



# Carbon County Transit Development Plan

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Prepared for:

CONNECTING PEOPLE  
BUILDING COMMUNITY



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# Carbon County Transit Development Plan

## Final Report

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# Introduction and Executive Summary

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## INTRODUCTION

Through its issuance of a Request for Proposal (RFP), issued on June 18, 2018, the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF) sought qualified firms to conduct services necessary to prepare a new Five-Year Transit Development Plan (TDP) for Carbon County, Montana that considers the transportation needs of all Carbon County residents and works cooperatively with existing services to best serve Carbon County residents and possibly visitors.



LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. (LSC) was selected by RLACF to complete this work and started this study with a kick-off meeting and community familiarization tour September 19 – 21, 2018. The project took 21 weeks to complete with delivery of the final report in late February 2019.

The LSC approach to completing the study has included the following tasks:

1. Project Administration and Coordination;
2. Review of Existing Conditions, Unique Traits, Transit Demand, and Community Needs;
3. Community Engagement;
4. Develop and Evaluate Service Alternatives;
5. Draft TDP; and
6. Deliver Final TDP.

This final TDP is built upon the interim report, dated October 26, 2018, and the service options technical memorandum, completed December 21, 2018. The TDP incorporates these previous reports and builds upon them to define the transit

development and operational vision; assess the opportunity and capacity for the planning and implementation of the TDP; and provide goals, priorities, and objectives for public transportation in Carbon County, Montana.

## Red Lodge Area Community Foundation

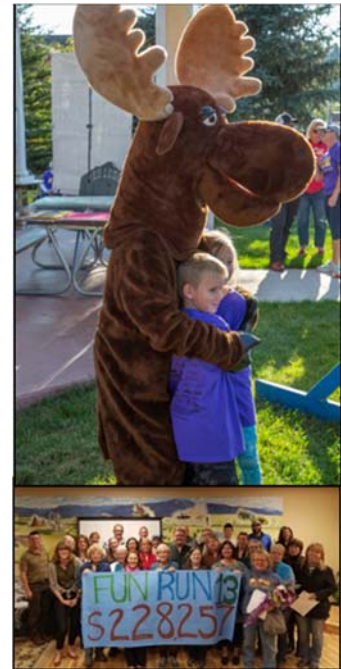
The Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF) is the client for this project. RLACF is a community non-profit with a mission of “connecting people and building community by catalyzing change and sharing resources to build a strong, vibrant, resilient, inclusive community.”

The goals of RLACF are to build:

- Resilient Community and Responsive Leadership
- Robust Arts, Culture, and Environment
- Connected Youth
- Thriving Nonprofits

Some initiatives of RLACF include the annual community Fun Run, Revitalizing Old Roosevelt School, Music from the Beartooths, Lunch in the Sun, and the Carbon County Connect community resource directory.

RLACF has taken the lead to investigate transportation needs in Carbon County as a result of its Age-Friendly Carbon County Survey. The survey identified transportation as the greatest concern for Carbon County seniors who stated that they require transportation for medical visits, grocery shopping, visits to the pharmacy, and getting around the county.



## Goals of the Study

As stated by RLACF in the original RFP, the study’s main goals have been to:

1. Assess the transportation needs of Carbon County residents.
2. Determine how existing public and private services are meeting the present needs of residents.
3. Create a comprehensive Five-Year TDP for Carbon County.

An ideal outcome and overarching goal for this TDP has been to leverage the plan for a successful Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) grant application for federal rural public transportation funding that could be used to establish a new public transportation system in Carbon County. The next MDT grant deadline for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5311 operating funding and capital funding is March 1, 2019, and this TDP will be used to inform a grant application.

## Study Issues

Through recent community assessments, RLACF has identified transportation as a top concern among Carbon County residents, especially among older residents and those living in more remote locations. The 2013 Community Health Services Development

report found that respondents considered transportation services one of the top three ways to improve the community's access to health care. In 2016, participants in a health-oriented Community Panel noted transportation to appointments in Billings, public services, and medical appointments as common issues. Furthermore, in two of the three community dialogues hosted by RLACF in 2016, participants identified transportation to medical appointments and support services as a concern.



More recently, as stated in the RFP, the Age-Friendly Carbon County survey similarly identified transportation as a major concern and top opportunity for improving the lives of older residents in the county, addressing social isolation, as well as health concerns.

All these findings are in line with those of national organizations dedicated to helping older adults and adults with disabilities. According to Grantmakers in Aging, transportation and access to services continue to be top issues identified by older adult service providers as a key to aging in place.

The study builds upon and complements existing transportation services available in the county. Input from the community has been a key driver of findings and recommendations throughout the entire process.

## Study Approach

LSC has approached this study with creativity and open-mindedness. We have listened to the community and leveraged our expertise and experience to define in this TDP:

- What the community needs and desires are for transportation;
- What transportation solutions are appropriate for Carbon County;
- What transportation services are possible to fund and operate;
- What has the highest chance of long-term sustainability and success;
- How the system will operate and who will operate it; and
- The incremental approach to growing services over the coming five years.

As LSC has moved through this study, each step in the process has been informed by the previous steps and associated deliverables in a way that has built up this Final TDP and its recommendations. The intent has been to create a clear and incremental process.



We have sought a variety of opinions and ideas that have been incorporated in the TDP. Public input has been inherent in every step:

- Phase 1 – Stakeholder interviews and community-wide survey
- Phase 2 – Service options workshop
- Phase 3 – Preview TDP recommendations

This phased approach has allowed for the incorporation of public input and community desires into the TDP as it has been developed.



## Advisory Committee

The TDP project has been managed for RLACF by Stephen Kalb-Koenigsfeld, Thriving Non-Profit Program Director, with assistance from Therese Picasso-Edwards, Resilient Community Program Director. An Advisory Committee (AC) made up of interested and engaged community members has guided the TDP process. The helpful input and dedicated involvement of the AC has been critical to the planning process and has resulted in a better TDP.

The AC comprised diverse community members representing many different community organizations:

- Ruth Bilyeu: Community Care Team, Red Lodge Fire
- Bill Bullock: Carbon County Commissioner
- James Caniglia: City of Red Lodge
- Sarah Ewald: Community Care Team, Red Lodge Fire
- Bill Foisy: RLACF Board and Beartooth Recreational Trails Association
- Kaci Jansma: Riverstone Health
- Margaret (Maggie) Karas: Beartooth Billings Clinic
- Barbara Marquardt: Citizen and Age-Friendly Community Steering Committee
- Josh McQuillan: Carbon County Sheriff
- Angela Newell: Carbon County Commissioners Administrative Assistant
- Gretchen Nolan: Citizen and Age-Friendly Community Steering Committee
- Don Redfoot: RLACF Board and retired AARP
- Jeff Schmidt: Red Lodge Mountain Resort
- Adam Kraft: MDT

It should be noted that this project was initiated by George Man, RLACF Americorps member, who coordinated the initial planning grant for the TDP.

The TDP funding has been made possible by MDT and its staff, especially Adam Kraft, who has provided critical input and support for the project.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Carbon County TDP is comprised of three major pieces:

1. Background and understanding of Carbon County, community needs and perceptions, and opportunity for new public transportation
  - a. Chapters II through IV
2. Transit demand and potential service options
  - a. Chapters V and VI
3. Service plan and implementation
  - a. Chapters VII and VIII

### Background and Understanding of Carbon County

Through the process of touring the community, listening to residents, researching the background information, analyzing available data, and carrying out a community survey, it has been clear that transportation is an important need in Carbon County. The TDP process has revealed that:

- Current transportation options are limited and not always affordable, accessible, or available.
- Carbon County is a very rural area, especially outside of Red Lodge, with dispersed population over a large geographic area.
- Tourism and recreation are important parts of the local economy with summer visitation growing steadily, while winter visitation is flat or declining slightly.
- Transit needs exist throughout the county, but demand estimation models show that some of the greatest need and potential for ridership include Red Lodge and adjacent areas, Bridger and adjacent areas, and Joliet.



- Although the majority of residents are finding ways of getting around today, the large majority of survey respondents and interviewees indicated that they, or their clients, would regularly utilize a potential new public transportation system.
- Red Lodge is the most popular potential destination for trips within Carbon County, while Billings is the overwhelming favorite potential destination outside of Carbon County.

## Transit Needs and Options

Using transit demand calculations in Chapter V of the TDP, LSC has identified that there is demand for a new transit system in Carbon County:

### Demand-Response Service within Carbon County

- 8,700 trips per year (estimated using rural, non-program estimate tool)
- Three to four buses
- Operating budget of \$250,000 - \$350,000

### Fixed-Route Service for Red Lodge Area/Red Lodge Mountain Resort with Connection to Billings

- 24,000 trips per year (estimated using rural, non-program estimate tool)
- Three to four buses
- Operating budget of \$200,000 - \$300,000

The TDP study has also revealed that meeting the total demand is not possible in the initial phases of operations due to funding limitations. The potential best-case funding does not match operating costs for service options:

#### Operating Budget: (best case, years one-two)

\$60,000 Federal  
\$35,000 Local Match  
**\$95,000 Total**



#### Example Annual Operating Costs:

- Demand response: Mon. - Fri., 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. = **\$85,000**
- Demand response: Mon. - Thur., 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. = **\$68,000**
- Billings: Two trips/month = **\$13,000**
- Fixed route Red Lodge to ski area: Fri.-Sun., Mid-Dec. to Mid-Mar., eight trips/day = **\$20,000**

Given funding constraints and public input, the TDP explores and evaluates (in Chapter VI) the potential service options for a new public transportation system which include:

- Weekday demand-response service (also known as dial-a-ride) in Carbon County to reach shopping, medical services, and senior activities;
- A monthly or weekly connection to Billings;
- Seasonal fixed-route service within Red Lodge and up to Red Lodge Mountain Resort; and
- Summer trailhead transportation.

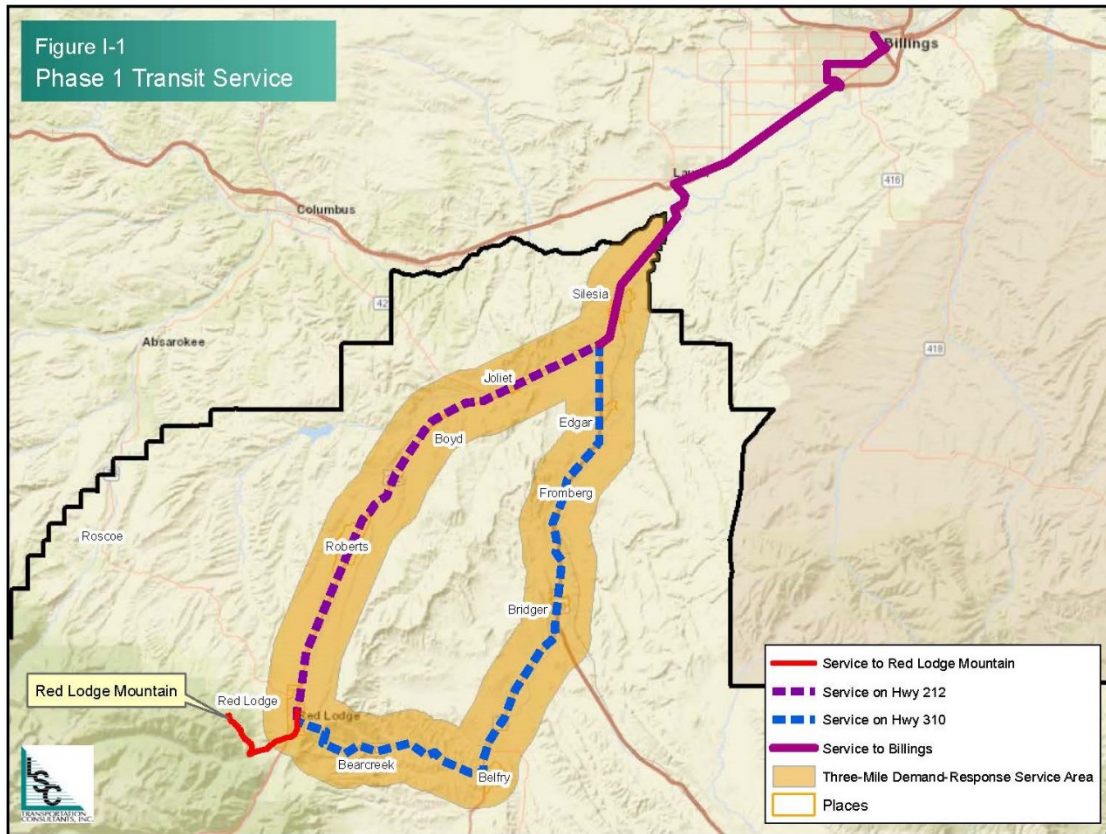
## **Service Plan and Implementation**

The TDP establishes a vision for a new public transportation service in Carbon County that incorporates three service aspects and includes a phased approach:

### **Phase 1 Transit Service**

The recommended Phase 1 transit service plan (Figure I-1) for the first three to four years of operation includes:

- **3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Highways 212 and 310** - operates three days per week, year-round, for eight hours per day.
- **Connection to Billings** - operates twice per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30 a.m. and returns at 4:30 p.m.
- **Winter Fixed-Route Service between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain** - operates on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) with eight roundtrips per day for three months per year (mid-December through mid-March).

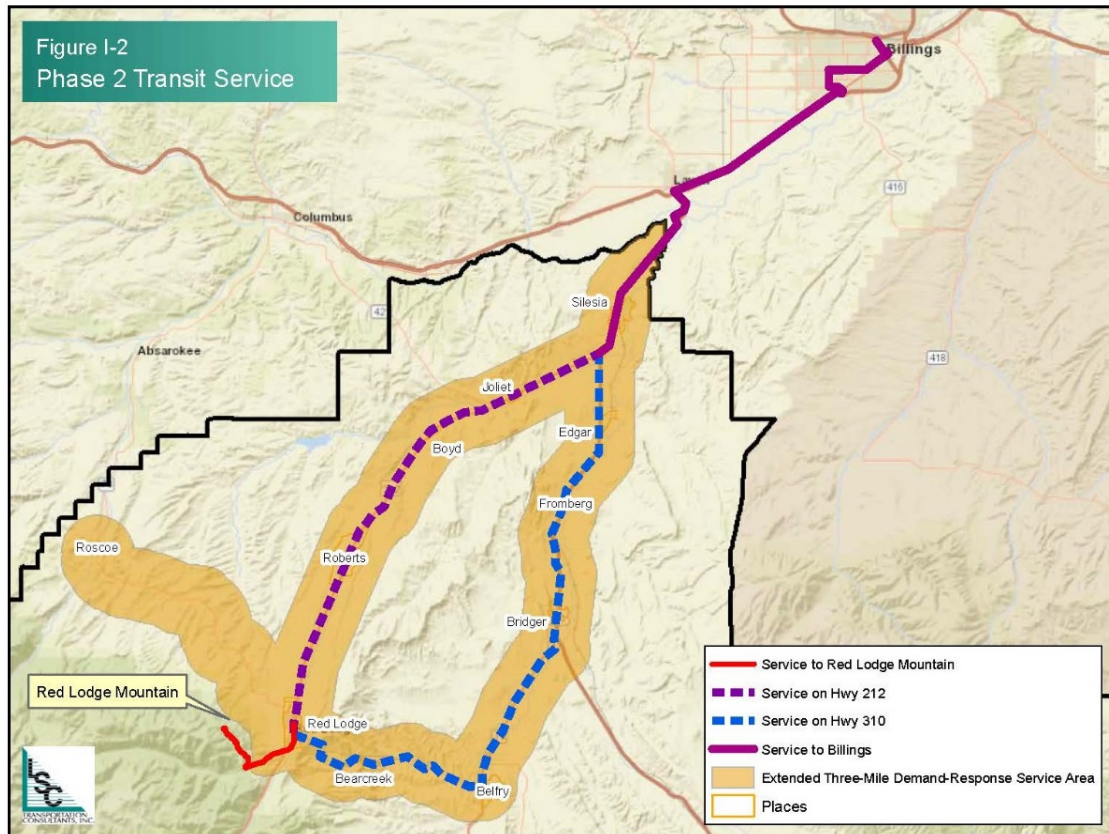


## Phase 2 Transit Service

The recommended Phase 2 transit service plan (Figure I-2) for implementation in years four or five includes:

- **3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Highways 212 and 310, with larger service area in the Red Lodge area and to Luther/Roscoe** - operates five days per week, year-round, for eight hours per day.
- **Connection to Billings** - operates four times per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30 a.m. and returns at 4:30 p.m.
- **Winter Fixed-Route Service between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain** - operates on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday with eight roundtrips per day for three months per year (mid-December through mid-March).





## Implementation

To fulfill the vision of a new public transportation system requires that the AC, community partners, and RLACF staff work quickly and efficiently over the coming nine months to implement the TDP:

By March 1, 2019	Submit MDT funding application for operating and capital
March - May 2019	Develop local match funding sources and necessary funding partnerships
June 2019	Learn of grant award; begin operational planning
July - Sept. 2019	Finalize operating plan and adopt budget; develop policies and procedures
Sept. - Nov. 2019	Start marketing and develop partnerships; hire drivers
Nov./Dec. 2019	Begin operations!



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# Review of Previous Studies

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This chapter provides a review of relevant plans, studies, and resources relating to transit and transportation issues in Carbon County.

## RED LODGE MOUNTAIN TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY (2012)

In 2012, the Red Lodge Mountain Resort (RLM) hired the consulting firm, SE Group, from Ketchum, Idaho to complete a transit feasibility study for RLM.

Since the 1980s, RLM has been challenged with providing parking to accommodate the large demand of skiers and visitors. Due to limited land available at the mountain base area to expand parking, RLM is considering the feasibility of establishing a park-and-ride facility in Red Lodge with transit service to the resort area. The service would be available for use by locals, visitors staying at area hotels, and other visitors passing through Red Lodge on their way to RLM during both summer and winter months. Visitation data suggest that parking is limiting visitation numbers at RLM and an improved transportation system would improve the experience and allow more skiers to access the area.

The existing base area at RLM can accommodate parking for approximately 650 vehicles, with approximately 550 spaces in the main parking lot area and 100 spaces along Ski Run Road. On the busiest days at RLM, sometimes as many as 200 additional vehicles park along Ski Run Road which brings up safety and snow plowing concerns.

Approximately 91 percent of skiers currently arrive by personal vehicle to RLM. In addition, RLM employs 250 people during the ski season, with approximately 100 working on a given peak day. Approximately 30 employees use the informal park-and-ride service provided by RLM and approximately 30 employees carpool to the base area on a regular basis equaling approximately 55 employee cars parked at the base area. Based on these estimates, the current parking capacity at RLM is approximately 1,700 people.

As part of the study, 13 potential park-and-ride lots were identified and four potential gondola landings and alignments were identified. Although the potential for a gondola in Red Lodge is exciting, it is not likely that the number of riders on the gondola would justify its operation on its own.

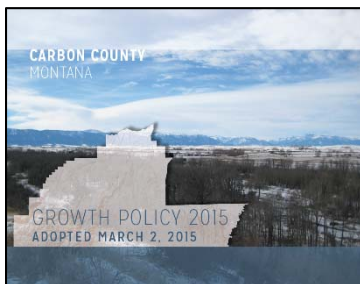
The estimated cost of the park-and-ride system is based on the cost of parking lot improvements, combined with the cost of the buses, as shown in Figure II-1. The cost summary assumes 1) that none of the lot locations would require the purchase or lease of the underlying property, 2) that parking lot lighting and significant drain improvements would not be needed, 3) a capital cost of \$150,000 per bus, and 4) that the cost estimate includes a 15 percent contingency and 20 percent for design and construction administration.

Figure II-1  
Park-and-Ride Cost Summary  
Source: RLM Transit Feasibility Study

Alternative	Cost of Parking Lot Improvements	Bus Capital Cost	Annual Bus Operations & Maintenance
Civic Center Lot	\$25,000	\$300,000	\$280,000
Civic Center Lot w/ On-Street	\$25,000	\$600,000	\$510,000
Coal Miner's Lot	\$300,000	\$750,000	\$690,000
North City Lot	\$100,000	\$600,000	\$460,000
Small Intercept Lot	\$275,000	\$300,000	\$220,000
Large Intercept Lot	\$1,750,000	\$2,400,000	\$1,800,000
Hotel Pick-up	--	\$300,000	\$190,000

Based on the findings of the study, a small transit system could be started with as few as four buses initially with a park-and-ride lot at the Civic Center and pick-up points at two area hotels. As the service becomes more successful, the plan recommends increasing the number of buses to at least six vehicles, which would begin to show a significant impact in terms of parking displacement and increased visitation.

## CARBON COUNTY GROWTH POLICY (2015)



In 2015, Carbon County adopted a growth policy which is intended to provide decision makers with a resource for balancing diverse goals, while creating a more vibrant, sustainable community. The growth policy is also the voice of local residents and formalizes how they want the county to grow in the future. It serves as a plan for the future focusing primarily on the physical and economic issues pertinent in the present economy.



The following contains a short summary of the transportation issues discussed in the growth policy.

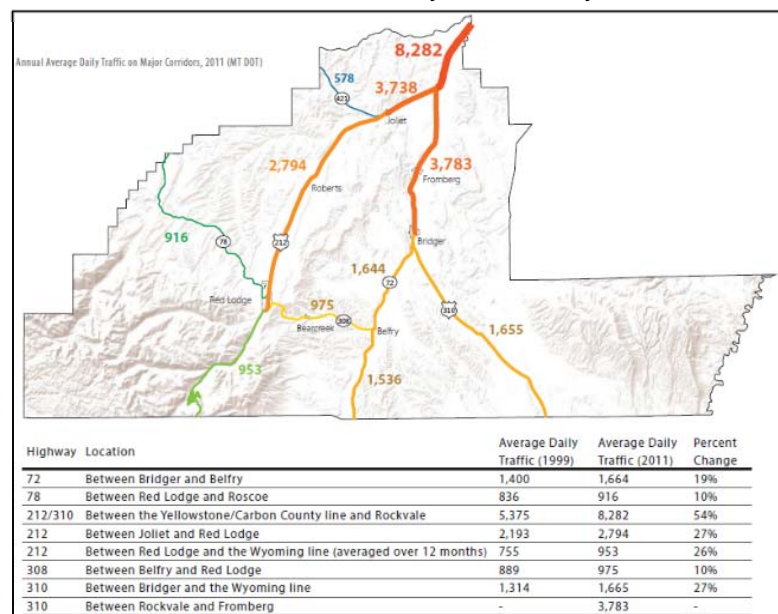
## Roads and Highways

The streets and highways in Carbon County are constructed and maintained by municipalities, the County, the State, the Bureau of Land Management, and private homeowners' associations. Carbon County is responsible for over 900 miles of roads and bridges, and the County completes one major replacement approximately every year. The County does not accept responsibility of new road systems in subdivisions, but requires that provisions for maintenance of the roads be in place through an appropriate mechanism, like a Homeowner's Association. The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) maintains approximately 24 miles of state secondary highway and approximately 153 miles of primary state highway in the county. The Custer National Forest maintains approximately 300 miles of roads in Carbon County, and the roads on Custer National Forest and BLM lands provide access for public and administrative uses.

## Traffic

Traffic has steadily increased on all of the county's state highways since the 1990s, with the largest increase occurring on Highway 212/310 from the Yellowstone/Carbon County Line to Rockvale where almost 3,000 more vehicles travel on the route on average every day. The annual average daily traffic

Figure II-2  
2011 Annual Average Daily Traffic on Major Corridors  
Source: Carbon County Growth Policy



(AADT) between Laurel and Rockvale is 8,282 vehicles per day, a 54 percent increase from 2009. As shown in Figure II-2, traffic flows generally decrease with

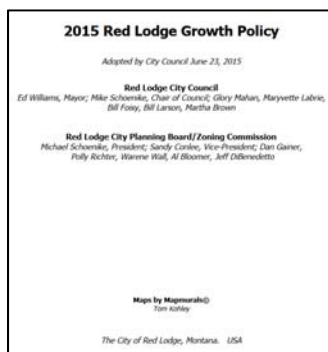
the distance traveled south from the Rockvale junction, with the exception of cars crossing into Wyoming at the state line.

Yellowstone National Park and the Beartooth Pass continue to be major tourist attractions. While the Beartooth Highway is only open seasonally, it saw a 27 percent increase in average daily traffic over the past 12-year period.

## Air Transportation

There are two public-use airports in Carbon County. Red Lodge has a paved 4,000-foot airstrip with a small crosswind runway located on the west bench above the city. Aviation fuel is available in Red Lodge; however, the present airport no longer meets Federal Aviation Administration standards and is ineligible for federal financial assistance. The second is located on the west edge of Bridger and has a paved 3,400-foot airstrip that can accommodate large twin engine planes. There is no instrumentation at Bridger, no available aviation fuel, nor a fixed-base operator. The closest commercial airport to Carbon County is Billings Logan International Airport.

## RED LODGE GROWTH POLICY (2015)



In 2015, the City of Red Lodge adopted a growth policy with the purpose of helping “the citizens of Red Lodge and the surrounding area sustain and even enhance their sense of place and spirit of community as growth occurs.” While public transportation is not specifically discussed in this document, elements of transportation, including sidewalks, streets, avenues, alleys, and snow plowing, are discussed as “this plan provides policy guidance for the public investment in infrastructure and land use decisions that will determine the pattern and quality of future development.”

## Sidewalks

The Growth Policy recommends that the City of Red Lodge should investigate a Sidewalk Improvement District and other funding alternatives to build a comprehensive system of well-maintained sidewalks, as well as encourage the installation of bicycle racks throughout the city.

## **Streets, Avenues, and Alleys**

The Growth Policy calls for establishing a comprehensive plan for the rehabilitation, maintenance, upgrading, and extension of the City of Red Lodge's existing 25 miles of streets and avenues, and six miles of alleys. In addition, the document recognizes that establishing a prioritized secondary route that connects the city to the top of the west bench is a great public health concern. The Growth Policy has identified 19<sup>th</sup> Street as an ideal emergency route and collector street in the event that Highway 78 at Brewery Hill is closed.

## **Snow Plowing**

The Growth Policy indicates that the City Public Works Department strives to provide clear and safe pedestrian crossings of public streets and avenues, and that private snow plowing on city streets and alleys shall be discouraged.

## **COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT (2016)**



Beartooth Billings Clinic is a 10-bed nonprofit critical access hospital located in Red Lodge and is the only hospital in Carbon County. In 2016, Beartooth Billings Clinic invited members of community health partner organizations, public agencies, mental health providers, school officials, child care providers, and public health officials to participate in developing the community health needs assessment via a community panel. The community panel participants identified transportation to medical appointments in Billings as the fifth highest area of community health need.

In addition, the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation and Beartooth Billings Clinic worked together to host community meetings in Bridger, Joliet, and Red Lodge to listen to and gather community concerns relative to health.

In Joliet, community concerns relative to health included:

- Need for transportation to Billings to receive care.
- The waiting time for an ambulance to arrive can take one and a half hours which is often not fast enough.
- Need transportation to and from eye care.

In Red Lodge, community concerns relative to health included:

- Need for transportation to the senior center and to access support services.

## **AGE-FRIENDLY CARBON COUNTY SURVEY RESULTS (2018)**

In 2018, the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF) conducted a survey with the purpose to determine, in the context of age-friendliness, the primary concerns and opportunities for improvement as identified by Carbon County residents, especially the older residents. The survey results are intended to guide the Age-Friendly Steering Committee of RLACF to make Carbon County more livable for seniors. The survey was designed using the eight domains of livability from the AARP website, which include:

1. Outdoor Space and Buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social Participation
5. Respect and Social Inclusion
6. Civic Participation and Employment
7. Communication and Information
8. Community Support and Health Services

Respondents were asked to rank the eight domains of livability on a scale from one to five, with one being very satisfied and five being very dissatisfied, in terms of how well the community meets their personal needs and the community's needs. Transportation received the lowest score for meeting residents' personal needs and the community's needs. In addition, transportation was ranked highest in terms of the greatest need for improvement out of the eight domains of livability, followed by communication and information, and housing.

The survey analysis concludes that transportation is the greatest concern for Carbon County seniors, and they require transportation for medical visits, grocery shopping, visits to the pharmacy, and getting around the county in general. The benefits of accessible and affordable transportation are physical, social, and economic, and can help reduce social isolation among seniors in Carbon County.

## CARBON COUNTY CONNECT



The RLACF has put together a directory of community services, called Carbon County Connect (available at: [www.carboncountyconnect.org](http://www.carboncountyconnect.org)). The directory is free and provides access to over 300 different listings of programs, organizations, services, and resources that are available to Carbon County residents.

The directory contains a wide variety of community services including:

- Health clinics
- Mental health
- Addiction services
- Agriculture
- Animals
- Art
- Childcare
- City works
- Clothing
- Disability
- Services
- Education
- Employment
- Financials
- Food
- Housing
- Kids programs
- Legal services
- Libraries
- Public assistance
- Public safety
- Senior citizens
- Spiritual centers
- Transportation
- Veterans services
- Victims of violence
- Wellness and recreation

Transportation resources listed in the community services directory include:

- Cab services
  - Red Lodge Taxi
  - Uber
- Community Care (medical trips)
- Bus lines
  - Black Hills Stage
  - Rimrock Trailways

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## Community Conditions

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### INTRODUCTION

Chapter III presents the community conditions, demographics, and select local travel patterns for Carbon County, Montana. In addition, this chapter evaluates visitor activity data within the study area, as well as an overview and analysis of several existing transportation services. Where appropriate, figures and tables are used for illustration.

### DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

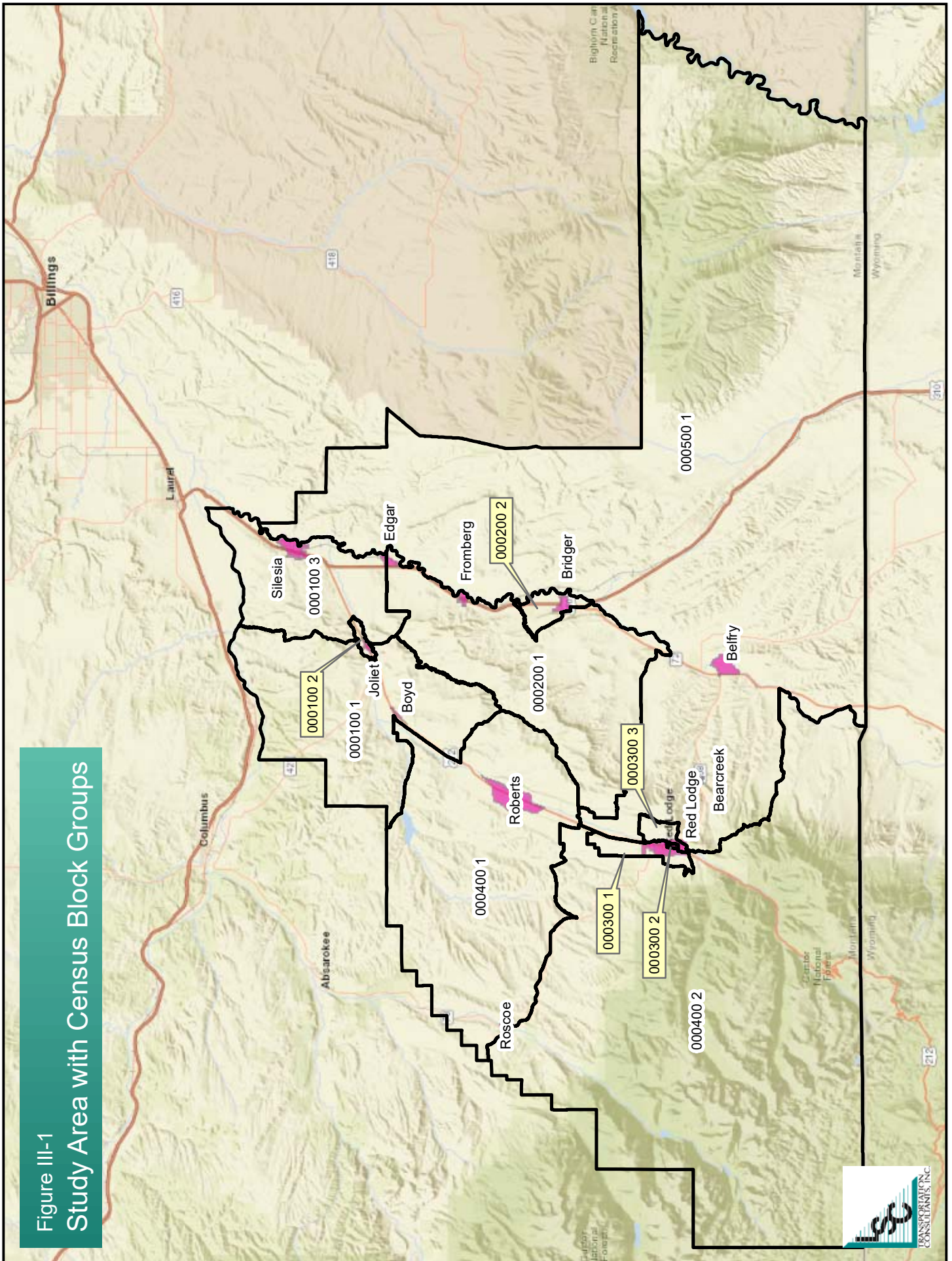
#### Study Area Location

Carbon County is located in central Montana along the border with Wyoming. It is located southwest of Billings and is part of the Billings, MT Metropolitan Statistical Area. The county seat, Red Lodge, is near several recreation opportunities such as skiing, mountain biking, and hiking. The county is home to more than 60 federally-designated historic sites, and parts of Custer and Gallatin National Forests as well as the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area are within its boundaries.

The demographic analysis was done by block group, which is a census-defined boundary. These boundaries do not necessarily denote neighborhoods or communities, but rather act as a standardized means for analysis. The study area with block group boundaries is shown in Figure III-1.

Figure III-1

# Study Area with Census Block Groups



## **Demographics**

Unless noted otherwise, all data listed in this chapter are from the 2012-2016 U.S. Census American Community Survey (2016 ACS) five-year estimates. According to the 2016 ACS, the total population of the study area is 10,340.

### **Population Density**

Population density is used to determine where population is concentrated. The size of the census blocks skews the location of population concentrations. Transit is generally more successful in areas with greater concentrations of population. As shown in Figure III-2, the highest densities are in downtown Red Lodge and Joliet. The areas with the next highest densities are the Red Lodge area as well as Bridger.

### **Transit-Dependent Population Characteristics**

This section provides information on the individuals considered by the transportation profession to be dependent upon public transit. The four types of limitations that preclude people from driving are physical limitations, financial limitations, legal limitations, and self-imposed limitations. Physical limitations may include permanent disabilities (i.e., frailty, blindness, paralysis, or developmental disabilities) to temporary disabilities (i.e., acute illnesses and head injuries). Financial limitations include people who are unable to purchase or rent a vehicle. Legal limitations include being too young to drive or having no driver's license. Self-imposed limitations refer to people who choose not to own or drive a vehicle (some or all of the time) for reasons other than those listed in the first three categories.

The Census is generally capable of providing information about the first three categories of limitation. The fourth category of limitation represents a relatively small portion of transit ridership in areas with low density. Table III-1 presents Carbon County's statistics regarding transportation-dependent populations. Although ambulatory disabled and low-income population data are included in the 2016 ACS, they are only available at the tract level and were apportioned to the block group level based on the population of the block group compared to the total population in the tract.



Figure III-2  
Population Density

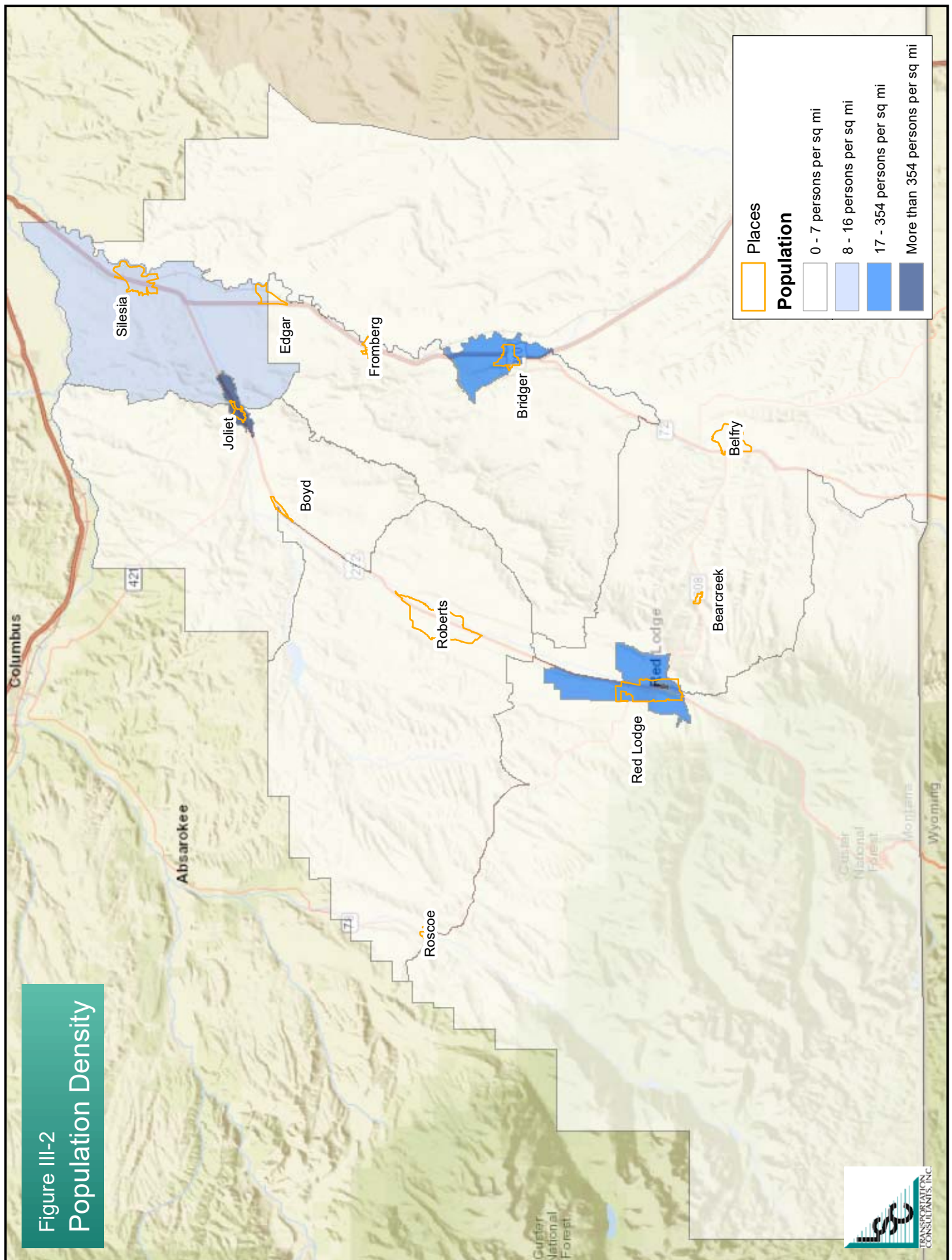


Table III-1 Estimated Population Characteristics Carbon County, MT														
Census Tract	Census Block Group	Total Population	Land Area (sq. miles)	Total Households	Zero-Vehicle Households		Older Adult Population (65 and Over)		Youth Population (10-19)		Ambulatory Disabled Population		Low-Income Population	
					#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	1	648	127.30	264	0	0.0%	154	23.8%	36	5.6%	51	7.8%	52	8.1%
	2	666	1.92	269	9	3.3%	128	19.2%	95	14.3%	52	7.8%	54	8.1%
	3	1,037	66.50	448	0	0.0%	223	21.5%	146	14.1%	81	7.8%	84	8.1%
2	1	958	138.65	399	9	2.3%	243	25.4%	139	14.5%	93	9.7%	95	9.9%
	2	1,129	7.51	413	18	4.4%	303	26.8%	132	11.7%	110	9.7%	112	9.9%
3	1	1,321	7.73	599	11	1.8%	264	20.0%	179	13.6%	127	9.6%	243	18.4%
	2	486	0.21	206	4	1.9%	124	25.5%	36	7.4%	47	9.6%	89	18.4%
	3	592	3.99	266	2	0.8%	153	25.8%	59	10.0%	57	9.6%	109	18.4%
4	1	1,254	204.86	526	33	6.3%	238	19.0%	112	8.9%	75	5.9%	56	4.5%
	2	714	562.22	364	4	1.1%	247	34.6%	69	9.7%	42	5.9%	32	4.5%
5	1	1,535	927.90	631	20	3.2%	275	17.9%	177	11.5%	144	9.4%	182	11.9%
Totals		10,340	2,048.79	4,385	110	2.5%	2,352	22.7%	1,180	11.4%	878	8.5%	1,108	10.7%
Montana Totals		1,023,391	147,040	412,653	21,343	5.2%	170,868	16.7%	126,294	12.3%	66,623	6.5%	148,677	14.5%
Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey - 2016, LSC 2018.														

