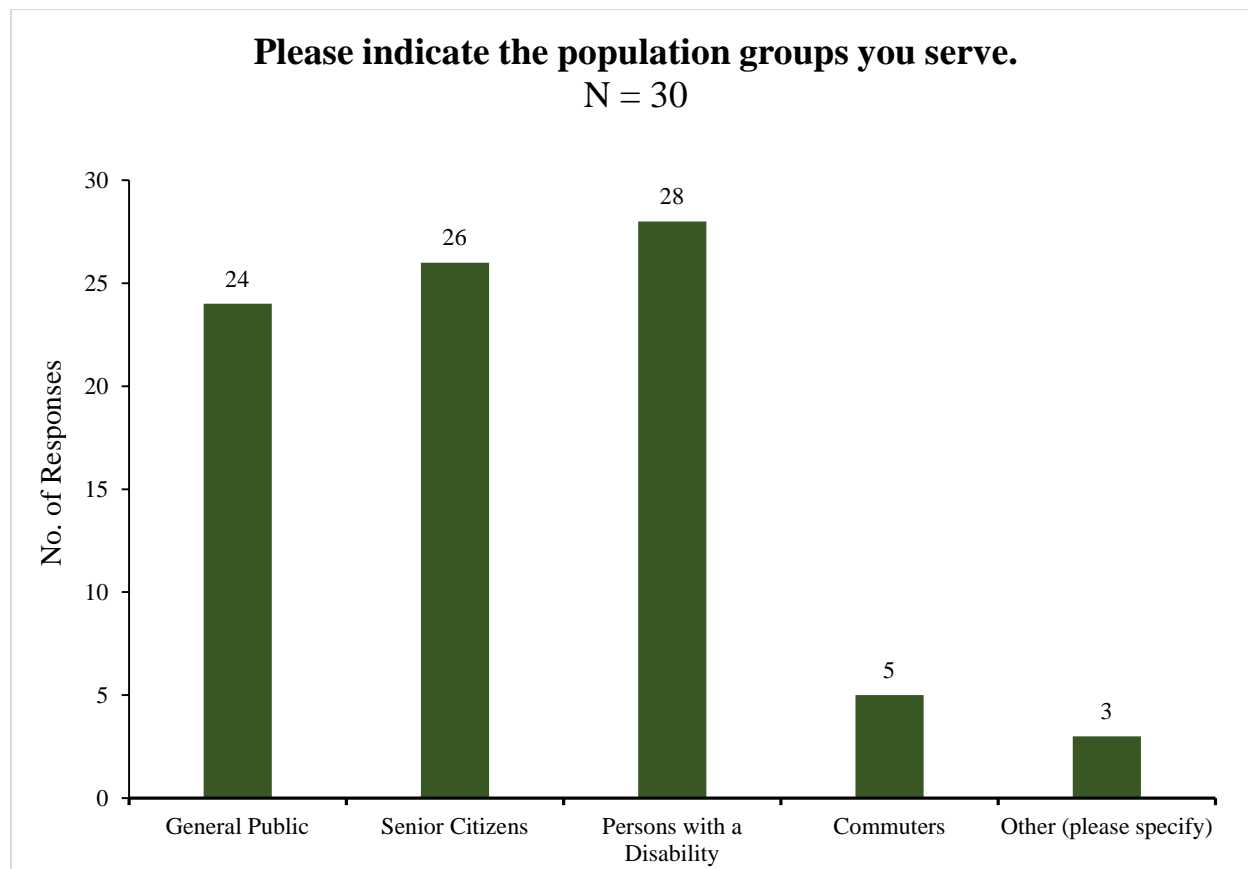


Figure 17: Classification of Transit Users

6.2.2. Transit Connections

To understand how transit agencies are aligned with the other modes of transportation services, the survey asked, “If your transit agency connects with the following modes of transportation, please note the name of the city/town where that connection is made.” Four respondents noted that they connect to intercity bus services (in Buffalo, Jackson, Lander and “Eastern” Wyoming), one respondent noted connecting with passenger rail in “eastern Wyoming” and one respondent noted connecting with airline service in “eastern Wyoming.” The survey then asked a more specific question about these connections, asking if the transit system connected within an hour of arrival or departure time of these other modes (intercity bus, rail or airline services), and the results are noted in Figure 18. It is noted that currently no passenger rail service exists within Wyoming. It should be noted that given thirty responses to the survey, there appears to be a lack of connectivity between the local transit services and other modes, including intercity bus services.

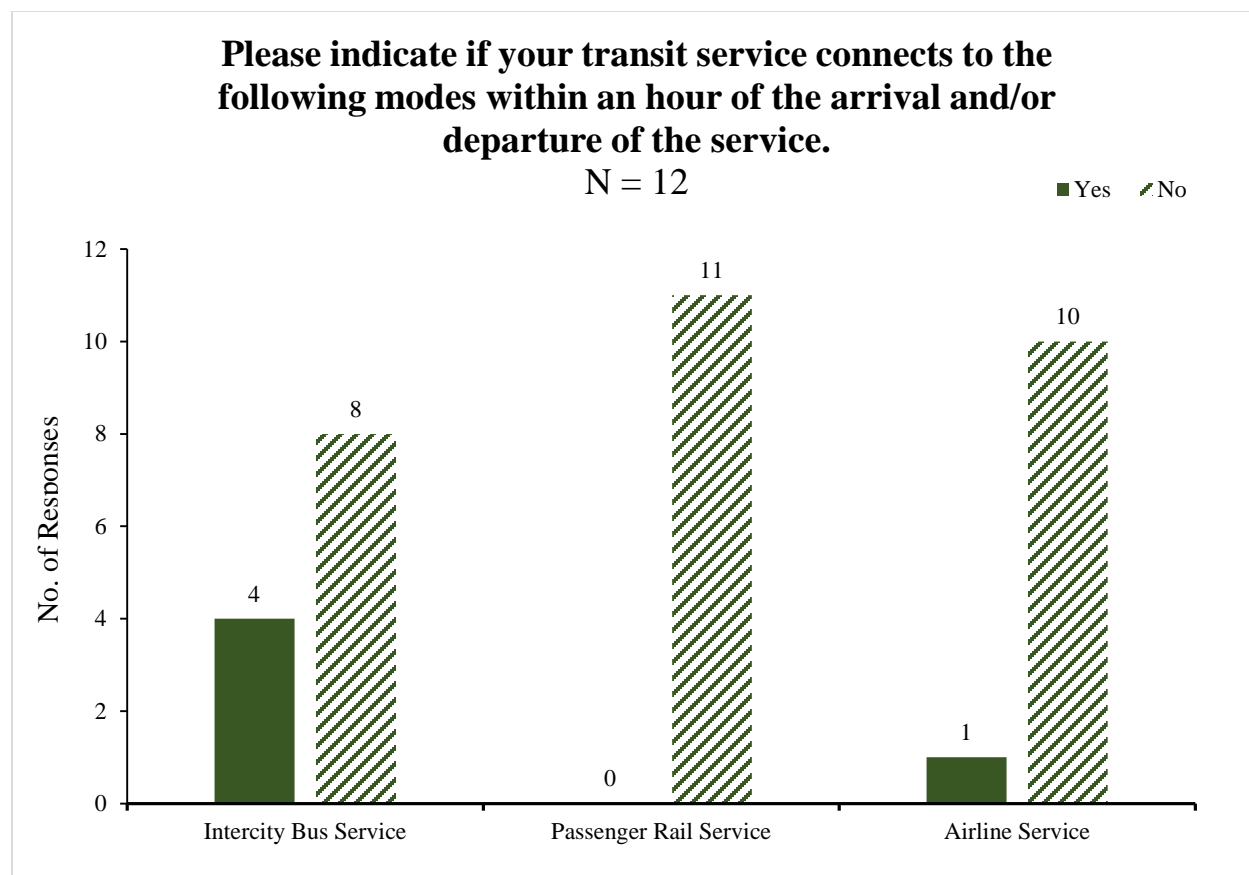


Figure 18: Transit Connections to Other Modes

Note: No passenger rail service exists within Wyoming

Responses to the next survey questions indicated that most local transit systems had never made connections with any other modes, and only one respondent indicated that they had made connections to another mode, but that service was discontinued due to a lack of demand.

6.2.3. Transit Service Needs

The survey then asked respondents, “To what extent do you feel that local, commuter and intercity bus service needs are being met in your area?” These terms were defined as follows:

- **Local Transit Service:** Provides basic mobility services within a local area (town/county) and travels limited distances (10-20 miles from main town).
- **Commuter Service:** Provides mobility for employment or to access health care and other services from one city/town to another city/town. One-way distances typically range from 10 to 50 miles.
- **Intercity Bus Service:** Regularly scheduled public service using an over-the-road bus (motor coach) that operates with limited stops between two or multiple urbanized areas, or that connects rural areas to urbanized areas. Intercity bus service may be also an interstate service.

This question used a five-point scale for respondents, with one end point of the scale being “Not at All” and another endpoint being “Very Well.” For analysis we interpreted the three middle responses, and show the results in Figure 19. Most of the respondents indicate that local bus service needs are being met (24 responses being neutral or better), with the majority of respondents indicating needs are not being met in regards to commuter and intercity bus services.

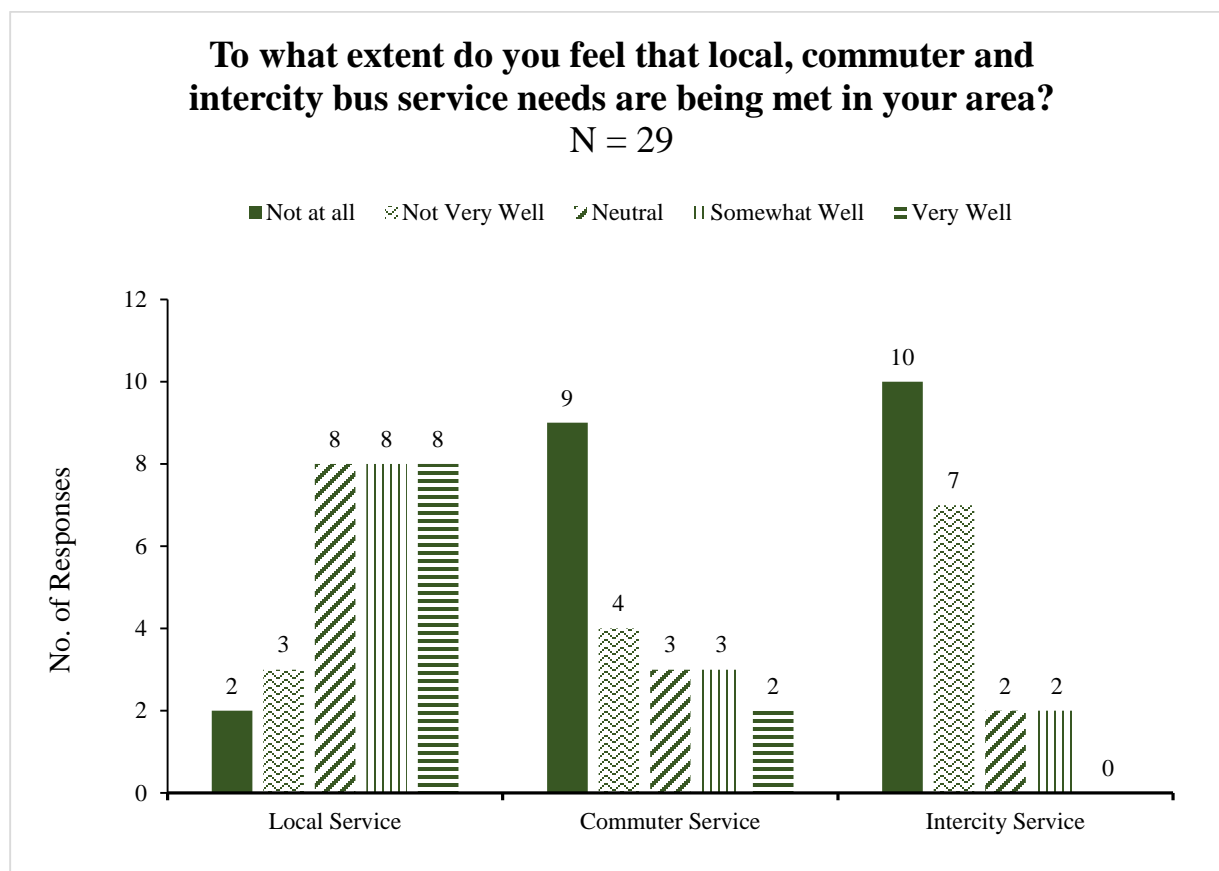


Figure 19: Transit Service Need Assessment

The survey then allowed respondents to identify communities (routes from and to) that may benefit from the implementation or improvement of intercity bus services. Respondents were allowed to list up to five such origins and destinations. Some of the connections noted are more of a “local connection” but these connections would allow smaller communities connections to cities and towns that current have intercity bus service. It should be noted that some of these connections already exist, such as service from Evanston to Salt Lake City, but that the respondents were noting the need for improved services. Table 11 shows the routes for new or improved services.

