

Short-Range Service Alternatives

The basis for a short-range transit alternatives analysis is a careful consideration of realistic service alternatives. Capital requirements, financial plans, and management options can then be developed to support the planned services. The following discussion evaluates both the potential for new services, as well as modification of existing services.

MAINTAIN STATUS QUO

The first option to be considered it is to maintain the current level of transit service in Grand County and Jackson County. The town of Winter Park and the Winter Park ski area would continue to operate local transit services within the Fraser Valley. Silver Creek would provide local shuttle service within the Silver Creek resort area and commuter service from Grand Lake and Granby. The Councils on Aging in Grand County and Jackson County would continue to provide specialized transportation services for the elderly.

This alternative will continue to meet the immediate needs of skiers at Winter Park. It will also meet limited needs of commuters working in the Fraser Valley during the winter. Seniors in both Grand County and Jackson County will have specialized transportation services provided by the Councils on Aging.

This alternative fails to meet the transportation needs of county residents in either county outside of the Fraser Valley. The lack of summer service would not meet the needs of local residents working in either the Fraser Valley or the Grand Lake area during the summer. No service outside the county would be provided. Residents of Jackson County would have no service other than the specialized transportation provided for the elderly.

TOWN-TO-TOWN SERVICE BETWEEN GRAND LAKE, HOT SULPHUR SPRINGS, AND WINTER PARK

This option would be town-to-town transit service operated between the eastern Grand County towns. The service would be operated year-round. The overriding concept behind this alternative is to have general public transit service that benefits each community and provides residents and visitors an alternative to move easily between the towns.

This alternative could be operated in several different ways:

- By expanding the Grand County Council on Aging to general public service. This method would make the existing senior operation available to the general public by expanding service hours, fleet size, and overall operations. General citizens would call and request rides, just as the service is operated today. This method of operation may decrease the existing senior service due to high demand of non-senior ridership.
- By providing Route Deviation Service. Route deviation service would establish certain locations in each of the towns that would be served at regular times. Outside of those times, the vehicle would be able to provide demand-response service for other community needs.
- By providing Fixed-Route Service. The fixed route would establish a clear route for the vehicle to follow in addition to specific locations and times. The potential routes would be between the towns and stops and the major activity centers being served.

Depending upon the service type selected, vehicles can be expected to travel, on average, at a speed of 35 miles per hour, including stops. Depending on the length of the route and towns served, the frequency of service would vary from 30 minutes to 2 hours.

These alternatives have been estimated for cost assuming it would operate approximately 12 hours per day. It could, of course, be operated during shorter or longer periods with the associated cost implications. This service would cost a minimum of \$40 per hour to provide, regardless of the type. The costs have been estimated based on operation of two vehicles. The total cost per year would range from \$313,900 to \$365,000.

Table IV-1			
Winter Park, Grand Lake, and Hot Sulphur Springs			
Fixed-Route Service			
Season	Hours	Operating Days	Costs
<i>Hot Sulphur Springs – peak hours only</i>			
Winter	3,870	180	\$154,800
Summer	3,978	185	\$159,100
Annually	7,848	365	\$313,900
<i>Hot Sulphur Springs – service all day</i>			
Winter	4,500	180	\$180,000
Summer	4,625	185	\$185,000
Annually	9,125	365	\$365,000

Based on the transit demand estimates presented in Technical Memorandum #1, the anticipated maximum demand is approximately 20,000 passenger-trips per year. If this service is scheduled to provide the winter commuter needs from Grand Lake to Winter Park, the annual ridership could be about 40,000 passenger-trips per year. Actual ridership would be a function of the specific route, schedule, and operating frequency. The projected performance is 2.5 passengers per hour at a cost of about \$16 per passenger-trip. If commuter service can be accommodated, the cost would decrease to about \$8 per passenger-trip.

Depending on the type of service chosen, two dedicated vehicles could be required. Maintenance and equipment needs for the vehicles could be provided through coordinated maintenance, the county shop, or contracted with a local mechanic.