### Older-Adult Population

The older-adult population, defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as people 65 years of age or older, represents a significant number of the national transit-dependent population and represents 22.7 percent of the total population in the study area. This is higher than the percentage of older adults in Montana (16.7 percent). The older adult population includes individuals over the age of 65 years. As shown in Figure III-3, the areas with the highest densities of older adults are downtown Red Lodge and Joliet. The area with the next highest density is in Bridger.

### Population of Persons with an Ambulatory Disability

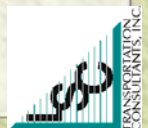
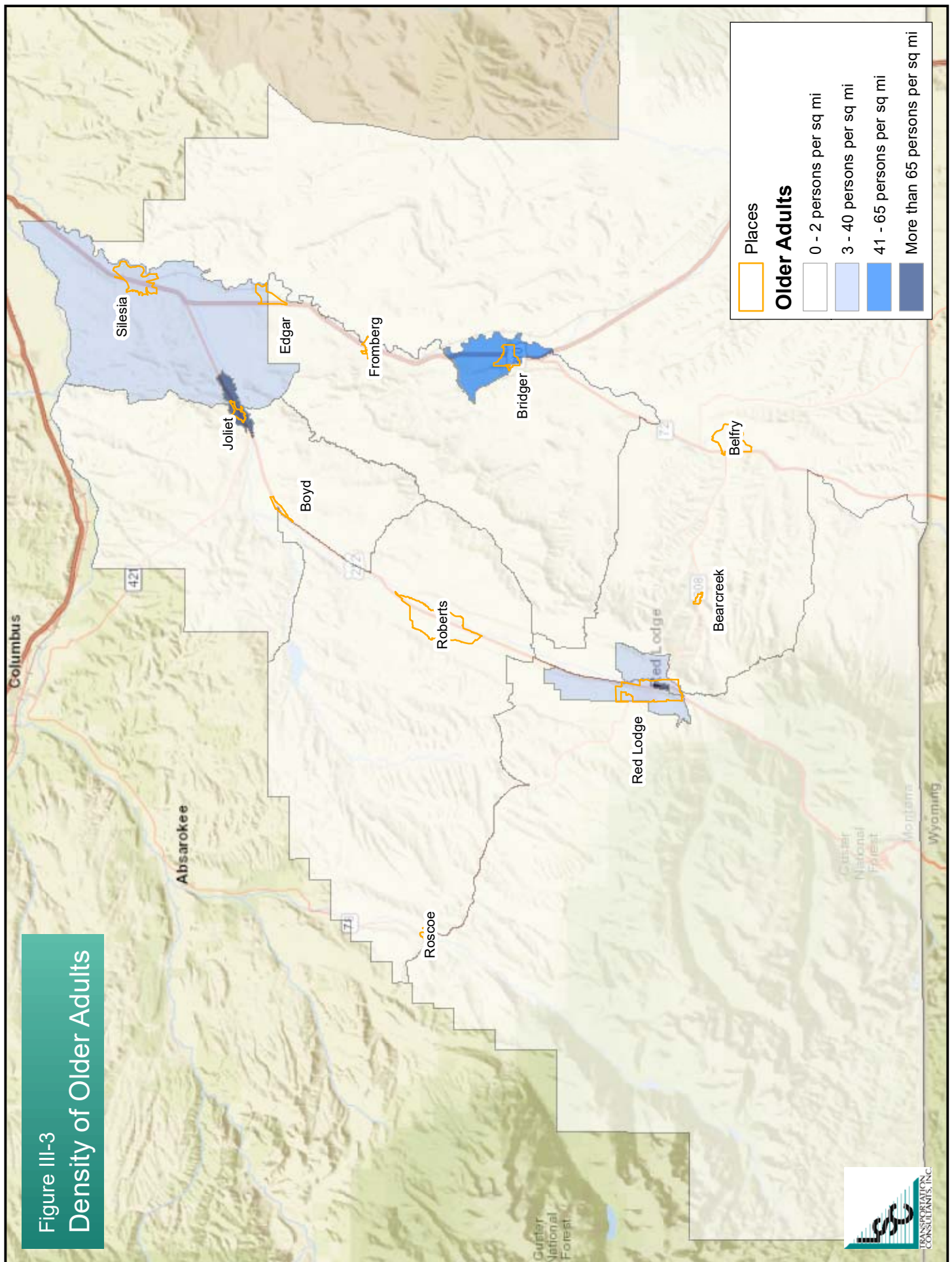
An individual is classified as having “ambulatory disability” if they have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. Approximately 8.5 percent of the population in the study area has some type of ambulatory disability. This is slightly higher than the percentage of persons with an ambulatory disability in Montana (6.5 percent). As shown in Figure III-4, the areas with the highest density of persons with an ambulatory disability are downtown Red Lodge and Joliet. The areas with the next highest density are in Bridger and the greater Red Lodge area.

### Low-Income Population

Low-income population, as defined by the FTA, includes persons whose household income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services’ poverty guidelines. The low-income population listed in the tables and GIS maps includes people who are living below the poverty line using the Census Bureau’s poverty threshold.

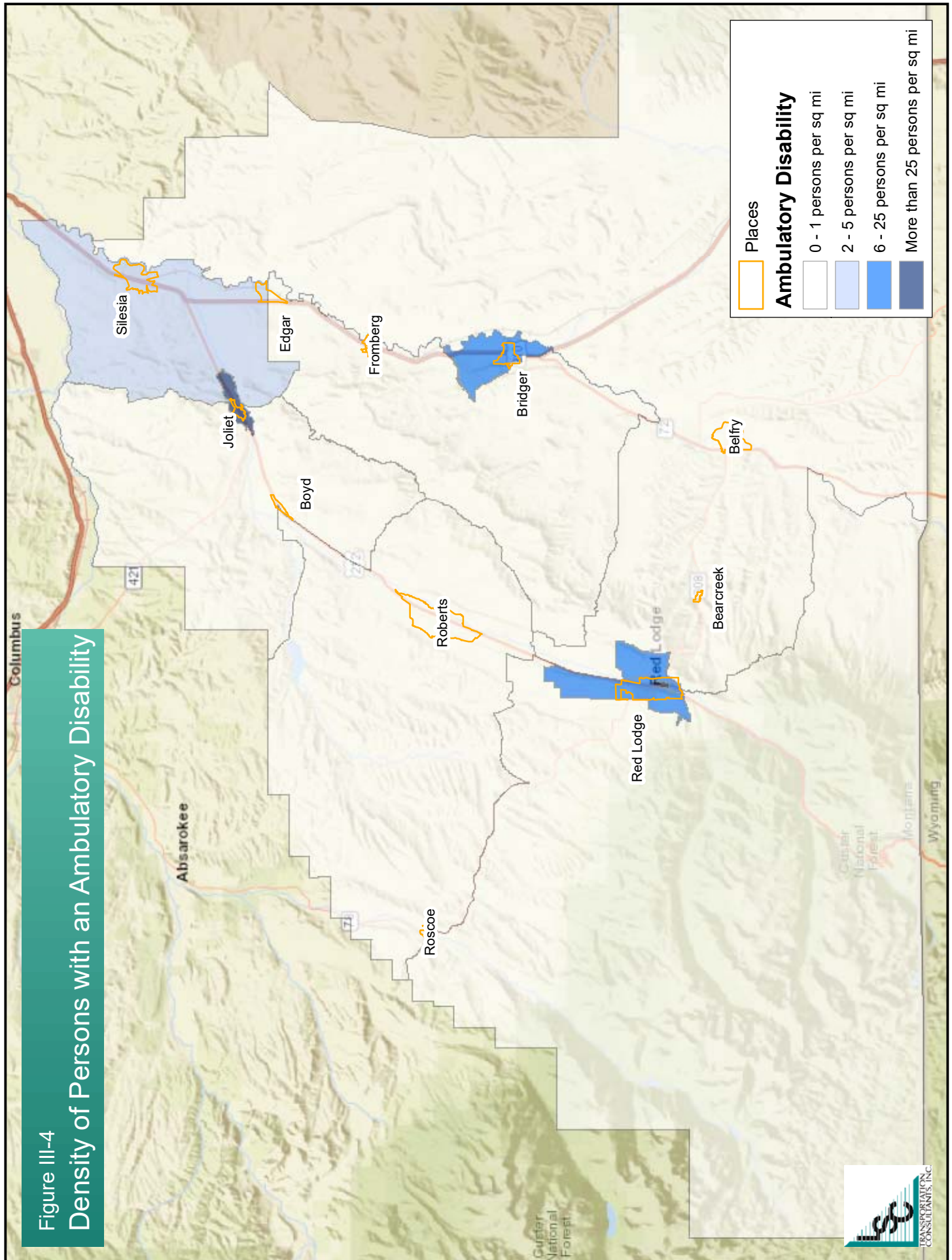
Approximately 10.7 percent of the population of the study area is considered low income while the percentage of persons considered low income for the State of Montana is slightly higher (14.5 percent). As shown in Figure III-5, the area with the highest density is downtown Red Lodge. The areas with the next highest densities are the greater Red Lodge area and Joliet.

Figure III-3  
Density of Older Adults

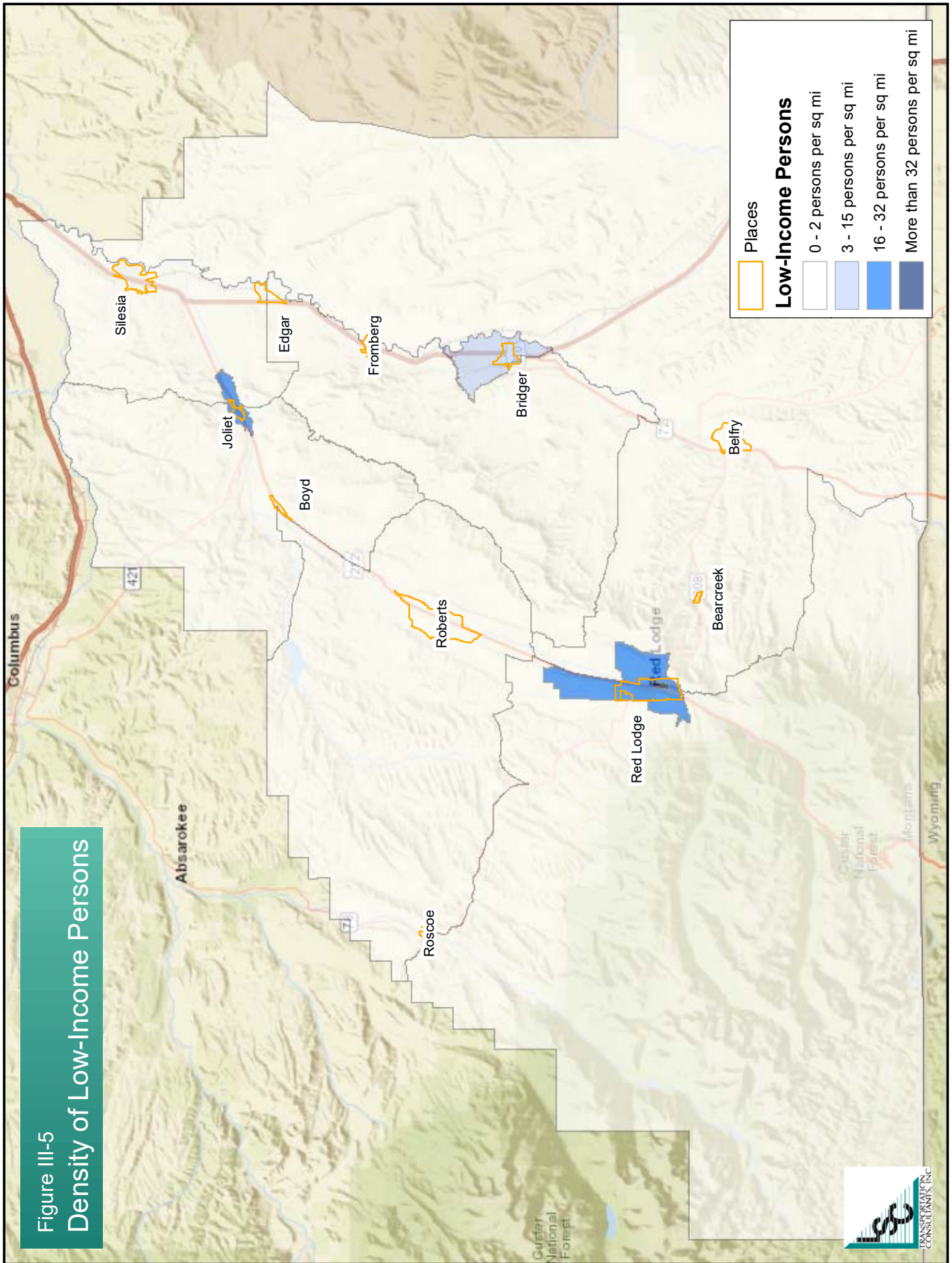




**Figure III-4**  
**Density of Persons with an Ambulatory Disability**







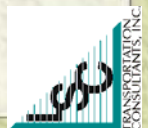
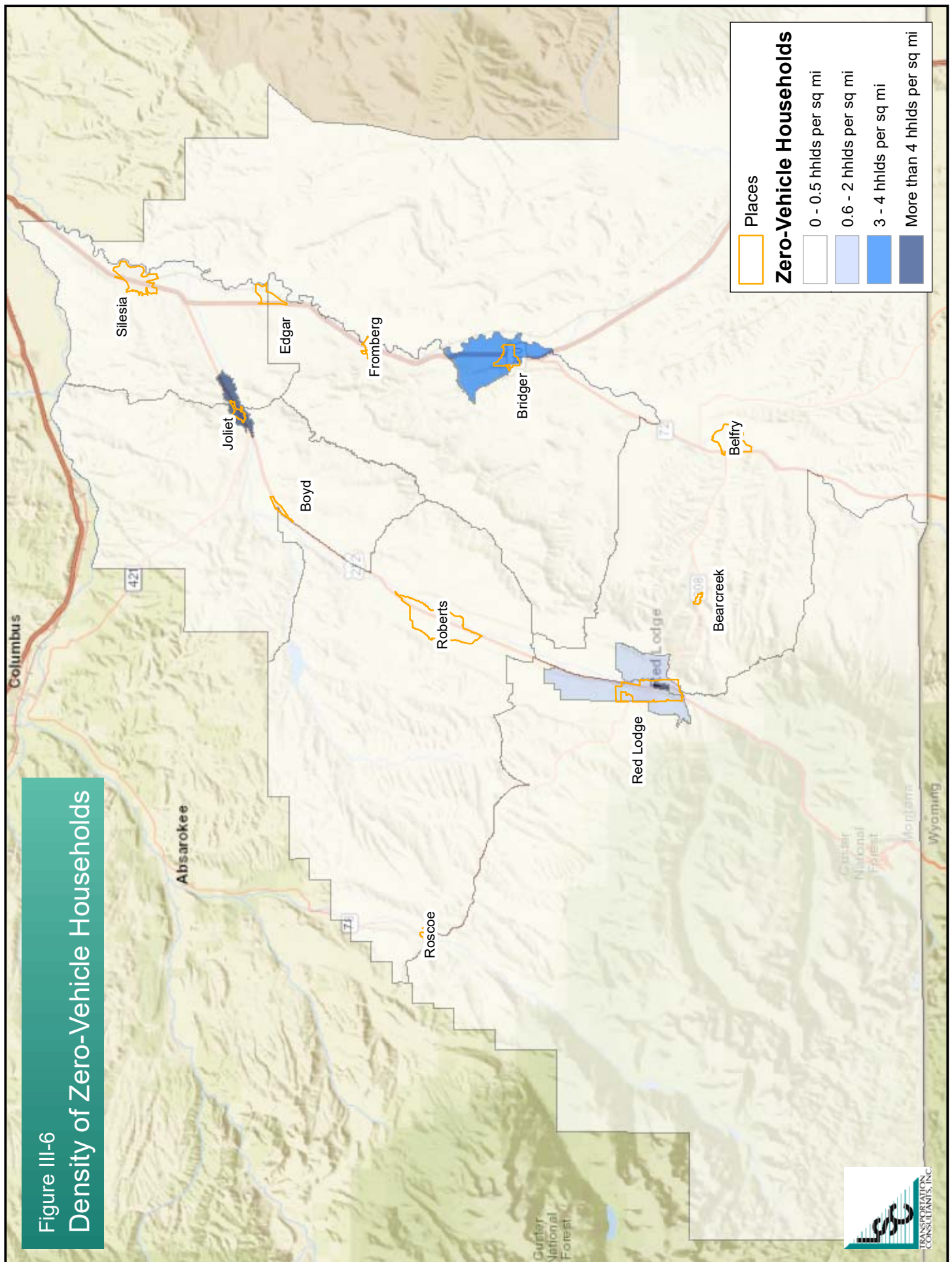
### Zero-Vehicle Households

A zero-vehicle household is defined as a household in which an individual does not have access to a vehicle. These individuals are generally transit-dependent as their access to private automobiles is limited. Approximately 5.2 percent of Montana's households reported no vehicle available for use while 2.5 percent of the study area's households (approximately half that of the state) reported having no vehicle available for use. The density of zero-vehicle households for the study area is shown in Figure III-6. The ranges for the density of zero-vehicle households are quite low due to the size of the block groups, combined with the small number of zero-vehicle households in the study area. The areas with the highest densities are downtown Red Lodge and Joliet. Bridger is the area with the next highest density.

### Youth Population

The population density of youth (10-19 years of age) for the study area is shown in Figure III-7. Approximately 11.4 percent of the population of the study area are youth, this is similar to the percentage of youth in the State of Montana (12.3 percent). The area with the highest density of youth is downtown Red Lodge. Western Red Lodge and Joliet are the areas with the next highest density.

**Figure III-6**  
**Density of Zero-Vehicle Households**





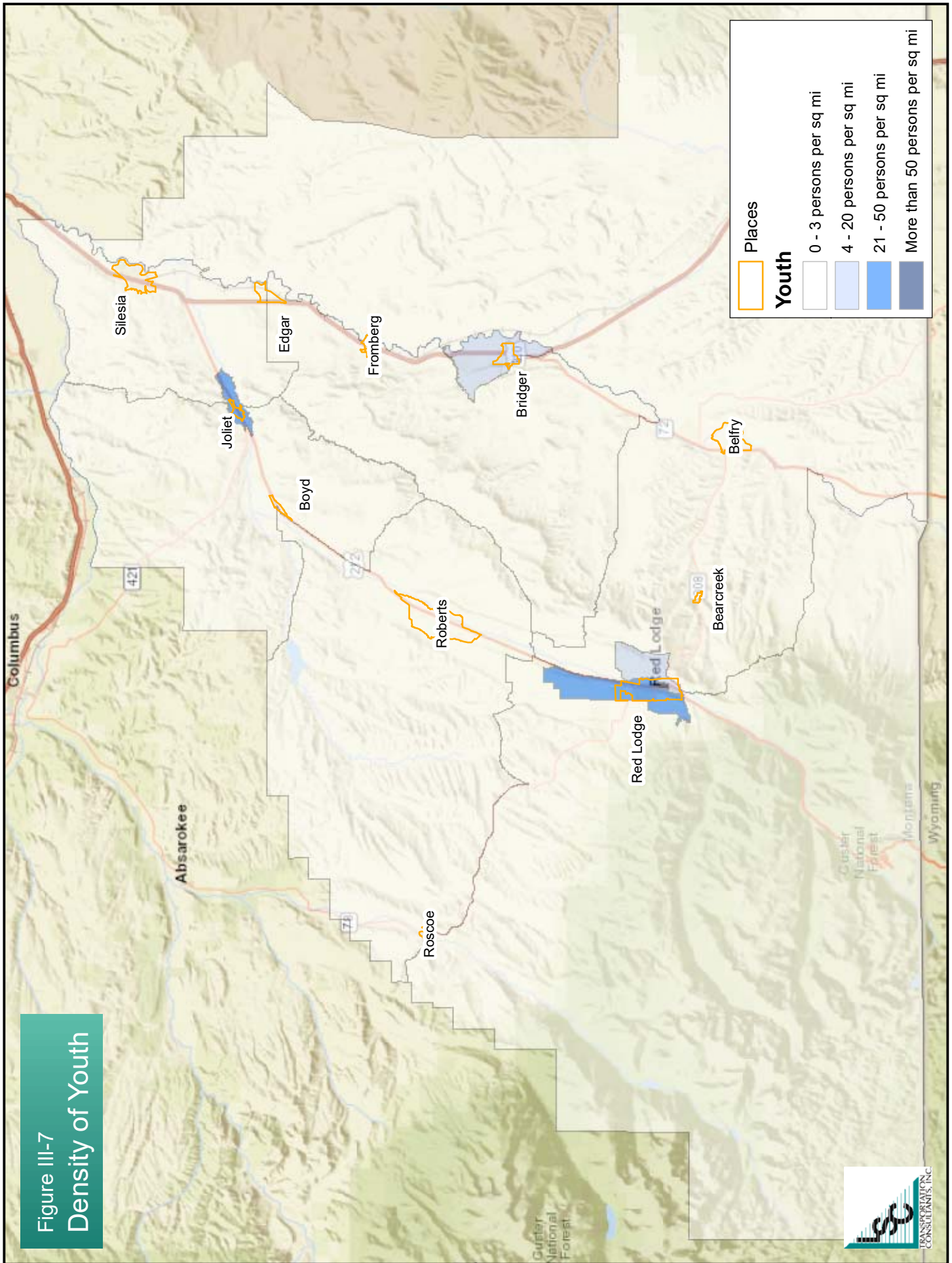
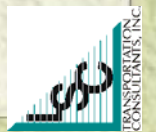
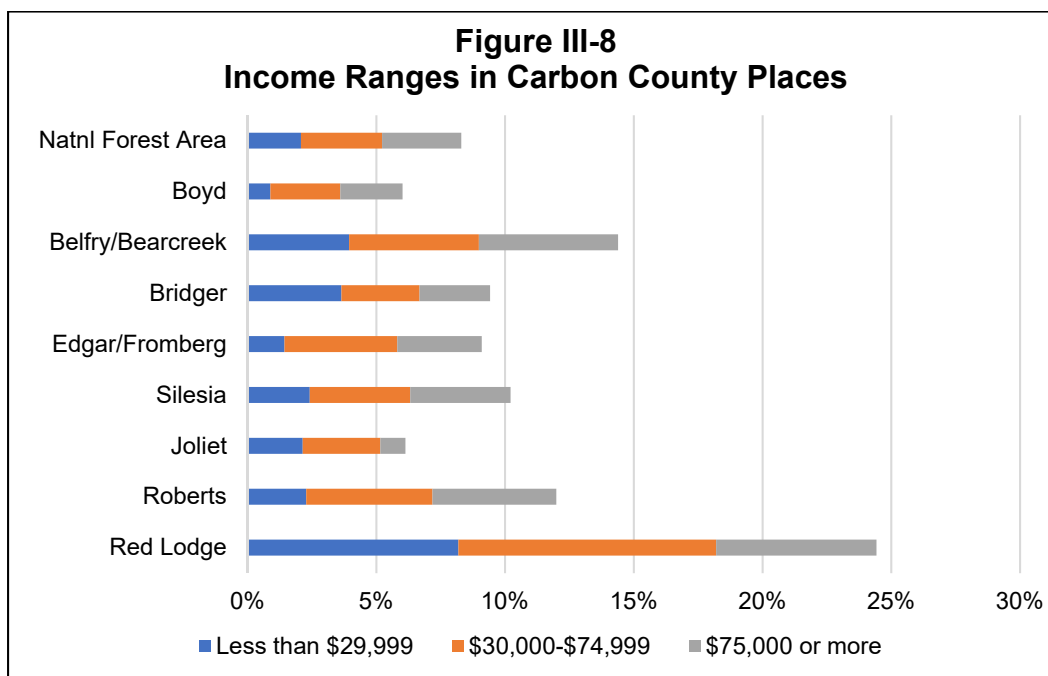


Figure III-7  
Density of Youth



## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

According to the 2012-2016 ACS, Carbon County has a total civilian labor force of 5,263 with 197 being unemployed (3.7 percent). This is lower than the 2016 ACS five-year average unemployment for the State of Montana (six percent). For this same time period, the median household income in Carbon County was \$52,869 which is higher than the median income for Montana (\$48,380). The median income in Carbon County was used to generate income ranges shown in Figure III-8. As shown in the figure, nearly a quarter of county income is in Red Lodge followed by the Belfry/Bearcreek area. Red Lodge and Belfry/Bearcreek also have the highest percentages of higher income residents (six and five percent respectively). Red Lodge has the areas highest percentage of persons in the low-income range (eight percent). Joliet and Boyd each have the lowest percentage of income in the county (six percent each). Although Joliet has a low percentage of county income, the median household income (\$44,583) is close to that of Montana. Red Lodge is a larger, more populated area and their median household income (\$56,635) is higher than that of Carbon County.



## Employment Sectors

Table III-2 shows the available 2016 ACS employment information for Carbon County and the State of Montana by employment sector. The employment numbers reflect a five-year average and may not accurately reflect current conditions. The Educational/Health/Social Services sector is the largest sector in Carbon County, accounting for approximately 19.8 percent of employment. This sector is also the largest sector in Montana (23.3 percent). The next highest industry sector for Carbon County is Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting/Mining (14.2 percent), which is significantly higher than the State of Montana (7.1 percent). In Carbon County, Retail Trade was the third highest sector with approximately 11 percent of employees followed by Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation/Accommodation and Food Services (10.8 percent). The second highest sector for the State of Montana is Retail Trade (11.9 percent). The next highest sector is Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation/Accommodation and Food Services (11.9 percent) followed by Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting/Mining with only 7.1 percent of employees, which is approximately half that of Carbon County.

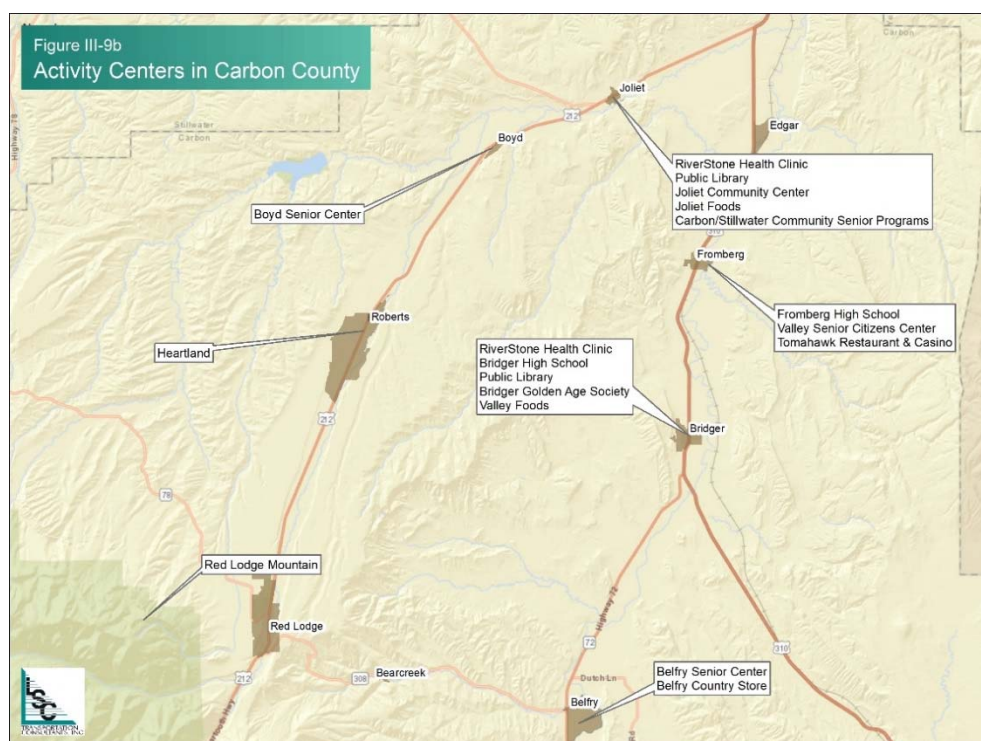
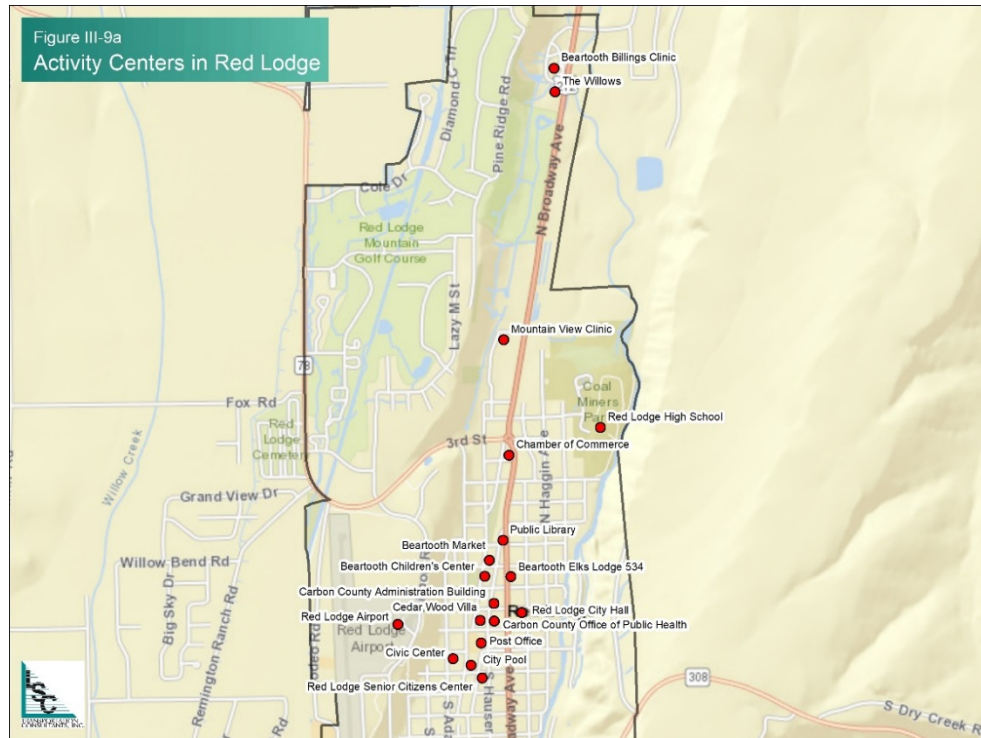
Table III-2 Employment by Sector				
Industry	Carbon County		Montana	
	Employees	Percent	Employees	Percent
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1,002	19.8%	114,529	23.3%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	717	14.2%	34,822	7.1%
Retail trade	556	11.0%	58,432	11.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	549	10.8%	54,238	11.1%
Construction	424	8.4%	40,566	8.3%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	382	7.5%	23,614	4.8%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	307	6.1%	40,620	8.3%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	290	5.7%	26,795	5.5%
Manufacturing	231	4.6%	22,275	4.5%
Public administration	231	4.6%	31,074	6.3%
Other services, except public administration	230	4.5%	23,617	4.8%
Wholesale trade	90	1.8%	11,542	2.4%
Information	57	1.1%	8,618	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,066</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>490,742</b>	<b>100%</b>
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.				

## Major Employers and Activity Centers

Major transit activity centers are important in terms of land use, trip generation, and the ability to be served by public transit. Many of these points of interest are clustered together into what can be referred to as “activity centers.” Activity centers are locations that are typically shown to generate transit trips because they are prime origins or prime destinations. There is no set formula that is used to derive a list of activity centers as the process is subjective. Activity centers generally include a wide variety of land uses including shopping/retail areas, as well as commercial, hospital, and education centers. Figure III-9a shows locations of possible transit generators within Red Lodge while Figure III-9b



shows locations in Carbon County. Places that have been identified as possible transit generators within the study area include senior centers, clinics, high schools, grocery stores, libraries, Red Lodge Airport, the City Pool and Civic Center in Red Lodge, Community Centers, the Tomahawk Restaurant and Casino, and Red Lodge Mountain Resort.





## TRAVEL PATTERNS

### Work Transportation Mode

The 2016 ACS yields information useful to the study area regarding the means of transportation to and from work for the study area's employed residents. Table III-3 shows the number of people in Carbon County's workforce, as well as the State of Montana, and their modes of travel. These data were tabulated for employees 16 years of age and older who were employed when the ACS was completed. The majority of both Carbon County's and Montana's workforce drives alone to work (3,153 people or 70.9 percent and 363,506 people or 80.2 percent respectively). Carpooling (691 people or 15.5 percent for Carbon County and 49,422 people or 10.9 percent for Montana) was the next highest mode of transportation to work. There were only 77 employees (approximately two percent) who reported using public transportation in Carbon County and less than one percent reported using public transit in the State of Montana. 517 people in Carbon County and 30,604 people in Montana reported that they worked from home, requiring no mode of transportation to work. These employees were not included when calculating the above percentages.

<b>Table III-3</b>				
<b>Means of Transportation to Work</b>				
<b>Means of Transportation</b>	<b>Carbon County</b>		<b>Montana</b>	
	<b>Workers</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Workers</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Drove alone	3,153	70.9%	363,506	80.2%
Carpooled	691	15.5%	49,422	10.9%
Walked	411	9.2%	24,489	5.4%
Taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle or other means	116	2.6%	11,796	2.6%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	77	1.7%	4,064	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,448</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>453,277</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>Note: Workers 16 years and over; Data do not include those who work at home</i>				
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates</i>				

Table III-4 shows that the mean commute time for Carbon County residents was 28 minutes which is 10 minutes longer than the mean commute time for the State of Montana (18 minutes). The most frequent response for residents' travel time to work for Carbon County and Montana was less than 10 minutes (30 percent and 27 percent of the respondents respectively) followed by 10 to 14

minutes in Montana with 22 percent of the respondents. However, for Carbon County, the second highest response was 60 or more minutes (14 percent of respondents). In Carbon County, 10 to 14 minutes and 30 to 34 minutes tied for the third highest travel times (11 percent of respondents). In Montana, the third highest response was 15 to 19 minutes (19 percent of respondents).

It is interesting to note that in Carbon County there are two distinct and equal groupings of commute times: those with short commutes of less than 15 minutes (41 percent) and those with long commutes of 30 minutes or longer (41 percent). This may point to a split in employment opportunities, whereby a large group of Carbon County employees is able to find employment close to home, within the county, and a large group seeks employment outside the county.

Table III-4 Travel Time to Work				
Travel Time	Carbon County		Montana	
	Workers	Percent	Workers	Percent
Less than 10 minutes	1,333	30%	120,358	27%
10 to 14 minutes	487	11%	99,329	22%
15 to 19 minutes	358	8%	87,940	19%
20 to 24 minutes	274	6%	53,995	12%
25 to 29 minutes	151	3%	17,070	4%
30 to 34 minutes	504	11%	31,710	7%
35 to 44 minutes	265	6%	11,356	3%
45 to 59 minutes	440	10%	13,542	3%
60 or more minutes	636	14%	17,977	4%
Total	4,448	100%	453,277	100%
Mean travel time to work:	28 minutes		18 minutes	
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.				

Table III-5 shows the time ranges for Carbon County and Montana residents leaving home to go to work. The most frequent response for the study area was between 7:30 and 7:59 a.m., with 15 percent of the total residents. This was also the most frequent response for residents in the State of Montana with 21 percent of total residents. The next most frequent response was between 9:00 and 9:59 a.m. with 16 percent, followed by 6:30 to 6:59 a.m. with 11 percent of total responses.

<b>Table III-5</b> <b>Time Leaving Home to Go to Work</b>				
Time Ranges	Carbon County		Montana	
	Workers	Percent	Workers	Percent
12:00 a.m. to 4:59 a.m.	303	7%	15,101	3%
5:00 a.m. to 5:29 a.m.	179	4%	10,525	2%
5:30 a.m. to 5:59 a.m.	158	4%	18,807	4%
6:00 a.m. to 6:29 a.m.	371	8%	28,324	6%
6:30 a.m. to 6:59 a.m.	482	11%	45,865	10%
7:00 a.m. to 7:29 a.m.	629	14%	62,593	14%
7:30 a.m. to 7:59 a.m.	651	15%	95,031	21%
8:00 a.m. to 8:29 a.m.	455	10%	52,159	12%
8:30 a.m. to 8:59 a.m.	209	5%	26,395	6%
9:00 a.m. to 9:59 a.m.	242	5%	25,752	6%
10:00 a.m. to 10:59 a.m.	186	4%	12,778	3%
11:00 a.m. to 11:59 a.m.	128	3%	5,608	1%
12:00 p.m. to 3:59 p.m.	177	4%	26,659	6%
4:00 p.m. to 11:59 p.m.	278	6%	27,680	6%
Total	4,448	100%	453,277	100%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.				

## COMMUTER PATTERNS

Commuter patterns were analyzed for Carbon County using Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data. In the absence of a better source of commuter pattern data, it is worthwhile to include these data as a general indicator of commuter patterns in the study area. However, it should be noted that LEHD data represent estimates of commuter patterns, synthesized from several sources of U.S. Census residential locations, business locations, and commute data. These data exclude federal, railroad, retired, disabled, unemployed, and self-employed employees. As such, these data should be used to provide only a general commuting pattern.