Table 11: Routes for Potential Implementation and/or Improvement

From (City or Town)	To (City or Town)
Casper	Cold Creek
	Paradise Valley
	Robinson Road
	Bar Nunn
Cody	Powell
Cody/Powell (NW Wyoming)	Billings (MT)
Evanston	Salt Lake City
Jackson	Wilson
	Jackson Hole Airport
Jackson/Moose	Grand Teton National Park
Lander	Riverton
Laramie	Centennial
	Cheyenne
	Rock River
Lusk	Casper
	Cheyenne
	Douglas
	Torrington
Sheridan	Billings (MT)
	Casper
Shoshoni	Riverton
	Casper
Riverton	Salt Lake City
Wind River Indian Reservation	Riverton

The second to last question of the survey was an open-ended question that asked respondents to “Please list what additional types of investments may need to be made to improve intercity bus services in Wyoming.” Of the fifteen responses to this question, eight listed the need for additional funding, and six noted the need for more buses/vehicles. One respondent noted the need for road improvements: bus lanes/pull-outs, bus shelters/stops, outstation maintenance facilities, and park/ride lots. One respondent noted that it was difficult to hire drivers with commercial driving license, as those drivers could make more money working for oil or coal companies. Perhaps the best way to summarize the responses to are to quote one respondent who noted the need for investments by saying, “More funding for local providers for operations and capital purchases. The connections across the state from one town to another is very poor.”

The final question of the survey was an open-ended question that asked transit agencies to provide any other comments they may have related to intercity bus services within or through Wyoming. A total of eight responses were provided, and many focused on local issues or

services. Some of the responses focused on corridors such as between Laramie and Cheyenne, service from Casper to smaller surrounding communities, and services in and around Jackson. There were two responses that focused in on intercity bus issues. One respondent noted the need for a system that would connect Casper to Billings, with limited stops at other communities along the corridor. This respondent noted that people travel to both Casper and Billings for medical, shopping and other purposes. They stated that more people may use transit if riders could use a common payment method for all the systems they used. One respondent perhaps summed up the issues concerning intercity bus services in Wyoming by stating, “I’ve lived in Wyoming for over 30 years and worked in transportation for half of that time. There has never been adequate intercity bus service in Wyoming that I have been aware of. We get asked about it periodically from callers to our local transit agency and it is disappointing to have to tell them that you can’t get there from here by public transit.”

6.3. MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

Funding for ICB services comes from various sources, including the FTA’s Section 5311(f) program. In clarifying information about ICB services, FTA notes that:

Intercity Bus Service. Regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes **meaningful connections** with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, if such service is available. ⁽¹⁾

What the FTA does not do, however, is define a “meaningful connection.” The definition, it seems, is left to others to interpret. Some states have defined a “meaningful connection” in their transportation plans or through transportation studies. The definitions, such as in Washington, typically include several factors, noting services should, “...provide for meaningful connections with the national intercity network through physical connections at common terminals, interline ticketing, provision of schedule information, and schedules that minimize connecting times (within 90 minutes before/after designated connecting services).” ⁽⁹⁾ In Tennessee, the DOT defined a meaningful connection as, “to intercity transportation service (i.e. go directly to the stations served by intercity buses, airlines, or Amtrak service, within 2 hours, or less, of the arrival/departure of those services).” ⁽¹⁹⁾

In Utah, the definition noted that services funded by FTA Section 5311(f) should have certain characteristics, including, “Provide for meaningful connections with the national intercity bus network... and schedules that minimize connecting times (within 120 minutes before/after designated connecting services).” ⁽¹⁷⁾ From those states that have defined a “meaningful connection,” the time period noted is between 90 and 120 minutes.

In Wyoming, the distances between communities with and without “major intercity bus service” can be 100 miles or more. In those cases, local transit systems in the smaller towns are trying to get people to the larger towns for medical appointments, or other purposes, and are not scheduling their service based on when the ICB service is scheduled. This is a matter of practicality, as the arrival and departure times of the local transit service need to be more aligned with the needs of the majority of passengers, most of whom are not connecting to ICB services.

Based on population and distances, a hierarchy of criteria is used to establish a “meaningful connection” to ICB services in Wyoming. Table 12 shows the various criteria, with a discussion of each criterion noted herein.

Table 12: Criteria for “Meaningful Connections” in Wyoming to the National Network

Population	Distance	Marketing	Connection - Location	Connection - Timeframe	Days of Service
50,000 +	N/A	Yes	ICB Terminal	Within 90 minutes	5x/wk (M-F)
25,000-50,000	Less than 60 miles	Yes	ICB Terminal	Within 120 minutes	2x/wk
	60 miles +	Yes	Terminal/Bus Stop	Within 180 minutes	2x/wk
10,000-25,000	Less than 60 miles	Yes	Terminal/Bus Stop	N/A	1x/wk
	60 miles +	Yes	Terminal/Bus Stop	N/A	1x/wk
Under 10,000	N/A	Yes	N/A	N/A	2x/mo

As shown in Table 12 a higher standard for a connection to ICB services is noted for urbanized areas. Communities with populations between 25,000 and 50,000 people have a little more flexibility, especially given the distance to the larger urban community. If more than sixty miles, the local transit service can coordinate with the transit service in the larger community, and passengers can transfer to a second transit system, before connecting with the ICB services. While the goal would be to have service five days per week for this sized community, a minimum of two days per week is required (noted in the table as 2x/wk). If a community is within 60 miles of an ICB terminal, the connection should be within two hours (120 minutes) of ICB arrival/departure; with three hours (180 minutes) being acceptable if the smaller community is more than 60 miles from the ICB station.

For communities between 10,000 and 25,000 people, service should be at least once per week (1x/wk), with a goal of two times per week, or more. These smaller communities can transfer passengers to a secondary transit system to make the connection to the ICB service. There is no specific timeframe for when a connection to ICB services needs to be made. For the smallest communities in Wyoming, the goal is to have service at least twice per month to a larger community with ICB service, although the goal should be service at least once per week. The connection times noted in Table 12 only relate to what may be considered “normal transit hours” which herein are defined as 7:30 am to 5:30 pm. Therefore, a connection does not need to be made to a major ICB terminal, if a major ICB carrier has an arrival or departure that falls outside of the 7:30 am to 5:30 pm timeframe. As noted in Table 10, nearly 40 percent (22 of 58) scheduled departures of major ICB carriers are outside of the 7:30 am to 5:30 pm timeframe. Finally, the “meaningful connections” are on a Monday-Friday basis, with no connections necessary during weekend days (Saturdays and Sundays).

This hierarchy of criteria fits into the FTA regulations and the FTA’s definition of “feeder services” as clarified below:

The “coordination of rural connections between small transit operations and intercity bus carriers” may include the provision of service that acts as a feeder to intercity bus service, and which makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points. The feeder service is not required to have the same characteristics as the intercity service with which it connects. For example, feeder service may be demand-responsive, while intercity service is by definition fixed route. Examples of eligible costs include marketing and extended hours of service in order to connect with scheduled intercity service. Where feasible, intercity bus feeder service may also provide access to intercity connections with rail or air service. Rural transit providers operating feeder service with destinations across state lines are required to comply with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations. Intrastate feeder service may also trigger compliance with FMCSA regulations if interlining is involved (issuing a single ticket for the feeder service and the trip provided by an interstate carrier). Section 5311(f) funds may be used for expenses incurred by a public transit operator as a result of FMCSA requirements triggered by the provision of feeder services. ⁽¹⁾

As noted in Table 12, all “local” transit systems should provide some marketing material to make riders aware of connections to not only ICB services, but to other modes, including Amtrak and airlines (airports).

6.4. SUMMARY

The results of this survey, completed by 30 of 48 transit agencies throughout Wyoming, indicates that many respondents believe that intercity services could be improved. While some responses focused more on services within the state, some noted the need for providing enhanced connections between Casper and Billing (MT) and to make connections to the intercity bus network from areas such as Riverton, Cody and Powell. Also, as shown in Figure 19, of the twenty-one responses noted in relation to the question about intercity bus needs, only two respondents noted that intercity bus needs were being “somewhat met”, while the majority (17 of 21) noted that intercity bus needs were being met “Not Very Well” or “Not at All” (two respondents indicated a “neutral” response). Further, respondents did indicate which corridors/connections they believed were needed, but noted that there needs to be additional funding and vehicles available to implement these connections.

7. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a current assessment of Wyoming’s Intercity Bus (ICB) services, and focuses on providing a methodology to determine if ICB service needs are being adequately met throughout the state. If the methodology finds that ICB needs are not being met, the authors propose a process to determine where new service should be implemented, with the most potential for success. It is important for WYDOT to have a tool to assess ICB services, as the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) allows funds to be moved between programs if ICB needs are being met. The FTA provides the following guidance for this process:

The statutory provision for certification by the governor implies a statewide assessment of intercity bus service currently available and of any existing needs. The legislative history indicates that the assessment of intercity bus needs may be made relative to other rural needs in the state. A state certifying that its needs are adequately met must demonstrate that it has assessed statewide intercity mobility needs no more than four years before the date of the certification. The state must document in the state management plan (SMP) its consultation process and any process that it develops for periodically assessing statewide needs. FTA will evaluate evidence that the state has followed its process in state management reviews approximately every three years.

A state must certify that the intercity bus service needs of the state are being met adequately for each fiscal year that it does not intend to use 15 percent of its Section 5311 apportionment for intercity bus service. The state may include more than one year in a single signed certification. If the state determines that expenditure of some amount of funds less than the full 15 percent will result in needs being met adequately, it may submit a “partial” certification for the remainder of the 15 percent and spend only the portion needed to ensure that the intercity bus needs are met adequately.⁽¹⁾

While the guidance provided by FTA covers many aspects of the ICB program and recommends “periodically assessing statewide needs” to ensure that “the ICB needs are met adequately,” it does not specifically define “need.” It is important to distinguish that not every need has to be met, but the “needs” (collectively) must be adequately met. “Adequately met” implies that the assessment uses a process whereby a reasonable judgment is made in regard to assessing the needs. It is assumed that by using reasonable judgment, the costs of providing the various ICB services can also be used as a factor in assessing the needs.

7.1. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

In Wyoming, a rural and frontier state, only 28 of 99 cities and towns listed by the U.S. Census Bureau have an estimated population (as of 2014) greater than 2,000 people (US Census, 2014). It is recommended that WYDOT focus on providing ICB services to these more populated areas. Specifically, it is proposed that WYDOT strive to connect 85% (24 of 28) of these cities to an ICB service provider or, at a minimum, to a more populated city. These services may consist of a rural or “feeder” type ICB service that merely connects less urbanized areas to the larger cities, or a national service provider that adds a city/town to a preexisting route to make the connection

from a less populated town to a larger city. To achieve the recommended level of 85%, seven additional cities must receive service, which would increase the number of cities connected to ICB service from 17 to 24.

To achieve this objective, the research team developed a method that combines an annual process and a triennial consultation process, as shown in Figure 20. The process includes five components (steps): the review of existing ICB services, determination of support for existing services, determination of funding balance for ICB services, analysis of potential new services, and funding for new services. The first three steps are used as an annual process to analyze the existing ICB services, and the triennial process is used to determine funding for potential new services. Each step of the assessment methodology is presented in the following sections.