Again, depending on the type of service chosen, this alternative could be served by a host of institutional organizations including: local government department, nonprofit, or public-private partnership. Given the travel demand between the towns, an intergovernmental agreement might also be a possibility.

DEMAND-RESPONSE YOUTH SHUTTLE/AFTER SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

This transportation service would serve youth after school in the East Grand School District, taking them to sports activities, allowing them to study longer at school, and/or receive a ride home after these activities. This transportation is serving a specific clientele with known travel needs.

This alternative would be tailored to the children of the local school district. It would operate 2-3 hours per day during the school year (180 days). It is estimated, based on a cost of \$40 per hour, that such a program would cost a minimum of \$17,000 per school year to operate if paid drivers were used.

A single small bus would be adequate to begin this service. Projected ridership is an average of five students per day or about 1.7 passengers per hour at a cost of about \$19 per passenger-trip. In terms of public transportation, this may not be cost-effective, but there may be parents who are willing to pay the cost of this transportation.

This alternative could be provided from a number of institutional bases. The most likely are the school districts themselves and the individual

towns. Nonprofit programs in any social service field are also likely candidates. Service could also be provided by a for-profit provider or through an RTA.

ROUTE DEVIATION BETWEEN WINTER PARK AND GRAND LAKE

The intention of this alternative is to provide regular general public service throughout the day among the east Grand County communities. This service would operate a fixed route between Winter Park and Grand Lake, with a route deviation to Hot Sulphur Springs in the morning and afternoon peak times. The fixed route would serve Granby, Silver Creek, the YMCA, Tabernash, and Fraser. This fixed route would provide employees, residents, and visitors a consistent method of transportation among the communities. Service would be provided to Hot Sulphur Springs only on an advanced reservation basis.

The frequency of service for this alternative would vary depending on the town and time of day and whether the bus deviated to Hot Sulphur Springs. The frequency would be 30 minutes to 2 hours. Service for 12 hours per day is assumed, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:15p.m. Winter service would operate with two vehicles, and summer service would operate with one vehicle and a lower frequency. If the transit demand in the summer season increases, two vehicles should be operated.

Table IV-2 presents the cost information for this alternative.

Table IV-2			
Route Deviation – Winter Park and Grand Lake			
Season	Hours	Operating Days	Costs
Winter	5,310	180	\$212,400
Summer	2,590	185	\$103,600
Annually	7,900	365	\$316,000

Using the transit demand estimates presented in Technical Memorandum #1 and survey responses, approximately 20,000 trips per year would be served. The route deviation to Hot Sulphur Springs would make this less desirable for commuters because of the uncertainty in travel time associated with the route deviation. The projected ridership equates to 2.5 passengers per hour at a cost of about \$16 per passenger-trip.

COMMUTER SERVICE – WALDEN TO WINTER PARK AND GRAND LAKE (SEASONAL)

This alternative would provide commuter service for employees in the morning and evening peak times. This would provide a lower cost alternative to employees who commute long distances.

One round-trip per day during the peak hours is analyzed as an initial point of consideration of this alternative. During the winter season, the commuter service would travel to Winter Park. The summer season commuter service would go to Grand Lake. Ultimately, user fares will play an important role in financing the service. This alternative is at least partially predicated on the basis that it is cheaper for the employee to purchase this transportation, have the travel time available for personal use, and eliminate the need for a personal vehicle. The alternative is also predicated, in part, on the basis that employers benefit from not having to operate their own employee shuttles. Thus, employer/business contributions are a second likely source of funding for this option.

Costs for the shuttle are broken out into winter, summer, and annual time periods. Approximately four hours of daily service are used for the cost estimates at \$40 per hour.