Table III-6 shows the top ten reported places where Carbon County residents are employed. The table shows that approximately 26 percent of Carbon County residents work in Billings followed by 22 percent working in Red Lodge and three percent in Bridger and Laurel. This split in residents working in Billings versus working within the county supports the previously noted split in commute time patterns shown in Table III-4, where a large group of county residents has a short

commute and a large group has a long commute. Although communities in the “other locations” category account for a total of 38 percent of all Carbon County resident employment locations, individually each town accounts for less than one percent of resident employment.

Table III-7 shows the top ten reported places where Carbon County workers live. The table shows that 22 percent of Carbon County workers are from Red Lodge. Approximately nine percent are from Billings, and approximately three percent are from Bridger, Roberts, and Fromberg. Although communities in the “other locations” category account for a total of 54 percent of all Carbon County workers residence locations, individually each town accounts for less than 0.5 percent of employee residence locations.

<b>Table III-6 Employment Location of Carbon County Residents</b>		
<b>Area of Work</b>	<b>Residents</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Billings, MT	898	26%
Red Lodge, MT	774	22%
Bridger, MT	122	3%
Laurel, MT	100	3%
Lockwood, MT	57	2%
Columbus, MT	54	2%
Bozeman, MT	53	2%
Roberts, MT	45	1%
Big Timber, MT	41	1%
Joliet, MT	40	1%
All Other Locations	1,332	38%
<i>Source: LEHD; LSC, 2018</i>		

<b>Table III-7 Residence Location of Carbon County Workers</b>		
<b>Area of Residence</b>	<b>Workers</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Red Lodge, MT	510	22%
Billings, MT	215	9%
Bridger, MT	78	3%
Roberts, MT	58	3%
Fromberg, MT	57	3%
Belfry, MT	37	2%
Laurel, MT	33	1%
Joliet, MT	26	1%
Bozeman, MT	20	1%
Columbus, MT	15	1%
All Other Locations	1,222	54%
<i>Source: LEHD; LSC, 2018</i>		

## VISITATION DATA

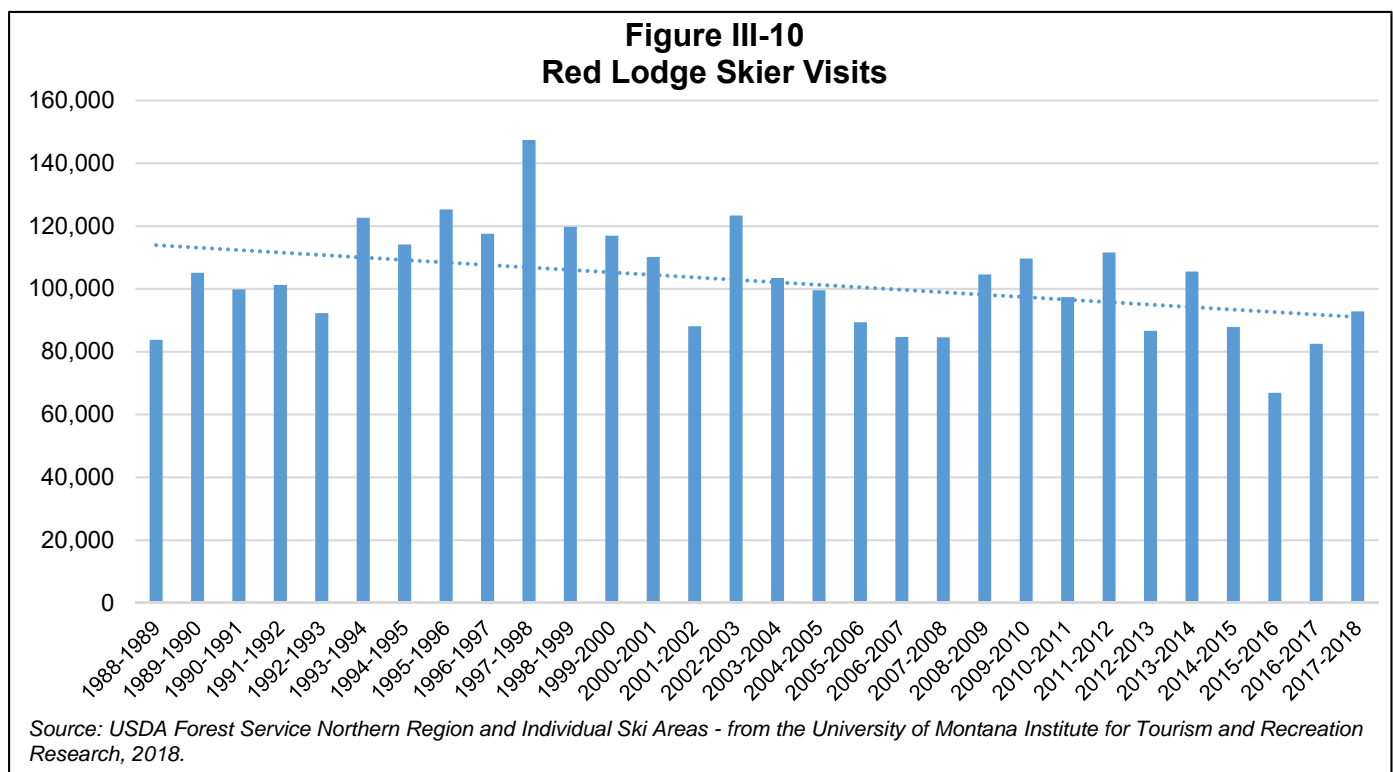
This section evaluates a variety of visitor activity within the study area, using data provided by the University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, the Red Lodge Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Montana Department of Transportation.

The University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research conducts travel and recreation research across the State of Montana and is

perhaps best known for producing the widely used statewide estimates of total non-resident visitation and travel expenditures, as well as visitor characteristics, in the state each year, along with the annual estimate of the economic contribution of non-resident travel to Montana's economy.

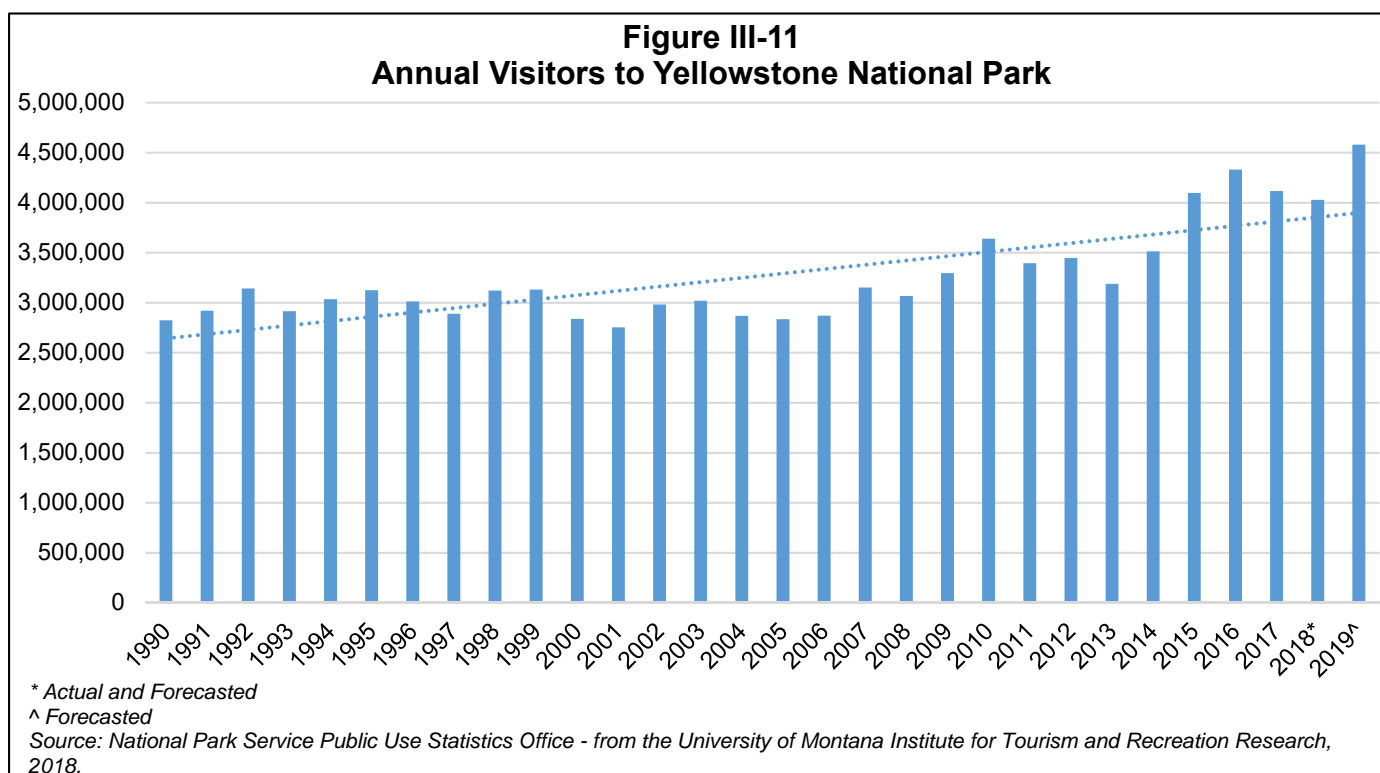
### Red Lodge Skier Visits

Skier visitation data for Red Lodge were available for the past 30 years from the University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research. As shown in Figure III-10, visitation has fluctuated a bit over the years but averages approximately 102,500 visitors per year over the past 30 years. The years with the highest visitors were 1997-1998 (approximately 147,500), 1995-1996 (approximately 125,000), and 2002-2003 (approximately 123,000). The years with the lowest visitors were 2015-2016 (approximately 67,000), 2016-2017 (approximately 82,500), and 1988-1989 (approximately 84,000). During the 2017-2018 season, Red Lodge had approximately 93,000 skier visits.

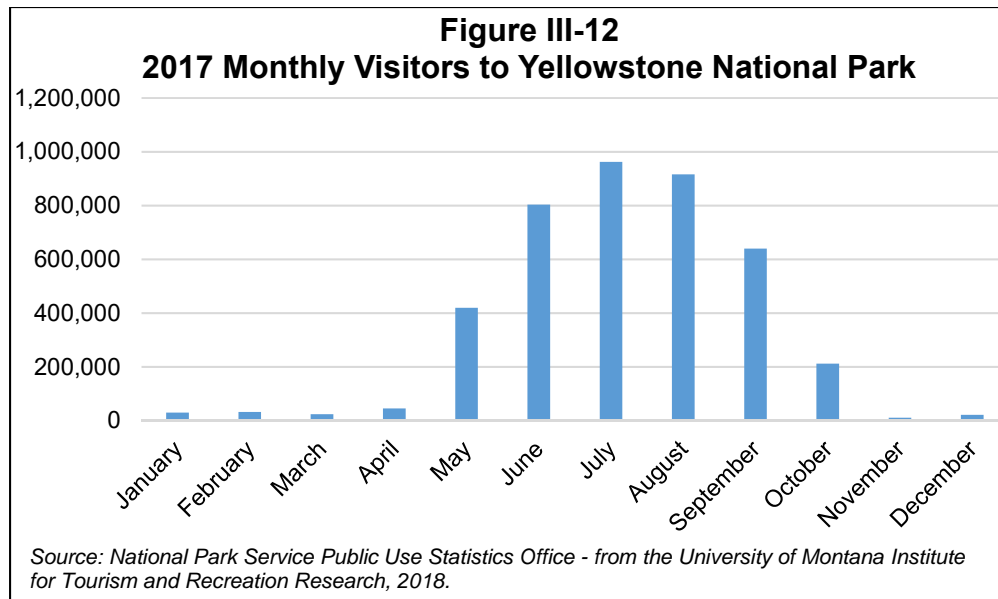


## Yellowstone National Park Visitation

Annual visitation data for Yellowstone National Park was available for the past 28 years, as well as forecasted for 2018 and 2019, from the University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research. As shown in Figure III-11, visitation has been steadily increasing since 2013 and is expected to increase significantly in 2019 to approximately 4,581,000 annual visitors. The years with the highest visitors were 2016 (approximately 4,332,000), 2017 (approximately 4,117,000), and 2015 (approximately 4,098,000). The years with the lowest visitors were 2001 (approximately 2,753,000), 1990 (approximately 2,824,000), and 2005 (approximately 2,836,000).

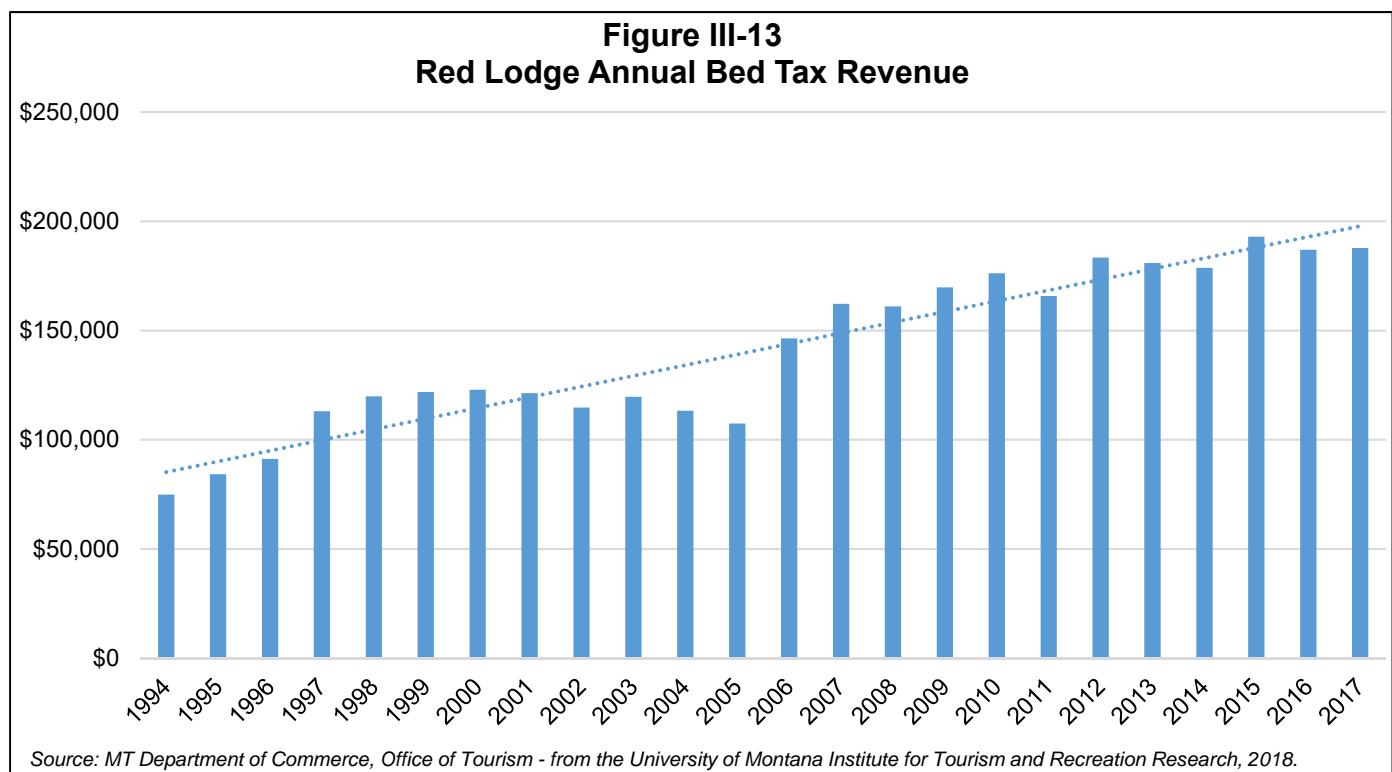


During 2017, the majority of visitors to Yellowstone National Park visited between the months of May and October. As shown in Figure III-12, July had the most visitors (approximately 962,000), followed by August (approximately 916,000) and June (approximately 804,000).



### Red Lodge Bed Tax Revenue

Annual bed tax revenue data for Red Lodge were available for the past 24 years from the University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research. As shown in Figure III-13, overall bed tax revenue in Red Lodge has been increasing, from approximately \$75,000 in 1994 to approximately \$188,000 in 2017.



## **2017 Carbon County Non-Resident and Resident Travel Survey Report**

The University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research provides reports on non-resident visitors to Montana, as well as resident travel within Montana. LSC has included a review and summary of these reports as Appendix A: Supplemental Visitation Data, since the information is only indirectly informative for the TDP.

## **The Beartooth Highway: 2012 Summer Use and Image**

Also included in Appendix A is a summary of the University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research published The Beartooth Highway: 2012 Summer Use and Image report in January 2013.

## **Red Lodge Area Chamber of Commerce**

In addition to the visitation data provided by the University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, the Red Lodge Area Chamber of Commerce provided the following supplemental information:

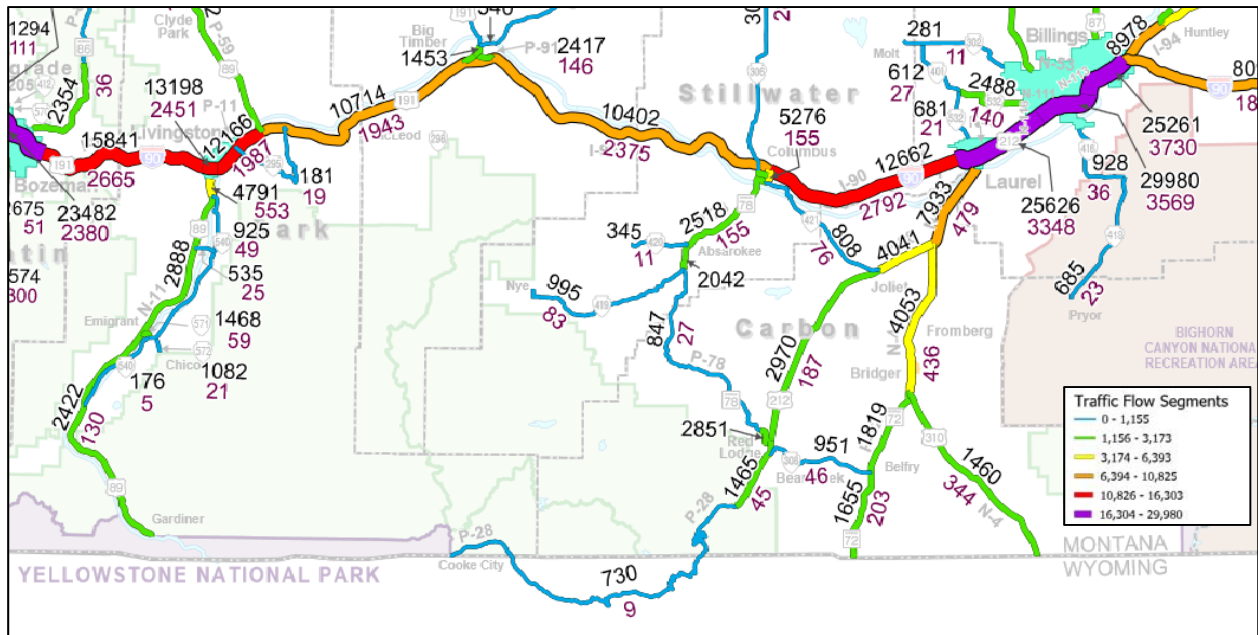
- Hotel occupancy rates in the Red Lodge area vary greatly by season - during February 2017 the occupancy rate was 25 percent and in July 2017 the occupancy rate was 68 percent.
- The visitor's center operated by the Red Lodge Area Chamber of Commerce has approximately 8,000 visitors per year.
- The Red Lodge Area Chamber of Commerce estimates the Beartooth Highway has over 120,000 annual travelers.

## **Montana Department of Transportation Traffic Data**

Figure III-14 shows the portion of the 2017 rural traffic flow in the Montana map created by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) showing the Carbon County study area. MDT provides the map to give users a general idea of the traffic flow in Montana.



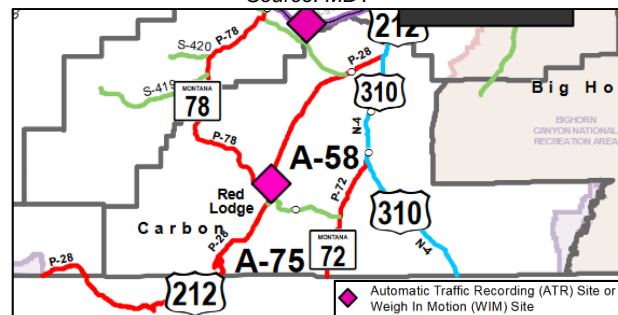
Figure III-14  
2017 Rural Traffic Flow Map  
Source: MDT



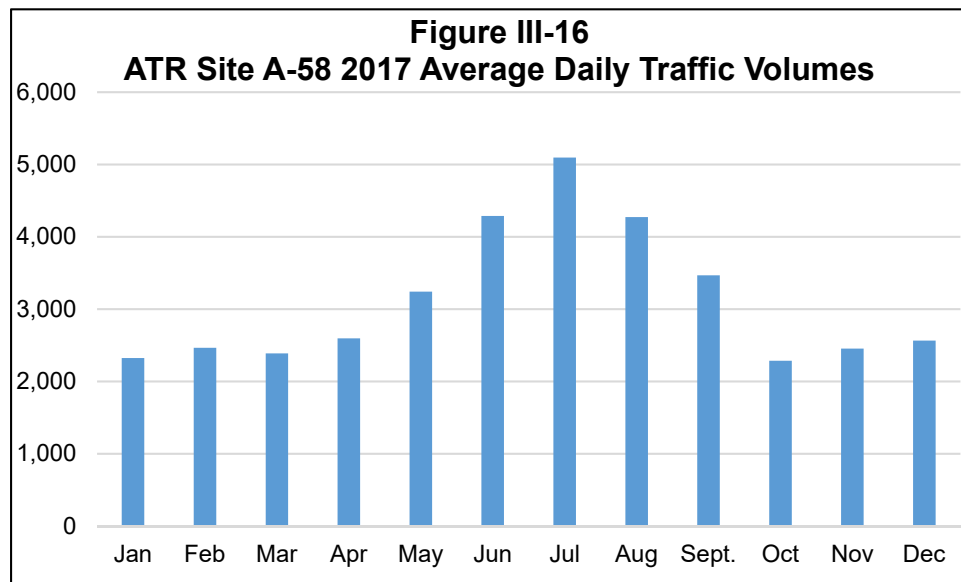
The map illustrates that traffic flows in Carbon County are heaviest in the northern portion of the county, specifically the segment located roughly between Rockvale and Laurel (AADT: 7,933). This is followed by the segment located roughly between Bridger and Rockvale (AADT: 4,053) and the segment located roughly between Joliet and Rockvale (AADT: 4,041).

In addition, MDT also conducts traffic counts using Automatic Traffic Recording (ATR) and Weigh in Motion (WIM) sites across the state. Figure III-15 presents a map of MDT's current ATR and WIM sites for Carbon County. There are currently two ATR sites located in Carbon County, one near Red Lodge and one on the Beartooth Highway near the Montana-Wyoming state border.

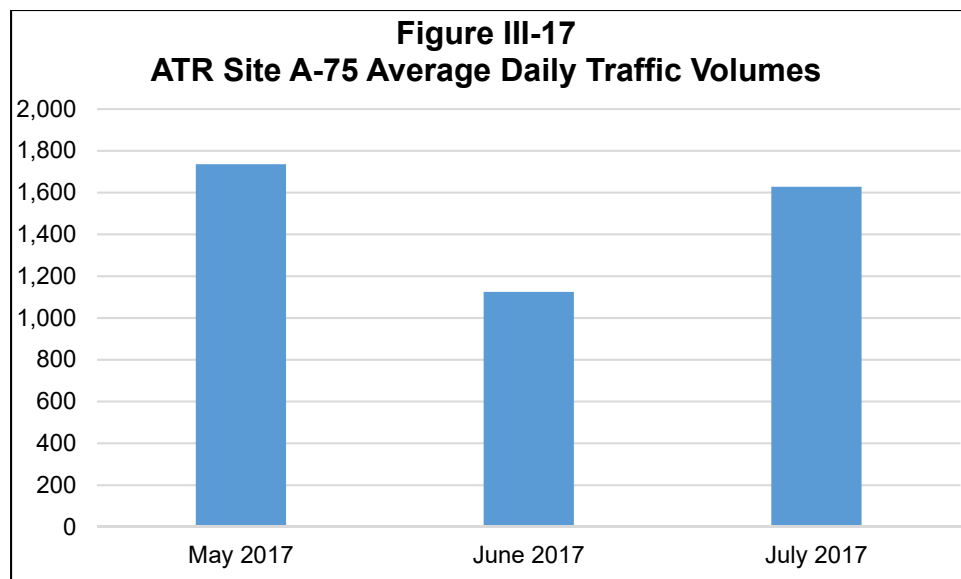
Figure III-15  
MDT ATR and WIM Site Map  
Source: MDT



Site 'A-58' is an ATR site located near Red Lodge, approximately 0.5 miles north of Two Mile Bridge Road. Figure III-16 presents the average daily traffic volumes at the site during 2017. Average daily traffic volumes were highest during July 2017 (5,095) and lowest during January 2017 (2,323). The average daily traffic volume for the entire year during 2017 was 3,165.



Site 'A-75' is a seasonal ATR site that is located on the portion of the Beartooth Highway that is only open seasonally. Figure III-17 presents the average daily traffic volumes at the site during May, June, and July 2017.



## EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

This section presents the two existing transportation services in Carbon County, the Community Care Program and Red Lodge Tour and Taxi, as well as the regional intercity bus service available in Billings operated by Jefferson Lines.

### Community Care Program



The Community Care Program is a grant-funded program hosted by Red Lodge Fire Rescue's (RLFR) EMS (Emergency Medical Services) Division. The program officially began accepting clients in January 2017 and aims to address the needs of community members who find themselves outside the scope of other services and programs by assisting with making physician visits, picking up medications at the pharmacy, and reducing home hazards. Each of these items can lead to an EMS call in the future if problems like regular health care visits, medication compliance, and nutrition are not addressed, so the goal of the program is to catch the emergency before it happens, in addition to improving the overall safety and health of the community.

The grant funding has allowed the program to employ two full-time CMT personnel to manage the program, as well as purchase one vehicle to operate the service. In addition, the program has access to RLFR vehicles if necessary. The program's operating hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., although the team often provides rides to community members outside of these hours to ensure Carbon County community members are able to receive the best possible care. There is no charge to Carbon County residents to use the Community Care Program.

The program has been very successful and during the first half of 2017 (January 1 through June 30, 2017), the Community Care Program received a total of 288 calls. As shown in Table III-8, approximately 40 percent of calls were related to transportation including providing rides to and from local clinics, as well as transporting people home from local hospitals. This was followed by prevention and public health phone calls (28 percent), consisting of welfare checks, informal counseling, connecting people to community resources, car seat checks,

facilitating diabetes education, offering CPR and first aid classes, and providing other public health initiatives.

<b>Table III-8</b> <b>Community Care Program Calls</b> <b>(January 1 - June 30, 2017)</b>		
<b>Type of Call</b>	<b>Number of Calls</b>	<b>Percent of Total Calls</b>
Transportation	116	40%
Welfare Check	33	11%
Informal Counseling	38	13%
Hospital Discharge Follow Up	11	4%
Prevention and Public Health	81	28%
Senior Ark Grant Site Visits	7	2%
Home Safety Checks	2	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>Source: Red Lodge Fire Rescue - EMS Division Annual Report, 2017.</i>		

During Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, the Community Care Program provided the following services:

- Transportation – 217
- Welfare Check – 84
- Public Education and Outreach – 112

During FY 2018, transportation was by far the most requested service that the Community Care Program provides. The goal of the program is to serve all of Carbon County; however, the priority is to serve referrals from local healthcare providers. The majority of the program's transportation clients require medical assistance, including assisting them in their home, helping them into and out of the vehicle, providing a calming and comforting visit throughout the transport, and assisting them to their appointment location.

The Community Care Program is well regarded and has 100 percent support from local clinics and hospital administration, and county-wide health, wellness, and safety service groups.

## Red Lodge Tour and Taxi

Red Lodge Tour and Taxi is the only taxi service in Carbon County. The company has been in business since 2007, although management changed hands about five years ago. In addition to local rides within Carbon County, Red Lodge Tour and Taxi is also able to provide rides from Red Lodge to the Billings Logan International Airport for a flat rate of \$132 due to a license from the State of Montana. Red Lodge Tour and Taxi provides service seven days per week and is usually busiest locally in Red Lodge on Friday evening and on weekends. While the service is used by visitors, it is mostly used by local residents. In particular, the company provides a large number of rides to elderly members of the community to medical appointments, both inside the county and to Billings. Red Lodge Tour and Taxi has two drivers and two vehicles, one of which is an ADA-accessible mini-bus.



## Jefferson Lines



Jefferson Lines is a regional intercity bus company that provides service across the State of Montana. In Billings, the Jefferson Lines bus terminal is located at 1830 4th Avenue North, about a half-mile from the City of Billings MET Transit Downtown Transfer Center. From Billings, passengers can travel south to Wyoming and Colorado, east to North Dakota, or west across the state and eventually ending in Whitefish.



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## CHAPTER IV

# Stakeholder Input

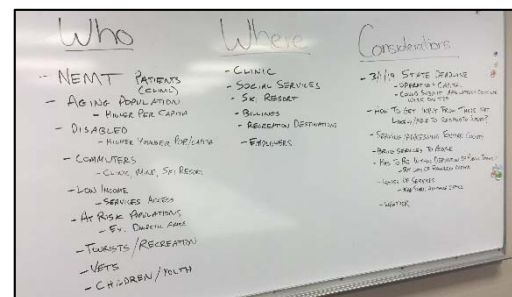
Chapter IV presents the input gathered from stakeholders and the community through community meetings, interviews, and a community survey.

### INITIAL OUTREACH

Jason Miller and Megan McPhilimy of LSC traveled to Carbon County September 19 through 21, 2018 to kick-off the project and conduct initial community familiarization, outreach, and engagement. During that trip, a variety of community members and stakeholders were interviewed, and various community meetings and events were attended.

### Kick-Off Meeting

A community meeting was held on September 19 at the Old Roosevelt School as a kick-off to the project. The meeting was attended by ten people from throughout the community including representatives from Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF), law enforcement, health care, Montana Department of Transportation, local government leadership, social services, and interested community members. The purpose of the meeting was to review the plan purpose and goals, discuss potential user groups and transportation needs, discuss public outreach, and review plan success factors. The meeting identified a variety of potential riders including:



- Seniors
- Those with disabilities and non-emergency medical needs
- At-risk populations including those with lower income or victims of domestic abuse
- Tourists and recreationalists
- Veterans
- Youth
- Commuters

The group discussed where potential riders may need to go, which included: medical clinics and services within Carbon County, Billings (primarily for medical needs), Red Lodge Mountain Resort from Red Lodge, social services within Carbon County, senior centers, trailheads in the summer for hiking and biking, and employment centers like Red Lodge.

## Community Meetings and Stakeholder Interviews

As part of the initial community engagement, LSC interviewed a variety of stakeholders and attended a variety of community meetings. These meetings and interviews had three main purposes—to introduce the plan and its process to the community, to solicit feedback on transportation needs, and to promote the community survey. Community meetings attended included:



- The Red Lodge School Board
- Senior Center lunches in Boyd and Fromberg
- Red Lodge Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting

LSC stakeholder interviews were conducted with representatives from:



- Luther Community Church
- The Red Lodge Fire Rescue Community Care Program (details about the program are shared in Chapter III)
- Beartooth Billings Clinic
- Sylvan Peak Mountain Shop
- Riverstone Health Clinic at the Joliet Community Center
- Red Lodge Tour and Taxi (details about the service are shared in Chapter III)

## Common Themes

Through the large variety of interviews and meetings, there were many common themes that started to emerge. Regarding potential destinations, we heard that new public transportation services should connect to:

- Medical services in Carbon County
- Employment in the town of Red Lodge
- Senior centers
- Billings, primarily for medical
- Red Lodge Mountain Resort (winter only)
- Summer recreation destinations (trailheads)



In terms of concerns and considerations, several themes also emerged:

- Plan must balance how to provide connection to Billings without taking away from existing medical services in Carbon County.
- Plan must consider the existing Community Care service in potential service options and how best to complement that service.
- The opportunity for operational funding exists through the Montana Department of Transportation and the plan needs to support potential grant application; capital funding for buses may be more difficult and plan should address short-term options for getting buses like leasing buses, potentially from Glacier National Park.
- Plan needs to consider who will operate a new public transportation system and how the local grant matching funds will be raised.
- The community is generally supportive and interested in the potential for a new public transportation service.

The information gained from these community meetings and interviews was invaluable in guiding the development of the TDP.



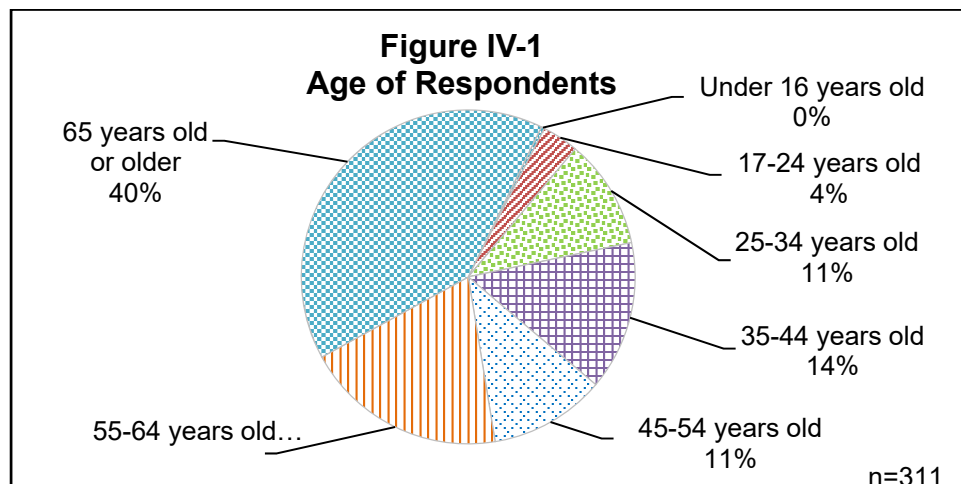
## COMMUNITY SURVEY ANALYSIS

As part of the effort to obtain input from the community, a separate survey questionnaire was used for Carbon County residents. The questionnaire was developed with input from Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF) staff and then distributed as widely as possible. The survey asked respondents to answer a series of questions about their personal and household transportation needs. The survey was available online and as a paper version for approximately three weeks (from September 25 through October 16, 2018) and a total of 316 responses were received, which significantly exceeded the Advisory Committee goal of at least 150 responses. A short summary of key takeaways from the survey is shared in this section, and the detailed analysis is located in Appendix B.

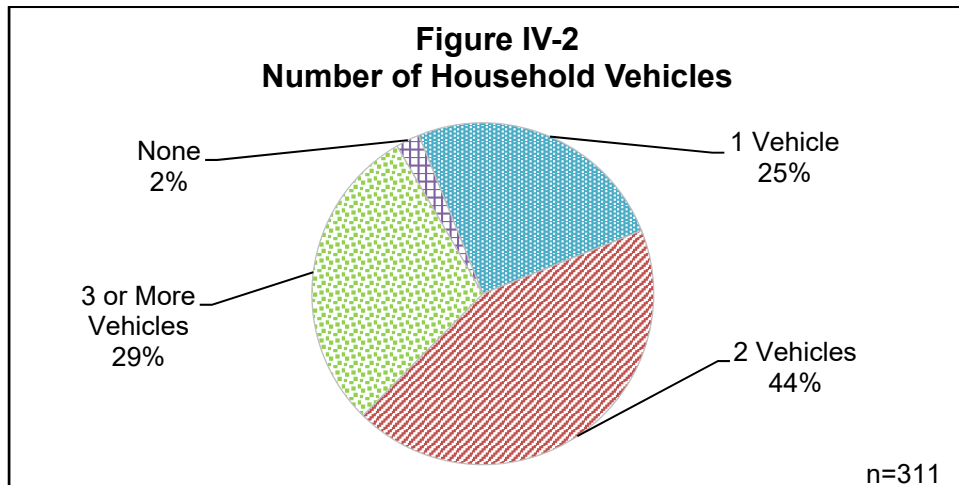


Key findings from the online resident survey include:

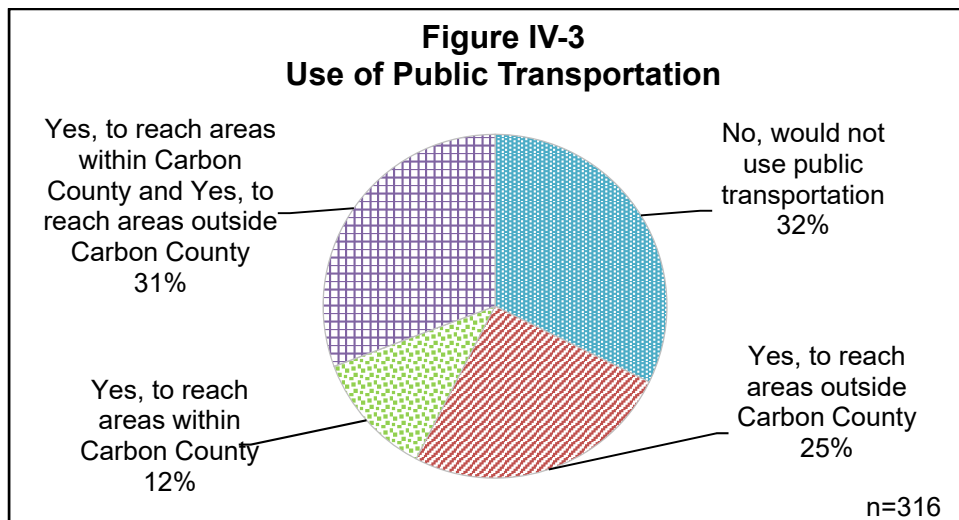
- Almost all survey respondents (96 percent) reported they or a member of their household use their personal vehicle, followed by 55 percent of respondents who indicated that they walk.
- Approximately 68 percent of respondents indicated that they reside in Red Lodge, followed by 11 percent of respondents who reside in Joliet and five percent who reside in Roberts.
- As shown in Figure IV-1, almost two-thirds of respondents were over the age of 55 and only 14 percent of respondents were under the age of 35.



- The majority of respondents were either employed full-time (45 percent) or retired (40 percent).
- As shown in Figure IV-2, only two percent of respondents said they live in households with no operating vehicles, the majority of respondents (44 percent) live in households with two vehicles.



- As shown in Figure IV-3, the majority of respondents said they would use a public transportation service.



- Potential Public Transportation Use to Reach Areas Inside Carbon County
  - The majority of respondents (84 percent) said they would use public transportation to reach destinations in Red Lodge, followed by Joliet (37 percent) and Roberts (37 percent).
  - As shown in Table IV-1, the most frequent reasons for why respondents would use public transportation to reach areas within Carbon County included recreation trips (55 percent), personal business trips (43 percent), and doctor/medical/healthcare trips (42 percent).