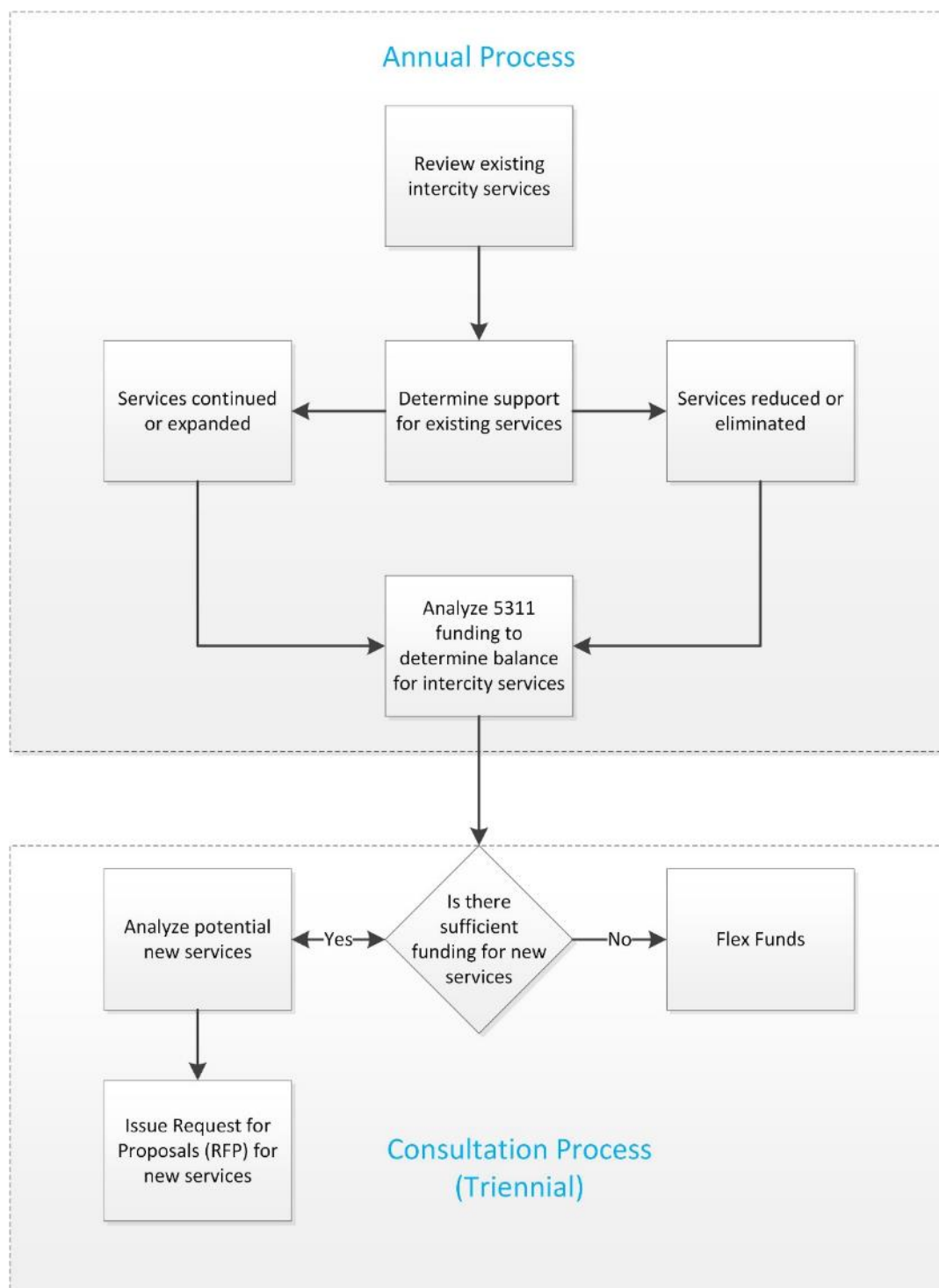


Figure 20: Assessment Methodology

7.2. REVIEW EXISTING ICB SERVICES

The first step in this methodology is to review and evaluate the performance (e.g., ridership, mileage) of existing ICB services in order to assess to what degree the ICB projects have

achieved their goals and objectives. WYDOT reviews existing public transportation services within the state through the use of information obtained in reports submitted by providers. The current review analyzes factors including ridership, mileage, and the area covered by the transit systems.

7.2.1. Determine Support for Existing Services

Based on review results, the next step is to make decisions regarding support for existing services. These determinations will fall into one of two categories: 1) services to be cut or to receive reduced funding, and 2) services to receive level or increased funding. For instance, services that have decreasing ridership may receive reduced funding in the next fiscal year, or could be completely cut, depending upon ridership levels. Alternatively, services with increasing ridership may receive additional funding from WYDOT. It is recommended that WYDOT continues to use its current evaluation practices for these initial steps.

7.2.2. Determine Balance for ICB Services

The savings from those services that receive reduced funding, or where funding is cut altogether, will be returned to the State's 5311(f) program fund. Some of this savings may be used to fund additional spending for those services that would receive increased funding for the next fiscal year. In addition, new ICB services may be proposed (new routes and/or frequency), which could be funded and as a result, increase the amount of 5311(f) program funds to be spent. After reviewing the request, the State will select and determine the funding to support existing ICB services. The balance for ICB services will then be determined based on the above savings and spending. It should be noted that while FTA guidance discusses a target amount for funding ICB services (15% of the Section 5311 funds), it does not preclude a state from spending more than 15% of its Section 5311 funding on ICB services.

7.2.3. Determine Funding for New Services

If there is sufficient funding in the 5311(f) program, the State will go through a "consultation process" (which is part of the triennial process) to determine which new services (routes), if any, to support. This could include funding new routes, as well as restoring ICB services that were previously discontinued.

It is proposed that support (funding) for new services be prioritized based on the population of communities to receive services. Priority would be given first to communities with a population of 10,000 or more people, then to communities with populations between 5,000 and 9,999 people, and finally to towns with populations between 2,000 and 4,999 people. Based on U.S. Census 2014 population estimates, Wyoming has ten cities with a population of 10,000 or more, seven cities with a population between 5,000 and 10,000, and eleven cities with a population between 2,000 and 4,999. As of March 2016, one of Wyoming's ten largest cities, Riverton, does not have access to ICB services. While not having an ICB stop, Green River (also one of the ten largest cities) is approximately sixteen miles from Rock Springs, which has ICB services, and people in Green River can use STAR Transit to access Rock Springs. Riverton, however, is approximately 120 miles from the nearest ICB service (in either Casper or Rawlins).

Five of the seven towns in Wyoming with populations between 5,000 and 9,999 people do not have ICB service. These communities (in order of population) include: Cody, Lander, Torrington, Powell and Worland. Of the eleven towns in Wyoming with a population between 2,000 and 4,999 people, five do not have ICB service: Newcastle, Thermopolis, Kemmerer, Lovell and Lyman. Some of the communities noted above used to have ICB services. One main ICB route through central Wyoming that included communities such as Cody, Greybull, Powell, Shoshoni, Thermopolis and Worland was discontinued on January 1, 2015. While not confirmed by the entity that operated this service (Black Hills Stage Lines), it is assumed that this service was discontinued due to low ridership and the cost of providing the service.

As noted earlier, the priority of the proposed process is to connect the highest populated communities via ICB or “feeder service” to more populated cities/towns that have ICB services. It is likely that any spending of FTA Section 5311(f) funding in cities/towns with a population of less than 10,000 people would be for feeder services, which are not subject to the same regulations as other intercity services.

The “coordination of rural connections between small transit operations and intercity bus carriers” may include the provision of service that acts as a feeder to intercity bus service, and which makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points. The feeder service is not required to have the same characteristics as the intercity service with which it connects. For example, feeder service may be demand-responsive, while intercity service is by definition fixed route. Examples of eligible costs include marketing and extended hours of service in order to connect with scheduled intercity service. Where feasible, intercity bus feeder service may also provide access to intercity connections with rail or air service. Rural transit providers operating feeder service with destinations across state lines are required to comply with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) regulations. Intrastate feeder service may also trigger compliance with FMCSA regulations if interlining is involved (issuing a single ticket for the feeder service and the trip provided by an interstate carrier). Section 5311(f) funds may be used for expenses incurred by a public transit operator as a result of FMCSA requirements triggered by the provision of feeder services. ⁽¹⁾

Based on the results from the review of communities and services, the next step in the assessment methodology process is to conduct a route analysis.

7.3. ROUTE ANALYSIS

Route analysis is important to identify potential ridership on new or previously discontinued ICB routes through Wyoming. Information in previous chapters provided information on communities in need of ICB services, and potential routes for services are discussed in the Corridor Analysis chapter. For this study, a “toolkit” was used to evaluate the potential or proposed ICB routes. The *Toolkit for Estimating Demand for Rural Intercity Bus Service* was developed through the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP). ⁽²⁰⁾ It should be noted that the toolkit was created in 2011, and due to timing, used population information from the 2000 U.S. Census. When using the Toolkit, therefore, it is important to review current population information to determine potential error. However, after comparing the populations based on the

2000 U.S. Census and the 2014 population estimates, the populations of more than half of the cities under consideration have not changed by more than 10%. Although it is not completely up-to-date, the Toolkit is still a relevant tool to use for this route analysis.

The TCRP Toolkit was utilized to identify routes that are similar to the routes being examined, and to produce representative data that could be reviewed for analysis purposes, including: annual ridership, distances traveled, fares, number of stops per trip, and frequency of the routes. For each route that was input into the Toolkit, four similar routes from 2011 were generated to use as a comparison. These routes were not identical to any of the routes that were analyzed by the Toolkit, but they allow users to obtain a better understanding of the characteristics that might allow a more rural, less populated, intercity bus connection that provides access to a major ICB route through Wyoming. The Toolkit provides clear user instructions, as shown in Figure 21.

INPUTS:
To use this toolkit please follow these instructions:

1. Select your State in the drop-down menu.
2. If an airport or correctional facility will be served by the route, check the respective box.
3. If the service will be operated by a national intercity bus carrier, check the 'National Intercity Bus Carrier' box.
4. Fill in the estimated length (in miles) of the route in the Route Length box.
5. Select the locations from the drop-down menu that will be served along the route.
6. To generate results click the 'Output/Results' button.
7. To clear existing inputs click the 'Reset Fields' button.

[Click Here for Results](#) [Click here to Reset Fields](#)

STATE Wyoming		National Intercity Bus Carrier <input type="checkbox"/>	Airport <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Correctional Facility <input type="checkbox"/>	Route Length 146 (miles)
LOCATIONS SERVED	POPULATION	LOCATIONS SERVED	POPULATION		
Lander, WY Urban Cluster	6,551				
Riverton, WY Urban Cluster	10,432				
Siouxton, WY	635				
Hudson, WY	407				
Fort Washakie, WY	1,477				
Elketa, WY	1,455				
Anaapahoe, WY	1,766				
Casper, WY Urbanized Area	57,719				

Figure 21: TCRP Toolkit Input Interface

Figure 21 also displays sample inputs for one route. The route begins in Lander, Wyoming and ends in Casper, Wyoming. The route is an estimated 146 miles with a planned stop at the airport in Casper. Further, it is anticipated that this route would likely not be served by a National Intercity Bus service carrier.

Figure 22 shows the output from the TCRP Toolkit. The modeled route is estimated to have ridership between 1,800 and 8,800 rides per year, or between 150 to 730 rides per month. Figure 22 also shows the four other routes/services that were generated for comparison purposes. The frequency indicated is the number of trips (roundtrips) per week made by each service, and the ridership shown is counted on an annual basis. It should be noted that these “comparison routes/services” are based on data collected primarily in 2008. So, it is important to remember

that these comparisons reflect a previous moment in time, and it is uncertain whether these services have sustained ridership, increased or decreased in ridership, or stopped operating all together. Also, when reviewing the comparable routes, it is important to note that some are from states such as California or Oregon, and these routes connect to cities much larger than Cheyenne or Casper.

