



## Existing Transportation Providers

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### INTRODUCTION

Chapter III provides an overview of the various public, private, and nonprofit transportation providers within the seven-county study area. Not all the providers reviewed here are “transit” agencies in the traditional sense of the word. Rather, the various agencies and organizations represent myriad nonprofit, for-profit, private, and public agencies which provide passenger transportation. The services provided by these agencies are presented in the discussion that follows. This information was critical in determining what transportation resources exist within the study area. The chapter discusses all types of transportation—health-related transportation, elderly transportation services, and other providers by county. Please note that though Judith Basin was part of the study area, no transportation providers were identified. LSC has updated this information as we received information from these agencies.

### BLAINE COUNTY

#### **New Horizons Unlimited, Inc.**

New Horizons Unlimited, Inc. is a private, nonprofit agency that provides services for a group home, supported living, and a day care center. They primarily serve persons with long-term mental and developmental disabilities. They provide transportation services to their clients to and from home/work, and for medical and recreational purposes. This agency has a total of six vehicles—five vans and one pick-up truck. This agency provides transportation between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The program serves approximately 17 clients. They sometimes provide rides to Billings and Chinook for medical appointments.

## BLAINE/PHILLIPS COUNTY

### Fort Belknap Senior Citizens Program

Fort Belknap Senior Citizens Program primarily serves elderly clients within the three communities of Fort Belknap Agency, Hays, and Lodge Pole on the Fort Belknap Reservation. Transportation service includes trips to the post office, medical services, grocery shopping, to and from Senior Center lunches, and occasional trips to powwows, bingo, and other scheduled services. Transportation for the Senior Center is financed through various tribal funding sources, the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), and the Older Americans Act. Fort Belknap Reservation Transit provides door-to-door service upon request. This transit service operates Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Fort Belknap Agency area and from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Hays and Lodge Pole area. Fort Belknap Reservation Transit currently has three vehicles for passenger transportation. Annual ridership for 2006 was 1,000 one-way trips. The vehicle inventory for passenger transit is shown in Table III-1. All of the buses are body-on-chassis, equipped with lifts, and are ADA-accessible.

<b>Vehicle Type</b>	<b>Make</b>	<b>Model Year</b>	<b>Wheelchair</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Replacement Year</b>
10-passenger vans	Chevy	2004 Pacer II	Yes	Good	2007
10-passenger vans	Chevy	2004 Pacer II	Yes	Good	2007
10-passenger vans	Chevy	2004 Pacer II	Yes	Good	2007

*Source: Fort Belknap Senior Citizens Program, 2006.*

In 2006, the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation provided a transit plan which focused on providing transportation services in the service area which includes the Fort Belknap Reservation with service along US Highway 2 extending to Havre and Malta. The preferred transit service plan—which is developed in three phases—includes flex routes, demand-response service zones, and vanpool services :

**Flex routes operate as follows:**

- Flex route between the communities of Hays, Lodge Pole, and Fort Belknap Agency.

- Flex routes operating from Fort Belknap Agency to Havre and from Fort Belknap Agency to Malta, both along US Highway 2.
- Flex route operating along US Highway 2 between Fort Belknap Agency to Dodson and then heading south to Lodge Pole and Hays.

**Demand-response zones operate as follows:**

- Demand-response zones for the communities of Fort Belknap Agency and Harlem.
- Demand-response zones for the communities of Lodge Pole and Hays.
- Demand-response zone along US Highway 2 near Dodson.

**Vanpool services operate as follows:**

- Vanpool service between the towns of Fort Belknap Agency and Havre.
- Vanpool service between Fort Belknap Agency and Malta.

The plan was focused on involving key players in the region with providing a communitywide transportation system. This plan will also be backed and supported by Blaine County.

## **CASCADE COUNTY**

### **Great Falls Transit District**

Great Falls Transit is a public transit service operated by the Great Falls Transit District which is overseen by a Transit District Board. The agency has been providing transportation services since 1982. The service area includes the City of Great Falls and the Black Eagle area. The agency operates seven fixed routes which include the Southeast, Central, North-Central, South-Central, Northwest, Northeast, and Southwest routes. The agency also provides a complementary paratransit service. Great Falls Transit operates Monday to Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and operates on Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. In 2005, the agency provided approximately 455, 500 annual one-way trips. The agency has a vehicle fleet of 29 vehicles, 19 of which are operated on a regular basis.