<b>Table IV-1</b>		
<b>Purpose for Using Public Transit within Carbon County</b>		
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Recreation	73	55%
Personal Business	57	43%
Doctor/Medical/Healthcare	55	42%
Work	48	36%
Shopping	43	33%
School/College	21	16%
Senior Center	17	13%
Other	10	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>245%</b>
<i>Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.</i>		

- The majority of respondents (29 percent) indicated that they or a household member would use public transportation within Carbon County one to three days per month.
- Potential Public Transportation Use to Reach Areas Outside Carbon County
  - The majority of respondents (99 percent) said they would use public transportation to reach destinations in Billings, followed by Laurel (50 percent) and Cody (37 percent).
  - As shown in Table IV-2, the most frequent purposes for why respondents would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County included the Billings airport (78 percent), doctor/medical/healthcare trips (67 percent), and shopping trips (65 percent).

<b>Table IV-2</b>		
<b>Purpose for Using Public Transit to Areas Outside Carbon County</b>		
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Billings Airport	135	78%
Doctor/Medical/Healthcare	116	67%
Shopping	113	65%
Personal Business	63	36%
Recreation	63	36%
Work	22	13%
School/College	14	8%
Other	7	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>306%</b>
<i>Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.</i>		

- The majority of respondents (46 percent) indicated that they or a household member would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County one to three days per month.





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## **Transit Needs and Demand Assessment**

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A key step in developing and evaluating transit plans is a careful analysis of the mobility needs of various segments of the population and potential transit riders. There are several factors that affect demand, not all of which can be forecast. Demand estimation is an important task in developing any transportation plan, and several methods of estimation have been developed. This analysis makes use of the demographic data and community conditions data, as discussed in Chapter III of this Final Report, as well as the stakeholder and community input presented in Chapter IV.

This chapter presents an analysis of the demand for transit services in the study area based upon standard estimation techniques. These methodologies are standard approaches to estimate transit needs and demand. Some may be more appropriate for Carbon County than others. Areas with significant visitor markets are unique and specific approaches must be developed based on the unique characteristics of community and the population segments. The transit demand identified in this section was used with information obtained through surveys and interviews to identify and evaluate various transit service options. This chapter describes several models and formulas to help quantify different segments of transit need and demand in the study area, including:

- Mobility Gap
- Greatest Transit Need
- General Public Rural Non-Program Demand
- Small City Fixed-Route Demand
- Commuter Transit Demand

Data were taken from the 2012-2016 U.S. Census American Community Survey (2016 ACS) five-year estimates for all of the population groups. Each of these approaches helps to show the patterns that are likely to arise regarding transit needs within the study area. Estimating demand for services is not an exact science and therefore must be carefully evaluated.

## MOBILITY GAP

The mobility gap methodology is used to identify the amount of service required to provide an equal mobility to households that have access to vehicles and those that do not. The National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) provides data that allow for calculations to be made relating to trip rates. Separate trip rates are generated for various regions throughout the United States to help account for any locational inequities. Trip rates are also separated by general density and other factors such as age. This methodology was updated using the most recent NHTS data available (2009).

Montana is part of the U.S. Census Mountain Division which has a trip rate of 5.2 daily trips for rural zero-vehicle households and a trip rate of 6.0 daily trips for rural households with at least one vehicle. The mobility gap is calculated by subtracting the daily trip rate of zero-vehicle households from the daily trip rate of households with at least one vehicle. Thus, the mobility gap is represented as 0.8 household trips per day. This mobility gap is lower than the national average of 1.5 for rural households. To calculate the transit need for each census block group in the study area, the number of zero-vehicle households is multiplied by the mobility gap number. Table V-1 shows this information broken out by block group. In total, 88 daily trips need to be provided by transit to make up for the gap in mobility. This calculates to an annual transit need of approximately 32,000 trips, assuming 365 days of service.

Table V-1 Mobility Gap Transit Need					
Census Tract	Census Block Group	Total Number of Households	Zero-Vehicle Households	Mobility Gap	Transit Need (Daily Trips)
1	1	264	0	0.8	0
	2	269	9	0.8	7
	3	448	0	0.8	0
2	1	399	9	0.8	7
	2	413	18	0.8	14
3	1	599	11	0.8	9
	2	206	4	0.8	3
	3	266	2	0.8	2
4	1	526	33	0.8	26
	2	364	4	0.8	3
5	1	631	20	0.8	16
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>4,385</b>	<b>110</b>		<b>88</b>
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey - 2016, LSC 2018.					

As shown in Figure V-1, the areas in Carbon County with the highest mobility gap and largest transit need are located in the northwest portion of the county,



including Roberts and Roscoe, followed by the eastern portion of the county, including Bearcreek, Belfry, and Bridger.

## **GREATEST TRANSIT NEEDS INDEX**

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

### **Methodology**

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

Census block groups in the segment with the lowest densities were given a score of 1. The block groups in the segment with the next lowest densities were given a score of 2. This process continued for the remainder of the block groups. The census block groups in the segment with the highest densities were given a score of four. This scoring was completed for each of the categories (zero-vehicle households, older adult population, ambulatory disability population, and low-income population). After each of the census block groups was scored for the four categories, all of the scores were added to achieve an overall score. Table V-2 presents the rank for each census block group in the study area. The scores range from four (lowest need) to 16 (highest need).

Table V-2 Greatest Transit Need Model																		
Census Tract	Census Block Group	Land Area (sq. miles)	Total Population	Total Households	Zero-Vehicle Households			Older Adult Population (65 and Over)			Ambulatory Disability Population			Low-Income Population			Overall Score (4-16)	Final Ranking (1-4)
					#	Density (Hhlds. Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank		
1	1	127.30	648	264	0	0.0	1	154	1.2	2	49	0.4	1	50	0.4	1	5	1
	2	1.92	666	269	9	4.7	3	128	66.5	3	63	32.9	3	65	34.0	3	12	4
	3	66.50	1,037	448	0	0.0	1	223	3.4	2	72	1.1	1	74	1.1	1	5	1
2	1	138.65	958	399	9	0.1	2	243	1.8	2	64	0.5	1	65	0.5	1	6	2
	2	7.51	1129	413	18	2.4	3	303	40.3	3	139	18.5	2	142	18.9	2	10	3
3	1	7.73	1,321	599	11	1.4	3	264	34.1	3	96	12.5	2	185	23.9	2	10	3
	2	0.21	486	206	4	19.5	4	124	604.5	4	66	324.1	4	127	621.3	4	16	4
	3	3.99	592	266	2	0.5	2	153	38.3	3	67	16.8	2	129	32.2	3	10	3
4	1	204.86	1,254	526	33	0.2	2	238	1.2	2	55	0.3	1	41	0.2	1	6	2
	2	562.22	714	364	4	0.0	1	247	0.4	1	62	0.1	1	47	0.1	1	4	1
5	1	927.90	1,535	631	20	0.0	1	275	0.3	1	144	0.2	1	182	0.2	1	4	1
TOTAL:					110	0.1		2,352	1.1		878	0.4		1,108	0.5			

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey - 2016, LSC 2018.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey - 2016, LSC 2018.

## Results

Table V-3 presents the study area's U.S. Census block groups with the greatest transit need, based on zero-vehicle households, older adult population, ambulatory disability population, and low-income population. As shown in Figure V-2, the greatest transit need is located in the block group covering the downtown Red Lodge area, followed closely by the block group covering Joliet. Other areas with high transit needs include the Greater Red Lodge area and the area around Bridger.

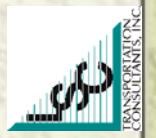
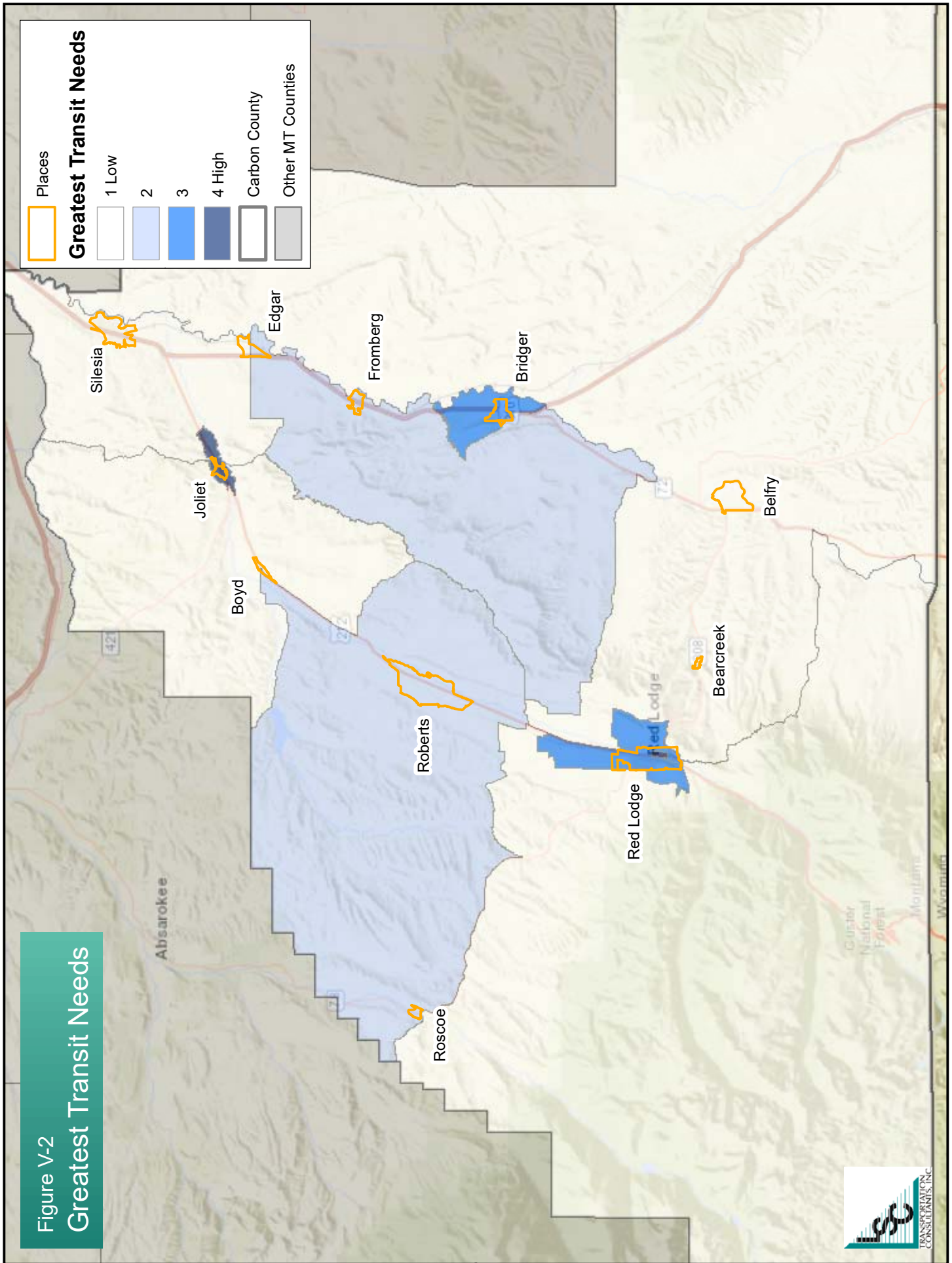
<b>Table V-3</b>			
<b>Census Block Groups with Greatest Transit Need</b>			
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>Census Block Group</b>	<b>Overall Score (4-16)</b>	<b>Final Ranking (1-4)</b>
3	2	16	4
1	2	12	4
2	2	10	3
3	1	10	3
3	3	10	3
2	1	6	2
4	1	6	2
1	1	5	1
1	3	5	1
4	2	4	1
5	1	4	1

*Source: LSC, 2018.*

## GENERAL PUBLIC RURAL NON-PROGRAM DEMAND

TCRP Report 161 provides a method of estimating general public rural transit demand. The TCRP analysis procedure considers transit demand in two major categories: program and non-program demand. Program demand is defined by TCRP Report 161 as “those trips that would not be made without the existence of a specific social-service program or activity,” and “the distinguishing factor is that the trip time and destination are set not by the traveler, but by the agency sponsoring the trip.” On the other hand, the methodology used in this section estimates the demand for general public, or non-program, passenger transportation in rural areas.







This methodology applies transit-dependent population statistics and trip rates to estimate the annual demand for non-program and overall general public rural transportation. The general public rural non-program demand estimation technique described in TCRP Report 161 is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Annual Demand} = (2.20 \times \text{Population Age 60+}) + (5.21 \times \text{Mobility-Limited Population Age 18-64}) + (1.52 \times \text{Residents of Households Having No Vehicle})$$

$$\text{Annual Demand Calculation} = (2.20 \times 3,397) + (5.21 \times 185) + (1.52 \times 179)$$

As calculated above, transit demand is estimated at approximately 8,700 passenger-trips annually.

## **SMALL CITY FIXED-ROUTE DEMAND**

TCRP Report 161 provides a method for estimating fixed-route demand for small urban areas with populations less than 50,000. The demand estimation technique considers the total population and estimated annual vehicle-hours of service and is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Annual Demand} = (5.77 \times \text{Revenue-hours}) + (1.07 \times \text{population}) + (7.12 \times \text{College/University Enrollment})$$

Assuming a local fixed-route service, like a circulator, operates in Red Lodge using one vehicle operating 12 hours a day and six days a week throughout the entire year, the annual vehicle-hours for the service would be 3,744. The population of Red Lodge is 2,286. The formula also includes college/university enrollment (not including community college enrollment), which is zero as there are no four-year resident colleges or universities in Red Lodge. The forecasted ridership for a fixed-route service in Red Lodge would be an estimated 24,000 one-way trips annually.

## **COMMUTER TRANSIT DEMAND**

The demand estimation technique established in *TCRP Report 161: Methods for Forecasting Demand and Quantifying Need for Rural Passenger Transportation* to estimate commuter demand between places is presented by the following formula:

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

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Proportion using Transit for Commuter Trips from Place A to Place B} = \\ 0.024 + (0.0000056 \times \text{Workers Commuting from Place A to Place B}) \\ - (0.00029 \times \text{Distance in Miles from Place A to Place B}) \\ + 0.015 \text{ (if the Place is a state capital)} \end{aligned}$$

Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data were used to determine how many individuals were commuting between various employment centers in the study area. Table V-4 show the associated demand estimates.

<b>Table V-4</b> <b>Commuter Transit Demand</b>				
<b>Residence Location</b>	<b>Work Location</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent Transit</b>	<b>Annual Transit Demand (one-way trips)</b>
Bridger, MT	Billings, MT	44	1%	500
Joliet, MT	Billings, MT	33	1%	500
Red Lodge, MT	Billings, MT	59	1%	300
Fromberg, MT	Billings, MT	37	1%	300
Belfry, MT	Red Lodge, MT	16	2%	300
Roberts, MT	Red Lodge, MT	13	2%	300
Fromberg, MT	Bridger, MT	7	2%	300
<i>Source: LEHD, LSC 2018.</i>				

Overall, the demand for daily commuter transit is very low throughout the study area using this methodology. The highest levels of commuter demand were from Bridger to Billings (500 annual trips) and Joliet to Billings (500 annual trips).

## POTENTIAL ORIGIN-DESTINATION LOCATIONS

Based on the existing community conditions and demographic data presented in Chapter III, the stakeholder and community input presented in Chapter IV, and the transit demand methodologies presented in this chapter, potential transit origin-destination locations have been identified. While this list does not include every possible transit destination, it includes some of the most requested locations in Carbon County and in Billings.

Within Carbon County, potential transit destinations may include:

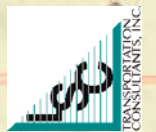
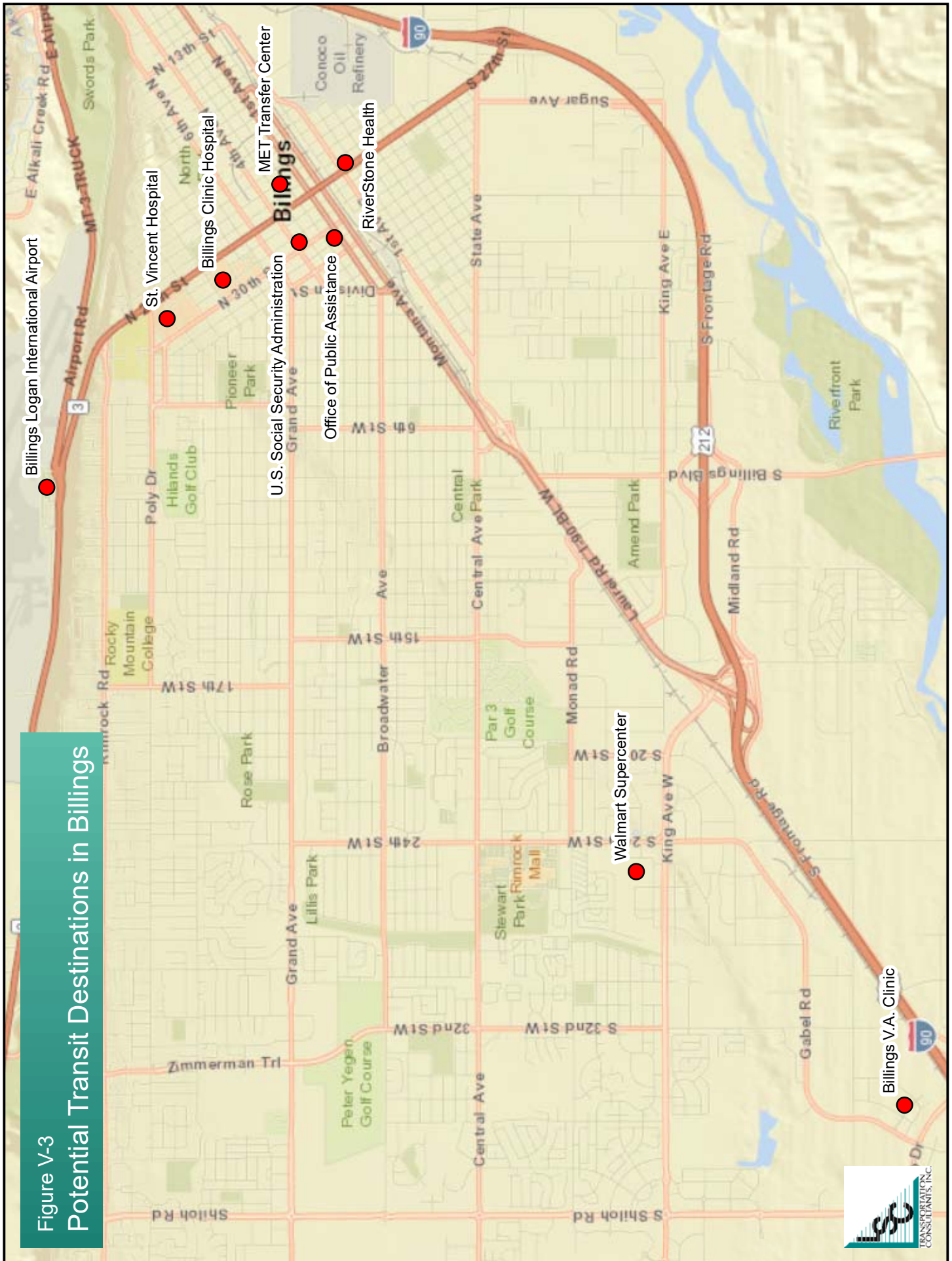
- Medical
  - St. Vincent Mountain View Clinic (Red Lodge)
  - Beartooth Billings Clinic (Red Lodge)
  - Carbon County Office of Public Health (Red Lodge)
  - RiverStone Health Clinic (Bridger)
- Community/Senior Centers
  - Joliet Community Center/RiverStone Health Clinic
  - Red Lodge Senior and Community Center
  - Belfry Senior Center
  - Bridger Golden Age Society
  - Boyd Senior Center
  - Valley Senior Citizens Center (Fromberg)
- Recreation
  - Red Lodge Mountain
- Grocery/Shopping
  - Beartooth Market (Red Lodge)
  - Joliet Foods
  - Valley Foods (Bridger)
  - Belfry Country Store
  - Family Dollar (Bridger)
  - Family Dollar (Red Lodge)

As shown in Figure V-3, potential transit destinations in Billings may include:

- Medical
  - St. Vincent Hospital
  - Billings Clinic Hospital
  - Billings V.A. Clinic
  - RiverStone Health
- Government
  - U.S. Social Security Administration
  - Office of Public Assistance
- Transportation
  - Billings MET Transfer Center
  - Billings International Airport
- Shopping
  - Walmart Supercenter

Figure V-3

## Potential Transit Destinations in Billings



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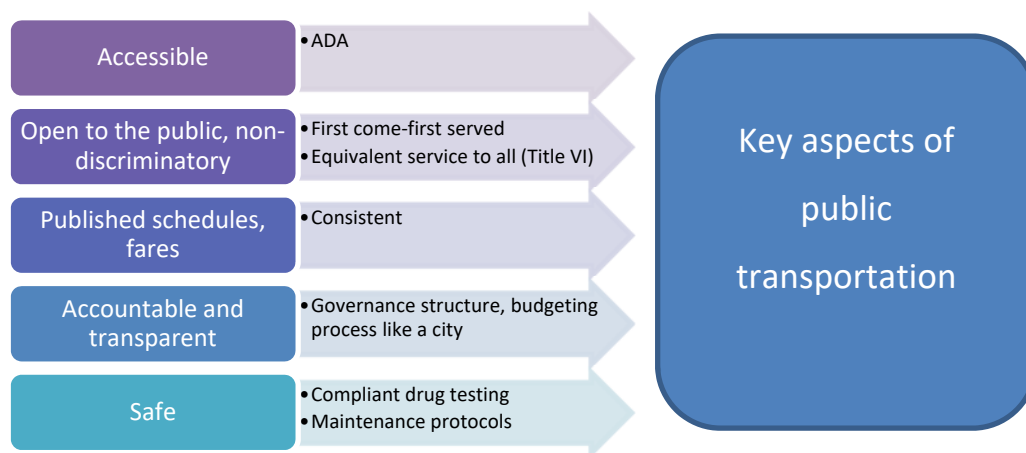


# Transit Service Options

## OVERVIEW

This report presents the service options and considerations associated with implementing them. To help understand the options and the terminology used in this report, LSC has prepared an overview of public transportation.

Public transportation has particular requirements and aspects that are different from private-sector passenger transportation solutions.



For Carbon County, there are many possible forms of public transportation.

- Demand Response (aka Dial-a-Ride)
  - Small bus or van operating in a defined area with defined hours and days of service
  - Trips are booked two to 24 hours in advance
  - Open to the public for a variety of trip purposes
- Fixed Route
  - Medium to larger bus running a fixed route with defined stops, published schedule
  - Typically consistent and frequent



- Regional service
  - Version of demand-response service connecting communities across longer distances to access shopping, medical, and services
  - Can be monthly, weekly, or daily trips with typically one departure trip and one return trip
- Commuter vanpool
  - Vans or minivans with volunteer driver to access employment
  - Monthly subscription fares that split operating costs of vehicle among riders

## **TRANSIT SERVICE OPTIONS**

The potential service options for Carbon County include:

- Demand-response service within Carbon County
- Connection to Billings
- Seasonal fixed-route service from downtown Red Lodge to the Red Lodge Mountain Resort
- Fixed-route service between Joliet and Red Lodge
- Summer trailhead service

Each of these service options has unique considerations and may be implemented in the initial service (Phase 1), in future years (Phase 2), or may be implemented by a private-sector provider in partnership with a new public transportation provider.

### **County-Wide Demand Response**

This option consists of demand-response transit service serving all of Carbon County. The service concept is illustrated in Figure VI-1 and presented in Table VI-1. The service would operate year-round for eight hours per day, and Table VI-1 presents the service characteristics if this service was operated between one and five days per week.



Table VI-1 County-Wide Demand Response Service								
Service Description	# of Vehicles Required	Total Annual		Annual Operating Days	Annual Ridership	Annual Operating Cost	Passenger-Trips per Hour	Avg. Cost per Passenger-Trip
		Revenue - Miles	Revenue - Hours					
Operating 5 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	62,400	2,080	260	2,080	\$85,032	1.0	\$40.88
Operating 4 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	49,920	1,664	208	1,664	\$68,026	1.0	\$40.88
Operating 3 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	37,440	1,248	156	1,248	\$51,019	1.0	\$40.88
Operating 2 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	24,960	832	104	832	\$34,013	1.0	\$40.88
Operating 1 day per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	12,480	416	52	416	\$17,006	1.0	\$40.88

Source: LSC, 2018.

### 3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Highways 212 and 310

This option consists of demand-response transit service covering a three-mile service area along Highways 212 and 210. The service concept is illustrated in Figure VI-2 and presented in Table VI-2. The service would operate year-round for eight hours per day, and Table VI-2 presents the service characteristics if this service was operated between one and five days per week.

Table VI-2 3-Mile Demand Response Service Area along Hwy. 212 and 310								
Service Description	# of Vehicles Required	Total Annual		Annual Operating Days	Annual Ridership	Annual Operating Cost	Passenger-Trips per Hour	Avg. Cost per Passenger-Trip
		Revenue - Miles	Revenue - Hours					
Operating 5 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	62,400	2,080	260	4,160	\$85,032	2.0	\$20.44
Operating 4 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	49,920	1,664	208	3,328	\$68,026	2.0	\$20.44
Operating 3 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	37,440	1,248	156	2,496	\$51,019	2.0	\$20.44
Operating 2 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	24,960	832	104	1,664	\$34,013	2.0	\$20.44
Operating 1 day per week, year-round, 8 hr./day.	1	12,480	416	52	832	\$17,006	2.0	\$20.44

Source: LSC, 2018.

### Connection to Billings

This option consists of transit service to Billings. The service concept is illustrated in Figure VI-3 and presented in Table VI-3. The service would operate year-round and would alternate service between Highways 212 and 310 to provide service to a wider portion of the county. Table VI-3 presents the service characteristics if this service was operated between one and four times per month.



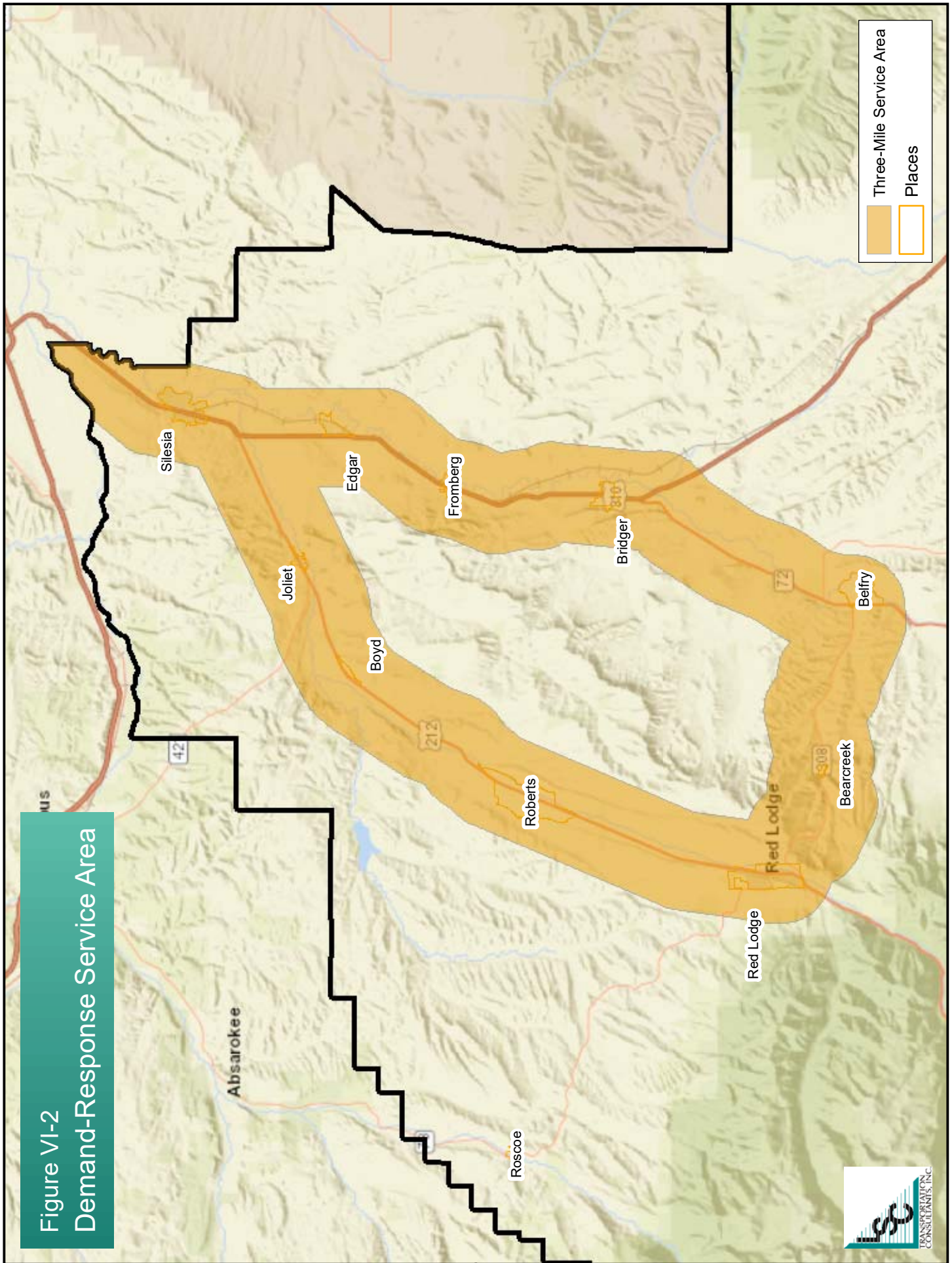


Figure VI-2  
Demand-Response Service Area



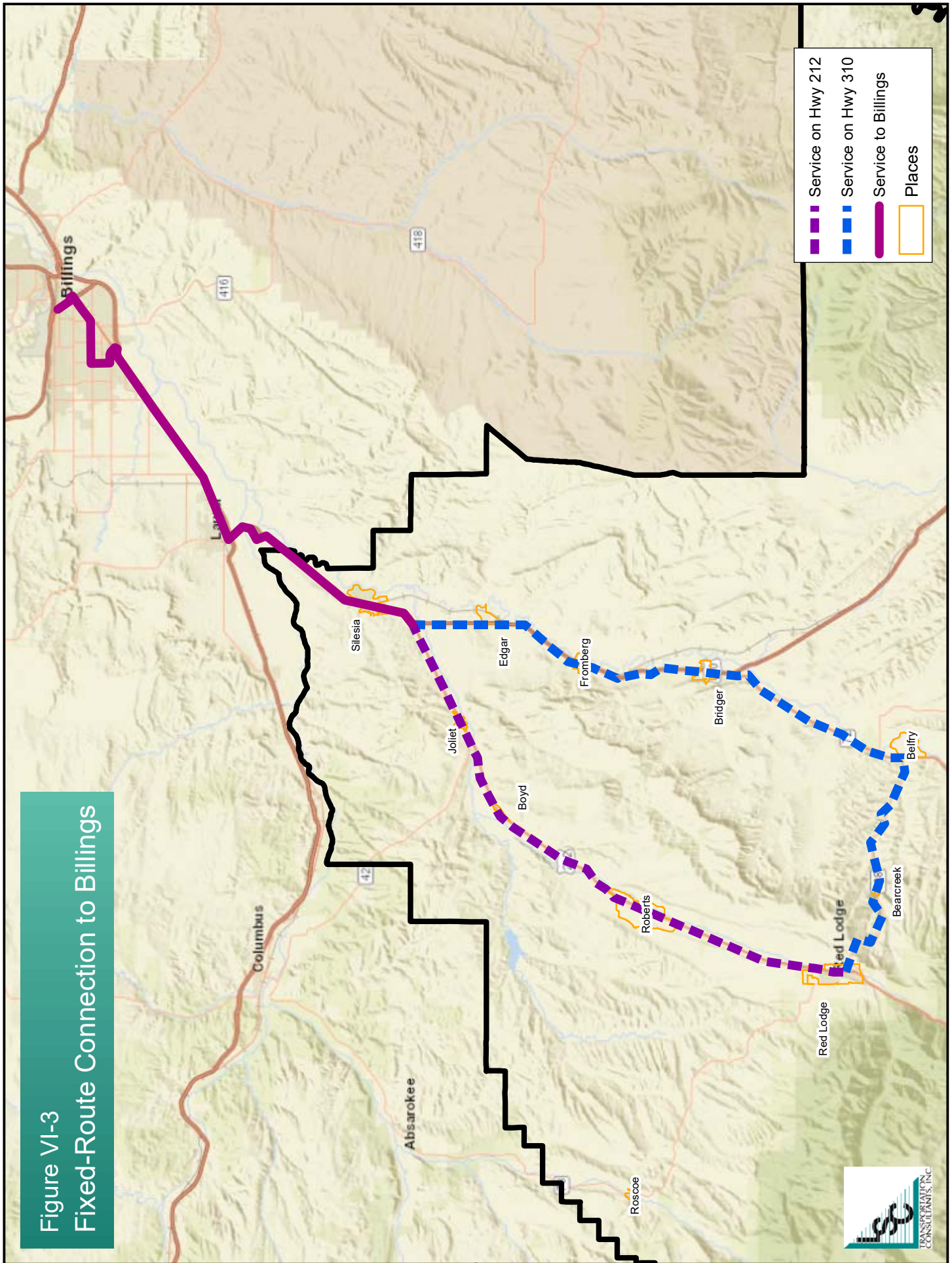


Table VI-3 Connection to Billings								
Service Description	# of Vehicles Required	Total Annual		Annual Operating Days	Annual Ridership	Annual Operating Cost	Passenger-Trips per Hour	Avg. Cost per Passenger-Trip
		Revenue - Miles	Revenue - Hours					
Operates once per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30am and returns at 4:30pm.	1	1,440	96	12	346	\$6,622	3.6	\$19.16
Operates twice per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30am and returns at 4:30pm.	1	2,880	192	24	691	\$13,244	3.6	\$19.16
Operates three times per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30am and returns at 4:30pm.	1	4,320	288	36	1,037	\$19,865	3.6	\$19.16
Operates four times per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30am and returns at 4:30pm.	1	5,760	384	48	1,382	\$26,487	3.6	\$19.16

Source: LSC, 2018.

## Fixed-Route Service Between Joliet and Red Lodge

This option consists of fixed-route transit service between Joliet and Red Lodge. The service concept is illustrated in Figure VI-4 and presented in Table VI-4. The service would operate year-round, and Table VI-4 presents the service characteristics if this service was operated either one, three, or five days per week with either two or four trips per day.

Table VI-4 Fixed-Route Service Between Joliet and Red Lodge								
Service Description	# of Vehicles Required	Total Annual		Annual Operating Days	Annual Ridership	Annual Operating Cost	Passenger-Trips per Hour	Avg. Cost per Passenger-Trip
		Revenue - Miles	Revenue - Hours					
Operates 5 days per week, two a.m. and two p.m. trips, year-round.	1	28,080	1,560	260	5,616	\$107,604	3.6	\$19.16
Operates 5 days per week, one a.m. and one p.m. trip, year-round.	1	28,080	780	260	2,808	\$53,802	3.6	\$19.16
Operates 3 days per week, one a.m. and one p.m. trip, year-round.	1	16,848	468	156	1,685	\$32,281	3.6	\$19.16
Operates 1 day per week, one a.m. and one p.m. trip, year-round.	1	5,616	156	52	562	\$10,760	3.6	\$19.16

Source: LSC, 2018.

## Winter Service to Red Lodge Mountain

This option consists of fixed-route transit service between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain. The service concept is illustrated in Figure VI-5 and presented in Table VI-5. The service would operate eight roundtrips per day and would only operate during the winter, for roughly three months from mid-December through mid-March. Table VI-5 presents the service characteristics if this service was operated either two, three, or four days per week.