OUTPUTS:
Based on the inputs that were provided, the projected annual rural intercity bus demand for

Service Characteristics

Average Population	3,246	Airport on Route	Yes	National Intercity Bus Carrier	No
Number of Origin Stop	8	Correctional Facility	No	<input type="text"/>	
Length of Route	146				

Regression Model
5,300

95% CI Upper Limit 8845.85
95% CI Lower Limit 1783.67

Trip Rate Model
1,200

Manual adjustments to the Trip Rate Model are possible. For more information about adjustments [click here.](#)

[Back to Inputs](#) [Adjustment Worksheet](#)

Comparable Routes

Origin Population	Frequency	Route Length	ICB	Airport	Ridership	More Info
21,507	7	175	Non-ICB	Yes	3,985	More Info
24,131	7	200	ICB	Yes	15,571	More Info
24,775	21	52	Non-ICB	Yes	6,867	More Info
17,139	3	203	Non-ICB	Yes	2,231	More Info

Figure 22: TCRP Toolkit Output

Despite some limitations, the Toolkit provides one process for determining the potential benefits of possible routes in Wyoming. The Corridor Analysis (next chapter) provides additional information on potential routes/services. It is also important to note that WYDOT needs to include a consultation process as part of its ICB analysis and any decision to fund new ICB services within the state.

7.4. CONSULTATION PROCESS

As noted in FTA Circular 9040-1.G, “A state is required to expend at least 15 percent of its apportionment for an intercity bus program, unless the Governor of the State certifies to the Secretary, after consultation with affected intercity bus service providers, that the intercity bus service needs of the State are being met adequately.” The FTA defines the following requirements for the consultation process:

CONSULTATION PROCESS REQUIREMENTS.

- “Consultation” is defined in the joint Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) FTA Planning Regulation, 23 CFR part 450 as “one party confers with another identified party in accordance with an established process and, before taking action(s), considers that party’s

views and periodically informs that party about action(s) taken.” For the purposes of this provision, FTA has adopted this definition of consultation.

- b. The State’s intercity consultation process must include the following elements:
 - (1) Identification of intercity bus providers in the State;
 - (2) Activities the State will perform as part of consultation with identified providers and the intercity bus industry;
 - (3) An opportunity for intercity bus providers to submit proposals for funding as part of the State’s distribution of its annual apportionment; and
 - (4) A direct correlation between the results of the consultation process and a determination that the State’s intercity service needs are being met adequately
- c. In developing the consultative process elements mentioned above, FTA suggests consideration of the following ideas, many of which are drawn from Transportation Cooperative Research Program (TRCP) Report 79, “Effective Approaches to Meeting Rural Intercity Bus Transportation Needs”:
 - (1) Identifying Private Intercity Carriers. Intercity carriers serving a State can be identified from several sources, including:
 - (a) Russell’s Official National Motor Coach Guide;
 - (b) Websites of private intercity bus operators;
 - (c) Bus industry directories;
 - (d) State regulatory agency listings; and
 - (e) Trade association, such as the American Bus Association and the United Motorcoach Association.
 - (2) Activities of Consultation.
 - (a) Inform intercity bus carriers of the State’s rural planning process and encourage their participation in that process, and where a State is considering possible certification, provide an opportunity to submit comments and/or request a public meeting to identify unmet needs and discuss proposals for meeting those needs.
 - (b) Include intercity providers’ participation in scheduled meetings, such as State agency transit meetings and public transit conferences.
 - (c) Meet with individual intercity providers periodically.
 - (d) Notify providers either through direct mail or advertise in various locations around the State of availability of funds for the current year’s intercity bus program.
 - (e) Inform intercity bus providers about the development of local, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans required by Section 5310 and encourage intercity bus provider participation.
 - (f) Solicit comments through direct mail and advertise in newspapers in various locations around the State of the State’s intent to certify needs are being met adequately unless needs are identified.

- (3) Available Resources for Assessment and Analysis of Intercity Bus Needs. It is appropriate and conducive for the State to work in partnership with the American Bus Association, and/or carriers individually, in periodic assessment of needs including meaningful connections to the national intercity bus network.
- (a) Include an assessment of intercity bus needs in the development of coordinated public transit-human services transportation plans.
 - (b) Include intercity bus transportation in statewide long range planning.
 - (c) Use Section 5311 State administration funds, statewide planning apportionments, or State Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) allocations for periodic statewide assessments of needs. ⁽¹⁾

After the analysis and consultation process has come to an end, the State may come to the conclusion that ICB service needs are being met, if there are no new routes that can be identified to provide service at a reasonable cost.

7.5. SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to present an assessment and methodology that WYDOT can use to determine if ICB needs are being adequately met. If after an analysis, which includes a consultation process, it is determined that the ICB needs are being adequately met, and less than 15 percent of the 5311 funds are being used, the Governor can issue a partial certification, so the balance of the 5311 funds can be used for other rural services. If the assessment shows that ICB needs are not being adequately met, this report provides information on how to review possible routes, and how to move toward implementation. The primary steps in the process include:

- Review existing ICB services.
- Determine level of support for existing services.
- Determine funding balance for ICB services.
- Determine funding for new services (using route analysis and consultation).
- Determine if ICB needs are being met (then apply for certification, or issue an RFB/RFP for new services).

To measure whether or not ICB needs are being met, it is recommended that WYDOT use a threshold of 85 percent of the largest (most populated) cities in the state receiving some level of intercity service. To achieve this threshold, 24 of the 28 most populated cities/towns in Wyoming, those with a population of 2,000 or more residents, would receive service. As of this study, only 17 of 28 such communities have some level of ICB service, so it is recommended that WYDOT utilize the information herein to explore adding ICB connections to at least eight more communities. The information in the next chapter, the Corridor Analysis, provides further information on routes/services that could be implemented to provide ICB connectivity to communities that currently do not have services.

8. CORRIDOR ANALYSIS

In the previous chapter, it was noted that only 17 of Wyoming's 28 largest (most populated) communities had a connection to ICB services. Staff at WYDOT were aware that there were large communities that didn't have connections to larger communities or ICB services, and asked that specific corridors be analyzed to determine the feasibility of implementing services along various potential routes (corridors). In this chapter, the corridors are discussed and compared to one another. The potential routes have been analyzed using the TCRP Toolkit ⁽²⁰⁾ and other data to determine the routes that have the most potential for success (ridership).

When analyzing routes, typical measures of success include overall ridership for a route, rides per mile, and cost per mile. However, in frontier and rural areas, simply having a service available is to some degree a measure of success. This would be especially true for some of the smaller communities included in this analysis, which currently lack any connection to a larger city or town.

Table 13 provides an overview of all of the corridors (routes) that were included in the analysis. The table provides information on the cities/towns that may receive service, the larger destination cities that these smaller communities would connect with, the projected population served by the proposed routes, the time duration of a one way trip, the cost of the round trip, and the number of cities that would be served with populations over 2,000 (these cities are highlighted). Later, this chapter presents additional information for each corridor and maps with a list of attributes of the proposed route. It should be noted that the estimated drive times are subjective, and additional time may be needed if there are more stops along the route. In addition, the vehicles used for these proposed routes may travel at speeds that are slower than posted speed limits, which would increase travel time.

The route descriptions explain that some of the routes are structured to allow other connecting routes to be served first: Worland through Thermopolis to Shoshoni, and Worland through Greybull to Lovell. These two routes are designed to first connect passengers to Shoshoni and Lovell, and then to the larger cities they are projected to travel to, Casper and Billings, respectively. It is possible that a community like Worland could try and connect to a service that would go to Billings, as well as to a service that would go to Casper.

The information and route descriptions in Table 13 have been ordered by population served, from largest to smallest. However, the population served by the various routes may change based on whether or not various communities connect to (or join in) the proposed routes/services. Also, the selection of routes to be implemented should not be based solely on population. Prioritization of the routes should be discussed in the consultation process due to the many different factors that should be considered when creating a new ICB route, such as number of cities of interest served, distance traveled, and cost per trip.

Table 13: Overview of Corridors (Routes) Analyzed

City	Population	Population Sums	Number of Cities of Interest Served	Destination City	Travel Time (One Way)	Cost per Day^
Arapahoe	1,656	24,680	2	Casper	3 h	\$750
Ethete	1,553					
Fort Washaki	1,759					
Hudson	462					
Lander	7,642					
Riverton	10,953					
Shoshoni	655					
Byron	609	19,368	3	Billings (MT)	3 h	\$750
Cody	9,740					
Lovell	2,404					
Powell	6,407					
Ralston	208					
Thermopolis (Worland)*	3,020 *(5,366)	3,020 *(8,386)	1 *(2)	Casper	2 h 10 m 2 h 45 m	\$600 *(\$750)
Lusk	1,578	8,316	1	Cheyenne	2 h 30 m	\$750
Torrington	6,738					
Greybull	1,868	7,234	1	Billings (MT)	2 h 45 m	\$750
Worland	5,366					
Big Piney	538	3,610	1	Rock Springs	2 h 45 m	\$750
Marbleton	1,114					
Pinedale	1,958					
Newcastle	3,513	3,513	1	Gillette	1 h 30 m	\$600

Highlighted rows = communities with populations over 2,000 people that currently do not have ICB service

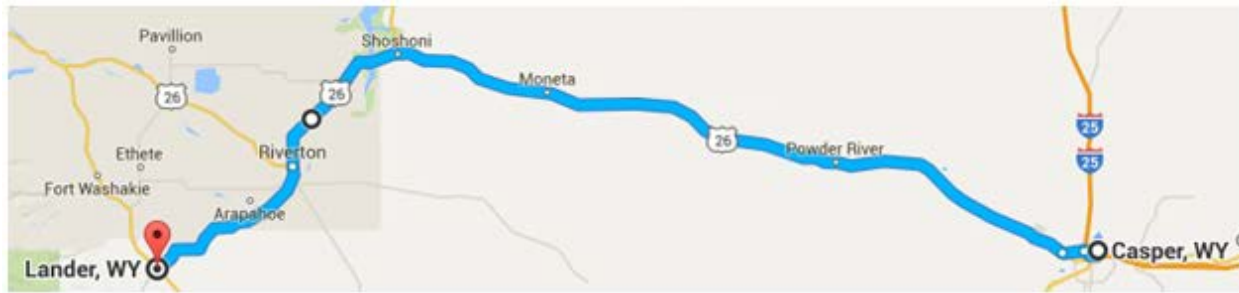
^ The cost per day is the estimated roundtrip cost for service

* Figures based on adding Worland to the route (Worland, then Thermopolis) to Shoshoni and Casper

The cost estimate reflects the daily cost to provide the service, and is based on an 8 or 10 hour work day at \$75 per hour (which includes the driver, fuel, maintenance, etc.). In general, if it takes much more than two hours to get to the destination, the trip is planned for a total of 10 hours, leading to a daily cost of \$750 for the trip. If it is possible to reach the destination city in two hours or less, the trip is planned for a total of 8 hours, at a trip (roundtrip) cost of \$600. The total time allows the people riding the bus to have approximately four hours in the destination city/community.

The Worland/Thermopolis information describes the route if Worland were to receive service as well as Thermopolis (the bus from Worland would pass through Thermopolis on its way to Shoshoni and Casper). Otherwise the data is for Thermopolis alone.