Season	Hours	Operating Days	Costs
Winter	720	180	\$28,800
Summer	740	185	\$29,600
Annual	1,460	365	\$58,400

The potential demand for the commuter shuttle is based on peak commuting times. Data were collected from the Advisory Committee members, key interviews, and the employer and employee surveys to project the level of demand for commuter service. Based on the data, the estimated demand for this service would be 10 people per day commuting between Jackson and Grand Counties or a total of 20 passenger-trips. This equates to 5 passengers per hour at a cost of about \$8 per passenger-trip or \$16 for a round-trip commute.

Based on the demand estimates, this service could be operated by the existing provider in Jackson County, Sage Brush Tours. This agreement

could be a public-private partnership. Other options would be for Jackson County to expand their senior transit service to operate the route. This analysis assumes no deadhead mileage, meaning the vehicle would remain in Walden overnight and in Winter Park or Grand Lake during the day. As such, a parking space would need to be identified at each end. There is a good possibility on the Grand County end that the vehicle could be put into the local route service or into service for one of the lodging units rather than being parked.

Institutionally, this alternative is likely to be served by either a public-private partnership, a nonprofit venture, or by an extension of the Jackson County senior service.

SUMMER WINTER PARK, GRAND LAKE, YMCA & RMNP SERVICE

This alternative is analyzed to determine the ability to meet the demand of residents and visitors traveling between Winter Park and Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP). Currently, residents do not have an alternate mode of transportation to travel between the two areas. This service would help alleviate traffic congestion within the corridor. This service would also provide assistance to RMNP, which is currently looking at transportation alternatives for summer congestion relief.

Two round-trips per day are analyzed as an initial point of consideration of this alternative. One vehicle would be used for the summer service. The first trip would be at 8:00 a.m. and returning at 6:45 p.m. The cost for the summer service is approximately \$40,000, using the operating cost of \$40 per hour.

Transit demand estimates for this summer service are 2,000 passenger-trips at 2 passengers per hour and a cost of \$20 per passenger-trip.

KREMMLING SERVICE FROM WALDEN, GRAND LAKE, AND GRANBY

The concept of this alternative is to provide residents of Grand and Jackson Counties service to Kremmling. The service to Kremmling would be provided twice per month from Walden and twice per month from Grand Lake and Granby.

The service could be an extension of the existing Grand County and Jackson County Councils on Aging services. Operating costs for each route would be approximately \$7,700 annually. The ridership is projected to be very low on these routes because of the infrequent service. This service

provides transportation only for those who have no other option. The cost per passenger could be as much as \$100 per passenger-trip.

This alternative would operate with one vehicle. The service to Kremmling would begin with one round-trip per day, twice a month. One institutional option is for an intergovernmental agreement between the town of Kremmling and the county. It would also be possible to operate as a county-only service or a Rural Transportation Authority (RTA).

NON-EMERGENCY TRIPS FROM DENVER TO GRAND COUNTY

The concept of this alternative is to provide a transportation option for those persons who have been taken to Denver by ambulance for medical treatment and need a ride back to Grand County. The service would be demand response and would require one vehicle for operation. It is important to clearly establish the objectives of this program and spell out the restrictions and limitations which define the use of the program. By doing this, the program costs will be kept within reason and abuse of the system is prevented. Tracking the number of requests over time (by week or month) as well as the companies/individuals using the system may provide useful information to guide the overall program.

This service could be an extension of the existing Grand County Council on Aging, local taxi subsidy, or an extension of The Lift. Depending upon the restrictions in place, the overall utilization of the program can vary substantially. For estimating purposes, one round-trip per week equates to 260 annual hours (5 hours per week x 52 weeks) and 10,400 annual miles (200 miles week x 52). The cost will be approximately \$10,400 annually for the service.

HENDERSON MINE COMMUTER SERVICE

The Henderson Mine Commuter Service alternative would provide commuter service to the Henderson Mine from the Granby area. The service would be provided during the peak hours of operation. The primary shifts are 12 hours, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Approximately 230 employees work at the mine, according to the Human Resources Department at the mine. Of those workers, about 70 percent commute from the east side—Denver, Idaho Falls, etc. The Henderson staff estimates that approximately nine percent of the 230 employees commute from the Granby area.