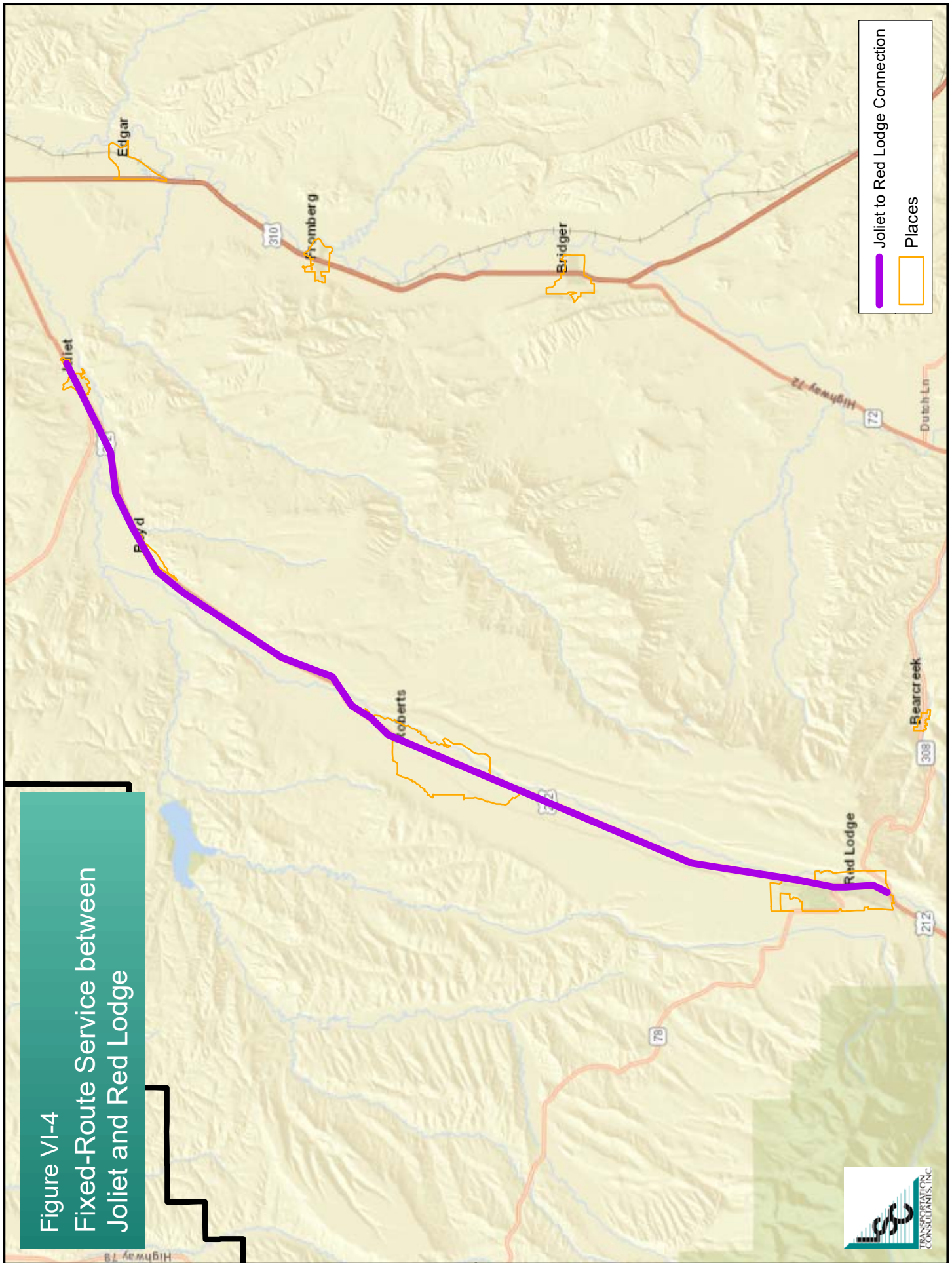


Figure VI-5  
Winter Service to Red Lodge Mountain

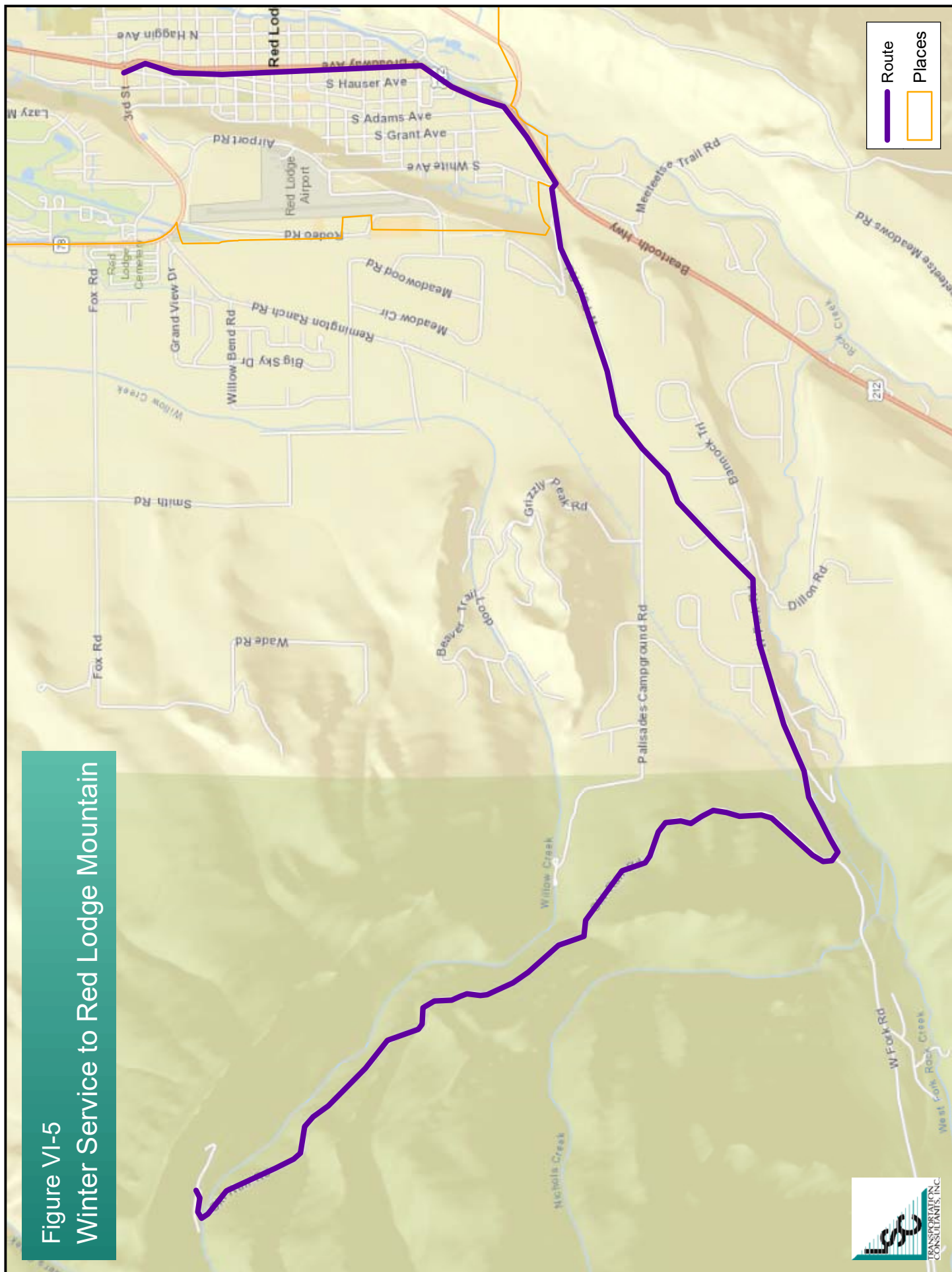


Table VI-5 Winter Fixed-Route Service Between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain								
Service Description	# of Vehicles Required	Total Annual		Annual Operating Days	Annual Ridership	Annual Operating Cost	Passenger-Trips per Hour	Avg. Cost per Passenger-Trip
		Revenue - Miles	Revenue - Hours					
Operates Thursday-Sunday (4 days per week) with 8 roundtrips per day for 3 months per year (mid-December through mid-March).	1	6,144	384	48	2,304	\$26,487	6.0	\$11.50
Operates Friday-Sunday (3 days per week) with 8 roundtrips per day for 3 months per year (mid-December through mid-March).	1	4,608	288	36	1,728	\$19,865	6.0	\$11.50
Operates Saturday and Sunday (2 days per week) with 8 roundtrips per day for 3 months per year (mid-December through mid-March).	1	3,072	192	24	1,152	\$13,244	6.0	\$11.50

Source: LSC, 2018.

## Summer Trailhead Service

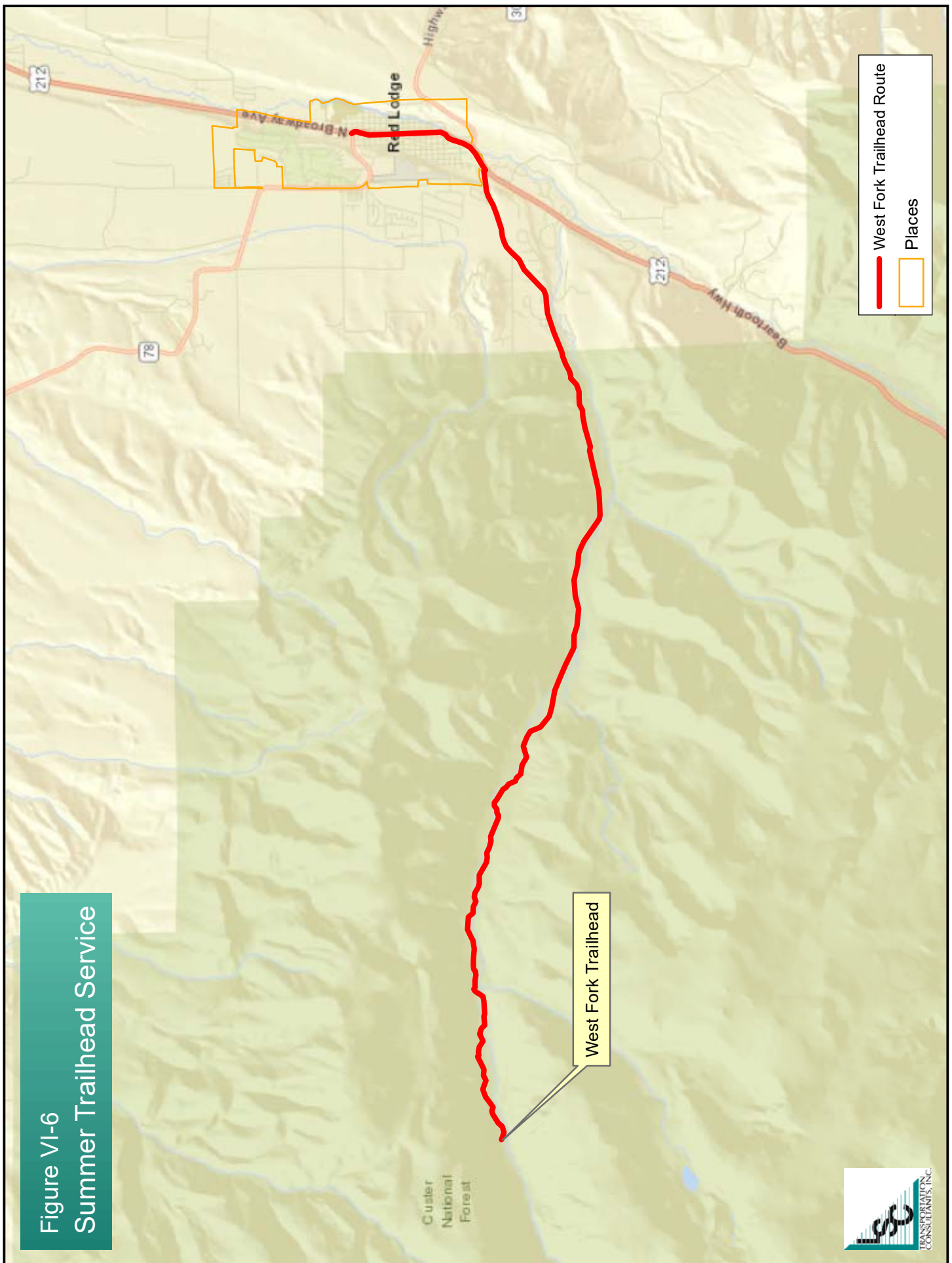
This option consists of fixed-route transit service between Red Lodge and the West Fork Trailhead. The service concept is illustrated in Figure VI-6 and presented in Table VI-6. The service would operate two roundtrips per day and would only operate on weekends during the summer. Table VI-6 presents the service characteristics if this service was operated for either four or five months per year.

Table VI-6 Summer Fixed-Route Service Between Red Lodge and West Fork Trailhead								
Service Description	# of Vehicles Required	Total Annual		Annual Operating Days	Annual Ridership	Annual Operating Cost	Passenger-Trips per Hour	Avg. Cost per Passenger-Trip
		Revenue - Miles	Revenue - Hours					
Operates weekends only (2 days per week) with 2 roundtrips per day, for 4 months per year (mid-May through mid-September).	1	1,920	96	32	346	\$6,622	3.6	\$19.16
Operates weekends only (2 days per week) with 2 roundtrips per day, for 5 months per year (May through September).	1	2,400	120	40	432	\$8,277	3.6	\$19.16

Source: LSC, 2018.



Figure VI-6  
Summer Trailhead Service



## SERVICE OPTIONS WORKSHOP

On December 6, 2018, LSC and the Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF) hosted a community workshop to present, discuss, and prioritize the various service options. The Service Options Workshop (SOW) was attended by approximately 30 community members and consisted of a presentation, information stations, and a budgeting priority game. The SOW attracted attendees with a variety of backgrounds and perspectives from Carbon County who were interested in the plan and its outcomes. Most attendees indicated that they live in, or very close to, Red Lodge with only a few attendees from other communities throughout Carbon County.

### Presentation



To educate and give context for the SOW discussion, LSC gave a presentation that summarized Interim Report #1, presented the options, discussed peer examples, and reviewed likely budget scenarios.

A peer review of similar rural Montana agencies showed that many other rural areas, some of which are smaller than Carbon County, have existing public transportation services. A sampling of peer communities, not a statewide list, included:

- Laurel
  - Demand-response service operates Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
  - Regional trip to Billings twice a month on the first and third Tuesday
  - System operated by City of Laurel
- Forsyth
  - Demand-response service operates Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. in town



- Regional trip to Billings three days per week and a regional trip to Miles City two days per week
- System operated by Rosebud Health Care Center
- Livingston
  - Windrider fixed-route service operates Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. until 5:50 p.m. with eight roundtrips per day
  - Includes required complementary paratransit up to three-quarters of a mile of fixed-route service
  - System operated by Park County
- Plentywood
  - Demand-response service operates Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and Saturday 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.
  - System operated by Sheridan County
- Broadus
  - Demand-response service operates Monday through Friday, only in town
  - Regional trips vary per month but are approximately four to six times per month to Billings, plus trips to Spearfish, Rapid City, Miles City
  - System operated by Powder River County



The presentation also included a discussion of estimated public transportation demand relative to budget constraints. As presented in Interim Report #1, the estimated ridership demand for county general public service was shown to be 8,700 annual trips, which would require three to four vehicles operating full-time. According to the small city fixed-route demand model, another demand model presented in Interim Report #1, the estimated annual ridership demand is 24,000 trips for fixed-route service, which would require two to three larger buses operating throughout the year. Either of these demand estimations would require a significant annual operating budget that is unlikely to be funded, given probable budget constraints. Meeting either of these demand models would

require a significant operating budget, as shown below, and is likely not possible with the estimated budget for the first one to two years of operations for a new Carbon County public transportation system.

**Demand response within Carbon County:**

8,700 trips per year

Calculated using rural, non-program estimate tool

Requires 3-4 buses, operating budget of \$250k - \$350k

**Fixed Route for Red Lodge area, Red Lodge Mountain Resort; Connection to Billings:**

24,000 trips per year

Calculated using small city fixed-route estimate tool

Requires 2-3 buses, operating budget of \$200k - \$300k

Based on input from the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the available Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant resources administered by MDT, the range of federal operating funding available is \$30,000 to \$60,000. Assuming that Carbon County could raise the local match and maximize available federal funding, estimated revenue for the first year of operations could be:

\$60,000 Federal
<u>\$35,000 Local Match</u>
<b>\$95,000 Total</b>

When compared against the estimated operating costs of the various options presented in Tables VI-1 through VI-6 in this chapter, it becomes clear that there will not be enough funding for all options. This budget does not include other revenue sources like fares, Medicaid trip reimbursements, and Montana TransADE funding from rental car receipts. These funding sources are explored in more detail in Chapters VII and VIII of this report.

Local match is a general term for the non-federal funds which are required to be eligible for FTA federal funds. The FTA funds are considered a reimbursement program whereby a public transportation provider is reimbursed a percentage of operating expenses in three categories—administration, maintenance, and operations—per established ratios. A transit provider must provide the local



match to be eligible for the federal reimbursement. In other rural transit systems local match sources include local government funding from cities and counties, private-sector contributions from local businesses, lodging or retail taxes, non-profit contributions from foundations or healthcare providers, and other specific tax sources. Local match should be developed with sustainability, service expectations, and partnerships in mind.

In addition to operating funding, a new transit service requires capital funding. MDT also manages a capital equipment and facilities program, which is carried out on a statewide competitive basis. As a new service, a capital grant request for Carbon County would be competitive but funding is dependent on an evaluation process and other grant applications received throughout the state. According to MDT, a “best case” Phase 1 capital budget could be:

\$80,000 Federal  
\$20,000 Local Match  
**\$100,000 Total**

This initial \$100,000 capital funding could be used to buy one wheelchair-accessible minivan (\$40,000) and one wheelchair-accessible 12-passenger bus (\$60,000), as an example. Variations such as an all-wheel drive option for the minivan could be pursued, based on the final service plan.

## Listening Stations



Following the presentation there was a breakout session where participants circulated between four different listening stations where several types of service possibilities were shown with maps, performance characteristics, and considerations. Participants were given time to ask

questions and provide input.

### Station 1 – Carbon County Demand Response

At this station, participants discussed whether the demand-response service area should include all parts of the county or stay within a three-mile corridor on

either side of the major state highways. The performance highlights and considerations of a county-wide demand-response service were presented:

#### **Performance Highlights**

- Passengers per Hour: 1.0
- Cost per Passenger: \$41.00
- Annual Operating Cost\*: \$85,000
- Annual Ridership\*: 2,080

\*assuming M-F service, 8a-4p, 1 bus

#### **Considerations**

- Serves entire county
- Meets ¼ of estimated demand (2080 of 8700)
- Lower performance, higher cost per passenger
- Winter conditions on outlying roads could challenge operations

This was in contrast to the performance highlights and considerations of a demand-response service area covering only a three-mile zone on each side of Highways 212 and 310, which improves productivity and cost per passenger:

#### **Performance Highlights**

- Passengers per Hour: 2.0
- Cost per Passenger: \$20.44
- Annual Operating Cost\*: \$85,000
- Annual Ridership\*: 4,160

\*assuming M-F service, 8a-4p, 1 bus

#### **Considerations**

- Serves towns and approximately 60% of county population
- Meets 1/2 of estimated demand
- Better performance, lower cost per passenger
- Keeps to major roadways

Participants considered the differences between the two versions of county-wide demand-response service. There were concerns that the lower productivity associated with a county-wide service may mean fewer people with access to public transportation overall. Consideration of employment transportation needs was also discussed, including the possibility of having a transit service more focused on employment trips in the morning and evening, with general purpose trips occurring during the midday.

### **Station 2 – Connection to Billings**

At this station, participants discussed a public transit connection to Billings, including how often it should operate, where it should go in Billings, and options for how it should operate to cover both Highways 212 and 310. The performance highlights and considerations of the Billings connection were presented:

### Performance Highlights

- Passengers per Hour: 3.6
- Cost per Passenger: \$19.16
- Annual Operating Cost\*: \$13,244
- Annual Ridership\*: 691

\*assuming 2 trips/month

### Considerations

- Would alternate between 212 and 310 (if 2x/month, 1x/month on 212, 1x/month on 310)
- Connect to shopping, medical in Billings – local connections via Billings bus system
- Requires a bus that could reduce local in-county service availability

Many participants indicated that this was an important and needed connection, especially for accessing medical and social services. Some participants commented that the Billings connection could take business away from local businesses, especially retail stores that may lose business from riders accessing Billings shopping instead of shopping locally. Other participants discussed how it might be challenging to coordinate the timing of medical appointments with the service – the service would involve waiting and a level of inconvenience.



The airport connection was also discussed, but this connection could be challenging due to the limited number of trips per month and unlikelihood that the service would match up with flight times, which are typically in the early morning for departing flights. It was also noted that Red Lodge Tour and Taxi provides this service.

### Station 3 – Fixed Route from Red Lodge to Red Lodge Mountain Resort

At this station, participants considered how a seasonal, winter-only fixed route between downtown Red Lodge and the Red Lodge Mountain Resort ski area might operate. The performance highlights and considerations of this fixed route were presented:

### Performance Highlights

- Passengers per Hour: 6.0
- Cost per Passenger: \$11.50
- Annual Operating Cost\*: \$20,000
- Annual Ridership\*: 1,728

\*assuming 3 days/wk (Fri-Sun) service, 3 months of service (mid-Dec to mid-Mar), 1 bus, 8 roundtrips/day

### Considerations

- Fixed route with stops throughout downtown Red Lodge
- 1 trip/hour in each direction
- Requires mid-size or larger bus (15 or more passenger capacity)
- Could be a partnership with Red Lodge Mountain Resort

Many participants thought this service option could be successful and should be part of the Phase 1 implemented service. Some participants expressed that it may need to be part of a larger fixed-route service operating along Highway 212 from Joliet in the future as part of Phase 2 service. Marketing was discussed and the possibility of packaging the service with hotels and perhaps as part of a resort tax. Some participants commented that four roundtrips per day might be sufficient initially and that past mountain skier days and ridership on the existing employee bus operated by Red Lodge Mountain Resort may be good sources of data.

## Station 4 – Summer Trailhead Service

At this station, participants discussed transportation needs for recreation and access to trailheads in the summer. The performance highlights and considerations for summer trailhead service were presented:

### Performance Highlights

- Passengers per Hour: 3.6
- Cost per Passenger: \$19.16
- Annual Operating Cost\*: \$6,622
- Annual Ridership\*: 346

\*assuming 2 days/wk (Sat-Sun) service, 4 months of service (mid-May to mid-Sept), 1 bus, 2 roundtrips/day

### Considerations

- Best suited to private sector
- Coordination/logistics challenging
- Fixed schedule may work for some but on-demand could be better for others

Participants discussed the challenges with coordinating and scheduling this type of service. Many participants thought that this service would be best operated by a private transportation provider to whom a public transportation provider could refer trips to and recommend as part of a tourist package. Some liked the idea of being able to get more people of all demographics and income levels out enjoying public lands and the outdoors.

## Budget Exercise

The final activity of the SOW was a budgeting exercise where participants were given coins to fund the various service options. Each participant was given eight coins to fund Phase 1 options and two additional coins to fund Phase 2 options. Participants were instructed to fully fund the options in Phase 1 and use the Phase 2 coins to fund any options they wanted. If a participant had an extra coin from Phase 1, they could place it in their favorite option. Table VI-7 presents the results of the SOW coin vote.



Table VI-7 Service Options Workshop Coin Vote Results				
	Option	# of coins required to fund service	# of coins collected	# of people who fully funded the option
<b>Phase 1</b>	County demand response, operating 5 days per week	7	22	3
	County demand response, operating 4 days per week	6	7	1
	County demand response, operating 3 days per week	5	73	15
	Connection to Billings 2 times per month	1	14	14
	Connection to Billings 4 times per month	2	15	8
	Winter weekend fixed-route service to Red Lodge Mtn.	1	27	27
<b>Phase 2</b>	Additional County demand response	n/a	6	3rd choice
	Start or add winter fixed-route service to Red Lodge Mtn.	n/a	19	1st choice
	Fixed-route service between Joliet and Red Lodge	n/a	11	2nd choice
	Summer weekend fixed-route service to West Fork Trailhead	n/a	4	4th choice

Source: LSC Service Options Workshop, 2018.

For Phase 1, the top-voted option was the Red Lodge Mountain fixed route, with 27 people fully funding it. County demand response operating three days per week was the next most popular option (fully funded by 15 people), followed closely by the connection to Billings twice a month (fully funded by 14 people).

For Phase 2, starting or adding to fixed-route service to Red Lodge Mountain Resort was the favored option (19 coins collected), followed by additional fixed-route service between Red Lodge and Joliet (11 coins collected).

## Questionnaire Feedback

LSC provided a questionnaire at the SOW to solicit additional feedback from participants and other stakeholders about the service options presented. The questionnaire asked four questions:

- Which option did you like the most?
- Which option did you like the least?
- Were the other options not presented that you would like to see explored?
- Do you have any other comments?

There were six questionnaires returned. The fixed-route service to Red Lodge Mountain Resort was the most favored option, followed closely by the demand-response service for Carbon County and the Billings connection. Summer trailhead service was not favored the most by any of the respondents.

Summer trailhead service was the least favored option, followed by half of respondents who favored county demand-response service the least. The Billings connection was favored the least by two respondents, and the fixed route to Red Lodge Mountain Resort did not receive any votes for least favored.

Comments received included:

Consider less service to and from Red Lodge Mountain Resort – three to six roundtrips per day may be enough.

A demand-response service may be higher performing if the service area was a 20-mile radius of Red Lodge – those in northern Carbon County likely go to Laurel or Billings for services.

What about more options along Route 78? They wouldn't get service with a 3-mile radius of 212.

Service for the “beaten path” backpacking route is needed but might be better suited to private sector.

Careful consideration should be given not to hurt local Carbon County businesses by having a trip to Billings.

Most respondents agreed that the options presented covered the potential service scenarios, but one noted that more vanpool and carpool options should be considered. Another noted that transit service is needed along Route 78.





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## Recommended Service Plan

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### OVERVIEW

This chapter presents the recommended service plan which incorporates the transit service alternatives that best meet the community's needs with available resources. The recommended service plan for Carbon County has been developed after considering performance factors, available budget, and comments received through the original community survey, the SOW, the follow-up questionnaire, as well as discussions with MDT and other stakeholders.

### RECOMMENDED SERVICE

The recommended transit service plan includes two phases consisting of the initial service implementation (Phase 1, years one to three of operation) and the future service implementation (Phase 2, years three and beyond).

#### Phase 1 Transit Service

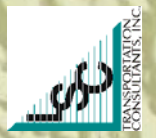
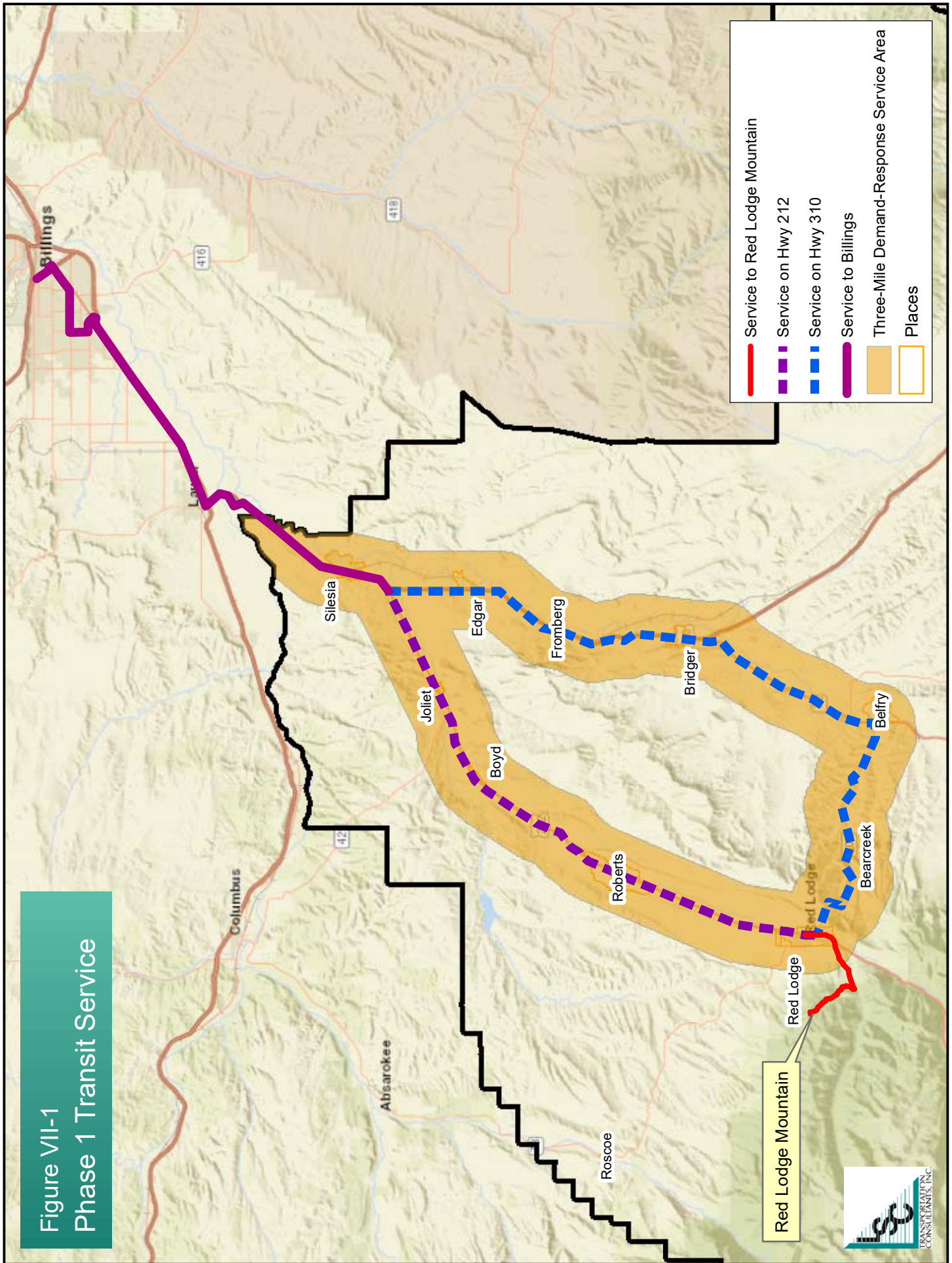
The recommended Phase 1 transit service plan includes:

- **3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Highways 212 and 310** - operates three days per week, year-round, for eight hours per day.
- **Connection to Billings** - operates twice per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30 a.m. and returns at 4:30 p.m.
- **Winter Fixed-Route Service between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain** - operates on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) with eight roundtrips per day for three months per year (mid-December through mid-March).

Table VII-1 presents the service characteristics of the recommended Phase 1 transit service and the service concepts are illustrated in Figure VII-1.

Table VII-1 Recommended Service Plan - Phase 1									
Service Description	# of Vehicles Required	Total Annual		Annual Operating Days	Annual Ridership	Annual Operating Cost	Passenger-Trips per Hour	Avg. Cost per Passenger-Trip	
		Revenue - Miles	Revenue - Hours						
<b>3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Hwy. 212 and 310</b> Operating 3 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day	1	37,440	1,248	156	2,496	\$51,019	2.0	\$20.44	
<b>Connection to Billings</b> Operates twice per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30am and returns at 4:30pm.	1	2,880	192	24	691	\$13,244	3.6	\$19.16	
<b>Winter Fixed-Route Service Between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain</b> Operates Saturday and Sunday (2 days per week) with 8 roundtrips per day for 3 months per year (mid-December through mid-March).	1	3,072	192	24	1,152	\$13,244	6.0	\$11.50	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1*</b>	<b>43,392</b>	<b>1,632</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>4,339</b>	<b>\$77,507</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>\$17.86</b>	
<i>Note: * One vehicle could be used to operate multiple services. Source: LSC, 2019.</i>									

Figure VII-1  
Phase 1 Transit Service



## Phase 2 Transit Service

The recommended Phase 2 transit service plan includes:

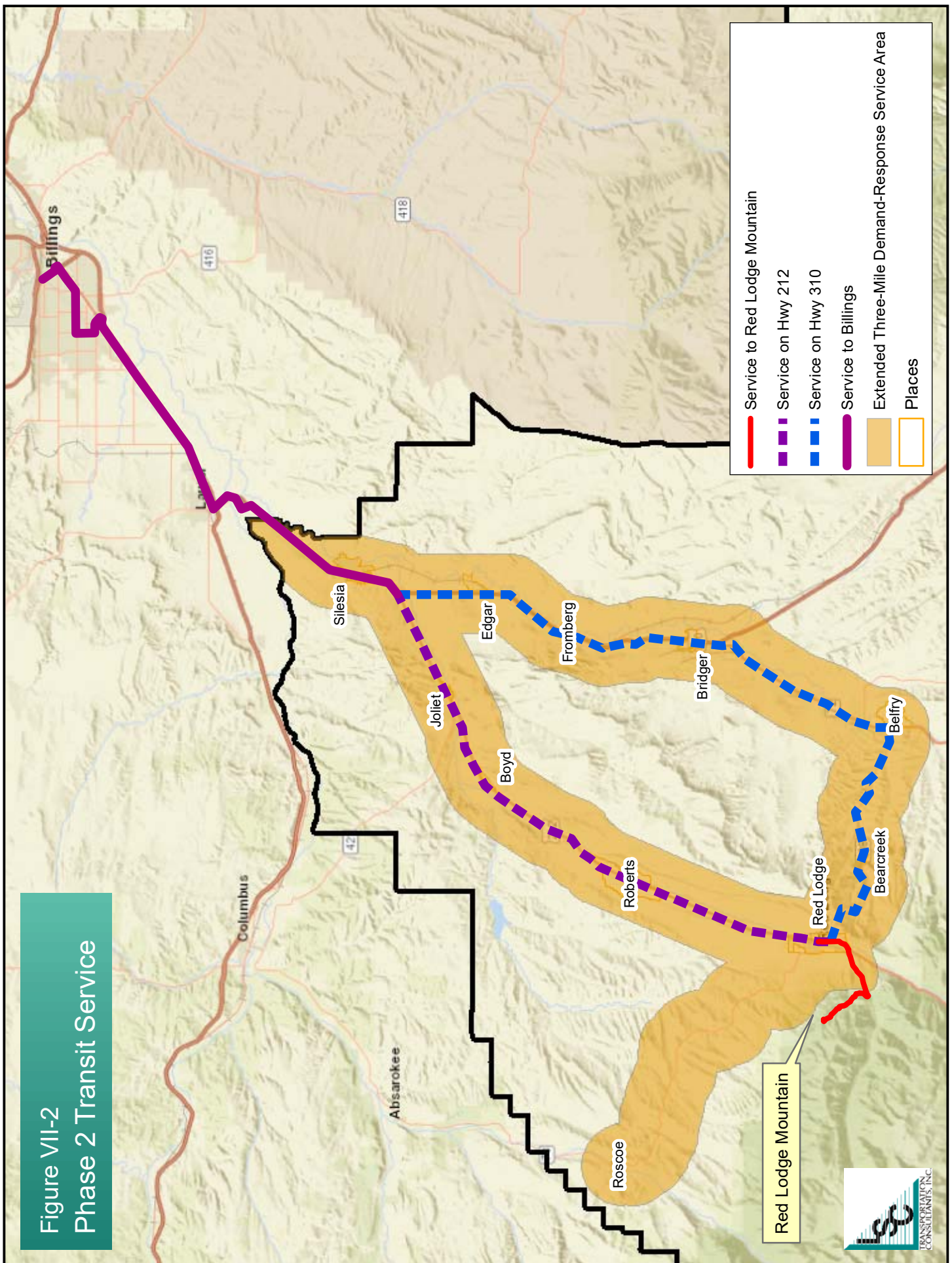
- **3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Highways 212 and 310, with larger service area in the Red Lodge area and to Luther/Roscoe** - operates five days per week, year-round, for eight hours per day.
- **Connection to Billings** - operates four times per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30 a.m. and returns at 4:30 p.m.
- **Winter Fixed-Route Service between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain** - operates on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sunday with eight roundtrips per day for three months per year (mid-December through mid-March).

Table VII-2 presents the service characteristics of the recommended Phase 2 transit service and the service concepts are illustrated in Figure VII-2.

Table VII-2 Recommended Service Plan - Phase 2									
Service Description	# of Vehicles Required	Total Annual		Annual Operating Days	Annual Ridership	Annual Operating Cost	Passenger-Trips per Hour	Avg. Cost per Passenger-Trip	
		Revenue - Miles	Revenue - Hours						
<b>3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Hwy. 212 and 310 with larger service area in Red Lodge area and to Luther/Roscoe</b> Operating 5 days per week, year-round, 8 hr./day	1	62,400	2,080	260	4,160	\$85,032	2.0	\$20.44	
<b>Connection to Billings</b> Operates four times per month, roundtrip leaves at 8:30am and returns at 4:30pm.	1	5,760	384	48	1,382	\$26,487	3.6	\$19.16	
<b>Winter Fixed-Route Service Between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain</b> Operates Friday, Saturday, and Sunday (3 days per week) with 8 roundtrips per day for 3 months per year (mid-December through mid-March).	1	4,608	288	36	1,728	\$19,865	6.0	\$11.50	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2*</b>	<b>72,768</b>	<b>2,752</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>7,270</b>	<b>\$131,385</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>\$18.07</b>	
<i>Note: * One vehicle could be used to operate multiple services. Source: LSC, 2019.</i>									



Figure VII-2  
Phase 2 Transit Service





## **Red Lodge – Red Lodge Mountain Schedule**

Table VII-3 presents the schedule for winter fixed-route service between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain. The service operates eight roundtrips per day, with the first run departing Red Lodge at 7:30 a.m. and the last run arriving in Red Lodge at 4:26 p.m. During Phase 1, the service would operate on Saturdays and Sunday from mid-December through mid-March. In Phase 2, the service would be extended to operate on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sunday from mid-December through mid-March.

Table VII-3 Schedule for Winter Fixed-Route Service Between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain											
Red Lodge to Red Lodge Mountain						Red Lodge Mountain to Red Lodge					
Traffic Circle at 2nd and Broadway Ave. (Depart)	10th and Broadway Ave.	17th and Broadway Ave.	Hauser Ave. and Broadway Ave.	W. Fork Rd. and Broadway Ave.	W. Fork Rd. and Ski Run Rd.	Red Lodge Mountain (Arrive)	Red Lodge Mountain (Depart)	W. Fork Rd. and Ski Run Rd.	W. Fork Rd. and Broadway Ave.	Hauser Ave. and Broadway Ave.	Traffic Circle at 2nd and Broadway Ave. (Arrive)
7:30 AM	7:32 AM	7:34 AM	7:36 AM	7:38 AM	7:44 AM	7:56 AM	8:00 AM	8:12 AM	8:18 AM	8:20 AM	8:26 AM
8:30 AM	8:32 AM	8:34 AM	8:36 AM	8:38 AM	8:44 AM	8:56 AM	9:00 AM	9:12 AM	9:18 AM	9:20 AM	9:26 AM
9:30 AM	9:32 AM	9:34 AM	9:36 AM	9:38 AM	9:44 AM	9:56 AM	10:00 AM	10:12 AM	10:18 AM	10:20 AM	10:26 AM
10:30 AM	10:32 AM	10:34 AM	10:36 AM	10:38 AM	10:44 AM	10:56 AM	11:00 AM	11:12 AM	11:18 AM	11:20 AM	11:26 AM
12:30 PM	12:32 PM	12:34 PM	12:36 PM	12:38 PM	12:44 PM	12:56 PM	1:00 PM	1:12 PM	1:18 PM	1:20 PM	1:26 PM
1:30 PM	1:32 PM	1:34 PM	1:36 PM	1:38 PM	1:44 PM	1:56 PM	2:00 PM	2:12 PM	2:18 PM	2:20 PM	2:26 PM
2:30 PM	2:32 PM	2:34 PM	2:36 PM	2:38 PM	2:44 PM	2:56 PM	3:00 PM	3:12 PM	3:18 PM	3:20 PM	3:26 PM
3:30 PM	3:32 PM	3:34 PM	3:36 PM	3:38 PM	3:44 PM	3:56 PM	4:00 PM	4:12 PM	4:18 PM	4:20 PM	4:26 PM
*Note: Driver break between 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM Source: LSC, 2019.											

## **Service Monitoring**

### **System Performance Measurement**

LSC recommends that closely monitoring the new transit system's performance and quality. A monitoring program is essential to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of the service being provided. Monthly reports (including information on productivity measures and cost information) should be created and presented to the Transportation Advisory Committee. In addition, a rider survey should be conducted at a minimum every other year.

Metrics to track should include:

- Miles by bus and by route reported daily
- Hours by bus and by route reported daily
- One-way passenger-trips by bus, by route, and by passenger type
- Fares collected by bus, by route, and by fare type
- Vehicle breakdowns that require a road call or vehicle replacement
- Accidents and incidents

Productivity measures should indicate the number of passengers per revenue-hour and passengers per revenue-mile by service area. The actual productivity should be compared with system standards. In order to monitor productivity, it is essential that passenger ridership data continue to be collected on an ongoing basis. The simplest approach for collecting the ridership data is to equip each vehicle with manual counting devices that allow the drivers to register each passenger who boards by the appropriate fare category. The ridership data should be collected by route and not by vehicle, so that each route can be compared to the whole system. When a vehicle moves from route to route, the count should return to zero. Hence, runs should also be counted individually. This will allow the new transit service to track demand not only by route, but also by time (peak hours and off-peak hours).

Cost information should include the cost per passenger, cost per revenue-mile, ridership, and average fare. The data should be collected and tracked based on each route of the transit system.

The monthly reports on productivity and costs should be prepared in spreadsheet or database format to analyze each bus stop, route, and service type. The data will help to ridership patterns and operating cost trends, and determine if transit system changes are needed.

### Driver Monitoring Program

Service can also be monitored through a driver tracking program. The drivers use a tracking sheet to gather data for evaluating the transit system's performance. The tracking sheet is designed to have the driver log in the number of passengers on each bus at each location; the number of agency, wheelchair, and discounted-fare clients; and the starting and ending mileage of the vehicle for each day. The information from the tracking sheet should be entered into a spreadsheet or database to analyze the performance of each bus stop, route, and service type.