8.1. Lander, Riverton, Shoshoni to Casper

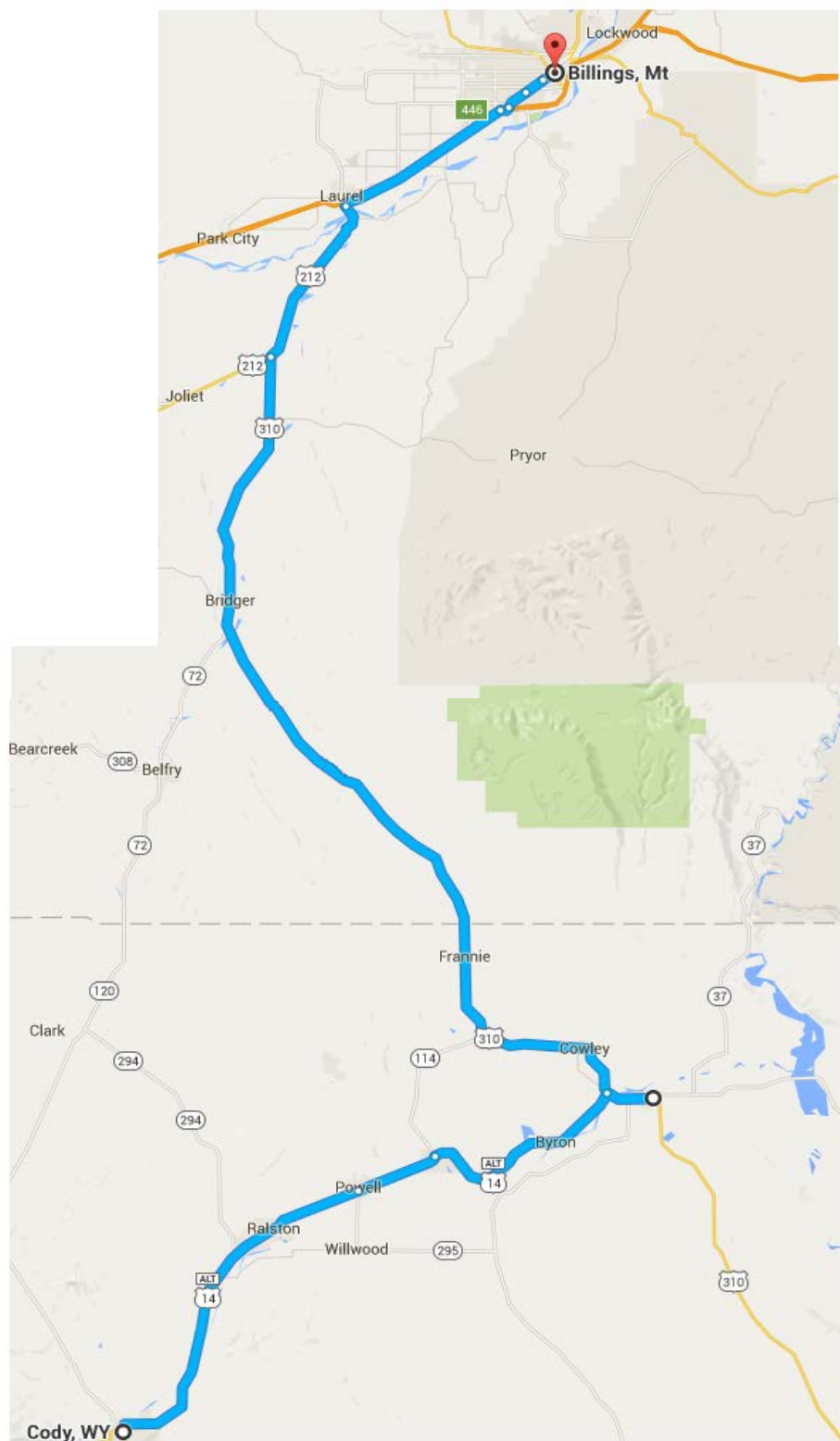


Lander Population:	7,642
Riverton Population:	10,953
Shoshoni Population:	655
Fort Washakie Population:	1,759
Ethete Population:	1,553
Hudson Population:	462
Arapahoe Population:	1,656
Casper Population:	60,086
Distance:	146 miles
Drive time via car:	3 hr 00 min
Number of ICB opportunities:	2
Times for ICB opportunities:	11:10 am, 2:45 pm
Attractions:	Airport, Medical Facilities, Retail/Shopping
Cost per day roundtrip:	\$750

This proposed route would connect Fremont County to Casper. As noted in Table 1, this route would connect two communities with populations over 2,000 people (Lander and Riverton) to ICB services. The population served by this route would be about 24,000, not including the population of Casper. This route would take about 2.5 to 3.0 hours (one-way) to complete, depending on the number of stops made, and would connect a large Wyoming County to the second largest city in Wyoming. Casper, having a population of over 50,000, is considered an urbanized area, and has opportunities for the residents of smaller cities to receive more specialized medical attention and medical services, more shopping opportunities, and connection to a larger airport. ICB services pass through Casper twice a day heading north and south along I-25, a service that is not present in Fremont County.

This route, as shown, connects Lander to Casper via WY-789 however, this route could travel north-west to begin its journey on US-287 to connect to Fort Washakie, then head to Ethete and around to Riverton to complete the route to Casper. Another option for this route is to utilize and collaborate with the existing services offered by the Wind River Transit Authority (WRTA), the local transit service in the Fremont County area. This transit system could connect the smaller cities along US-287, Ethete and Fort Washakie, to Riverton where the passengers would be able to connect to the proposed ICB service heading to Casper. This addition would allow two smaller cities to connect to Casper and more service through WRTA as well.

8.2. Park County to Billings, MT

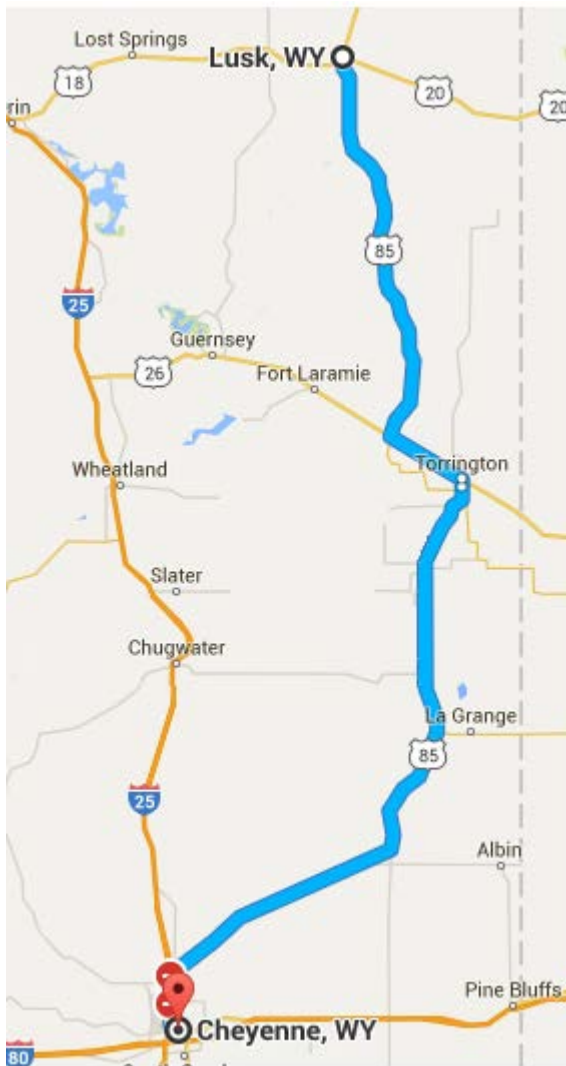


Cody Population:	9,740
Powell Population:	6,407
Lovell Population:	2,040
Ralston Population:	208
Byron Population:	609
Billings Population:	109,059
Distance:	140 miles
Drive time via car:	3 hr 00 min
Number of ICB opportunities:	5
Times for ICB opportunities:	1:40 am, 5:30 am, 6:15 am, 1:55 pm, 8:15 pm
Attractions:	Airport, Medical Facilities, Retail/Shopping
Cost per day roundtrip:	\$750

This proposed route would travel from northwest Wyoming to Billings, Montana. There could be three main stops in Cody, Powell, and Lovell, then the bus would travel to Billings. Alternatively, in order to collect a larger population and help aid the smaller communities along the way, the bus could make additional stops in Ralston and Byron. These extra stops would serve an additional 1,000 or so people. This route is suggested because a large population made up of smaller Wyoming cities would be able to access bus service to a large urbanized city in Montana. These smaller cities would be able to access larger, and more abundant health care opportunities in Billings along with access to the Billings airport, retail/shopping opportunities, and multiple recreational activities.

Several communities on this route, such as Cody, Lovell and Powell, were affected when the Black Hills Stage Lines service that went through this area ended on December 31, 2014.

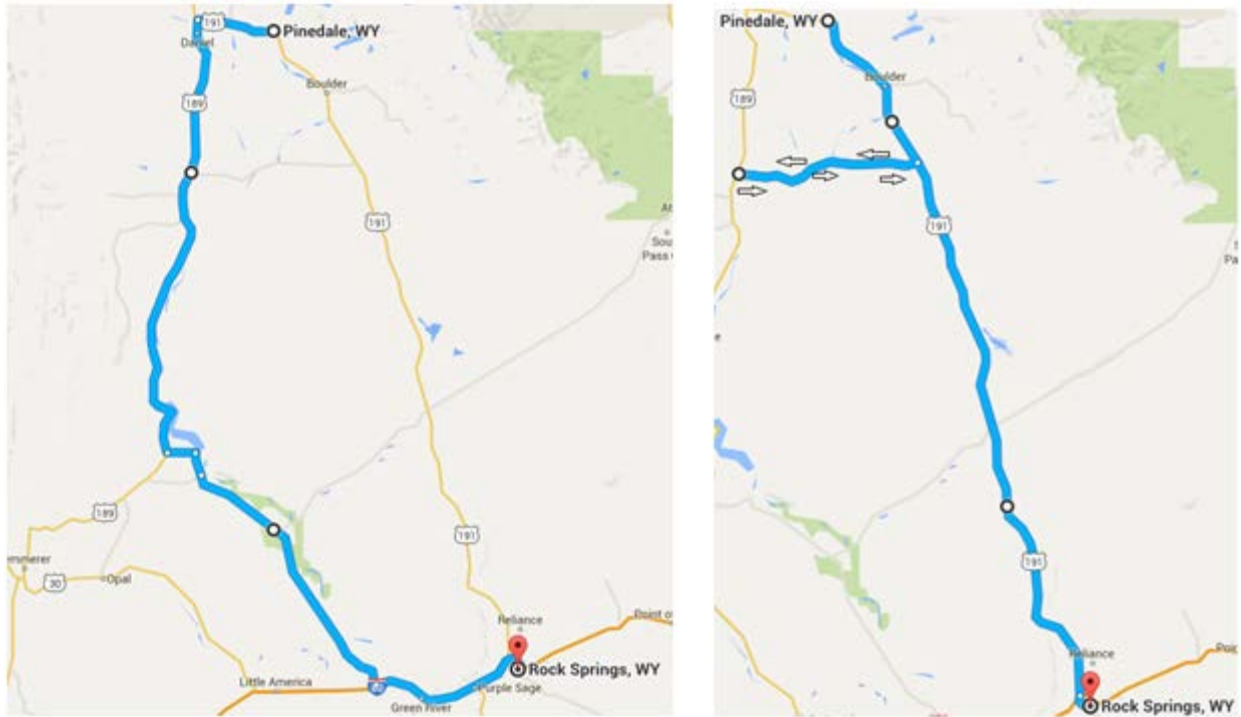
8.3. Lusk to Torrington to Cheyenne



Lusk Population:	1,578
Torrington Population:	6,736
Cheyenne Population:	62,845
Distance:	140 miles
Drive Time:	2 hr 30 min
# of ICB Opportunities:	6
Times of ICB Connections:	2:25 a, 4:55 a, 11:15 a, 1:50 p, 3:00 p, 4:10 p
Attractions:	Airport, Medical Facilities, Retail/Shopping
Cost/day (roundtrip):	\$750

This route would serve about 8,500 people by connecting Lusk, to Torrington, to Cheyenne. The route was chosen to increase the number of rural communities that could easily access ICB service by connecting these two cities to Cheyenne rather than Wheatland. In addition, Cheyenne is the largest city in Wyoming with many opportunities for medical services, shopping opportunities, easier flight connections, and connections to National ICB Service Providers. Cheyenne sits at the intersection of I-80, a major east-west route, and I-25, a north-south route. This proposed transit route would allow the majority of Goshen County and the southern portion of Niobrara County to have access to ICB and to a large urbanized area. Another option would be to have the route travel only from Torrington to Cheyenne, which would reduce about 60 miles (one-way) from the trip. The reduction in the trip distance would save time and money, but would certainly reduce the number of people receiving service.