### **Easter Seals Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain**

The Easter Seals Goodwill Northern Rock Mountain is a private, nonprofit organization that provides a variety of services including adult services such as community-based developmental disability service, case management, supported

## *Existing Transportation Providers*

living services, medical services, goodwill services, vocational services, children's services such as child care and preschool programs. In addition, they provide equipment loans, information, and referral assistance for persons with disabilities. The agency funds transportation services to persons with an age-related disability, a developmental disability, a physical disability, a visual impairment, a hearing impairment, or persons who cannot afford a vehicle. The trips provided are not restricted to customers only. Transportation services are provided to several counties four days a week. The agency does not directly provide transportation services, but contracts these services out to a provider.

### **Center for Mental Health**

The Center for Mental Health is for seniors only. The center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Transportation is provided for medical appointments from Monday through Thursday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Transportation on Wednesday is reserved for one-hour grocery shopping. Transportation provided is mainly restricted to local trips within the Great Falls area.

### **Great Falls Senior Citizens Center**

The Great Falls Senior Citizens Center is a private, nonprofit organization. This agency provides curb-to-curb transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities for medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other personal errands. The agency serves the City of Great Falls. The Senior Center provides transportation five days a week (Monday to Friday) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. The senior center has approximately four vehicles in their fleet—a 12-passenger van and three 7-passenger minivans.

### **Quality Life Concepts**

The Quality Life Concepts, Inc. is a private, nonprofit organization providing a variety of services to individuals and their families with developmental disabilities. Agency services include both adult and children services which include group home services, supported living programs, work activity centers, and retirement and other employment opportunities. This organization provides service in nine counties—Glacier, Toole, Liberty, Hill, Blaine, Pondera, Chouteau, and Cascade.

The agency provides transportation to its residents using a fleet which consists of 18 vans, two buses, and two SUVs. The agency is partly funded by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services.

## **CHOUTEAU COUNTY**

### **Big Sandy Activities**

Big Sandy Activities is a private, nonprofit organization providing services such as residential care, community-based developmental disability service, employment opportunities or job placement, family support and in-home assistance, housing, life skills development and assistance, residential care, and transportation services for adults with developmental disabilities. The agency provides transportation to its clients using a fleet which consists of five vans and one car. They provide transportation services for programs at the agency or at another agency, congregate meals, medical appointments, shopping, and trips for personal errands or field trips. The service area includes various portions of the state with transportation provided seven days a week. Approximately 30 percent of their clientele require wheelchair lifts with most of their clients requiring a personal-care attendant.

### **Chouteau County Health Care Foundation**

Chouteau County Health Care Foundation provides services which include a nursing home and an assisted-living facility. The agency provides transportation services for residents and for the general public, elderly, persons with disabilities, and low-income individuals within the community. Transportation is provided five days a week (Monday to Friday) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The agency also provides transportation on weekends if they get trip requests. Transportation service includes trips to doctor appointments with occasional recreation and leisure trips for groups. Other transportation trips provided are to and from retirement homes, senior centers, field trips, and other organized trips. Revenues to operate the service comes from personal contributions and fund raising events. The agency hopes to receive funding from MDT for partial reimbursement for maintenance purposes. Transportation is provided to the Chouteau County area (except the Big Sandy area). The agency uses part-time drivers who also help with

## *Existing Transportation Providers*

other responsibilities in the facilities. The agency's fleet consists of one 13-passenger bus which is wheelchair accessible. The agency provides approximately 10 trips per week which works out to approximately 520 annual one-way trips. Ridership during the summer, spring, and fall months is generally higher than during winter months.

### **Stone Child College**

Stone Child College is a tribally-controlled community college of the Chippewa-Cree tribe. The college is located between Box Elder and Rocky Boy Agency in three buildings. Stone Child College was chartered by the Chippewa-Cree Business Committee on May 17, 1984, accredited on June 29, 1993, and reaffirmed in 1998. Programs of study that can lead to Associate of Arts, Associate of Science Degrees, certificates, and transfer to four-year institutions are offered.