### Comment Cards and Boxes

LSC recommends that the new transit service provide comment cards and comment boxes on each transit vehicle so the passengers have an opportunity to provide input regarding the transit system.

## **CAPITAL NEEDS**

This section presents the capital needs associated with the new transit service.

### **Vehicles**

The new transit service will require capital funding from MDT to procure vehicles. MDT manages the capital equipment and facilities program, which is carried out on a statewide competitive basis. As a new service, a capital grant request for Carbon County would be competitive, but funding is dependent on an evaluation process and other grant applications received throughout the state. As part of Phase 1, the initial \$100,000 in capital funding would be used to buy one wheelchair-accessible minivan (\$40,000) and one wheelchair-accessible 12-passenger bus (\$60,000). Capital funds administered by MDT require a 15 percent local match for wheelchair-accessible vehicles, meaning that the new transit service will need to provide \$15,000. As part of Phase 2, the new transit service would apply for \$40,000 in capital funding to buy a second wheelchair-

accessible minivan, of which the new transit service will need to provide \$6,000 in local match. If an all-wheel drive minivan were chosen, the vehicle cost would be slightly lower at approximately \$36,000, but the local match requirement would be 20 percent, or \$7,200.

## **Transit Facility Requirements**

A major capital investment is the development of a vehicle maintenance and storage facility. A transit facility should accommodate bus storage, as well as provide administration office space. Having the entire vehicle fleet parked at a single location will support management and control of the fleet. However, as a new transit



agency just starting out, LSC recommends using available funding to purchase vehicles and wait on acquiring or building a transit facility. Outdoor space to park the vehicles is available at the Old Roosevelt in Red Lodge or a partnership could be made with either Carbon County or the Red Lodge Public Schools to house the vehicles, as both Carbon County and Red Lodge Public Schools operate vehicle fleets and have facilities that may have capacity to house additional vehicles. LSC recommends reevaluating transit facility needs as part of Phase 2, when an additional vehicle is added to the fleet, to determine if pursuing a transit facility would be beneficial and make sense economically.

## **Bus Stops**

In order to implement the winter fixed-route service between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain as part of Phase 1 service, bus stops and/or shelters should be installed at key locations at a total cost of \$5,000. The bus stops and shelters will allow the public to easily identify the transit pick-up locations and the route serving each location. Bus stops and shelters will reduce the barriers to using the transit system and will increase the public profile of the transit service. Bus stops can range from a simple sign with the posted schedule to a small shelter with indoor waiting space to protect passengers from winter conditions. In creating new bus stops, it is important to ensure that the bus stops are accessible to wheelchairs by meeting the baseline requirements of the Americans with Disability Act.



## FUNDING ALTERNATIVES

This section presents potential federal, state, and local funding alternatives for transit services within the study area.

### Potential Federal Funding Sources

Descriptions of federal funding programs that could potentially be used for regional transit service in the study area are listed below:

- FTA Section 5311 Formula Grants for Rural Areas:** The Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000, where many residents often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. The program also provides funding for state and national training and technical assistance through the Rural Transportation Assistance Program. A 20 percent local match is required for capital expenditures, and a 50 percent local match is required for operating expenditures. These funds are segmented in to “apportioned” and “discretionary” programs. The bulk of the funds are apportioned directly to rural counties based upon population levels. The program has historically been the source of FTA funds for many rural areas within Montana.
- TransADE Program:** In April 2001, the Montana State Legislature passed Senate Bill 448, which established the Transportation Assistance for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (TransADE) Program. This is a state funding program within Montana statute, and the grant program provides funds for up to 50 percent of the transportation operating costs for the elderly and disabled throughout Montana. Eligible recipients are counties, incorporated communities, transportation districts, and nonprofit organizations.
- FTA Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities:** This program is intended to improve mobility for seniors and

individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. This program supports transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in all areas—large urbanized (over 200,000), small urbanized (50,000-200,000), and rural (under 50,000). Eligible projects include both traditional capital investment and nontraditional investment beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services. This program allows states or localities that provide transit service to be direct recipients under this program.

- **FTA Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Program:** This program makes federal funds available to states and designated recipients to replace, recover, and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities including technological changes or innovations to modify low or no-emission vehicles or facilities. Funding is provided through formula allocations and competitive grants. A sub-program provides competitive grants for bus and bus facility projects that support low and zero-emission vehicles.

A wide variety of other federal funding programs provide support for transportation programs. Some of these are currently being utilized in the region and others can be explored further including the following:

- **Centers for Independent Living:** This program provides support to local nonprofit centers for independent living, enabling them to provide training, counseling, advocacy, and supportive services to individuals with significant disabilities. Transportation services are provided through this program. These funds are only awarded to local nonprofit centers.
- **Community Health Centers:** This program supports primary health care centers in medically-underserved areas, migrant communities, public housing sites, and at organizations providing medical care to homeless persons. Funds may be used to provide transportation services as necessary to provide health care services. Private nonprofit and public health agencies are eligible applicants.
- **Corporation for National Service, National Senior Service Corps:** The National Senior Service Corps provides volunteer and community service opportunities for older persons through three programs: the Foster Grandparent Program, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, and the Senior Companion Program. In each of these, program funds may be used to support the transportation needs of program participants.
- **Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration:** Grants support capital facilities in economically-distressed areas, including transportation facilities and infrastructure improvements. Funds are also available for planning and adjustment assistance in communities experiencing severe economic deterioration. Public bodies,



private nonprofit organizations, and Native American Indian tribes are eligible applicants.

- **Developmental Disabilities Basic Support and Advocacy Grants:** This program provides formula grants to state agencies serving the developmentally disabled for the purpose of enabling persons with developmental disabilities to become fully integrated into their communities. Funds are used to support the activities of state developmental disabilities planning councils, and to provide a variety of support services, including transportation.
- **Head Start:** Head Start is a program of comprehensive services for economically-disadvantaged preschool children. Funds are distributed to local public and nonprofit agencies to provide child development and education services, as well as supportive services such as transportation. Head Start funds are used to provide transportation services, acquire vehicles, and provide technical assistance to local Head Start centers.
- **Medicaid:** Medicaid is a program of medical assistance for qualified low-income persons and persons with disabilities. Under this program, states are required to arrange for transportation of beneficiaries to and from medical care. Individual states determine how transportation costs are to be paid and which transportation providers are eligible program participants. According to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), for Medicaid trips, they would reimburse directly to the client for the fare since they do not contract with transit providers for the trip cost. Therefore, in Montana the Medicaid program would benefit Medicaid clients, who could get a free ride, but would not be beneficial to the agency and would not serve as a revenue source.
- **Older Americans Act:** Through the Administration on Aging's Title III-B program, funds are awarded on a formula basis to state and area agencies on aging for the purpose of providing supportive services for older persons, including the operation of multipurpose senior centers. Many area agencies on aging use these funds to help meet the transportation needs of older persons.
- **Rural Development Loan Fund:** These loans finance business activities in rural communities and towns with a population of less than 25,000. Transportation facilities and other community development projects are among the eligible uses of borrowed funds. Some loans are made to direct borrowers; others are awarded to national and local nonprofit intermediaries. These intermediaries then make and service loans to individual borrowers.
- **Rural Health Outreach and Research:** Funds are provided for demonstration grants to expand or enhance the availability of health services in rural areas, and for applied research in the field of rural health services. Transportation services that improve the availability of rural

health care can be funded through this program. Public agencies and private nonprofits are eligible applicants.

- **Rural Housing and Economic Development Grants:** This program provides technical assistance and capacity building funds to private nonprofits, housing finance agencies, community development corporations, and state and local community or economic development agencies to help develop and carry out innovative housing and community development strategies. To the extent that transportation plans and programs fit into such strategies, they can be supported through these grants. Funds are awarded every year on a competitive basis.
- **Social Services Block Grants:** Also known as Title XX, this program provides formula funds to state welfare agencies to provide social services, including transportation services, that help individuals reduce welfare dependency, achieve self-sufficiency, or forestall unnecessary use of institutional care. Since the advent of welfare reform in 1996, there has been a decline in federal support for this program.
- **Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities:** This Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Housing program helps private nonprofit entities provide housing and necessary supportive services for low-income persons with disabilities. Transportation is among the supportive services that may be funded through this program.
- **Transit Benefit Program:** The “Transit Benefit Program” is a provision in the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) that permits an employer to pay for an employee’s cost to travel to work in other than a single-occupancy vehicle. The program is designed to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and conserve energy by encouraging employees to commute by means other than single-occupancy motor vehicles.
- **Veterans’ Employment and Training Service, Homeless Veterans’ Reintegration Project:** This is a program of discretionary grants to local public and private nonprofit organizations to provide employment and training services that help urban and rural homeless veterans re-enter the workforce. Funds may be used to provide transportation, outreach, and other support services.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Grants:** Vocational rehabilitation funds are distributed to state rehabilitation agencies on a formula basis to provide a full range of rehabilitative services. Funds may be used for transportation to these services.
- **Workforce Investment Act Programs:** The Workforce Investment Act provides funding to state and local workforce development agencies for a variety of youth, adult, and dislocated worker employment and training services. States may use these funds to help provide transportation to training programs for program participants. State employment and training agencies receive these funds, which are then passed on to area workforce development boards, who allocate program resources according to local workforce development plans.

## Potential Local and Regional Funding Sources

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

- **General Fund Appropriations:** Counties and municipalities appropriate funds for transit operations and maintenance and for transit capital needs. Monies to be appropriated generally come from local property taxes and sales taxes. Competition for such funding is tough, and local governments generally do not have the capacity to undertake major new annual funding responsibilities for transit.
- **Advertising:** One modest but important source of funding for many transit services is on-vehicle advertising. The largest portion of this potential is for exterior advertising, rather than interior “bus card” advertising. The potential funds generated by advertising placed within the vehicles are comparatively low. Additionally, advertising on bus shelters has been used to pay for the cost of providing the shelter.
- **Voluntary Assessments:** This alternative requires each participating governmental entity (cities and counties) and private businesses to contribute to funding the system on a year-to-year basis. This alternative is common for areas that provide regional service rather than service limited to a single jurisdiction. An advantage of this type of funding is that it does not require voter approval. However, the funding is not steady and may be cut off at any time.
- **Private Support:** Financial support from private industry is essential to provide adequate transportation services in and around the study area. Major employers in the study area are potential sources of revenue, as they may be willing to help support alternative fuel vehicles or operating costs for employee transportation. Some retailers, such as Walmart, have provided matching funds for public transportation that provides store access to transit system riders.
- **Lodging Tax:** The appropriate use of lodging taxes (a.k.a. occupancy taxes) has long been the subject of debate. Historically, the bulk of these taxes are used for marketing and promotion efforts for conferences and general tourism. In other areas, such as resorts, the lodging tax is an important element of the local transit funding formula. A lodging tax can be considered as a specialized sales tax, placed only on lodging bills. As such, it shares many of the advantages and disadvantages of a sales tax. Taxation of this type has been used successfully in Park City, Utah; Sun Valley, Idaho; Durango, Colorado; and Telluride, Colorado. A lodging tax creates inequities between different classes of visitors, as it is only paid by overnight visitors. Day visitors (particularly prevalent in the summer) and

condominium/second homeowners, who may use transit as much as lodging guests, do not contribute to transit.

- **Sales Tax:** A sales tax could be implemented with funds to go to transit services. Sales tax is the financial base for many transit services in the western United States. The required level of sales tax would depend upon the service alternatives chosen. One advantage is that sales tax revenues are relatively stable and can be forecast with a high degree of confidence. In addition, sales tax can be collected efficiently, and it allows the community to generate revenues from visitors in the area. This source, of course, would require approval by voters. In addition, a sales tax increase could be seen as inequitable to residents not served by transit. This disadvantage could be offset by the fact that sales taxes could be rebated to incorporated areas not served by transit. Transit services, moreover, would face competition from other services that may seek to gain financial support through sales taxes.
- **Property Tax for Special Transportation:** Section 7-14-111 of the Montana Code states that a county, urban transportation district, or municipality may (in addition to all other property tax levies authorized by law) levy up to one mill of property taxes to fund special transportation services for senior citizens and handicapped persons. The proceeds of the levy may be used to contract with public or private transportation providers for services for senior citizens and disabled individuals, or to augment or subsidize provisions for the transportation of senior citizens and disabled individuals provided by the public transportation providers.
- **Urban Transportation District:** Section 7-14-201 provides authority for Montana counties to establish Transportation Districts. The Districts may be created if the residents within the proposed district boundaries vote in favor of the measure. The District is administered by a transportation board. The board members are elected by the public during the general election process. The board has the power to establish, operate, improve, maintain, and administer the transportation district. The District shall primarily serve the residents within the boundaries, but may authorize service outside the District where deemed appropriate. The District may borrow money by the issuance of general obligation bonds or revenue bonds or a combination thereof to provide funds for the District. A Transportation District could be created for an entire county or a designated area within the county.
- **Service Districts:** The service district funding option was authorized in 1985 by the state legislature. This procedure requires the establishment of a special district such as a special improvement district, rural special improvement district, or multi-jurisdictional service district. These districts would operate similar to the UTD mentioned previously. The funding structure consists of bonds issued with the backing of the local governments that would be utilized to pay for transit improvement costs.

Revenue to pay for the bonds would be raised through assessments against property owners within the district.

- **Local Option Gas Tax:** State law allows for the establishment of a countywide local option gas tax of up to two cents per gallon, if the measure receives voter approval within the county. A gas tax fund could provide for the implementation of the recommended transit improvements contained within this plan. The primary advantage offered by a gas tax fund is that only the users (both residents and visitors) of the transportation system are taxed. Fees paid by the individual users would vary according to their use of the transportation system.
- **Fare Revenues:** Passenger fares are a key component of local transit funding. Table VII-4 presents the passenger fares for the new transit service included in the recommended service plan.

Table VII-4 New Transit Service Fares	
Type of Service	Cost per Trip
3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Hwy. 212 and 310	Free
Connection to Billings	\$4.00
Winter Fixed-Route Service Between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain	\$1.00
Source: LSC, 2019.	

## Funding Summary

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

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

## **FINANCIAL PLAN**

This section presents a financial plan with projected expenditures and required revenues. Table VII-5 presents a five-year transit plan with the assumption of an annual three percent inflation rate. The three percent inflation rate takes into account historical trends for increases in transit operating expenses.

As detailed in the recommended service plan, the cost projection incorporates the following elements:

### **Revenues**

The financial plan identifies the revenues required to operate the recommended transit services and procure the necessary capital equipment. As shown in Table VII-5, FTA 5311 Operational and Capital Grants will serve as the main funding sources, with the new transit service providing the required local match.

It should be noted that 5311 funding administered by MDT is distributed quarterly and is a reimbursement program. A new public transit service should plan to have sufficient startup reserve funds to carry the first four months of service operations. After a new service is receiving quarterly reimbursements from MDT, ongoing reserves will still be necessary and should be established at a minimum of three months of estimated operating expenses.

### **Capital Expenses**

Capital expenses include the following:

- Vehicle purchases
- Bus stop signs and/or shelters



Table VII-5 Five-Year Transit Financial Plan (assumed 3% inflation)					
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
<b>Operation</b>					
<b>Phase I</b>					
3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Hwy. 212 and 310	\$51,019	\$52,550			
Connection to Billings	\$13,244	\$13,641			
Winter Fixed-Route Service Between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain	\$13,244	\$13,641			
<b>Phase I Subtotal</b>	<b>\$77,507</b>	<b>\$79,832</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Phase II</b>					
3-Mile Demand-Response Service Area along Hwy. 212 and 310 with larger service area in Red Lodge area and to Luther/Roscoe			\$90,211	\$92,917	\$95,705
Connection to Billings			\$28,100	\$28,943	\$29,812
Winter Fixed-Route Service Between Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain			\$21,075	\$21,707	\$22,359
<b>Phase II Subtotal</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$139,386</b>	<b>\$143,568</b>	<b>\$147,875</b>
<b>Operation Subtotal</b>	<b>\$77,507</b>	<b>\$79,832</b>	<b>\$139,386</b>	<b>\$143,568</b>	<b>\$147,875</b>
<b>Capital</b>					
Vehicle Purchase	\$100,000		\$40,000		
Bus Stops	\$5,000				
<b>Capital Subtotal</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$182,507</b>	<b>\$79,832</b>	<b>\$179,386</b>	<b>\$143,568</b>	<b>\$147,875</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>					
<b>Operation</b>					
FTA 5311 Operational Grant Funding^	\$47,384	\$48,806	\$84,985	\$87,535	\$90,161
TransADE	\$0	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$3,000
Passenger Fares	\$4,608	\$4,746	\$8,640	\$8,899	\$9,166
Local Match	\$25,515	\$26,280	\$43,761	\$44,634	\$45,548
<b>Operation Subtotal</b>	<b>\$77,507</b>	<b>\$79,832</b>	<b>\$139,386</b>	<b>\$143,568</b>	<b>\$147,875</b>
<b>Capital</b>					
FTA 5311 Capital Grant Funding*	\$89,000		\$34,000		
Local Match	\$16,000		\$6,000		
<b>Capital Subtotal</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$182,507</b>	<b>\$79,832</b>	<b>\$179,386</b>	<b>\$143,568</b>	<b>\$147,875</b>
<i>Total Annual Local Match Required</i>	<i>\$41,515</i>	<i>\$26,280</i>	<i>\$49,761</i>	<i>\$44,634</i>	<i>\$45,548</i>
^Up to a 65% federal share was estimated for operations. *An 85% federal share was estimated for vehicles and a 80% federal share was estimated for bus stops. Source: LSC, 2019.					



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# Strategic Considerations

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This chapter outlines strategic considerations that must be addressed to implement a new public transportation service in Carbon County, according to the recommended service plan.

## GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT



Based on conversations to date, the most likely organization to manage and operate Carbon County's new public transportation system is RLACF. RLACF has the advantages of:

- Having many complementary programs for youth and seniors.
- Understanding the needs, issues, and impacts of public transportation services in the quality of life and health of Carbon County residents.
- Taking a leading role, through this study and other efforts, in working to establish new public transportation services.
- An existing, well-established structure for administration, operations, and marketing.
- Experience accessing grant funding and private donor fundraising.
- Existing relationships with the cities, county, local businesses, health care providers, and social services organizations that will be necessary in building a new public transportation service.
- An existing board of directors that could serve as the governing body to make fiscal and policy decisions for the new public transportation service.

If RLACF were to decide not to become the home of the new public transportation service, the next most likely organization to take on managing and operating transit would be Carbon County, but this option would require time and effort of County staff to get up to speed on to-date efforts and public transportation requirements. The County has the advantages of operating public services, being able to access affordable liability insurance, experience with public grants, and fleet operations, but RLACF is still better positioned to administer and manage a new public transportation system for the reasons stated above.

A hybrid approach could also work whereby RLACF and the County divide up duties and responsibilities of operating a new public transit system. This may be necessary if RLACF is unable to access affordable liability insurance.

Another possible option for governance and oversight could be the City of Red Lodge, but this option was not considered in detail due to the fact that the City isn't a regional entity that operates throughout the county.

If RLACF is determined through community discussions to be the best home for the new public transportation service, LSC recommends that a formal endorsement of RLACF as the administrator and operator be sought out from both Carbon County Commissioners and the Red Lodge City Council. This will help legitimize RLACF as the home of public transportation in Carbon County and provide community clarity. A formal agreement like a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between RLACF and the County is recommended to memorialize the arrangement and agreement.

## **Transportation Advisory Committee**

LSC recommends that a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) be established to help guide the development and implementation of the Carbon County public transit system. TACs are a common tool used to provide guidance to and foster community collaboration for meeting local transportation needs.



The Carbon County TAC could be an expanded version of the Advisory Committee that was established for this TDP study. LSC recommends that the TAC have representatives from:

- RLACF Board of Directors
- Carbon County
- The cities of Red Lodge, Joliet, Bridger, Roberts, and Fromberg
- The Chamber of Commerce
- Beartooth Billings Clinic, Riverstone, and other health care providers
- Social service organizations and nonprofits serving disadvantaged populations
- Developmental disability organizations

- Red Lodge Mountain Resort
- Senior centers
- Community Care
- Local law enforcement

It is likely that not all organizations on this list would have the time or interest to participate, but a reasonable goal for TAC membership might be 8-12 members.

The TAC should meet at least quarterly and may need to meet monthly in the first year as services are established. The TAC would be an advisory body to the RLACF board of directors, assuming that RLACF were to take on public transportation operations.

## **Policies and Procedures**

Public transportation operations and use of federal funding from the FTA come with many compliance requirements and reporting. Ahead of starting transit operations, policies and procedures must be developed and approved by the governing body including:

- Organizational operations
  - Format for agendas, minutes, and orientation of board members
  - Mission and goals for the public transportation operation
  - By-laws, updated if necessary, to support management of public transportation services
  - Process for adopting annual budget and format for monthly financial reports
  - Grant reimbursement process
  - Board conflict of interest policy and code of conduct
  - Organizational chart
  - Document control and records retention policy
  - Personnel manual and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) compliant job applications and job advertisements
- Provision of transit service
  - Driver manual
  - Complaint resolution process and policy



- Rider code of conduct
- Rider suspension process and policy
- Title VI Civil Rights complaint procedures
- Charter and school bus service prohibition provisions
- Safety
  - Fleet and facility maintenance plan
  - Drug and alcohol testing policy and agreement with third party administrator
  - Accident and incident procedures

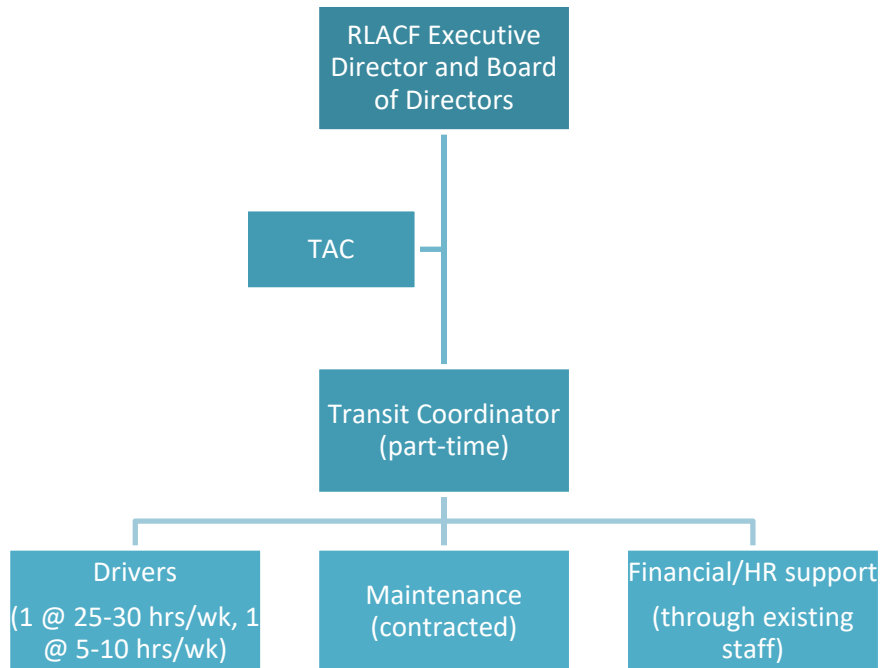


This list is not meant to be exhaustive—there may be additional policies and procedures that need to be established. LSC recommends that RLACF staff use the available MDT resources and staff. MDT offers a training for new transit managers that should be attended by whomever takes on transit management.

## STAFFING

As a relatively small operation initially, staffing will be limited to a part-time Transit Coordinator, drivers, contracted maintenance, and financial and human resource support, as shown in Figure VIII-1 (RLACF assumed as operator).

**Figure VIII-1  
Organizational Chart**



Contracted operations could be considered for the driver and maintenance functions. This could be achieved through a procurement process and award to a private company that would bid on contracted operations. In that case, RLACF would have one part-time transit coordinator managing the contract for services.

With RLACF assumed to operate the service, the Transit Coordinator is assumed to continue with other program duties within RLACF. The Transit Coordinator could also be made a full-time position if some driving duties were included as part of the job.

## **PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

In order to support the long-term success and sustainability of a new public transportation service, there are many partnerships that should be pursued. These partnerships could be for marketing, coordination, funding, or operations. Some examples of potential partnerships to be developed include:

- Marketing and promotional arrangement with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Partnerships with local municipalities, business organizations, social service organizations, healthcare providers, and Carbon County to provide local matching funds for transit operations and to build political support.

- Support from local retail businesses to distribute information about the new public transportation service.
- Relationships with local senior centers to coordinate service schedules.
- Partnerships with local health care providers to help provide local matching funds, as well as promote the service and educate new riders.

Successful small, local community transportation services leverage a multitude of partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits, community members, and municipalities to succeed – **a grassroots strategy works best!**

## VEHICLES

### Timing

Consideration must be given to the timing of when and if grants for new vehicles will happen. Depending on the success of operating and capital grant applications and the ability of RLACF to start a new service, there could be a situation where operating funds are available to start a new service in the second half of 2019 but capital funds aren't available, either due to timing, lack of an award, or manufacturing lead time for a new bus or van.

In the case that RLACF wants to start operations sooner than a vehicle may be available, there are several options that could be considered:

- Leasing a vehicle from a bus or van dealer.
- Using an in-state partnership that allows public transit providers to access small buses that are used in Glacier National Park in the summer and available for use in the off-season.
- Contracting with a local transportation provider who may have vehicles available.

### Storage

Another vehicle consideration is where the bus and van will be stored. The preferred alternative, especially in a cold and snowy climate like Carbon County has, is to store vehicles inside. Ideally, partnering with either Carbon County or the Red Lodge Public Schools to house the new bus and van would be preferred,

but the County has indicated that vehicle storage space is at a premium and that Red Lodge Public Schools has very limited bus storage space.

In the early years of operation, it may be necessary to store the vehicles outside, possibly at the Roosevelt School or at a private parking lot, while longer-term discussions and analysis take place on where to locate a permanent vehicle storage location. Whatever vehicle repair shop is used for maintenance may also be a possibility for vehicle storage.

## MARKETING PLAN

Although the budget will likely be limited for extensive marketing, a new public transportation system needs to have some fundamentals in place to attract riders, build community awareness, and develop successful partnerships. Developing a name and brand, creating public information tools, and building strategic marketing relationships are all necessary and can be done cost effectively.

Marketing is important to disseminate transit services information to study area residents and visitors. For residents and commuters, the primary goal of marketing will be to ensure that they are aware of the service. Often, community members do not use transit because they are unaware the service exists, or do not know how to find basic information about the service, such as fare rates and schedules.



### System Name and Brand

It will be important to make sure that all vehicles and buses have the same name, logo, and color scheme. A bus stop sign should be developed that clearly identifies the bus stop and indicates which routes or services are served by that stop to increase public awareness and visibility. The sign pole should also have space to display the bus schedules serving that stop.

Some of the most successful community transit systems often have strong branding and identity that clearly identifies what the service is and visually connects the bus system with the character of the local area. This can include:

- Logos that relate to the local landscape

- The Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System logo incorporates the iconic El Capitan.



- Carbon County might consider a using the Beartooth Mountains or rural character of the county as inspiration for a name and logo.

- Vehicle graphics that reflect local values

- In the mountain ski resort community of Crested Butte, Colorado, The Mountain Express buses are painted by local artists in different themes that reflect the community.



- MDT has indicated that vehicle graphics can be included in the capital purchase price of a new vehicle—unique branding and look of the vehicle would be applied with vinyl-applied graphics.

- Taglines and slogans that relate to the uniqueness of the area

One idea for developing a name for a new system is to have a community contest to name the new service. This builds interest, awareness, and excitement about a new service in a low-cost way.

## Customer Information Tools

As this system will be entirely new for Carbon County and its residents, it is important that potential riders can easily find information about how to use the bus. Information about the new bus service must be easy to find and available in a number of formats. Although these tools come with a cost, a new public transportation system should invest in these customer information tools:

- An easy to navigate website, or subset of an existing website, should incorporate schedules, rider tools, trip booking information, and system policies.
- Widely distributed, easy-to-understand printed bus information in locations where community members pick up information on local services.
- A phone number established for the new system that allows passengers to access someone quickly and easily.

- Fliers and posters directing new passengers to the phone number and website.
- Social media tools and an online presence, as appropriate.

All customer information materials should be designed with the user in mind, who often times has never or rarely used a transit system and is not familiar with reading bus schedules. Materials should be made as easy to understand as possible for new riders.

## **Marketing Partnerships**

Transit for visitors must attract riders who may not have considered using transit or may be unaware of the service. Visitors often find about the local transit system after arriving by car, deciding to take the local bus to get around town, and leaving their car parked. Local businesses can support and facilitate this visitor transit use in many ways:

- Businesses, social service organizations, and health care providers can act as travel trainers
  - A new transit system can utilize local businesses and organizations as outreach partners who help educate new riders about the new system and help them start using it. This is particularly important for older riders who may be hesitant to try the service and need someone they already have a relationship with to help them.
- Local organizations can help market the bus system
  - A transit system can provide bus information to local organizations to market the service—things like printed schedules, flyers, posters, countertop displays, and pocket cards.
  - Shared website links, social media collaboration, and online cross promotion can be a win-win for local organizations and the transit system.
- Partnerships during special events
  - To gain initial visibility, a new transit system could partner with businesses putting on special events to encourage attendees to use the bus to access the event, with the goal of introducing new riders to the bus.



- Participation in business groups
  - Being a part of the local chamber, business groups, and networking clubs help a new transit system become top-of-mind in the community.

A new transit system increases its effectiveness by leveraging local support and should strive to be as omnipresent in the community as possible.

## **COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION EFFORTS**

### **Cooperative Working Relationships**

Many successful transit programs have worked in cooperation with other transportation programs. In some cases, these have included working with other transit programs to coordinate schedules, allow transfers between systems, or establish a consolidated transit service.

Cooperation and coordination of services have allowed rural transit providers to pool existing resources and leverage those financial resources to obtain additional funding. Coordinated efforts result in greater efficiency in delivering service and often allow for a greater service area.

### **Participation in State and National Organizations**

Participation in state, regional, and national organizations such as a state or regional transit association or the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) gives transit staff access to many resources. Agencies that have established successful transit programs often have been involved in these outside organizations. Attendance at conferences and transiting programs helps transit personnel develop the skills and expertise necessary to operate a successful system.

Interaction with other transit providers is another benefit of participating in these organizations. The peer-to-peer connections that are established serve as a resource for transit programs to increase expertise and obtain informal assistance.

LSC recommends participation in the following regional, state, and national organizations:

## Montana Transit Association

The Montana Transit Association (MTA) encourages cooperation among members in dealing with public transportation issues in the State of Montana. MTA represents transit interests and provides professional development to the transit community. The MTA currently has about 80 members, including transit providers, transit-related businesses, and governmental entities. The Montana Transit Association has the following mission statement:

- *To encourage cooperation among members in dealing with public transportation issues.*
- *To provide a medium for the exchange of ideas, information, and experiences.*
- *To collect, compile, and make available to members, comparative data and information relative to public transportation in Montana.*
- *To promote training for members through joint development, sponsorship, and implementation of workshops, seminars, courses, employee exchanges, etc.*
- *To provide a forum for the voluntary discussion of mutual and individual members' problems.*
- *To represent to the people of Montana the importance of public transportation.*
- *To encourage the use and improvement of public transportation systems in Montana.*
- *To keep the citizens of Montana informed on project plans and progress.*
- *To solicit public input on select issues affecting public transportation in Montana.*
- *To advise and counsel both executive and legislative branches of local, state, and federal governments on public transportation issues.*
- *To study and make recommendations on the design and improvement of legislation, regulatory, training and education provisions under which public transportation systems operate with a view of assuring the efficiency and effectiveness of operations.*
- *To keep elected and appointed representatives informed on the importance of public transportation in Montana, its problems and its progress.*
- *To formally represent the collective interests and goals of Association members.*

## The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)

The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) and its members believe that mobility is a basic human right. From work and education to life-sustaining health care and human services programs to shopping and visiting with family and friends, mobility directly impacts quality of life. CTAA members are in the business of moving people—efficiently and cost-effectively. CTAA staff, board, and state/tribal delegates are dedicated to ensuring that all Americans, regardless of age, ability, geography or income, have access to safe, affordable and reliable transportation.



CTAA is committed to providing the highest quality training, certification, and education services to its members and to the community and public transportation industry. Since 1988, CTAA has pioneered training and certification programs that have enabled community transportation systems to grow and develop.

### **LONG-TERM VISION: 10 YEARS AND BEYOND**

Although this plan and associated implementation focuses on the first seven to ten years, the community should establish a long-term vision for the growth and development of public transportation services in Carbon County—a vision for what Phase 3 and beyond could be.

Based on all of the information, data, and research contained in this report, a Phase 3 vision for Carbon County public transportation to strive toward might include:

- Demand-response service operating Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. that serves the entire county with three to four vehicles operating on weekdays and one to two operating on weekends.
- A connection to Billings twice per week throughout the entire year.
- A fixed-route connection between Joliet and Red Lodge with four round-trips per weekday, focused primarily on commuters.

- Red Lodge Mountain fixed-route service operating Wednesday through Sunday for the entire winter ski season with eight roundtrips per day.
- A partnership with a local, private transportation provider to connect from Red Lodge to various summer trailheads for hiking, backpacking, and biking.

Creating a long-term vision for continued growth and development of the system gives the community something to plan and strive for.

## TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

If this plan is to be implemented and a new service to be started in 2019, RLACF and the local community needs to move quickly and execute a series of steps over the next six to nine months. These steps are shown in Figure VIII-2.

**Figure VIII-2**  
**Timeline of Implementation Steps**

By March 1, 2019	Submit MDT funding application for operating and capital
March - May 2019	Develop local match funding sources and necessary funding partnerships
June 2019	Learn of grant award; begin operational planning
July - Sept. 2019	Finalize operating plan and adopt budget; develop policies and procedures
Sept. - Nov. 2019	Start marketing and develop partnerships; hire drivers
Nov./Dec. 2019	Begin operations!

This is an aggressive timeline that will require significant effort and careful execution. If RLACF and Carbon County find that this timeline of next steps is not possible, this entire timeline could be stretched to have operations begin in 2020.

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## Supplemental Visitation Data

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Appendix A provides supplemental visitation data for the Carbon County area. LSC has reviewed and summarized in this appendix:

- The University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research 2017 report on non-resident visitors to Montana with data for Carbon County.
- The University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research 2017 report on resident travel within Montana with data for Carbon County.
- The University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research report, The Beartooth Highway: 2012 Summer Use and Image report in January 2013.

### 2017 Carbon County Non-Resident Travel Survey Report

This section summarizes 2017 non-resident visitors who spent at least one night in Carbon County. The sample size was 81 survey respondents.

#### Group Characteristics

Group characteristics of surveyed visitors included:

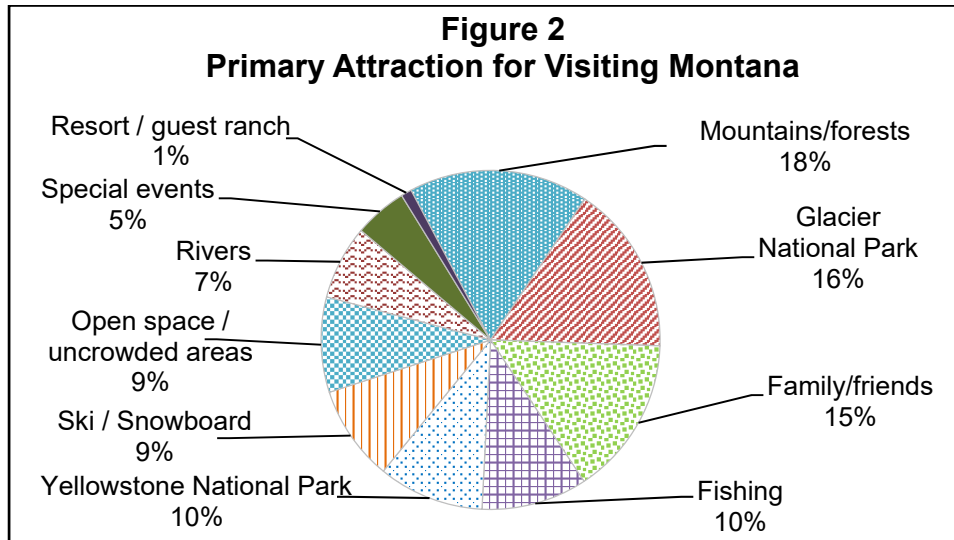
- The majority of groups contained all repeat visitors (72 percent) followed by groups with mixed first time and repeat visitors (15 percent) and groups with all repeat visitors (13 percent).
- Approximately 86 percent of surveyed visitors indicated they plan to return within two years.
- The primary reason for visiting Carbon County indicated by the majority of visitors was for vacation, recreation, and/or pleasure (60 percent), followed by visiting friends, relatives, or to attend a family event (19 percent).
- The average length of stay was approximately 7.1 nights.
- The majority of respondents stayed in a hotel or motel (39 percent), followed by a home, condo, or cabin of a friend or relative (17 percent),

personal second home, condo, or cabin (15 percent), and public land camping (10 percent).

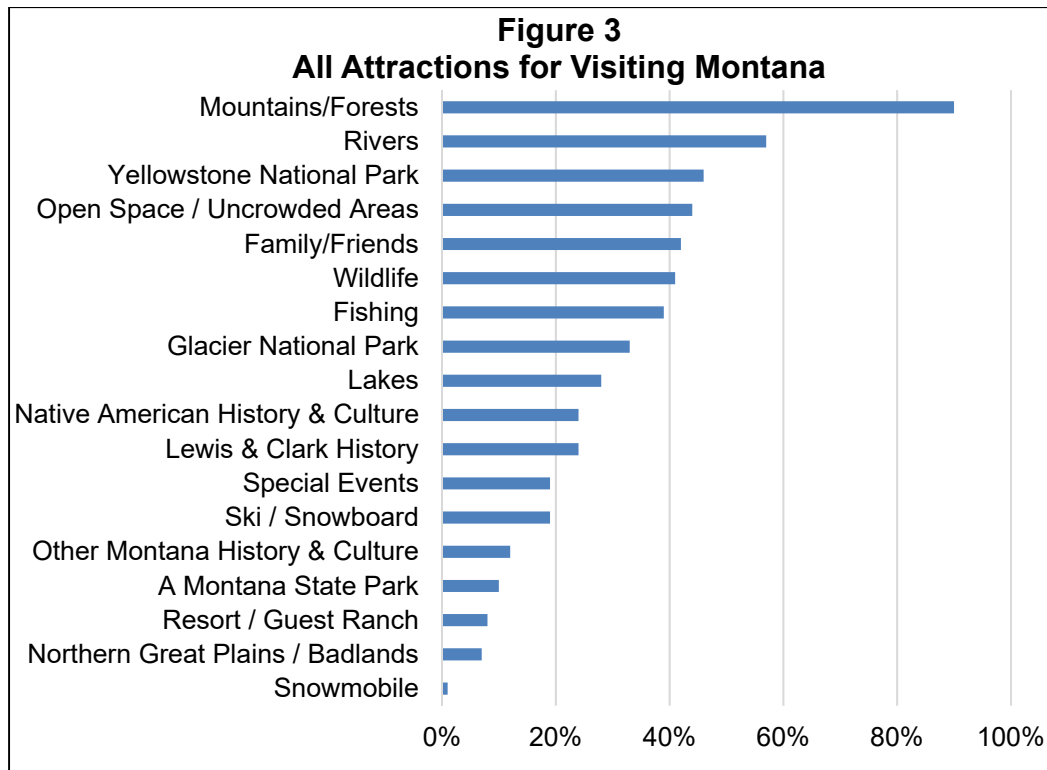
- As shown in Figure 1, the most popular activities that visitors participated in included scenic driving (72 percent), wildlife watching (63 percent), day hiking (57 percent), visit local brewery (31 percent), recreational shopping (30 percent), and nature photography (29 percent).