8.4. Big Piney, Marbleton, Pinedale, Green River to Rock Springs



Pinedale Population:	1,958
Marbleton Population:	1,114
Big Piney Population:	538
Green River Population:	12,630
Rock Springs Population:	24,045
Distance:	149 miles
Drive time via car:	2 hr 45 min
Number of ICB opportunities:	4
Times for ICB opportunities:	7:40 am, 10:50 am, 7:05 pm, 11:30 pm
Attractions:	Closer access to Cheyenne, ICB opportunities, health centers
Cost per day roundtrip:	\$750

The two routes presented show connections from Sublette County to Rock Springs. The first shows a connection starting in Pinedale, stopping in Marbleton/Big Piney, and stopping in Green River, before ending the trip in Rock Springs. This would provide bus service to a population of about 16,000, not including the population of Rock Springs. This route would allow these smaller cities access to more medical services and to ICB services run by National Carriers. Four buses pass through Rock Springs everyday heading east towards Cheyenne and West towards Evanston. The second route shown shows a connection starting again in Pinedale heading to Marbleton/Big Piney via US-191 S and WY-351 E, then backtracking to US-191 and heading south to Rock Springs. This would allow a population of about 3,000 access to Rock Springs, and the services and transit connections described in the previous paragraph.

8.5. Newcastle to Gillette



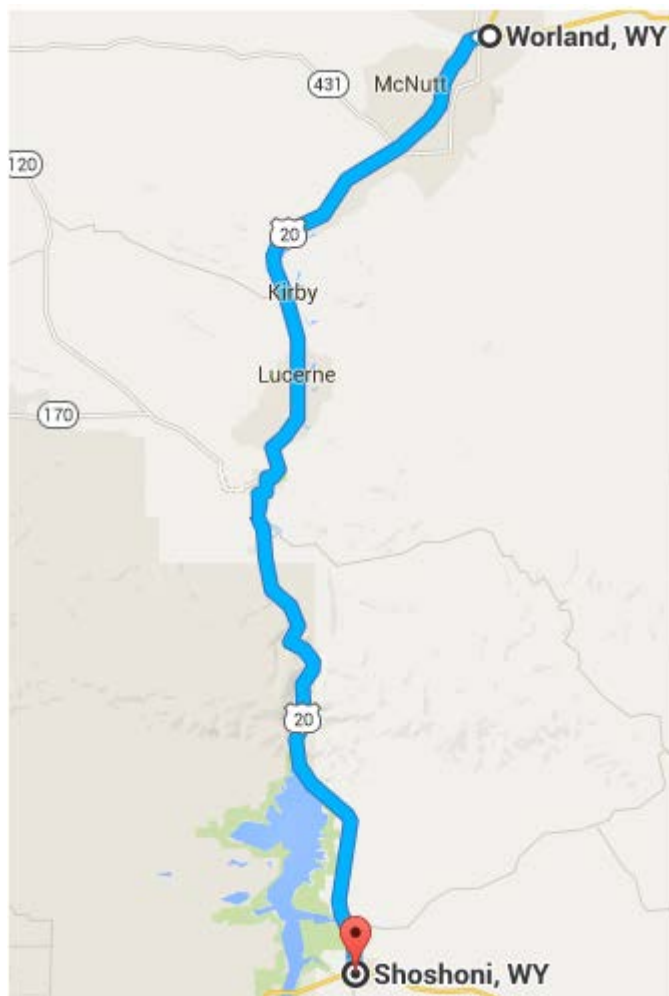
Newcastle Population:	3,513
Gillette Population:	31,971
Distance:	77.5 miles
Drive time via car:	1 hr 30 min
Number of ICB opportunities:	2
Times for ICB opportunities:	9:45 am, 8:25 pm
Attractions:	Medical Services, Retail/Shopping
Cost per day roundtrip:	\$600

This route would connect the population of Newcastle, about 3,500, to Gillette (population of about 32,000). In Gillette, there would be connections to a National ICB provider. Gillette is the fourth largest city in Wyoming, meaning this connection would allow the people of Newcastle and surrounding areas, to also access more abundant and specialized medical centers and shopping opportunities.

The route has the option of adding a stop in Moorcroft. This community is along the proposed route, and would increase the population served by the route by about 1,000 people. While Jefferson Lines, the National ICB provider, passes by Moorcroft when heading to either Gillette or Sioux Falls, it does not stop in the community. By having the service from Newcastle stop in Moorcroft, there is the potential for riders to connect (transfer) to ICB services.

Another option for this route would be to add 30 miles to the trip and head north from Newcastle to connect to Sundance then to Moorcroft and finally to Gillette. This route would connect about 2,300 more individuals to the proposed route than if Newcastle alone was connected to Gillette.

8.6. Worland, Thermopolis to Shoshoni (and on to Casper)

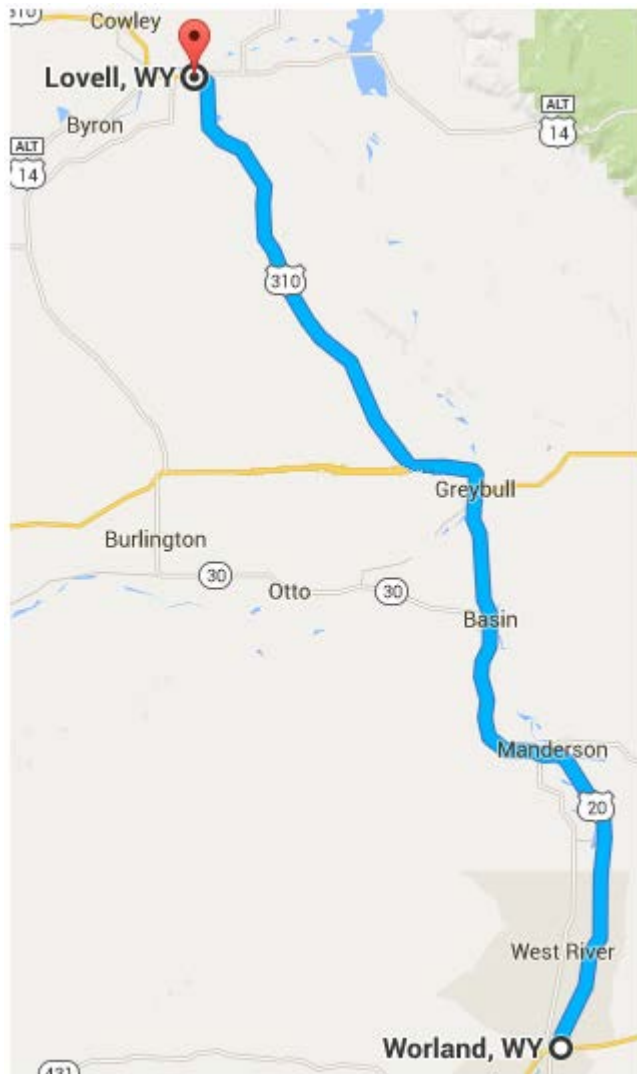


Worland Population:	5,366
Thermopolis Population:	3,020
Shoshoni Population:	655
Distance:	65.4
Drive time via car:	1 hr 15 min

Number of ICB opportunities:	0
Times for ICB opportunities:	N/A
Attractions:	N/A
Cost per day roundtrip:	\$600

This proposed route would connect Worland and Thermopolis to Shoshoni, which would then connect to the proposed route from the Lander/Riverton area to Casper. This route (or route extension) would add a population of approximately 8,000 to the more than 24,000 that would be served by the Lander/Riverton/Shoshoni route. This route would not necessarily need to be run as frequently as the proposed Lander/Riverton/Shoshoni route, with the frequency based on the use (or demand) for service. The ride from Worland, through Thermopolis to Casper would be approximately three hours, one-way. Allowing for a total of four hours in Casper, it is anticipated that travelers from Worland would likely have a ten-hour day, from departing Worland in the morning, until they arrived back in Worland in the early evening.

8.7. Worland, Greybull to Lovell



Greybull Population:	1,868
Worland Population:	5,366
Lovell Population:	2,040
Distance:	70.7 miles
Drive time via car:	1 hr 15 min

Number of ICB opportunities:	0
Times for ICB opportunities:	N/A
Attractions:	N/A
Cost per day roundtrip:	\$600

This route would connect Worland to Lovell with a stop in Greybull. This route would connect to the proposed Cody/Powell/Lovell route that would go to Billings, MT. This route (or route extension) would allow about 7,000 more individuals to access the route to Billings (which is estimated to service a population of 19,000). This route would add a little more than an hour of travel time, so that someone traveling from Worland would likely have a ten hour day. This is based on leaving Worland in the morning, spending approximately three hours on the bus to Billings, having four hours in Billings, and then traveling for nearly three hours on the bus back to Worland. Given Worland's location on two of the proposed new routes, it is possible that Worland would have service that allows people to connect to service to Billings, as well as Casper. Further analysis, including a discussion with the residents of Worland, would help to determine which route or routes would be of value.

8.8. SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed various corridors (routes) that were recommended by WYDOT for analysis. All of these potential routes would provide service to at least one of the communities with a population of 2,000 or more people that does not currently have ICB service. In addition to connecting to a city with ICB services, these potential routes also allow smaller communities in Wyoming to connect to larger, more populated cities. The information herein shows the various attributes of each of the routes. During the consultation process, and discussions with the various communities, it should be noted that the primary goal is to connect 85% of the cities in Wyoming with populations of 2,000 or more to a National ICB service provider. In addition to this goal, these proposed routes will provide smaller (less populated) communities with connections to more urbanized areas (larger, more populated cities) where there is access to airports, medical centers, retail/shopping, and other recreational activities.

Table 14 provides ridership estimates for some of the potential routes noted in this chapter.

Table 14: Estimated Ridership for Various Potential Routes

Route	Estimated Annual Ridership
Worland, Thermopolis, Lander, Riverton & Shoshoni to Casper	6,000
Worland, Greybull, Cody, Powell & Lovell to Billings (MT)	5,300
Lusk and Torrington to Cheyenne	3,900
Pinedale, Marbleton & Big Piney to Rock Springs	3,600
Newcastle to Gillette	3,400

As noted earlier in this chapter, it is almost equal distance for people in Worland to ride to Casper (WY) or Billings (MT). The information above includes Worland's potential ridership for two routes, and it is possible that implementing both routes would be a preferential outcome. However, it is important to remember that these ridership estimates are only one factor in deciding which routes may be implemented, and WYDOT needs to undertake a process that includes input from the various communities and consultation with the various intercity and local transit systems before a final decision is made.

9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The goal of this project was to provide the Wyoming Department of Transportation a current assessment of intercity bus (ICB) services, a definition of “meaningful connections” for Wyoming, and a methodology to determine if ICB needs are being met within the state. While previous chapters provided detailed information related to the various components of the project, this chapter summarizes the findings and conclusions of this research study, and provides recommendations for implementation.

9.1. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This project identified some trends in ICB services at the national level. First of all, there is overall growth in utilization of the Section 5311(f) program among states, due to needs and opportunities identified through the consultation process and additional FTA funding. Secondly, the majority of states are in the process of, or have completed needs analysis, consultation (to support certification), or program implementation. Thirdly, the number of states certifying as having no unmet rural ICB services appears to be declining. Under the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015, states planning to certify are required to undergo a consultation process. The process was started through SAFETEA-LU of 2005, and continued in subsequent acts. In many states, such a consultation process resulted in the identification of unmet rural intercity bus needs.

The literature review also found that two main methods have been used for allocating Section 5311(f) funds. Some states such as Colorado, Iowa Minnesota, Pennsylvania and South Dakota used a grant application process. Some other states (e.g. Washington) used RFPs and contracts. California and Oregon used grants, RFPs, and a mixture of both approaches for intercity bus funding. The Section 5311(f) funds were used widely by states for operating assistance, capital assistance, and marketing. States also used the funds for planning studies, administration, and other purposes. Further, the survey of rural/frontier states revealed that six of the seven responding states (California, Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, South Dakota, and Utah) used 15% of their 5311 funds for ICB services. Washington wanted to use 15% of its funds, but used less than 15% of the 5311 funds due to a lack of projects.

The prioritization and determination of funds for ICB projects/services include two approaches. First, states may have identified areas (or routes) for ICB service. This was usually done through regional and/or statewide ICB studies. States conducting ICB studies to identify routes (areas) were found to use a RFP/bid system to award funds. Second, for those states using a grantor/grantee system to award funds, the general process of determining funds included three steps: 1) submitting proposals by ICB providers; 2) reviewing and/or scoring applications; and 3) determining funds for projects.