The college provides transportation to students with a 15-passenger van (a 2000 Chevy Astro van). The college employs one driver who transports students to and from classes.

Stone Child College's school year occurs between August and May. A five-day-per-week course schedule is offered. Beginning the last week of May, the college offers summer courses three days per week—Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday—for eight weeks. Four trips are offered each school day—two in the morning between 7:00 and 9:00 a.m. and two in the afternoon between 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. Trip schedules are set at the beginning of each semester, and information regarding available transportation is disseminated during student orientation. Each run between the college and residential areas takes approximately one hour to complete. There is no cost to the students using this service. The vehicles are also used to provide other college-related transportation, primarily to Havre for the 4-H and Literature programs. Approximately 1,700 trips are provided annually.

College administrators have indicated that they would like to provide more comprehensive transportation services such as additional service hours. However, due to lack of funding, the current service is limited to college-related activities. The annual operating budget for transportation is approximately \$40,000 and comes from within the school's overall annual budget. The transportation program also receives a small grant to assist with operations.

## **HILL COUNTY**

### **Havre Day Activity Center, Inc.**

Havre Day Activity Center is a private, nonprofit agency that provides services for community support networks, residential care, and transportation services for persons with disabilities. Transportation is provided seven days a week for shopping, employment purposes, medical appointments, field trips, and other personal errands. The agency vehicle fleet consists of nine vehicles—one bus and eight vans.

### **Hill County Area on Agency on Aging**

The Hill County Agency on Aging provides transportation services to the elderly and persons with disabilities, and on a space-available basis will also provide transportation to individuals of other ages. They provide various trips for medical appointments, social services, and field trips to Havre, Great Falls, Helena, Billings, and other trip destinations. Trips made to out-of-state destinations require a minimum number of people. Transportation is provided five days a week (Monday to Friday). There is a suggested donation of up to \$2.00 for a one-way trip. Revenues to operate the service comes from the Older Americans Act and personal contributions. The agency uses three vehicles—one 12-passenger van which is wheelchair accessible, one sedan, and one van. In February 2006, the agency provided approximately 74 trips per week which works out to approximately 3,800 annual one-way trips.

## **PHILLIPS COUNTY**

### **Phillips County Transit Authority**

The Phillips County Transit Authority—which operates out of Malta—is operated by the Phillips County Transportation Improvement Authority. This agency is a new transit system that began operation in July 2006. The agency provides demand-response transportation services for the general public in the Phillips County area with services concentrated in the City of Malta. Transportation is provided Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Revenue sources include Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds (Sections 5309, 5310, and 5311), contract with developmental services, Head Start, Medicaid, the Older Americans Act, and other contracts. The agency's vehicle fleet consists of five buses and one van. The agency bought one vehicle from Malta

## *Existing Transportation Providers*

Opportunities, Inc. as part of a transportation coordination effort in the Phillips County area. In the first six months of service (July-January), the agency provided approximately 12,900 one-way trips with approximately 22,000 vehicle-miles. The agency has an annual operating cost of approximately \$154,000. Approximately \$57,000 of the total operating costs go toward drivers' salaries and benefits; \$40,000 is for administrative costs; \$31,000 is for materials and supplies; while the remaining costs are utilities, insurance, maintenance costs, and other expenses. The agency employs two full-time drivers and one part-time driver.

### **Phillips County Council on Aging**

The Phillips County Council on Aging provides transportation to the elderly (60 years and older) and persons with disabilities. Transportation is provided on Wednesday and Friday in Malta, on Tuesday in Saco, on Thursday in Jordan, and Tuesday to Friday to other cities for congregate meals. The agency employs one bus for providing transportation services to its participants. Approximately one percent of their riders require wheelchair lifts, one percent need to be assisted with a personal care attendant, and another 10 percent require walkers and canes.

### **Malta Opportunities**

Malta Opportunities, Inc. is a private, nonprofit organization for individuals who are developmentally disabled. The agency provides transportation services to their clients through a contract with Phillips Transit Authority.

## **TETON COUNTY**

### **Teton Memorial Hospital Association**

The Teton Memorial Hospital Association is an independent, nonprofit organization that provides transportation services to and from doctors' appointments within the Chouteau area. The agency provides transportation to its residents using a seven-passenger van. Transportation is funded through the agency's general funds. The agency provides an average two to three trips per day which works out to approximately 650 annual one-way trips.