- As shown in Figure 2, the primary attraction for visiting Montana by surveyed Carbon County visitors was mountains and forests (18 percent), followed by Glacier National Park (16 percent), family and/or friends (15 percent), fishing (10 percent), and Yellowstone National Park (10 percent).



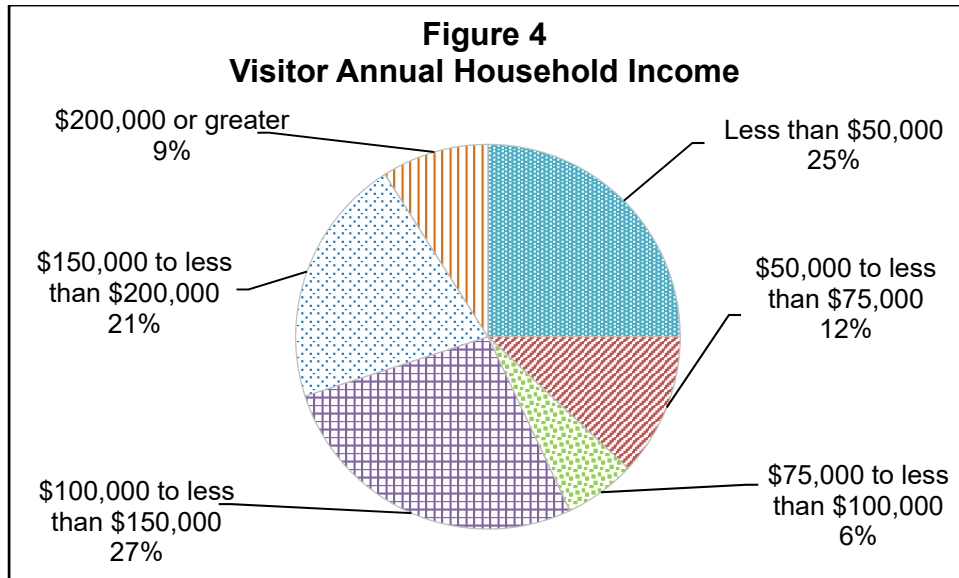
- As shown in Figure 3, when surveyed, Carbon County visitors were allowed to select multiple attractions for visiting Montana. The most popular attractions were mountains and forests (90 percent), followed by rivers (57 percent), Yellowstone National Park (46 percent), open space and uncrowded areas (44 percent), family and/or friends (42 percent), and wildlife (41 percent).



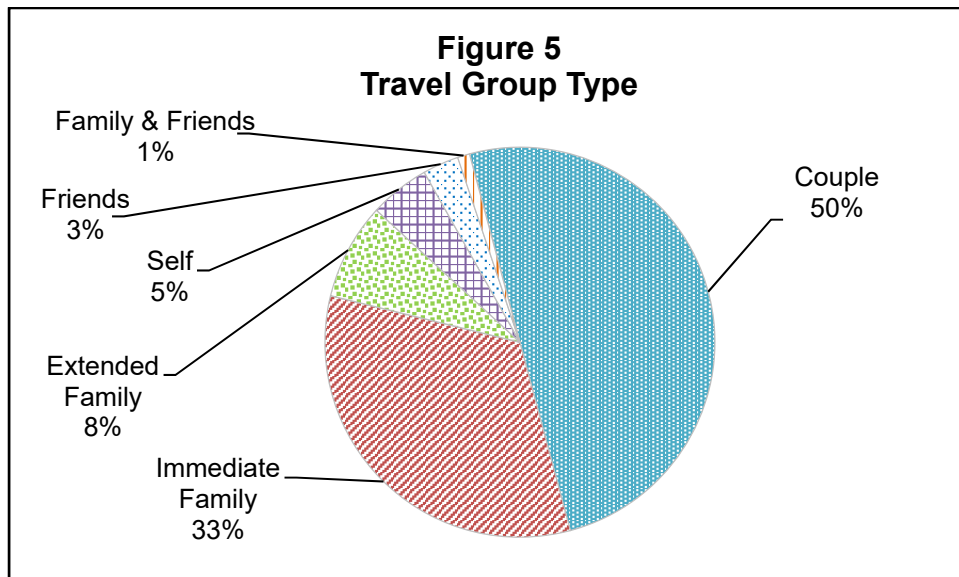
- Approximately 89 percent of surveyed Carbon County visitors visited Yellowstone National Park while on their trip.

### Visitor Demographics

- Approximately 14 percent of surveyed Carbon County visitors were from California, followed by Colorado (13 percent), Wyoming (10 percent), and North Dakota (10 percent).
- Respondents were between the ages of 22 and 81, with the average age being 56 years old and median age being 60 years old.
- 52 percent of respondents were male and 48 percent of respondents were female.
- As shown in Figure 4, approximately 57 percent of respondents indicated they had an annual household income over \$100,000, with approximately 27 percent having an annual household income between \$100,000 and \$150,000, 21 percent having an annual household income between \$150,000 and \$200,000, and nine percent having an annual household income over \$200,000.



- Approximately one-quarter of respondents indicated they had an annual household income of less than \$50,000.
- The average group size was approximately 2.5 people.
- As shown in Figure 5, approximately half of respondents (50 percent) indicated they traveled as a couple, followed by approximately one third of respondents (33 percent) who said they traveled in a group with their immediate family.



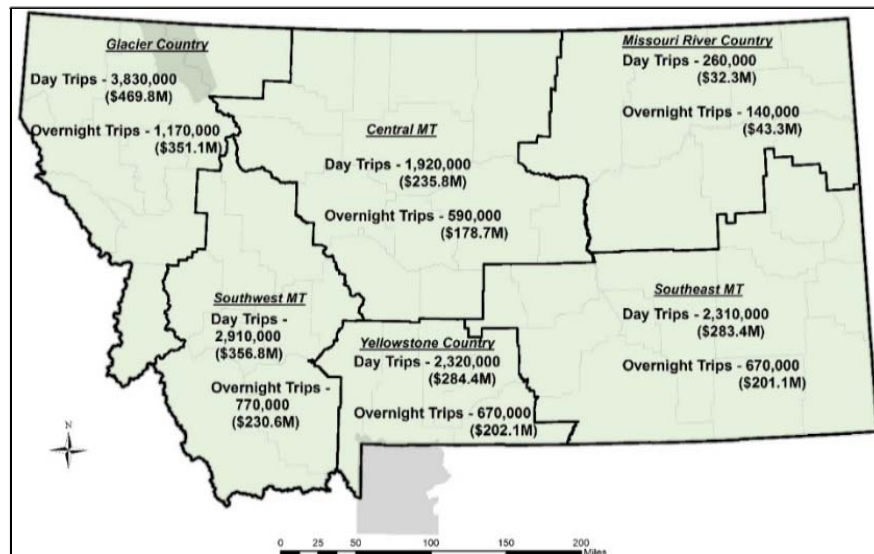
## 2017 Resident Travel in Montana

The University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research completed a study in 2017 to estimate annual resident travel within Montana

and the spending volume of resident visitors to counties outside their residence (50 miles or more away from home), as well as to map the flow of resident travel within Montana. During 2017, Montana residents took approximately 13,547,000 day trips spending \$1,662,620,000 and took approximately 4,013,000 overnight trips spending \$1,206,970,000 for a total of nearly \$2.87 billion spent on travel in Montana. Including both resident and non-resident travel spending, total travel industry spending in Montana is \$6.23 billion dollars, of which 54 percent is contributed by non-residents and 46 percent is contributed by resident travel within the state.

As part of the study, the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research divided the state into six different travel regions. As shown in Figure 6, Carbon County is part of the “Yellowstone Country” travel region. During 2017, Yellowstone Country had approximately 1,920,000 total day trips to the region with travelers spending approximately \$284.4 million, and approximately 670,000 total overnight trips to the region with travelers spending approximately \$202.1 million.

Figure 6  
Trip Numbers and Dollars Spent within Each Travel Region  
Source: University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research



As shown in Figure 7, looking at each of the 42 counties in the State of Montana individually (not all 56 counties had sufficient data to analyze), Carbon County

had the sixth highest number of total day trips by Montana residents and the seventh highest amount of total money spent at destinations within the county. Despite having a higher number of day trip visitors and a greater amount of total money spent, Carbon County actually had an average spending per visitor of approximately \$113, which ranked 26<sup>th</sup>, indicating day trip visitors to Carbon County spent less than day trip visitors to other areas in the state.

Figure 7  
Resident Day Trip Travel Numbers and Spending in Destination County  
*Source: University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research*

County	Total Day Trips to County	Total Spent at Destination	County	Total Day Trips to County	Total Spent at Destination
Beaverhead	205,000	\$23,417,000	Madison	219,000	\$32,784,000
Big Horn	94,000	\$14,050,000	Meagher	289,000	\$32,784,000
Broadwater	62,000	\$9,367,000	Mineral	133,000	\$9,367,000
Carbon	578,000	\$65,568,000	Missoula	1,352,000	\$224,804,000
Carter	9,000	\$4,683,000	Park	156,000	\$23,417,000
Cascade	859,000	\$98,352,000	Phillips	203,000	\$9,367,000
Choteau	62,000	\$9,367,000	Pondera	164,000	\$14,050,000
Custer	183,000	\$23,417,000	Powell	41,000	\$9,367,000
Dawson	112,000	\$23,417,000	Prairie	31,000	\$4,683,000
Deer Lodge	94,000	\$14,050,000	Ravalli	234,000	\$14,050,000
Fergus	226,000	\$23,417,000	Roosevelt	102,000	\$4,683,000
Flathead	470,000	\$112,402,000	Sanders	297,000	\$23,417,000
Gallatin	1,477,000	\$173,287,000	Sheridan	102,000	\$4,683,000
Glacier	244,000	\$18,734,000	Silver Bow	561,000	\$65,568,000
Granite	94,000	\$14,050,000	Stillwater	469,000	\$28,101,000
Hill	240,000	\$28,101,000	Sweet Grass	31,000	\$4,683,000
Jefferson	94,000	\$14,050,000	Teton	297,000	\$23,417,000
Lake	386,000	\$32,784,000	Toole	133,000	\$9,367,000
Lewis & Clark	1,207,000	\$149,870,000	Valley	62,000	\$9,367,000
Lincoln	306,000	\$28,101,000	Wheatland	31,000	\$4,683,000
McCone	102,000	\$4,683,000	Yellowstone	1,541,000	\$224,804,000
<b>TOTAL DAY TRIP NUMBERS = 13,552,000</b>					
<b>TOTAL DAY TRIP SPENDING = \$1,662,613,000</b>					
*The following counties had insufficient sample size and are not included in this table: Blaine, Daniels, Fallon, Garfield, Golden Valley, Judith Basin, Liberty, Musselshell, Petroleum, Powder River, Richland, Rosebud, Treasure.					



As shown in Figure 8, looking at each of the 56 counties in the State of Montana individually, Carbon County had the 18<sup>th</sup> highest number of total overnight trips by Montana residents and the 17<sup>th</sup> highest amount of total money spent by travelers within the destination county. Compared to day trip visitors, overnight visitors had the eighth highest average spending per visitor trip out of the 56 counties in Montana, indicating that Carbon County overnight visitors spent more money within the destination county than overnight visitors in other areas in the state.

Figure 8  
Resident Overnight Travel Numbers and Spending in Destination County  
*Source: University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research*

County	Total Overnight Trips to Destinations in County	Total Spent by Travelers with Destination in County	County	Total Overnight Trips to Destinations in County	Total Spent by Travelers with Destination in County
Beaverhead	76,100	\$23,912,000	Madison	40,700	\$12,868,000
Big Horn	20,300	\$5,984,000	Meagher	38,800	\$12,150,000
Blaine	12,400	\$3,707,000	Mineral	15,600	\$4,932,000
Broadwater	15,800	\$5,057,000	Missoula	503,900	\$153,976,000
Carbon	41,900	\$13,374,000	Musselshell	9,000	\$2,486,000
Carter	3,900	\$1,038,000	Park	88,000	\$27,277,000
Cascade	310,500	\$91,864,000	Petroleum	2,500	\$725,000
Choteau	15,400	\$4,775,000	Phillips	23,000	\$6,774,000
Custer	47,300	\$13,111,000	Pondera	17,000	\$4,840,000
Daniels	2,000	\$669,000	Powder River	7,800	\$2,146,000
Dawson	32,300	\$8,759,000	Powell	16,800	\$5,331,000
Deer Lodge	40,000	\$12,321,000	Prairie	2,600	\$786,000
Fallon	8,000	\$2,094,000	Ravalli	55,100	\$16,954,000
Fergus	70,900	\$20,588,000	Richland	38,800	\$10,361,000
Flathead	322,400	\$98,393,000	Roosevelt	21,900	\$5,839,000
Gallatin	490,100	\$146,713,000	Rosebud	15,900	\$4,786,000
Garfield	3,800	\$1,266,000	Sanders	41,800	\$12,746,000
Glacier	69,200	\$21,095,000	Sheridan	7,700	\$2,139,000
Golden Valley	3,300	\$1,098,000	Silver Bow	151,800	\$44,847,000
Granite	27,800	\$8,904,000	Stillwater	28,400	\$8,563,000
Hill	65,600	\$18,264,000	Sweet Grass	20,400	\$5,646,000
Jefferson	18,100	\$5,650,000	Teton	16,600	\$5,199,000
Judith Basin	7,600	\$2,476,000	Toole	36,300	\$10,587,000
Lake	80,300	\$25,767,000	Treasure	2,000	\$626,000
Lewis & Clark	382,100	\$112,821,000	Valley	50,500	\$15,322,000
Liberty	7,500	\$2,243,000	Wheatland	6,600	\$2,082,000
Lincoln	47,600	\$14,802,000	Wibaux	600	\$179,000
McCone	3,800	\$1,110,000	Yellowstone	526,400	\$158,947,000
TOTAL OVERNIGHTS = 4,012,500					
TOTAL OVERNIGHT TRIP SPENDING = \$1,206,969,000					

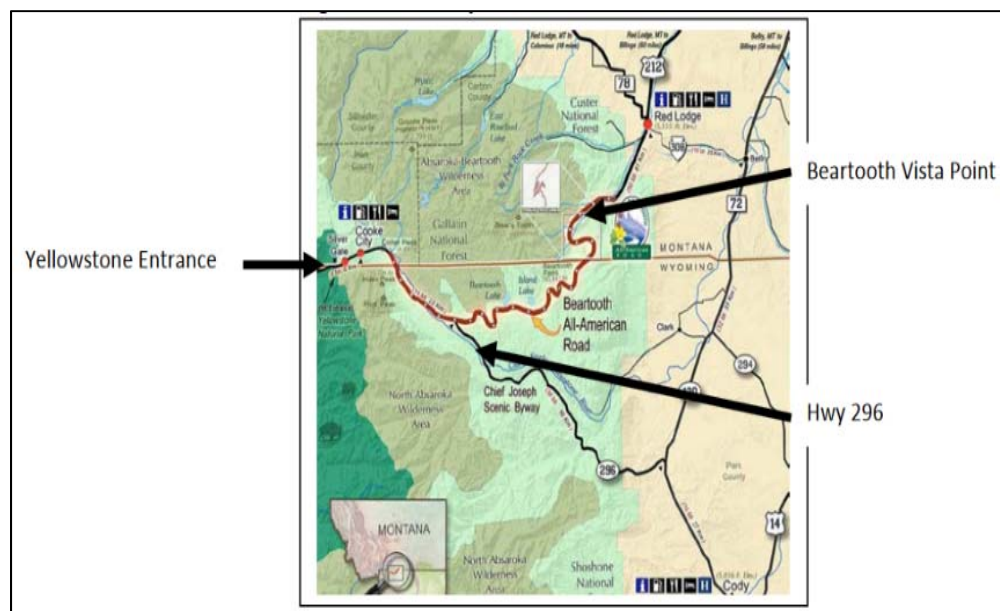
## The Beartooth Highway: 2012 Summer Use and Image

The University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research published The Beartooth Highway: 2012 Summer Use and Image report in January 2013.

Study data were collected from May 31, 2012 through the end of September 2012 at the three entry locations to the Beartooth Highway, as shown in Figure 9. A total of 4,267 non-residents and 85 residents of the local counties were intercepted. Of the non-residents given a follow-up survey, 1,473 mail-back surveys were returned (45 percent response rate). During the study time period, the total traffic on the Beartooth Highway was 78,904 vehicles, of which non-residents represented 91 percent of total traffic.

Figure 9  
Survey Intercept Sites

Source: University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research



Key findings from the intercept survey included:

- The majority of visitors (81 percent) were non-local U.S. residents, followed by 10 percent who were local residents of Park County (WY), Park County (MT), and Carbon County (MT), five percent who were foreign visitors (other than Canada), and three percent were from Canada.

- Non-resident visitors averaged approximately 2.4 people in their group and spent approximately two nights in the Beartooth Region.
- Non-resident visitors were most likely to enter the Beartooth Highway via Red Lodge (44 percent), followed by Yellowstone's northeast exit (Silver Gate) (40 percent) and WY 296 (16 percent).
- Resident visitors generally had two people in their group and were likely to travel the Beartooth Highway between six and 17 times per year.
- Resident visitors were most likely to enter the Beartooth Highway via WY 296 (40 percent), followed by Red Lodge (38 percent) and Yellowstone's northeast exit (Silver Gate) (23 percent).

Key findings from the mail-back survey included:

- The majority of Beartooth Highway visitors have a Bachelor's degree or higher (63 percent) and there is very little difference in education level between first-time and repeat visitors.
- As shown in Figure 10, the majority of first-time and repeat visitors have an annual household income between \$50,000 and \$100,000 (41 percent of all visitors).

Figure 10  
Mail-Back Survey: Annual Household Income  
*Source: University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research*

Average Household Income	First-Time Visitors		Repeat Visitors		All Visitors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than \$25K	22	3%	29	4%	51	4%
\$25K to less than \$50K	62	9%	121	16%	183	12%
\$50K to less than \$75K	141	21%	181	22%	322	22%
\$75K to less than \$100K	129	19%	154	19%	283	19%
\$100K to less than \$150K	137	21%	135	18%	272	19%
\$150K to less than \$200K	64	10%	63	8%	127	9%
\$200K or greater.	60	9%	62	8%	122	8%

- The average age of visitors was 56 years old and first-time visitors were slightly younger than repeat visitors (54 vs. 57 years old).
- Approximately 55 percent of respondents were male and 45 percent were female.

- Approximately 80 percent of the travelers did a day trip between Yellowstone National Park and a gateway community. As shown in Figure 11, Red Lodge and Cooke City had the highest percentage (31 percent each) of respondent that day-tripped to or from Yellowstone National Park.

Figure 11  
Mail-Back Survey: Visitors that Day-Tripped to/from Yellowstone National Park and  
a Gateway Community

*Source: University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research*

Day Tripped to/from YNP from...	First-Time Visitor		Repeat Visitor		All Visitors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Cooke City, MT	188	28%	274	34%	462	31%
Red Lodge, MT	208	31%	245	30%	453	31%
Cody, WY	177	27%	167	21%	344	26%
N/A	135	20%	165	20%	300	20%

- As shown in Figure 12, the most popular activities along the Beartooth Highway included scenic driving (84 percent), nature photography (61 percent), and wildlife watching (58 percent).

Figure 12  
Mail-Back Survey: Most Popular Activities along the Beartooth Highway  
Source: University of Montana Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research

Activity	First-Time Visitors		Repeat Visitors		All Visitors	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Scenic Driving	533	80%	621	77%	1154	84%
Nature Photography	390	59%	451	56%	841	61%
Wildlife Watching	326	49%	468	58%	794	58%
Historical Site	137	21%	165	20%	302	22%
Interpretive Site	132	20%	162	20%	294	21%
Day Hiking	93	14%	197	24%	290	21%
Camping	58	9%	103	13%	161	12%
Birding	41	6%	93	12%	134	10%
Fishing/Fly Fishing	22	3%	82	10%	104	8%
Motorcycle Riding	34	5%	40	5%	74	5%
Backpacking	10	2%	32	4%	42	3%
Road/Tour Biking	13	2%	23	3%	36	3%
Horseback Riding	6	1%	18	2%	24	2%
Festivals/Events	6	1%	16	2%	22	2%
Skiing/Snowboarding	6	1%	16	2%	22	2%
Canoeing/Kayaking	6	1%	14	2%	20	2%
Mountain Biking	6	1%	13	2%	19	1%
ATV/OHV	2	<1%	15	2%	17	1%
Sporting Event	1	<1%	6	<1%	7	<1%
Motor boating	0	0	3	<1%	3	<1%
Hunting	0	0	2	<1%	2	<1%
Snowshoeing	0	0	2	<1%	2	<1%
Snowmobiling	0	0	1	<1%	1	<1%
Cross Country Skiing	1	<1%	0	0	1	<1%
Sledding	0	0	1	<1%	1	<1%

- Non-resident visitors averaged approximately 2.4 people in their group and spent approximately two nights in the Beartooth Region.
- Non-resident visitors were most likely to enter the Beartooth Highway via Red Lodge (44 percent), followed by Yellowstone's northeast exit (Silver Gate) (40 percent) and WY 296 (16 percent).
- Resident visitors generally had two people in their group and were likely to travel the Beartooth Highway between six and 17 times per year.
- Red Lodge is the most visited gateway community on the Beartooth Highway, and approximately 42 percent of respondents said they visited Red Lodge for at least one hour or longer on their trip.

Of the visitors who spent at least one night in Red Lodge during the duration of their trip, the majority of visitors spent between one and seven nights with a mean of approximately 2.4.



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## **Community Survey Analysis**

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As part of the effort to obtain input from the community, a separate survey questionnaire was used for residents in the study area. The questionnaire was developed with input from Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF) staff and then distributed as widely as possible. The survey asked respondents about their personal and household transportation needs. The survey was available online and as a paper version for approximately three weeks (from September 25, 2018 through October 16, 2018) and is included in Appendix C.

### **SURVEY ANALYSIS**

A total of 316 responses were received, of which approximately 57 percent of respondents used the online questionnaire and approximately 43 percent of respondents used the paper questionnaire. The results of the survey are discussed in the following section.

#### **Existing Transportation Modes Used**

Respondents were asked which types of transportation—personal vehicle, ride from a friend/relative, borrow a vehicle, walk, bicycle, Community Care, Red Lodge Tour and Taxi, or other—they and others in their household use and how often—six to seven days per week, three to five days per week, one to two days per week, one to three days per month, or less than once a month—they use it. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses to explain the types of transportation currently used by their household. The results are shown in Table 1.

Almost all survey respondents (96 percent) reported they or a member of their household use their personal vehicle. This was followed by over half of respondents (55 percent) who indicated that they walk, 34 percent of respondents who receive a ride from a friend or relative, and 28 percent of respondents who said they use a bicycle.

Table 1 Transportation Modes Currently Used												
	6-7 Days/week		3-5 Days/week		1-2 Days/week		1-3 Days/month		Less than once/month		Total Responses	Percent of All Respondents
	# of responses	percent of responses	# of responses	percent of responses	# of responses	percent of responses	# of responses	percent of responses	# of responses	percent of responses		
Personal Vehicle	205	68%	77	26%	16	5%	2	1%	1	0%	301	96%
Ride from a friend/relative	1	1%	9	8%	15	14%	35	33%	47	44%	107	34%
Borrow a vehicle	0	0%	1	6%	1	6%	6	35%	9	53%	17	5%
Walk	65	37%	44	25%	28	16%	16	9%	21	12%	174	55%
Bicycle	10	11%	22	25%	18	20%	19	21%	20	22%	89	28%
Community Care	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	7%	14	93%	15	5%
Red Lodge Tour & Taxi	0	0%	1	4%	0	0%	1	4%	23	92%	25	8%
Other	0	0%	1	25%	0	0%	1	25%	2	50%	4	1%
Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.												

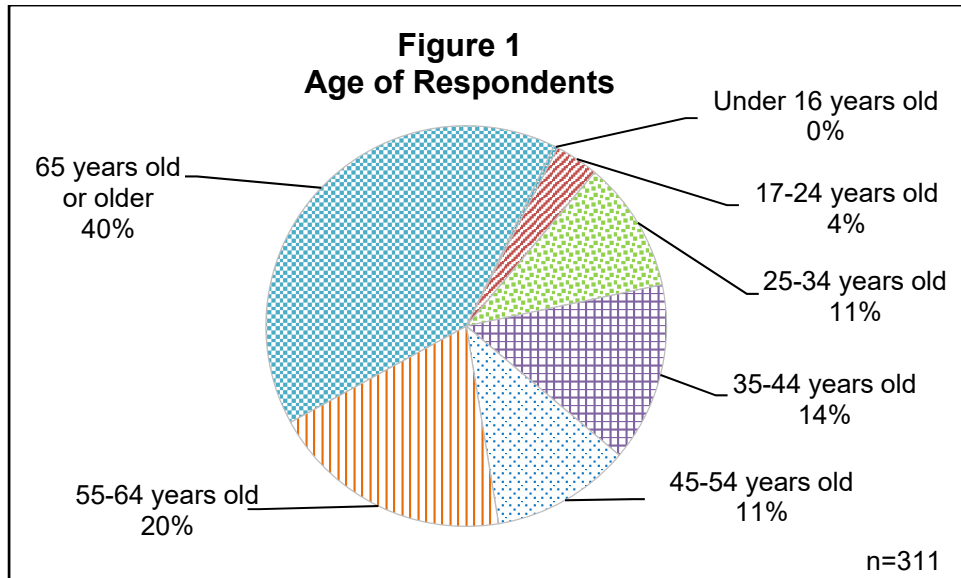
## Residence Location

Respondents were asked to list which community or town they live in within the study area. The results are shown in Table 2. Approximately 68 percent of respondents indicated that they reside in Red Lodge, followed by 11 percent of respondents who reside in Joliet and five percent who reside in Roberts.

<b>Table 2</b>		
<b>Residence Location</b>		
<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Red Lodge	212	68%
Joliet	34	11%
Roberts	17	5%
Belfry	13	4%
Bridger	8	3%
Fromberg	8	3%
Boyd	7	2%
Bearcreek	4	1%
Luther	3	1%
Laurel	2	1%
Absarokee	1	0%
Rockvale	1	0%
Salesia	1	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.</i>		

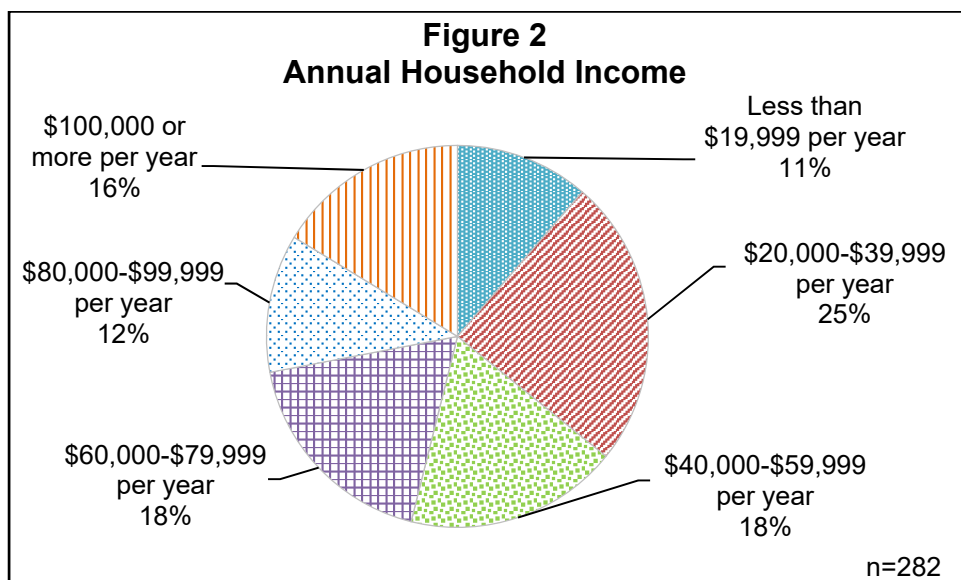
## Age

Respondents were asked to indicate their age and the results are shown in Figure 1. Almost two-thirds of respondents were over the age of 55, with 20 percent between the ages of 55 and 64, and 40 percent age 65 or older. Only 14 percent of respondents were under the age of 35.



### Annual Household Income

The annual household incomes of survey respondents are shown in Figure 2. Approximately 25 percent of respondents indicated their annual household income was between \$20,000 and \$39,999 a year, followed by 18 percent who said their annual household income was between \$40,000 and \$59,999 a year and 18 percent who said their annual household income was between \$60,000 and \$79,999 a year. Approximately 16 percent of respondents said their annual household income was \$100,000 or more a year, while approximately 11 percent of respondents indicated that their annual household income was less than \$19,999 a year.



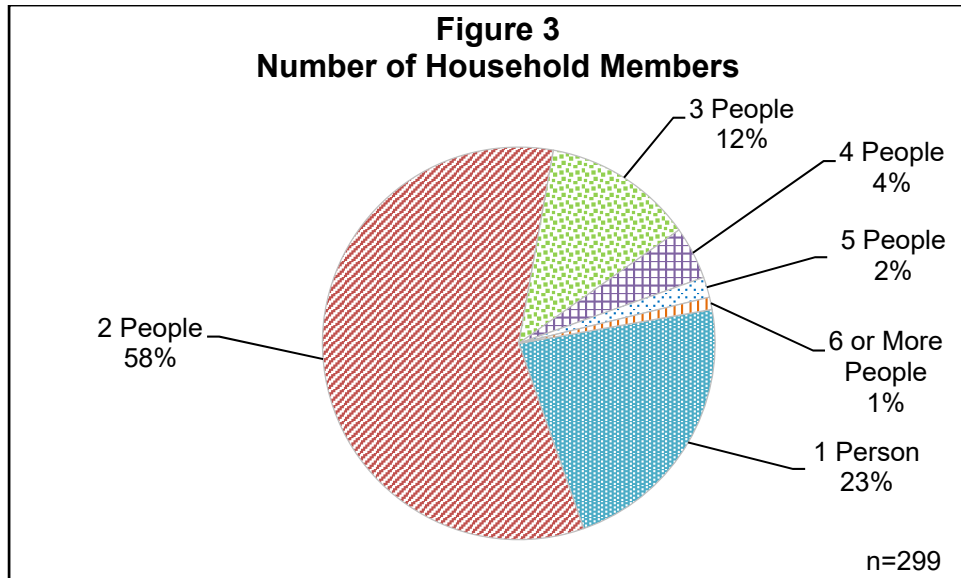
## Employment Status

Respondents were asked to indicate their current employment status—employed full-time, employed part-time, unemployed, retired, student, or other. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses to explain their current employment status and the results are shown in Table 3. Approximately 45 percent of respondents indicated they are employed full-time, followed by 40 percent of respondents who said they were retired and 14 percent of respondents who indicated they were employed part-time.

<b>Table 3</b>		
<b>Employment Status</b>		
<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Employed Full-Time	140	45%
Retired	123	40%
Employed Part-Time	42	14%
Student	9	3%
Unemployed	6	2%
Disabled	1	0%
Other	7	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>105%</b>
<i>Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.</i>		

## Household Size

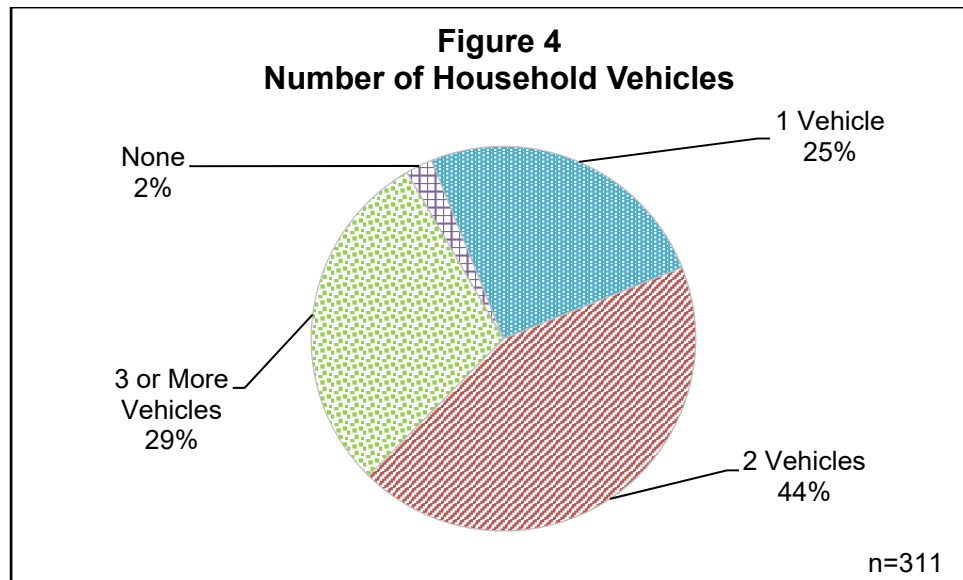
Survey respondents were asked how many people age 10 and older live in their household. The results are shown in Figure 3. Approximately 58 percent of respondents said there were two people age 10 or older living in their household, followed by 23 percent of respondents who live in a single-person household.



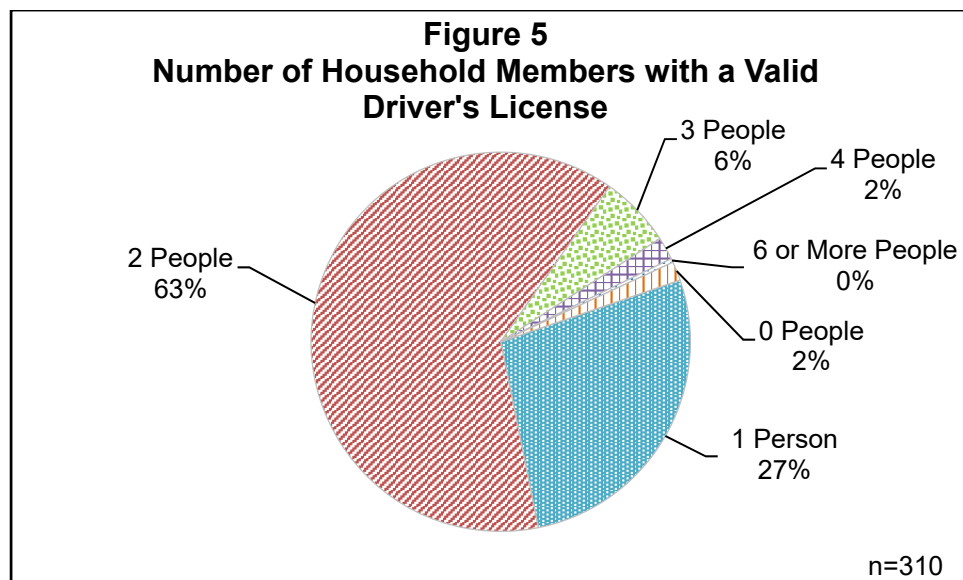
### Operating Vehicles and Licensed Drivers

Lack of a private vehicle influences people to use public transportation. This comparison provides an indication of the number of potential choice riders compared to those who are transit-dependent. Potential choice riders refer to those respondents that live in households with an operating vehicle and a driver's license, who may choose to use transit.

Figure 4 shows the proportion of respondents with operating vehicles available in their household. As illustrated, the largest percent of respondents (44 percent) live in households with two vehicles, followed by 29 percent of respondents who live in households with three or more operating vehicles. Approximately 25 percent of respondents live in single-vehicle households, and only two percent of respondents who live in households with no operating vehicles.



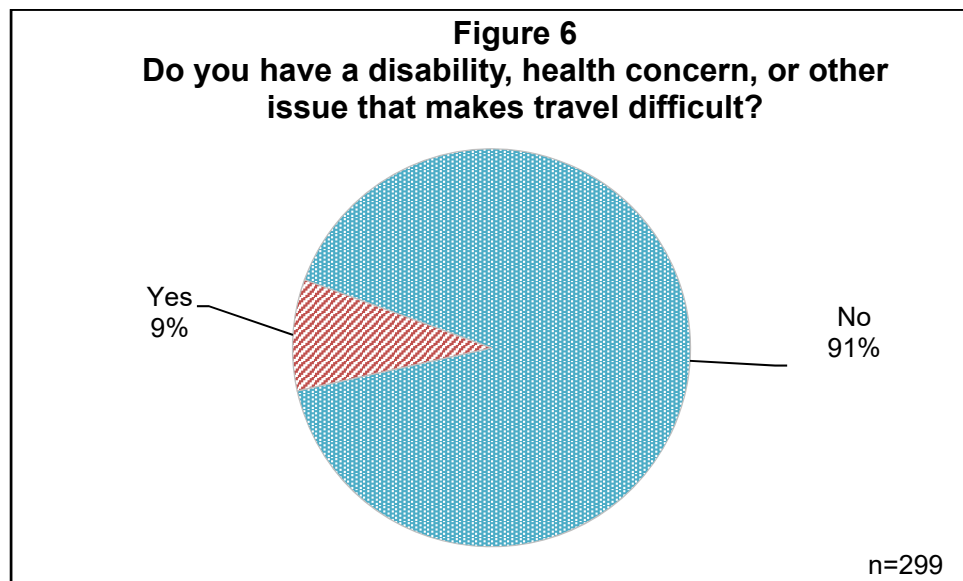
Survey respondents were also asked how many people living in their household (including themselves) have a valid driver's license. The results are shown in Figure 5. Approximately 63 percent of respondents indicated that there were two people in their household who had a valid driver's license, followed by 27 percent of respondents who indicated that there was one person in their household who had a valid driver's license. Approximately two percent of respondents said there was no one in their household who had a valid driver's license.