The rural/frontier states surveyed indicated that the most common challenges facing ICB services were funding and the lack of understanding and clarity about a business model (a funding formula). Funding issues included: policy on the use of in-kind match, potential federal budget

cuts that may be detrimental to local ICB services, and lack of DOT support for allocating funds to support private, for profit companies.

Highlights of the results of a survey of ICB riders in Wyoming are as follows:

- Riders of ICB were most often using the service to visit family or friends followed by other purposes such as relocating; returning home; attending a funeral; or going to take care of parents.
- Most riders stated they used an Internet search or word of mouth to get information about the route they were using at the time of the survey.
- 62% of Wyoming residents riding ICB were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with available information about ICB, compared to 38% being somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied.
- 46% Wyoming residents riding ICB were satisfied or at least somewhat satisfied with the frequency of ICB services, with 31% being neutral, and 23% were somewhat dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the level of frequency of ICB service.
- Respondents reported that the three leading factors that lead to ICB use are lack of access to a vehicle, lack of ability to drive and gas prices.
- Over two-thirds of those using the ICB services (67%) have a household income of less than \$30,000 per year.

A survey was conducted of transit managers in Wyoming to obtain their opinions regarding ICB service. The results of this survey, completed by 30 of 48 transit agencies throughout Wyoming, indicate that many respondents believe that intercity services could be improved. While some responses focused more on services within the state, some noted the need to provide enhanced connections to Billings (MT), and to make connections to the intercity bus network from areas such as Cody, Powell and Riverton. Only two of twenty-one respondents noted that intercity bus needs were being “somewhat met”, while the majority (17 of 21) noted that intercity bus needs were being met “Not Very Well” or “Not at All.” Respondents did indicate which corridors/connections needed service, but noted that there needs to be additional funding and vehicles available to implement these connections.

In Wyoming, a rural and frontier state, only 28 of 99 cities and towns listed by the U.S. Census Bureau have a population estimated in 2014 to be greater than 2,000 people (US Census, 2014). As of this report, only 17 of these cities are connected to ICB services. These services may consist of a rural or “feeder” type ICB service that connects less urbanized areas to the larger cities, or a national service provider that adds a city/town to a preexisting route to make the connection from a less populated town to a larger city.

9.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides specific recommendations that if implemented, would help to achieve the goals of the project. As noted herein, however, there needs to be a process of consultation with

the communities, local transit providers, and ICB providers before new services are initiated. In general, it is recommended that WYDOT focus on providing ICB services to these more populated areas and strive for 85% (24 of 28 cities) of these most populated cities in Wyoming to be connected to an ICB service provider or, at a minimum, a more populated city.

9.2.1. Explore opportunities to enhance connections to ICB services

This research study found that there were areas of the state that could potentially benefit from services that would connect smaller communities to larger communities that had national ICB service, as well as other attractions/services. As noted in the Corridor Analysis, services to these larger communities would need to be evaluated for their potential ridership and economic feasibility. To achieve the recommended level of connecting 85% of the most populated communities in Wyoming to ICB service, seven additional cities must receive service. This change would increase the number of cities connected to ICB service from 17 to 24. Figure 23 displays the recommended routes/services for potential implementation.

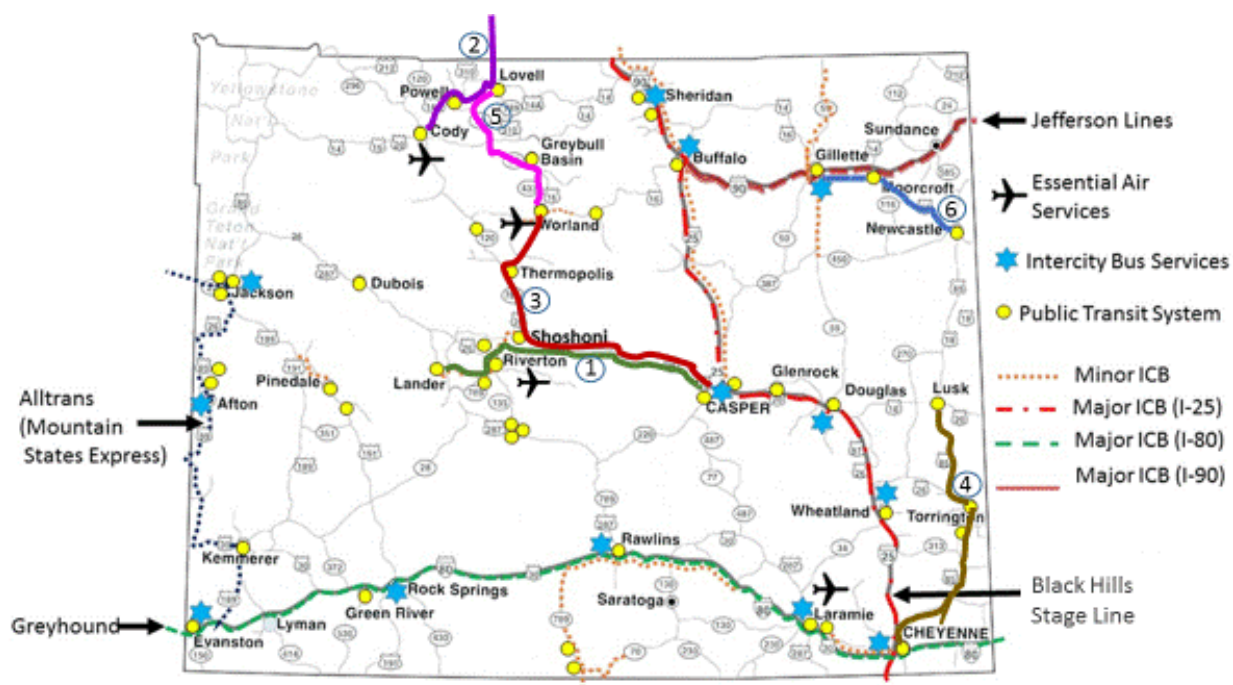


Figure 23: Proposed New Routes/Services

Additional information on these proposed routes, which are based on information from the Corridor Analysis, is presented in Table 15.

Table 15: Proposed Routes with Service Information

Route	Cities	Population	Cost/Day (Round Trip)	Roundtrips per Year	Total Annual Costs	Major ICB Destination
1	Lander	7,642	\$750	26	\$19,500	Casper
	Riverton	10,953				
2	Cody	9,740	\$750	52	\$39,000	Billings (MT)
	Lovell	2,404				
	Powell	6,407				
3	Thermopolis	3,020	\$600	52	\$31,200	Casper
	Worland	5,366				
4	Lusk	1,578	\$750	26	\$19,500	Cheyenne
	Torrington	6,738				
5	Greybull	1,868	\$600	26	\$15,600	Billings
	Worland	5,366				
6	Newcastle	3,513	\$600	26	\$15,600	Gillette

The total annual cost of the proposed routes equals \$144,300. The Greybull/Worland route is not included in the total, as it is assumed that the Thermopolis/Worland route would go through Greybull one week to connect to the route to Billings, and one week would go to Shoshoni to connect with the route to Casper. Given the match ratios (match funding) provided by WYDOT, it is assumed that the local share would be approximately 42%, or an annual total of \$60,606 ($\$144,300 * .42 = \$60,606$). The FTA/WYDOT share would be \$83,694.

It is recommended that the frequency start on a limited basis, and grow based on demand. If all the above routes were implemented, there would be service to ten communities of 2,000 or more people. Only seven of these communities would have to receive service to get Wyoming to the recommended 24 of 28 (85%) of communities of 2,000 or more people having some type of connection to the national ICB network. Moreover, the research team approached existing transit systems (local providers) who would be logical choices to implement the proposed routes. The findings indicate that these transit systems would need additional funding and local match to initiate new services. None of transit systems, however, would likely need new vehicles to initiate the new services (Appendix D).

9.2.2. Implement definition of meaningful connections

The research team used a hierarchy of criteria to define “meaningful connections” based on the sizes of communities and distances between those communities in Wyoming (Table 12). Connection times in the definition of “meaningful connections” relate to “normal transit hours” which fall between 7:30 am and 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday. No connections are necessary during weekend days (Saturdays and Sundays). WYDOT can use these parameters as a basis for evaluating and funding new services in the state.

9.2.3. Adopt process to review intercity bus service needs on a regular basis

This research study provided a process that can occur on a triennial process to determine if intercity bus service needs are being met, and if not, a process to determine where service should be implemented (providing sufficient funding exists). Currently 17 of 28 of the largest cities in Wyoming have access to intercity bus service and the proposed new routes would reach an additional 11 communities. If future analyses yield similar results, it is recommended that WYDOT utilize a partial certification, so that unspent Section 5311(f) funds can be used for other public transportation (transit) services.

9.2.4. Review and update definition of meaningful connections

Finally, the definition of “meaningful connections” and the assessment methodology provided in this document were developed with the rural/frontier nature of Wyoming in mind. While it is recommended that WYDOT adopt the definition and methodology noted herein, these items may need to be updated in the future if there are changes to the Federal Transit Administration’s programs, specifically FTA Section 5311 and 5311(f).

9.3. SUMMARY

With the information presented in this report, the Wyoming Department of Transportation should have sufficient information to initiate a consultation process with local and intercity bus providers to determine which routes/services noted herein should be implemented. Based on the data presented, and the results of the consultation process, it is anticipated that WYDOT will be able to implement enough service to get to the threshold whereby 24 of the 28 largest (most populated) communities in Wyoming have some connection to national intercity bus services.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: References

Appendix B: State Survey

Appendix C: Rider Survey

Appendix D: Wyoming Transit Managers Survey

Appendix E: Rolling Stock Analysis

APPENDIX A: REFERENCES

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APPENDIX B: STATE SURVEY

Introduction

The Western Transportation Institute (WTI) at Montana State University is working on behalf of the Wyoming Department of Transportation on a project related to intercity bus (ICB) service.

As a part of this project, WTI is collecting information on the processes that states use to determine the amount of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5311 funds that are spent on ICB service. We are also investigating the processes states use to disburse funds to intercity bus providers.

While participation in this survey is completely voluntary, we hope that you will share your knowledge of intercity bus practices within your state with us. Within the survey, you will see that we ask for any documentation you may have on your state's intercity bus practices. Please e-mail that documentation to me at my e-mail address noted below.

Please contact me if you have any questions about survey or the project. Thank you for your information and participation.

David Kack
Program Manager: Mobility and Public Transportation
Western Transportation Institute
PO Box 174250
Bozeman, MT 59717

(406) 994-7526
dkack@coe.montana.edu

Your Contact Information

Your name, title and e-mail address will be kept confidential, and will not be included in any report generated from this survey.

Name:
Job Title:
E-mail address:
Your organization (DOT):

Current Use of 5311 Funds

Does your state currently? (check one):

- ☐ Use 15% of its 5311 funds toward ICB service.
- ☐ Certify ICB service needs are currently met and waive the 15% (use no 5311 money for ICB service).
- ☐ Certify ICB service needs are currently met but still spend 5311 funds on ICB service. (If so, please enter % used in Box 1)
- ☐ Use a portion of the 5311 funds toward ICB service. (If so, please enter % used in Box 1)
- ☐ Attempt to use 15% of FTA 5311 funds but lack sufficient projects to do so. (If so, please enter % used in Box 1)
- ☐ Use more than 15% of the 5311 funds toward ICB service. (If so, please enter % used in Box 1)
- ☐ Other (Use Box 1 to explain)

Box 1

Use Determination and Allocation

What process(es) does your state use to determine what percentage of 5311 funds to use on intercity bus services? Please e-mail any associated documents to David Kack.

If 5311 funds are used for ICB services, how are the funds prioritized for allocation (e.g. what process, such as a formula or demographic information, is used)? Please e-mail any associated documents to David Kack.