It is unlikely that more than 10 percent of the total commute trips to the mine may switch to transit. This would be approximately four daily trips or

1,460 annual trips. The service would require approximately three hours of service for the morning peak route and three for the evening peak route. This equates to approximately 2,190 annual hours (6 hours x 365 days). The annual cost for this service is approximately \$87,600 (2,190 hours x \$40 hour). The cost per person-trip for this service is approximately \$60 or \$120 for a round-trip commute.

GRAND LAKE SUMMER CIRCULATOR

This short-term alternative is similar to the summer circulator presented as a long-range alternative. The difference is that there is no potential for connection to transit service within RMNP over the next six years.

The Grand Lake Circulator route, presented in Chapter III (Figure III-1), would operate one vehicle from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The frequency would be every 10 to 15 minutes. The cost for summer service is approximately \$48,000, using one vehicle. The circulator would operate approximately 1,080 hours and 16,200 miles for the 100 days of summer service. During the winter, demand for a circulator within the community would be very low. This route option is expected to have a demand of approximately 4,000 trips per year. This equates to four passengers per hour. The cost per passenger would be approximately \$10.67 in current dollars.

SERVICE COORDINATION

This alternative would include improved coordination of transportation services provided within the two counties. Coordination of transportation services is a concept that has improved services in many areas in recent years. However, the terms coordination and/or consolidation are often threatening to many agencies that provide some form of transportation. There is sometimes apprehension that the agency will lose control of their operations or that employees will lose their jobs. Therefore, a general discussion of transportation service coordination is provided as background for the development of this alternative.

Coordination has been interpreted as everything from telephone conversations to transfer of vehicle ownership. There are four different phases or levels of coordination with regard to the shared use and efficient operation of equipment and facilities. These levels are define below:

- **Communication** involves recognition and understanding of a problem and discussion of possible solutions. This improves the working relationships among various bodies who are in a position to influ-

ence transportation developments within their particular jurisdiction.

- **Cooperation** involves the active working together of individuals in some loose association in a cooperative way. The individuals or individual agencies retain their separate identities.
- **Coordination** involves bringing together independent agencies to act together in a concerted way, in order to provide for a smooth interaction of separate units of a transportation system. In coordination, the primary concern is in the form of common funds, equipment, facilities, or operations. Members or agencies preserve their separate identities.
- **Consolidation** involves joining together or merging agencies for mutual advantage. In the case of transportation services and in the context of this report, consolidation is used in reference to a fully integrated transportation system in which all individual units have been combined or consolidated into one integrated system. Individual agency identity for the purpose of transportation is no longer maintained.

Many transportation operators have found coordination to be desirable and beneficial. Coordination has resulted in a reduction in overlap and duplication of service, more service capacity, greater productivity and operating efficiency, and reduction in capital and operating costs.

There is little coordination of services currently within Grand or Jackson Counties. Through the TAC and the Existing Providers Subcommittee, the transportation providers have developed communication and cooperation and are beginning to seek opportunities for coordination. There are a number of opportunities for cooperation, coordination, or consolidation.

One opportunity for cooperation and coordination is the employee shuttle service from Grand Lake to Winter Park and to Silver Creek/Berthoud Pass. Both WPRA and Silver Creek operate employee shuttles from Grand Lake during the winter season. Employees of WPRA ride The Lift shuttles, and employees of Silver Creek ride the Silver Creek shuttles. The two operators could coordinate the schedules and cooperate by allowing employees of either area to ride either shuttle. The shuttles would need to make common stops and provide service to Berthoud Pass for employees working at the Berthoud Pass Ski Area. Some runs of these shuttles have been open to local residents on a space available basis. Cooperation and coordination with local governments or the county could increase the amount of service provided so that residents are given more opportunities to use the shuttles.