## **OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS**

### **Area II Agency on Aging**

This agency does not directly provide transportation but contracts with senior citizen centers and other service providers to provide transportation to an 11-county area—which includes Judith Basin, Wheatland, Golden Valley, Sweet Grass, Stillwater, Carbon, Fergus, Petroleum, Musselshell, Yellowstone, and Big Horn Counties. Transportation services are provided to the elderly (60 years and older) for congregate meals, home-delivered meals, senior center activities, and for medical services. The agency works with the Judith Basin Senior Center in Stanford to provide transportation. Limited funding and resources makes it difficult for the senior center to provide transportation within the Judith Basin area.

## **INTERCITY PROVIDERS**

### **Greyhound Bus Lines**

Greyhound Bus Lines provides regularly-scheduled service between Billings and Great Falls. They have one trip departing Billings at 12:45 p.m. which arrives in Great Falls at 9:30 p.m. The fare is \$70.00 per one-way trip (daily). The bus stop in Great Falls is located at 326 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

### **Rimrock Trailways**

Rimrock Trailways is an intra- and interstate transportation provider. Service operates daily between Butte and Great Falls. Stops are made in Cascade and Ulm Junction in the study area. Service departs Great Falls at 2:50 p.m. and arrives in Butte at 5:40 p.m. Return service departs Butte at 6:30 p.m. and terminates in Great Falls at 9:30 p.m. There is no intercity service provided along US Highways 2 and 87.

## **SUMMARY**

Table III-2 provides a summary of the transportation resources in the study area by county. The table details the type of agency, type of service, type of fleet, fleet size, and ridership information. Figure III-1 illustrates the spatial service area provided by various transportation providers, which helps analyze gaps in transit service—spatial gaps where service is not provided, service gaps where service is provided by a private provider for a specific clientele, and temporal gaps where limited service is provided during different days of the week.

### *Existing Transportation Providers*

The figure illustrates that public transportation is provided in Phillips County and a planned regional service area in Blaine County from Malta to Havre. Other areas that have public transportation services are located within Great Falls and the Havre area. However, there is a spatial gap along US Highway 87 between Havre and Great Falls. The figure also illustrates many private agencies in the seven-county study area that provide limited transportation services to their clients.

**Table III-2  
Transportation Providers in the Seven-County Area**

County	Agency	Agency Type	Type of Service	Bus	Vans	Sedans	SUVs/Truck	Total Number of Vehicles	Estimated Annual Trips Provided
Blaine County Blaine/Phillips County	New Horizons Unlimited, Inc. Fort Belknap Senior Citizens Program	Private	Demand-Response		5		1	6	
		Public	Demand-Response	3				3	1,000
Cascade County	Great Falls Transit District Easter Seals Goodwill Northern Rocky Mountain Center for Mental Health Great Falls Senior Citizens Center Quality Life Concepts	Public	Fixed-Route and Paratransit Service	22	7			29	455,500
		Private	Demand-Response					n/a	n/a
		Private	Demand-Response		4			4	n/a
		Private	Demand-Response	2	18		2	22	n/a
Chouteau County	Big Sandy Activities Chouteau County Health Care Foundation  Stone Child College	Private	Demand-Response		5	1		6	n/a
		Public	Demand-Response	1				1	520
		Private (student only)	Scheduled Service		1			1	1,700
Hill County	Havre Day Activity Center, Inc. Hill County Area X Agency on Aging	Private	Demand-Response		9			9	n/a
		Public	Demand-Response		3			3	3,800
Phillips County	Phillips County Transit Authority Phillips County Council on Aging Malta Opportunities	Public	Demand-Response	5	1			6	12,900 **
		Public	Demand-Response	1				1	n/a
		Private	Demand-Response					n/a	n/a
Teton County	Teton Memorial Hospital Association		Demand-Response		1			1	650
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>34</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>476,070</b>

Note\*\*: Since Phillips County Transit began its operation in July 2006, ridership reported was for the first six months  
n/a = not available  
Source: Transportation Provider Survey by LSC, 2007.

Figure III-1  
Existing and Planned Transportation Service Area