Awards Practices and Projects

If 5311 funds are used for ICB service, are funds awarded (check one):

- ☐ Using a grantor/grantee system with potential services applied for similarly to a grant?
- ☐ Using a RFP/bid system with potential projects identified by DOT, then issuing a RFP on which service providers then bid?
- ☐ Using another process (please explain)

Would any of the methods used in determining 5311 fund usage or allocations be considered a best practice by your state?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (please describe best practices)

Does your state (any agency including the DOT) actively promote ICB service?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (please describe actions taken)

Does your state have any unique or exceptional ICB projects that have been recently completed, or are currently underway, that you would like to share with us?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (please describe)

Ridership and Service

In the past two years, have ICB routes/services in your state:

- ☐ Increased (approximate % increase) _____%
- ☐ Decreased (approximate % decrease) _____%
- ☐ Stayed about the same

In the past two years, has ICB ridership in your state:

- ☐ Increased (approximate % increase) _____%
- ☐ Decreased (approximate % decrease) _____%
- ☐ Stayed about the same

Have there been any significant changes in ICB services in your state in the past two years?
(please describe)

What do you believe are the most important issues/barriers facing ICB service in your state (i.e., funding, regulations, reduced service, etc.)? Further, what are the opportunities/strategies to address the issues/barriers?

Please provide any other comments you may have about intercity bus services, either from a national perspective or related to services in your state.

Thank You

Thank you for participating in this survey! We appreciate your time and you sharing your information on intercity bus issues. We hope you won't mind if we follow up with you, if necessary, to clarify the information you have shared with us.

Please provide any other studies, information, or examples that will help us understand your efforts relating to intercity bus service in your state. Send information to:

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PO Box 174250
Bozeman, MT 59717-4250

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dkack@coe.montana.edu

APPENDIX C: RIDER SURVEY

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Wyoming Intercity Bus Rider Survey

The Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University is administering this survey on behalf of the Wyoming Department of Transportation to users of intercity bus services. We are interested in your opinion of intercity bus services in and through Wyoming in an effort to better understand the use of these services, as well as determine potential improvements. **Participation in the survey is strictly voluntary.**

As used within this survey, intercity bus service refers to long-distance trips (at least 50 miles) on carriers such as Greyhound, Arrow/Black Hills Stage Lines, Jefferson Lines and Salt Lake Express. Local bus service refers to bus (transit) services within a community.

1. Where did you start your trip (City, State)? _____
2. How did you arrive at the bus station (terminal) where you boarded (or will board) this bus? (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> Drove myself	<input type="checkbox"/> Driven by someone else	<input type="checkbox"/> Walked	<input type="checkbox"/> Biked	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Bus Service
<input type="checkbox"/> Intercity Bus Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Train	<input type="checkbox"/> Taxi	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain) _____	
3. What is your final destination (City, State)? _____
4. How will you travel to your final destination, once you leave this bus? (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> Drive myself	<input type="checkbox"/> Picked up by someone else	<input type="checkbox"/> Walked	<input type="checkbox"/> Biked	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Bus Service
<input type="checkbox"/> Intercity Bus Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Train	<input type="checkbox"/> Taxi	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain) _____	
5. What is your primary purpose for traveling on the bus today? (either going to, or coming from)...

<input type="checkbox"/> Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> School	<input type="checkbox"/> Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Reasons
<input type="checkbox"/> Visiting Family or Friends		<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain) _____		
6. How were you made aware that the route (service) you are traveling today was available? (check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth	<input type="checkbox"/> Print Advertisement	<input type="checkbox"/> Radio Advertisement	<input type="checkbox"/> Television Advertisement
<input type="checkbox"/> Internet Search		<input type="checkbox"/> Internet Advertisement	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain) _____			
7. How satisfied are you with the information available about intercity bus services in Wyoming?

	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. For the following question, your personal group is defined as anyone who you are taking this trip with, such as family, spouse, friends, etc. This does not include the larger group on the bus.
 How many people, including yourself, are traveling on this bus as part of your personal group?

_____ Number of Adults	_____ Number of Children (under 18)
------------------------	-------------------------------------
9. What factors lead you to use the intercity bus service today for this particular trip?
 (Rank the top three with 1 being the most important)

____ Gas Prices	____ Lack of ability to drive	____ Lack of access to a vehicle
____ Safety of service	____ Cost of service	____ Enjoyment of service
____ Frequency of service	____ Ease of use	____ Other (explain) _____
10. If this bus service were not available, how would you have otherwise made this trip? (check only one)

<input type="checkbox"/> I would not have made the trip	<input type="checkbox"/> Drive myself	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride with someone else
<input type="checkbox"/> Take an airplane	<input type="checkbox"/> Take a train	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain) _____

OVER

11. How satisfied are you with the frequency of intercity bus services in Wyoming? (check only one)

Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. How satisfied are you with the routes of intercity bus services in Wyoming? (check only one)

Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Approximately how many one-way trips per year do you make on intercity bus services?
(One round trip is two one-way trips) _____

14. Are you more likely to ride intercity bus services: (check only one)

☐ Within Wyoming ☐ Between Wyoming and other states

15. How frequently do you ride public transportation/transit (i.e., a local or "city" bus) for work or commuting?
(check only one)

☐ Never ☐ Infrequently ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily

16. What is your gender? ____Male ____Female

17. What is your age?

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 18	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-35	<input type="checkbox"/> 36-45
<input type="checkbox"/> 46-55	<input type="checkbox"/> 56-65	<input type="checkbox"/> 66-79	<input type="checkbox"/> 80 or older

18. What is your total annual household income?

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$15,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15,000 to \$29,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30,000 to \$39,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 to \$49,999
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 to \$59,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60,000 to \$74,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000 to \$99,999	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 or higher

19. What is the zip code of the residence/home where you received your mail last month: _____

If you have a second (or seasonal) residence, what is the zip code of that location: _____

Please provide any other comments you have about intercity bus services in and through Wyoming.

Thank you for completing this survey!

APPENDIX D: WYOMING TRANSIT MANAGERS SURVEY

Intercity Bus Service Survey

The Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University is conducting this survey as part of a Wyoming Department of Transportation sponsored project related to intercity bus (ICB) service.

While participation in this survey is completely voluntary, we hope that you will share your knowledge and opinions with us. Please contact me if you have any questions about survey or the project. Thank you for your time and participation.

David Kack
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Note: Please use the following definitions to complete this survey.

Local Transit Service: Provides basic mobility services within a local area (town/county) and travels limited distances (10-20 miles from main town).

Commuter Service: Provides mobility for employment or to access health care and other services from one city/town to another city/town. One-way distances typically range from 10 to 50 miles.

Intercity Bus Service: Regularly scheduled public service using an over-the-road bus (motor coach) that operates with limited stops between two or multiple urbanized areas, or that connects rural areas to urbanized areas. Intercity bus service may be also an interstate service.

Name of your Transit Agency: _____

1. Which of the following services does your transit agency currently providing? (Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Local fixed route	<input type="checkbox"/> Demand-Response
<input type="checkbox"/> Paratransit	<input type="checkbox"/> Commuter Bus
<input type="checkbox"/> Intercity Bus	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):

2. Please list the communities you serve with the types of services noted:

Local Service (includes fixed route and/or demand response)	
Commuter Service	
Intercity Bus Service	

3. Please indicate the population groups you serve. (Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> General Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizens
<input type="checkbox"/> Persons with a Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Commuters
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):	

4. If your transit agency connects with the following modes of transportation, please note the name of the city/town where that connection is made.

Intercity Bus Service	
Passenger Rail Service	
Airline Service	

5. Please indicate if your transit service connects to the following modes within an hour of the arrival and/or departure of the service. (If no, please go to Question 5.a.)

Mode	Yes	No
Intercity Bus Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passenger Rail Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Airline Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5a. If "No", please indicate the layover time (in minutes and/or hours) for passengers to connect to the various modes:

Mode	Layover Time
Intercity Bus Service	
Passenger Rail Service	
Airline Service	

6. If your transit system does not provide connections to intercity bus, passenger rail or airlines service, which of the following statements is most accurate?

	We have never provided this service	We provided this service, but it is discontinued
Intercity Bus Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passenger Rail Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Airline Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6a. If you discontinued the service, why was it discontinued? (check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of funding	<input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient demand
<input type="checkbox"/> Rules/regulations	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):

7. To what extent do you feel that local, commuter and intercity bus service needs are being met in your area?

	Not at all				Very Well
Local Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commuter Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intercity Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please identify communities (routes from and to) that may benefit from the implementation or improvement of intercity bus services.

From (City/Town/Village)	To (City/Town/Village)

9. Please list what additional types of investments may need to be made to improve intercity bus services in Wyoming (e.g., additional funding, new vehicles, etc.).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

10. Please provide any other comments you have related to intercity bus services within or through Wyoming.

Thank you for your time and participation!

APPENDIX E: ROLLING STOCK ANALYSIS

Route # & Cities	Agency	Location	# of Vehicles	What are the types, years, and mileage of your vehicles?	Are the vehicles in good condition?
Route #1 Lander- Riverton-Casper	Child Development Services	Lander	24	-	Yes
Route #1 Lander- Riverton-Casper	Fremont County Assoc of Govts- WRTA	Riverton	14	1. 2001 Ford, medium duty bus, 25 passenger, 200,800 miles; 2. 2008 Ford, medium duty bus, 25 passenger, 95,000 miles; 3. 2011 Ford, medium duty bus, 25 passenger, 117,000 miles; 4. 1999 Champion, heavy duty bus, 35 passenger, 400,400 miles; 5. 2001 Champion, heavy duty bus, 35 passenger, 359,000 miles; 6. 2012 Champion, heavy duty bus, 35 passenger, 102,000 miles; 7. 2012 Champion, heavy duty bus, 35 passenger, 91,000 miles; 8. 2012 Champion, heavy duty bus, 35 passenger, 129,000 miles; 9. 2012 Champion, heavy duty bus, 35 passenger, 131,000 miles; 10. 2012 Blue Bird, heavy duty bus, 35 passenger, 147,000 miles; 11. 2012 Blue Bird, heavy duty bus, 35 passenger, 125,000 miles; 12. 2008 Dodge, light duty van, 103,000 miles; 13. 2014 Dodge, light duty van, 11,000 miles; 14. 2012 Chevy, light duty van, 95,000 miles	Varies, overall good
Route #2 Cody-Powell-Lovell	Powell Senior Citizens Center AGO- GO	Powell	4	-	Yes
Route #2 Cody-Powell-Lovell	Cody Council on Aging	Cody	7	-	Yes inspected daily, closely maintained
Route #3 Worland-Thermopolis- Casper	Hot Springs County Senior Citizens	Thermopolis	3	1. 2015 Dodge Caravan, ADA accessible, 12,843 miles; 2. 2011 Ford Starcraft, 14-passenger, ADA accessible, 26,517 miles; 3. 2007 Surbaru Wagon, passenger vehicle, NOT ADA accessible, 72,940 miles	Yes
Route #3 Worland-Thermopolis- Casper	Washakie County Senior Citizens Center	Worland	4	1. 2015 Dodge 7 passenger with ramp, 2,700 miles; 2. 2012 Chrysler 7 passenger with ramp, 45,500 miles; 3. 2008 Chevrolet 7 passenger with ramp, 67,000 miles; 4. 2002 Chevrolet 7 passenger with ramp, 76,600 miles	Yes

Route # & Cities	Agency	Location	# of Vehicles	What are the types, years, and mileage of your vehicles?	Are the vehicles in good condition?
Route #4 Lusk-Torrington-Cheyenne	Niobrabra Senior Center Incorporated	Lusk	5	-	-
Route #4 Lusk-Torrington-Cheyenne	Diversified Services	Torrington	8	-	Yes
Route #5 Worland-Greybull-Lovell-(Billings)	Washakie County Senior Citizens Center	Worland	4	1. 2015 Dodge 7 passenger with ramp, 2,700 miles; 2. 2012 Chrysler 7 passenger with ramp, 45,500 miles; 3. 2008 Chevrolet 7 passenger with ramp, 67,000 miles; 4. 2002 Chevrolet 7 passenger with ramp, 76,600 miles	Yes
Route #6 New Castle-Gillette	Weston County Senior Services	New Castle	8	-	Yes

When current providers were asked about expanding services to meet large ICB services, those who indicated that they would be willing to look at such an option included WRTA, Hot Springs County Senior Citizens, Washakie County Senior Citizens Center, and Diversified Services (Torrington).

When asked about what these providers may need from WYDOT to expand their services for ICB purposes, most noted that they would need more information, and likely they would need additional funding, both for vehicles (rolling stock) and for operations.