Another opportunity in Grand County is to provide a consolidated bus maintenance facility. This is described further in Chapter V on capital alternatives. A consolidated facility could meet the needs of The Lift, the East Grand School District, Silver Creek, and the Council on Aging. The facility could also provide maintenance capabilities for any enhanced transit services within Grand County. In the short term, there is an opportunity to cooperate on purchases of parts and tires for vehicles.

The possibility of using Sage Brush Tours to operate an employee shuttle from Walden is an opportunity for coordination. Further coordination could be achieved by using the Sage Brush Tours vehicle in the Fraser Valley area during the day between the trip from Walden and the return to Walden in the afternoon.

An opportunity for consolidation is available through the formation of an RTA. All of the current services could be operated by an RTA if one is approved and established for the Grand County and/or Jackson County service areas.

A future opportunity for cooperation or coordination is the potential to operate a summer shuttle which is coordinated with shuttle service within RMNP. This should be viewed as a longer-term opportunity and could function along with other coordination or consolidation efforts.

Coordination provides ways to make better use of existing transportation resources. Limited financial resources make it impossible to provide unlimited transportation services. By coordinating the various efforts, there is the potential to provide additional service without obtaining additional financial support.

SUMMARY OF SHORT-RANGE SERVICE ALTERNATIVES

This chapter has presented the short-range alternatives which are being considered for Grand County and Jackson County. Table IV-4 presents a summary of the characteristics for each of these alternatives.

Table IV-4

**Short-Range Service Alternatives
Preliminary Cost Estimates**

Alternative			# of Veh.	Total Daily		Total Annual		Operating Days	Operating Cost \$40/hr
				Vehicle Miles	Vehicle Hours	Vehicle Miles	Vehicle Hours		
Fixed Route between Grand Lake & Winter Park & peak only HSS	7a-7:15p & 6a-9:30/1p-6:30p	Winter	2	655	21.5	117,900	3,870	180	\$ 154,800
Transfer Granby		Summer	2	655	21.5	121,175	3,978	185	\$ 159,100
		Annual				239,075	7,848	365	\$ 313,900
Fixed Route between Grand Lake & Winter Park & all day HSS	7a-7:15p & 6a-6:30p	Winter	2	761	25	136,980	4,500	180	\$ 180,000
Transfer Granby		Summer	2	761	25	140,785	4,625	185	\$ 185,000
		Annual				277,765	9,125	365	\$ 365,000
Fixed Route between Grand Lake & Winter Park w/ Deviation to HSS	7a-7:15p	Winter	2	926	29.5	166,680	5,310	180	\$ 212,400
Transfer Granby		Summer	1	436	14	80,660	2,590	185	\$ 103,600
		Annual				247,340	7,900	365	\$ 316,000
Commuter Service Walden to Winter Park	6a-7:45a/5p-6:45p	Winter	1	152	4	27,360	720	180	\$ 28,800
Transfer Granby		Summer	1	140	4	25,900	740	185	\$ 29,600
		Annual				53,260	1,460	365	\$ 58,400
Walden to Steamboat		Winter	1	114	4	20,520	720	180	\$ 28,800
Transfer Granby		Summer	1	114	4	21,090	740	185	\$ 29,600
		Annual				41,610	1,460	365	\$ 58,400
Grand Lake Circulator	10a-10p	Summer	1	180	12	16,200	1,080	90	\$ 43,200
Winter Park/GL/RMNP	8a-6:45p	Summer	1	254	11	22,860	990	90	\$ 39,600
Kremmling Service Granby/Kremmling	2x per mth 8a-4p	yr-round	1		8	1,296	192	24	\$ 7,680
Walden/Kremmling	2x per mth 8a-4p	yr-round	1		8	2,976	192	24	\$ 7,680
Grand Lake/Kremmling	2x per mth 8a-4p	yr-round	1		8	1,968	192	24	\$ 7,680
Non-emergency Trips	DR	1 per wk	1			10400	208	52	\$ 8,320
Henderson Mine Service			1		6		2190	365	\$ 87,600