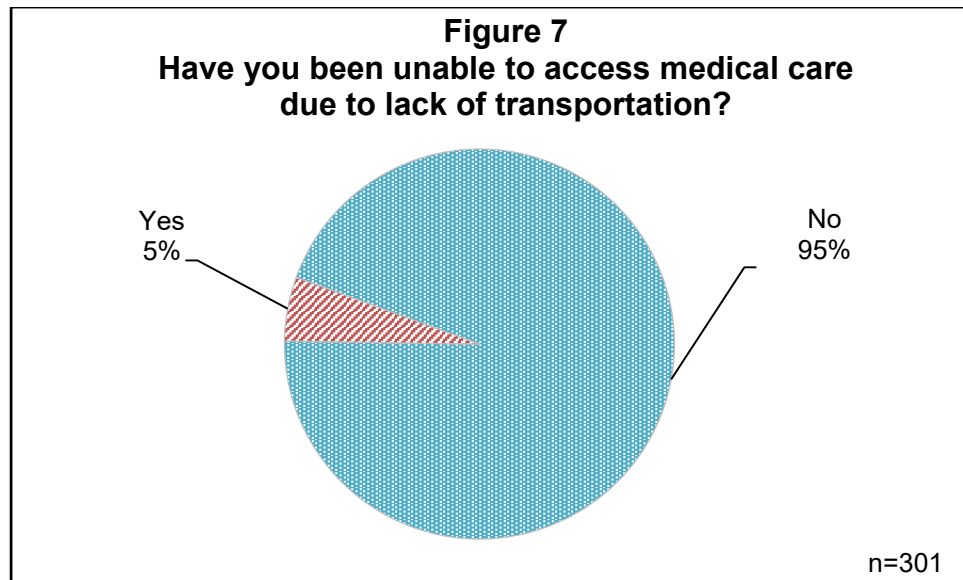


## Medical Care and Transportation

The survey asked respondents if they have, or if someone in their household has a disability, health concern, or other issue that makes travel difficult. As shown in Figure 6, approximately nine percent of respondents indicated that they have or someone in their household has a disability, health concern, or other issue that makes travel difficult. Respondents who answered yes, were asked to specify the types of issues that make travel difficult for them or a household member. The most frequent responses included various health issues (eight respondents), mobility issues (seven respondents), vision issues (seven respondents), driving concerns (three respondents), and disabled (two respondents).



The survey also asked respondents if they have or if someone in their household has been unable to access medical care due to lack of transportation in the last two years. As shown in Figure 7, approximately five percent of respondents indicated that they have or someone in their household has been unable to access medical care due to lack of transportation in the last two years.

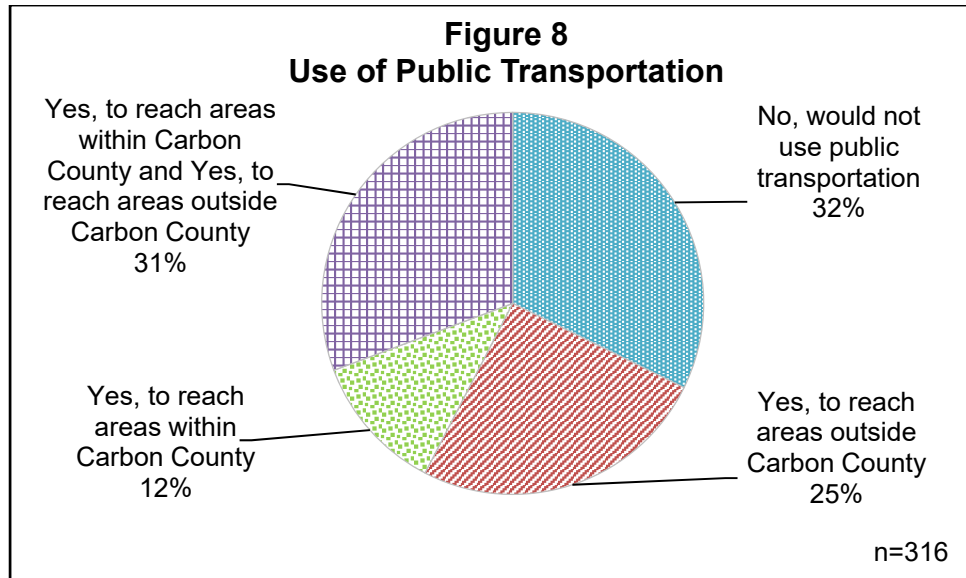


### **Employment and Transportation**

The community survey asked respondents if they or someone in their household had lost a job, dropped out of school, or had problems finding work in the last two years due to lack of transportation. Only two respondents said yes, indicating that they or someone in their household had lost a job, dropped out of school, or had problems finding work in the last two years due to lack of transportation. One respondent indicated that they had lost their job, and one respondent indicated their son had dropped out of college.

### **Potential Public Transportation Use**

Respondents were asked to indicate if they or a member of their household would use public transportation, such as a local bus or shuttle, to reach areas inside Carbon County and/or to reach areas outside Carbon County. As shown in Figure 8, approximately 32 percent of respondents said they would not use public transportation, followed by approximately 31 percent of respondents indicated they would use public transportation to reach areas inside and outside Carbon County. Approximately 25 percent of respondents said they would only use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County, and about 12 percent of respondents said they would only use public transportation to reach areas within Carbon County.



### Potential Public Transportation Use to Reach Areas Inside Carbon County

Respondents who indicated they would potentially use public transportation to reach areas inside Carbon County were asked a series of separate questions.

#### Desired Destinations within Carbon County

Survey respondents were asked which destinations they or members of their household would use public transportation to reach within Carbon County. The results are presented in Table 4. The most frequent responses included Red Lodge (84 percent), Joliet (37 percent), and Roberts (37 percent).

Table 4 Desired Destinations Using Public Transit within Carbon County		
Location	Number of Responses	Percent of Respondents
Red Lodge	108	84%
Joliet	48	37%
Roberts	48	37%
Bridger	32	25%
Belfry	25	19%
Fromberg	14	11%
Other	9	7%
Bearcreek	3	2%
Absarokee	2	2%
Boyd	2	2%
Columbus	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>226%</b>
Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.		

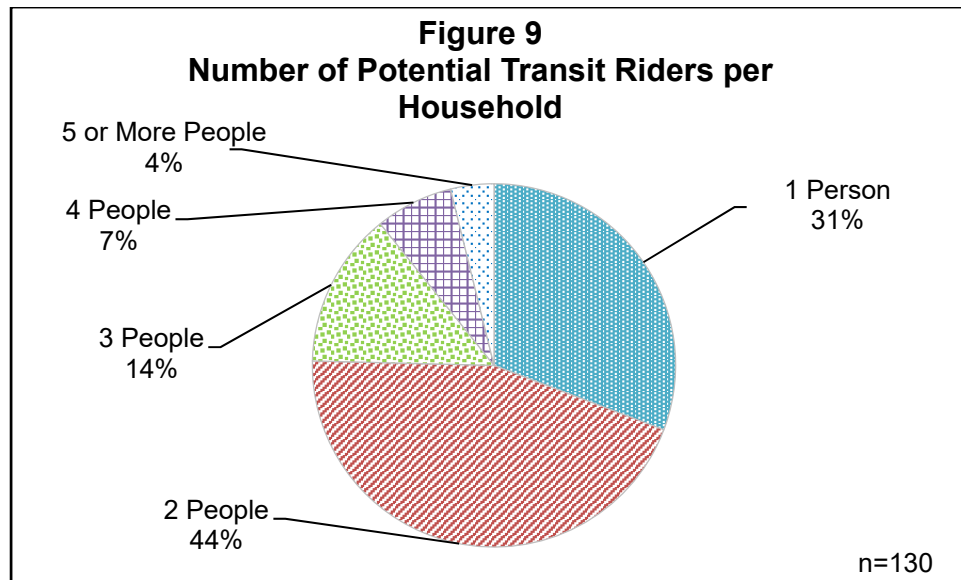
### Purpose for Using Public Transit to Reach Areas Within Carbon County

Respondents were asked to indicate the primary reasons they or a member of their household would use public transportation within Carbon County—work, personal business, doctor/medical/healthcare, school/college, recreation, shopping, senior center, or other purpose. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses to explain all of the types of trips they or a household member would use public transportation for within Carbon County. The results are shown in Table 5. Approximately 55 percent of respondents indicated they would use public transportation within Carbon County for recreation trips, followed by 43 percent who would use it for personal business, 42 percent who would use it for doctor/medical/healthcare trips, and 36 percent who would use it for commuting to and from work.

<b>Table 5</b>		
<b>Purpose for Using Public Transit within Carbon County</b>		
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Recreation	73	55%
Personal Business	57	43%
Doctor/Medical/Healthcare	55	42%
Work	48	36%
Shopping	43	33%
School/College	21	16%
Senior Center	17	13%
Other	10	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>245%</b>
<i>Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.</i>		

### Number of Potential Transit Riders per Household

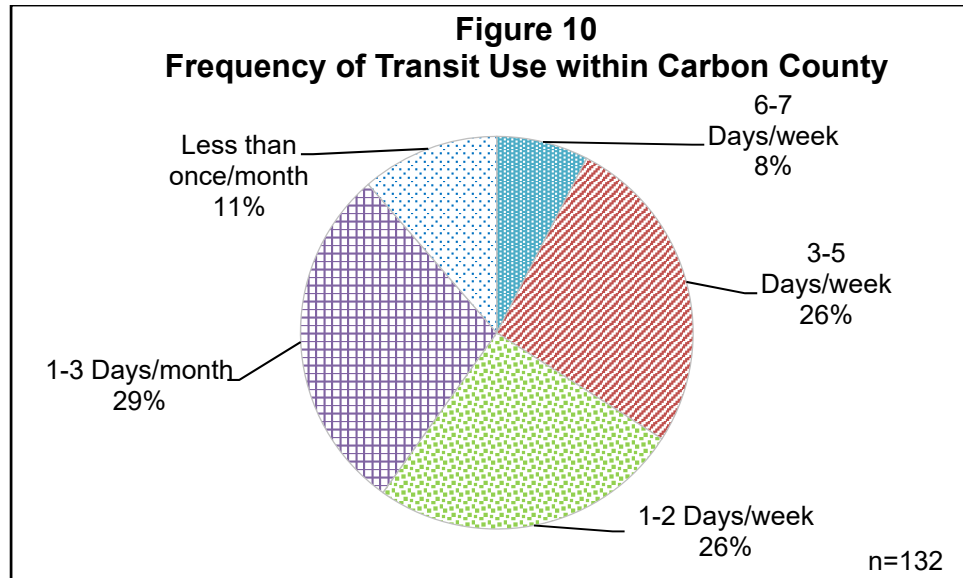
Respondents were asked to indicate how many people in their household, including themselves, would use public transportation within Carbon County. The results are shown in Figure 9. Approximately 44 percent of respondents said two people in their household would use public transportation within Carbon County, followed by 31 percent of respondents who said one person in their household would use public transportation within Carbon County.



### Frequency of Transit Use to Areas Within Carbon County

Respondents were asked about the frequency of how often they or a member of their household would use public transportation within Carbon County, including which days and times of service would suit their needs.

Respondents were asked to indicate how often they or a household member would use public transportation—six to seven days per week, three to five days per week, one to two days per week, one to three days per month, or less than once a month. The results are shown in Figure 10. Approximately 29 percent of respondents indicated that they or a household member would use public transportation within Carbon County one to three days per month, followed by those who would use it three to five days per week (26 percent) and those who would use it one to two days per week (26 percent).



Respondents were asked to indicate which days of the week they or a household member would use public transportation within Carbon County. Respondents were allowed to check multiple responses and the results are shown in Table 6. Approximately 77 percent of respondents indicated that they would use public transportation in Carbon County on Fridays, followed by Thursdays (68 percent), Mondays (67 percent), and Wednesdays (67 percent).

<b>Table 6</b> <b>Days Respondents Would Use Public Transit in Carbon County</b>		
<b>Day</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Monday	82	67%
Tuesday	77	63%
Wednesday	82	67%
Thursday	83	68%
Friday	94	77%
Saturday	81	66%
Sunday	62	51%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>460%</b>
Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.		

Table 7 illustrates the time of day respondents said they or a household member would use public transportation in Carbon County. Respondents were allowed to check multiple responses. Approximately 60 percent of respondents indicated that would use public transportation between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m., followed by 51

percent of respondents who said they would use public transportation between 9:00 a.m. and noon.

<b>Table 7</b> <b>Times of Day Respondents Would Use</b> <b>Public Transit in Carbon County</b>		
<b>Time of Day</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
6-9 a.m.	60	47%
9 a.m. - noon	66	51%
Noon - 3 p.m.	61	47%
3-6 p.m.	78	60%
6-9 p.m.	63	49%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>254%</b>
<i>Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.</i>		

## Potential Public Transportation Use to Reach Areas Outside Carbon County

Respondents who indicated they would potentially use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County were asked a series of separate questions.

### Desired Destinations Outside Carbon County

Survey respondents were asked which destinations they or members of their household would use public transportation to reach outside Carbon County. The results are presented in Table 8. The most frequent responses included Billings (99 percent), Laurel (50 percent), and Cody (37 percent).

<b>Table 8</b> <b>Desired Destination Using Public Transit to</b> <b>Areas Outside Carbon County</b>		
<b>Destination</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Billings	171	99%
Laurel	87	50%
Cody	64	37%
Billings Airport	3	2%
Bozeman	3	2%
Absarokee	1	1%
Butte	1	1%
Columbus	1	1%
Cooke City	1	1%
Missoula	1	1%
Powell	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>193%</b>
<i>Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.</i>		



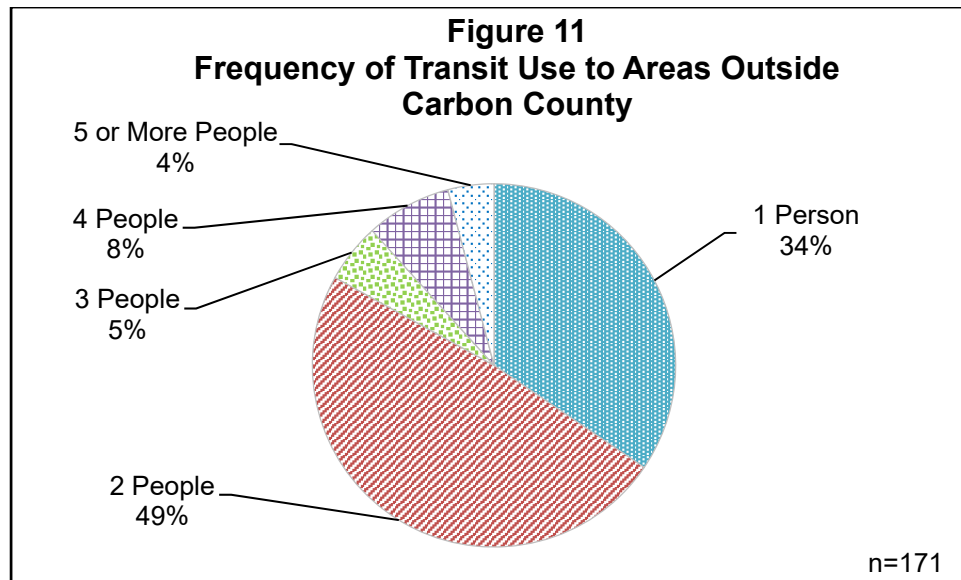
### Purpose for Using Public Transit to Reach Areas Outside Carbon County

Respondents were asked to indicate the primary reasons they or a member of their household would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County—work, personal business, doctor/medical/healthcare, school/college, recreation, shopping, Billings airport, or other purpose. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses to explain the types of trips they or a household member would use public transportation for to reach areas outside Carbon County. The results are shown in Table 9. Approximately 78 percent of respondents indicated they would use public transportation to reach the Billings airport, followed by 67 percent of respondents who would use it for doctor/medical/healthcare trips, 65 percent of respondents who would use it for shopping trips, and 36 percent of respondents who would use it for personal business trips.

<b>Table 9</b> <b>Purpose for Using Public Transit to Areas Outside Carbon County</b>		
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Billings Airport	135	78%
Doctor/Medical/Healthcare	116	67%
Shopping	113	65%
Personal Business	63	36%
Recreation	63	36%
Work	22	13%
School/College	14	8%
Other	7	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>306%</b>
<i>Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.</i>		

### Number of Potential Transit Riders per Household

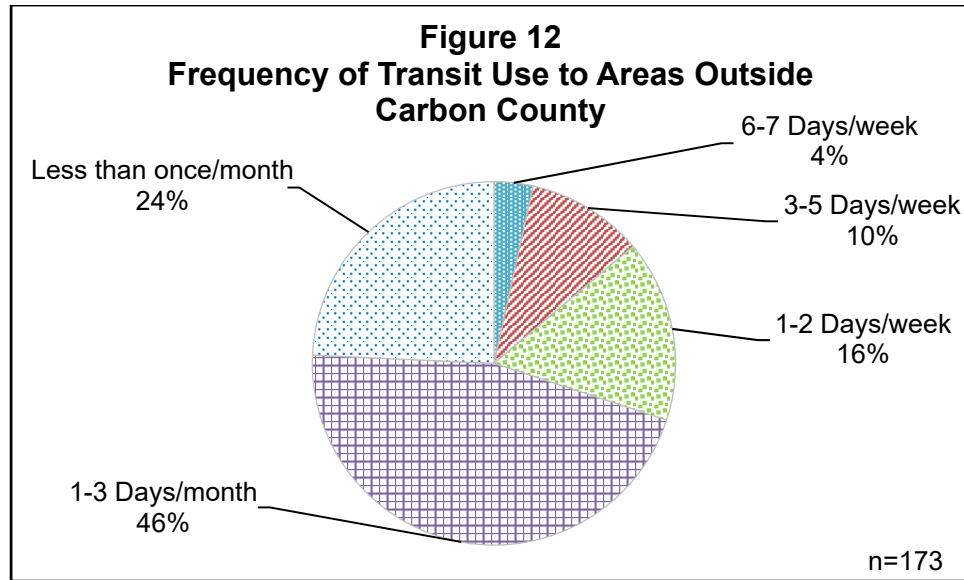
Respondents were asked to indicate how many people in their household, including themselves, would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County. The results are shown in Figure 11. Approximately 49 percent of respondents said two people in their household would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County, followed by 34 percent of respondents who said one person in their household would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County.



### Frequency of Transit Use to Areas Outside Carbon County

Respondents were asked about the frequency of how often they or a member of their household would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County, including which days would suit their needs.

Respondents were asked to indicate how often they or a household member would use public transportation—six to seven days per week, three to five days per week, one to two days per week, one to three days per month, or less than once a month. The results are shown in Figure 12. Approximately 46 percent of respondents indicated that they or a household member would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County one to three days per month, followed by those who would use it less than once per month (24 percent), and those who would use it one to two days per week (16 percent).



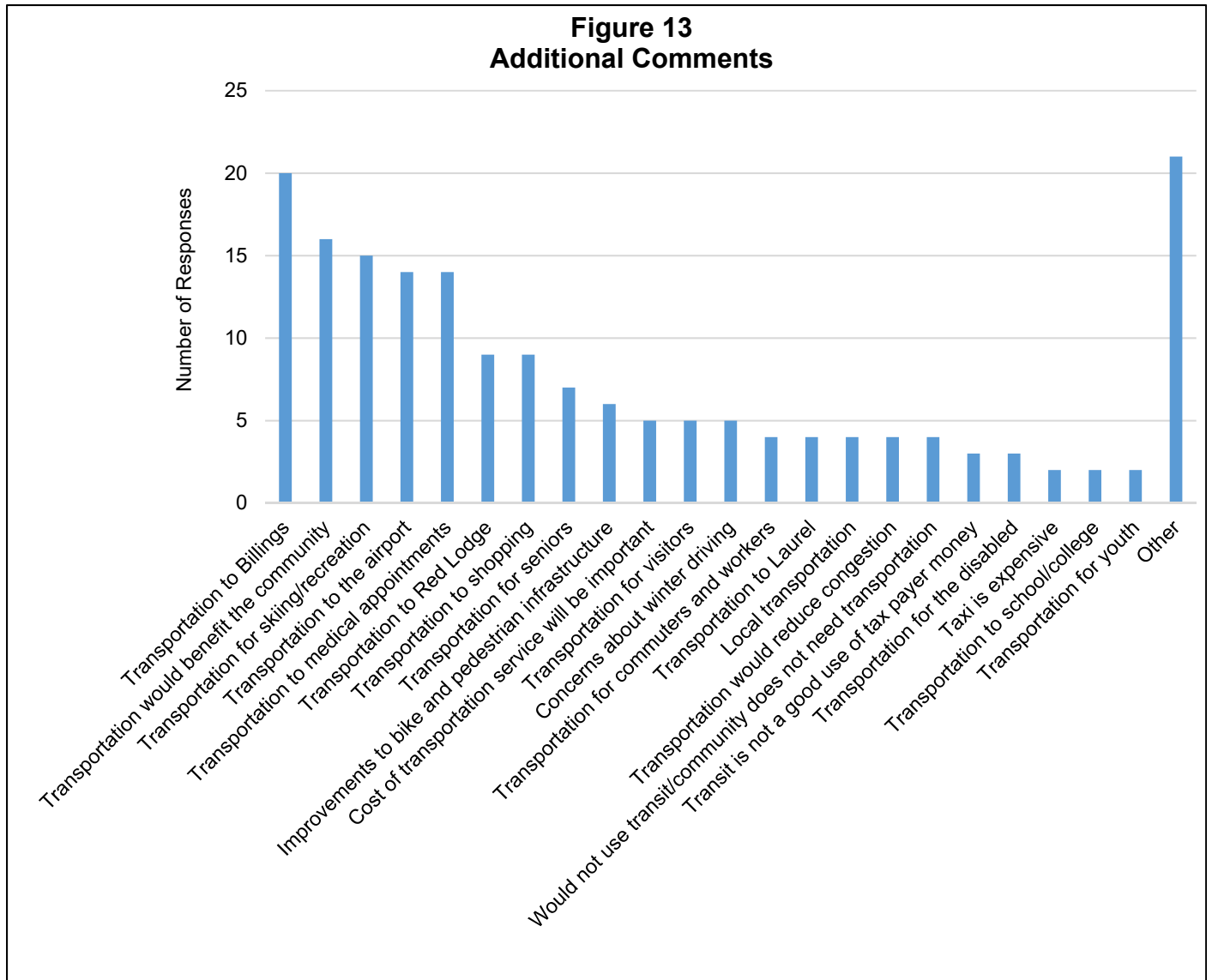
Respondents were asked to indicate which days of the week they or a household member would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County. Respondents were allowed to check multiple responses and the results are shown in Table 10. Approximately 74 percent of respondents indicated that they would use public transportation to reach areas outside Carbon County on Fridays, followed by Mondays (66 percent), Thursdays (65 percent), and Wednesdays (64 percent).

Table 10 Days Respondents Would Use Public Transit to Areas Outside Carbon County		
Day	Number of Responses	Percent of Respondents
Monday	101	66%
Tuesday	88	58%
Wednesday	98	64%
Thursday	99	65%
Friday	112	74%
Saturday	97	64%
Sunday	85	56%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>447%</b>
<i>Source: LSC Community Survey, 2018.</i>		

### Additional Comments

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to provide additional comments about the transportation service they would like to see, or any other

unmet transportation needs they, members of their household, or their customers/clients might have. The individual comments can be read in full in Appendix C. Out of 316 total survey responses received, 89 respondents chose to add additional comments. General categories were used to group the comments based on the topics mentioned. If multiple subjects were addressed in one comment, the comment was counted in each of the relevant categories. Figure 13 categorizes the various comments received.



The most frequently received comments were regarding transportation to Billings (20 responses), the belief that transportation would benefit the community (16 responses), transportation for skiing and recreation activities (15 responses), transportation to the airport (14 responses), and transportation to medical appointments (14 responses).



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## CARBON COUNTY, MT COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

### Dear Carbon County Resident,

The Red Lodge Area Community Foundation (RLACF) applied for and received a transportation planning grant from the Montana Department of Transportation, and has hired the consulting firm, LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc., to create a Transportation Development Plan (TDP) for Carbon County. This plan will define what a public transportation system in Carbon County could look like – the system could include dial-a-ride vans, fixed route buses, or regional bus connections outside of Carbon County. As part of the plan, we are seeking input from residents across Carbon County on their current personal and household transportation needs. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions, which will help identify the transportation needs of Carbon County residents and will assist us in the development of the TDP. The goal is to complete this plan by February of 2019 and potentially start a new service by Fall 2019, if all goes well. **Thanks for your help!**



### To return the survey, you may:

Fill it out **online** at: <https://surveynuts.com/Carbon>

**Scan and email it to:** Stephen Kalb-Koenigsfeld, RLACF Thriving Non-Profit Program Director, [StephenK@rlacf.org](mailto:StephenK@rlacf.org)

**Drop it off at:** The Red Lodge Area Community Foundation, 122 Hauser Ave S, Red Lodge, MT 59068

**Please complete the survey only once, either paper OR online, by Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018.**

*If you represent a business/community organization please consider household to refer to the customers/clients you represent.*

### 1. Which of the following types of transportation does your household currently use and how often?

	6-7 Days/week	3-5 Days/week	1-2 Days/week	1-3 Days/month	Less than once/month	Never
Your personal vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borrow a vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ride from a friend/relative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bicycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Red Lodge Tour & Taxi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 2. Would you or a member of your household use public transportation, such as a local bus or shuttle? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Yes, to reach areas within Carbon County (please answer **questions 3-8**)
- ☐ Yes, to reach areas outside Carbon County (please answer **questions 9-13**)
- ☐ No, would not use public transportation (please skip to **question 14**)

### Questions about Transportation Needs Within Carbon County:

### 3. If you or a member of your household would use public transportation to reach areas within Carbon County, which areas would that include? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Belfry ☐ Bridger ☐ Fromberg ☐ Joliet ☐ Red Lodge ☐ Roberts ☐ Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. What are the primary reasons your household would use public transportation within Carbon County? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Work ☐ Personal Business ☐ Doctor/Medical/Health Care ☐ School/College
- ☐ Recreation ☐ Shopping ☐ Senior Center ☐ Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. How many people in your household (including yourself) would use a new public transportation service within Carbon County? ☐ None ☐ One ☐ Two ☐ Three ☐ Four ☐ Five or More

### 6. If available and going where and when you need to go, how often would your household use a new public transportation service within Carbon County?

- ☐ 6-7 Days/week ☐ 3-5 Days/week ☐ 1-2 Days/week ☐ 1-3 Days/month ☐ Less than once/month

### 7. If available and going where and when you need to go, which days of the week would your household use a new public transportation service within Carbon County? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday ☐ Sunday

### 8. If available, when would you use a new public transportation service within Carbon County? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ 6-9 a.m. ☐ 9 a.m. – noon ☐ Noon – 3 p.m. ☐ 3-6 p.m. ☐ 6-9 p.m.



**Questions about Transportation Needs Outside Carbon County:**

9. If you or a member of your household would use public transportation to reach areas **outside** Carbon County, which areas would that include? *(Check all that apply)*  
☐ Billings ☐ Laurel ☐ Cody ☐ Other *(Please specify)* \_\_\_\_\_
10. What are the primary reasons your household would use public transportation **outside** Carbon County? *(Check all that apply)*  
☐ Work ☐ Personal Business ☐ Doctor/Medical/Health Care ☐ School/College ☐ Recreation  
☐ Shopping ☐ Billings Airport ☐ Other *(Please specify)* \_\_\_\_\_
11. How many people in your household (including yourself) would use a new public transportation service **outside** Carbon County? ☐ None ☐ One ☐ Two ☐ Three ☐ Four ☐ Five or More
12. If available and going where and when you need to go, how often would your household use a new public transportation service **outside** Carbon County?  
☐ 6-7 Days/week ☐ 3-5 Days/week ☐ 1-2 Days/week ☐ 1-3 Days/month ☐ Less than once/month
13. If available and going where and when you need to go, which days of the week would your household use a new public transportation service **outside** Carbon County? *(Check all that apply)*  
☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday ☐ Sunday

**Questions for All Respondents:**

14. In which community do you live? ☐ Belfry ☐ Boyd ☐ Bridger ☐ Fromberg ☐ Joliet ☐ Red Lodge  
☐ Roberts ☐ Rockvale ☐ Other - *Please specify your zip code:* \_\_\_\_\_
15. What is your age? ☐ Under 16 years old ☐ 17–24 years old ☐ 25-34 years old ☐ 35-44 years old  
☐ 45-54 years old ☐ 55-64 years old ☐ 65 years old or older
16. Are you: *(Check all that apply)*  
☐ Employed Full-Time ☐ Employed Part-Time ☐ Unemployed ☐ Retired ☐ Student  
☐ Other *(Please specify)* \_\_\_\_\_
17. What is your total annual **HOUSEHOLD** income? *(Include all income from all household members)*  
☐ Less than \$19,999 per year ☐ \$20,000-\$39,999 per year ☐ \$40,000-\$59,999 per year  
☐ \$60,000-\$79,999 per year ☐ \$80,000-\$99,999 per year ☐ \$100,000 or more per year
18. Including **yourself**, how many people, age 10 and over, live in your household?  
☐ One ☐ Two ☐ Three ☐ Four ☐ Five ☐ Six or more
19. Including **yourself**, how many people living in your household have a valid driver's license?  
☐ None ☐ One ☐ Two ☐ Three ☐ Four ☐ Five ☐ Six or more
20. How many operating vehicles are available to your household?  
☐ None ☐ 1 Vehicle ☐ 2 Vehicles ☐ 3 or more Vehicles
21. Do you or a household member who needs transportation have a disability, health concern, or other issue that makes travel difficult? ☐ No ☐ Yes *(please specify – e.g. I use a wheelchair)* \_\_\_\_\_
22. In the last 2 years, have you or a member of your household been unable to access medical care due to lack of transportation? ☐ No ☐ Yes *(please describe)* \_\_\_\_\_
23. In the last 2 years, have you or a member of your household lost a job, dropped out of school, or had problems finding work due to lack of transportation? ☐ No ☐ Yes *(please describe)* \_\_\_\_\_
24. Please provide any additional comments about the service you would like to see or any other unmet transportation needs you, members of your household, or customers/clients have.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
25. If you would like to receive updates about the Carbon County Transit Development Plan please provide your name, email address, and/or phone number:  
\_\_\_\_\_



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## Community Survey Comments

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1. A bus service would not only help seniors who live here, but it would be a great asset to a resort community attracting tourists.
2. A lot of seniors in Joliet don't have a means to get to Billings for Dr. appointments.
3. A once monthly trip to Costco would help.
4. A public transportation system in Carbon County would be a waste of taxpayer funds. All it would do is put another unneeded burden on the people of Carbon County. Also take a look at the financial failure of Billings public transportation.
5. Affordable airport shuttle.
6. Affordable rates to Billings, not \$100!
7. Airport Shuttle would be amazing. Those early morning flights having to leave Red Lodge at 4 a.m.
8. Airport shuttles.
9. Although I do not have a transportation need at this time, I do know folks who could use transportation to RL or Billings especially for medical needs. Cost would be a big factor.
10. Although we have a car and are in the position to drive to work, medical needs, etc., I know the transportation system would benefit the residents of RL and surrounding communities who are less fortunate. Also, having transportation available to/from Billings airport, the ski mountain, Cody, etc. would be a boost for our local tourism and economy!
11. Bike/ped path along Hwy 78 beyond existing - out to Palisades Basin/Lazy S/E subdivision.
12. Billings Airport or shopping.
13. Billings to Cody with stop in RL would be worth \$\$\$\$.
14. Brilliant idea to offer transportation to residents AND VISITORS!
15. Bus service from RL to the airport in Billings.
16. Carpool, vanpool services.
17. Clients need access to the Billings Clinic Behavioral Health building on average once a month. Clients also need access to Billings, Laurel, or Red Lodge where there are available mental health service providers. Clients and their families would also benefit from being able to access other communities for activities for their children and shopping needs. Travel is especially difficult during the winter months as most clients

do not have suitable vehicles to be out on the road for great distances. Travel is also difficult during the summer months as school is not in session and this lessens the resources available to students and families.

18. Clients need to get to Yellowstone Office of Public Assistance.
19. Clients traveling to and from Red Lodge -- very costly to take RL Tour & Taxi and not all of them wish to rent a car.
20. Could phase in public transportation for special events and busiest times of year. Could use it for travel between downtown Red Lodge and Red Lodge Mountain in winter, and for busy tourist weekends in summer (to move people around town).
21. Due to age, I know the day is coming when I cannot drive. Any major medical need or air travel requires going to Billings or Cody, and with no family near, it's difficult to rely on friends. RL Taxi is expensive!
22. Having public transportation would be especially helpful when weather is too difficult to drive and park - also to reduce number of vehicles moving through town.
23. I am healthy and purposely live close enough to town, and the town is small enough, I can always walk to anywhere I need to be.
24. I am disabled and I don't and can't drive. I am new to the area and don't know too many friends yet.
25. I have seen several people unable to meet appointments to their Billings doctors or get a ride to town to get groceries.
26. I hope you are going door to door and asking these questions of the ones who really need the transportation.
27. I like the idea of public transportation as a way to cut back on the number of vehicles on the road.
28. I live 12 miles from Red Lodge. If we move to Red Lodge it would be easier to answer your questions. It's hard to imagine good transportation where we are.
29. I need the county to plow the Eastside road. It is a serious problem when I can't get to town, especially for medical care.
30. I see a need for recreational transportation/shuttles- bike rides, hiking trail pick up, kayaking, boating, ski area drop-off and pick-up.
31. I think a Billings/Red Lodge transit would be heavily used for work commuters during the week and insanely by Billings folks for recreation all weekend.
32. I think a lot of people would use public transportation for some kinds of medical or surgery needs in Billings and also many would use transportation to and from the Billings airport.

33. I think a public transportation service in Carbon County would be a huge waste of time and taxpayer money.
34. I would be willing to help transport people to medical appointments or shopping if we set up a community rideshare type of service.
35. I would like to have transportation for anyone in the county who needs medical appointments including dental, counseling, etc. I would like to see them be able to see providers in the county first and then if needed go to Billings. Additionally, I would like to see that people who have no transportation have access to transportation to come to town (any town in county) to shop, get their hair done, and socialize at a café or library or senior center. We need to have human contact to survive and transportation could help with that. I would like to see if there is any way to contract with the schools for use of the buses and drivers when they are not in use, maybe it would be a way to strengthen their work force and use existing vehicles to the best of their abilities. I would like to see this transportation be low cost or by donation so we who can pay can help support those who cannot.
36. I would like to see better crosswalks with more visibility, and better signage about right of way. My daughter likes to ride her bike in town and it scares me to have her crossing 212. She often waits a long time to cross, even at crosswalks.
37. I would like to see local public transportation to Billings, Billings Airport, and Red Lodge Mountain during the winter ski season.
38. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED A RIDE FOR MEDICAL ATTENTION THAT IS NOT AMBULANCE APPROPRIATE. AS AN EMT, WE GET CALLS FROM PEOPLE WHO COULD EASILY GO BY PRIVATE CAR BUT HAVE NO ONE TO TAKE THEM. I THINK THIS USES UP VALUABLE RESOURCES.
39. I would love more walking and bike paths in the area.
40. I would love more walking/biking trails to connect the area.
41. I would love to see transportation to and from the Billings Airport at a reasonable cost.
42. I would not use public transportation as I need to use my car for my work however I am all for it.
43. If I did not have a vehicle, as in the future, this would definitely be a need for me. More for going to Billings.
44. If the bus was free I would use it lots.
45. If there was bus service or other public transportation from here to Laurel and/or Billings I would definitely take advantage of it, as long as it's affordable and cost-effective for the county. I totally support public transportation.

46. I'm very excited about this potential opportunity-I would most look forward to rides to Billings in the winter when I don't want to drive those roads on my own. If you had a route that dropped people off at Shiloh Crossing, a lot of restaurants and shopping could be done in that area, or a route to medical offices in the downtown area would be awesome as well. Walmart in Laurel would also be a great monthly route to get some shopping in-there are just some things that aren't available in our rural towns.
47. It would be great to see regular transportation for all ages to and from local destinations such as clinics, gym, post office, grocery, library, Boys and Girls Club.
48. It would be terrific to have a weekend shuttle to Billings; or to the Airport.
49. Medical, VA, etc.
50. Multiple children in multiple school sports and extracurricular activities are hard to keep up with. Having public transportation would help.
51. My roommate goes to college in Billings 3 days a week. He would love transportation. I would love to be able to go to Billings or Laurel for the airport and Walmart.
52. Need mainly transportation to medical, airport, or recreation in Billings
53. Needs a safer transportation driver than me when winter roads are bad.
54. Not needed in our situation.
55. Only concern is taking away business from Red Lodge businesses.
56. People are too independent.
57. Please focus solely on elderly or veteran needs, e.g., grocery, medical appointments, etc. It is too ambitious to start an open transportation system for the community at large with limited tax resources.  
  
The fact that: 1) Uber didn't work in Red Lodge, 2) the VFW/American Legion couldn't secure reliable drivers for free medical shuttle service for Vets, 3) and that Billings and RL Taxi services all charge \$100+ for a one-way trip to the airport all show this is a massive money loser and a difficult program to administer.
58. Public transit to I-90, particularly linking up to the Billings transit system would be great for people who don't have reliable personal vehicles.
59. Public transportation is not needed in Red Lodge, we are a small town with people thinking we are more than what we really are.
60. Public transportation would free up parking downtown for visitors. Also, public transportation would be safer for seniors in the winter.
61. Recreational shuttle - to Red Lodge Mountain (winter) and trailheads (summer)
62. Red Lodge does not have the funding to provide for a transportation system and I do not want to see my taxes going up to provide one.



63. Regular route to Beartooth Billings Clinic and MT View for work and to see providers. Transportation to and from the Ski Hill for work and pleasure.
64. Safe nonmotorized route to school from Red Lodge Golf Course area.
65. Ski area - adults and kids, shuttle to trailheads.
66. Thank you!
67. The effects on our environment with all of the vehicles commuting to work every day. Would be great to have a bus to Laurel and Billings for work to save the air and fuel.
68. The population over 65 is going to include many people, like me, who are very able, as well as people over 80 who need this service. It is a mistake to not include more age categories over 65. You also fail to ask if you could envision using this service in the future. If I were older, and more worried about my ability to drive during the winter, my answers would be different.
69. There is a great need for some sort of transportation service for elderly and/or disabled persons throughout Carbon County.
70. There is a need for handicap-accessible transportation.
71. This is a small town with the potential to be very walkable and bikeable. The former is limited by poor sidewalk conditions, limited shade, and lack of snow removal, all of which also detract from the town's aesthetic. Bike lanes and routes along highways and through town would improve the latter, as would a way to access places like the hospital and Sam's Taproom from the west side of town, without having to ride on 212.
72. To and from airport in Billings.
73. To Red Lodge and back for selves, friends, and family.
74. Transportation for employment from Bear Creek and other neighbor communities, health, airport, sober driver for concerts and local events, mountain.
75. Transportation for seniors, disabled individuals, or financially struggling families sounds like a wonderful service that could benefit our community immensely.
76. Transportation for youth and elderly from school/home to job or appointments.
77. Transportation to clinics/medical in Red Lodge and Billings.
78. Transportation to/from airport, hospital, clinic, shopping areas would be fabulous.
79. Transportation within the town for people with disabilities.
80. Uber, van/bus services.
81. Waste of time.
82. We do not need public transportation. Our community has sufficient volunteers to assist. This is a wasteful eventual cost to individual taxpayers. P.S. I work for local

government. Please focus on pertinent issues like drugs and abuse, not on issues that enable laziness.

83. We live 8 miles out of Red Lodge. Time will come when our driving will be limited.

84. We would not use this service.

85. Work in Carbon County, but live elsewhere.

86. Would like to see this service especially in Carbon County.

87. Would like to see transportation for home-bound folks.

88. Would love a shuttle to ski area.

89. Would love to have public transportation to Red Lodge ski area and shopping in Billings.