

Missoula Urban Transportation District Coordination Plan

FY 2026

for

Montana Department of Transportation

prepared by

**Missoula Urban Transportation District,
Mountain Line, and
Special Transportation Advisory Committee**

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Date Adopted by Board of Directors

This plan was adopted on February 27, 2025, by the Board of Directors of the Missoula Urban Transportation District (MUTD), Missoula, Montana.

Adoption is based on the recommendation of the Specialized Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC). The coordination plan update was discussed and recommended for adoption at the February 21, 2025, STAC meeting.

Minutes from the meetings of these two boards showing these actions are included in the Appendix.

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Introduction

This coordination plan, as required by federal legislation and the Montana Department of Transportation, provides a summary of current and anticipated coordination efforts in the Missoula urban area. All transportation providers in the greater Missoula area are open to all coordination efforts that can lead to the maximization of effectiveness and efficiency in the investment of local dollars to provide transportation services to people who live in, work in, or visit the greater Missoula area.

This document updates the Missoula Urban Area Public Transportation Coordination Plan for Fiscal Year 2026 as recommended and approved by MUTD, the lead organization in the Missoula urban area.

STAC also reviewed the plan and recommended it for approval. STAC is committed to the coordination of all public transportation services within the Missoula urban area that are served by the primary providers in this plan and in coordinating efforts with the outlying areas of the western Montana region served by other providers.

It is the goal of all primary providers listed in this coordination plan to work closely with MUTD and STAC to follow the guidance established by the Federal Transit Administration to:

1. Work together to provide more effective transportation solutions that lead to increased ridership, better access to jobs, reduced congestion, and more efficient provision of transportation services.
2. Continue to identify transit industry best practices and human service transportation coordination activities that help improve the action plan for continuing to improve transportation coordination.
3. Ensure adequate outreach efforts, including conducting an annual needs assessment, and jointly conducting planning sessions that determine how to use the available resources to best meet those needs.
4. Recognize the outreach efforts of other providers and agencies in western Montana.
5. Seek participation from non-Department of Transportation (DOT) funded partner agencies.

As the lead organization, MUTD is committed to including the following groups and organizations in the coordinated planning process:

1. Transit riders and potential riders, including the general population, individuals with disabilities and older Americans.
2. Area transportation planning agencies.

3. Area public transportation providers, including non-profit transportation providers.
4. Area private transportation providers.
5. Human service agencies.
6. Other government agencies in the area who administer health, employment, or other support such as vocational rehabilitation, medical, independent living, and the County Council on Aging programs.

1.0 Agencies Involved

MUTD provides general public transportation in Missoula. Recipients of FTA 5311 or 5310 (seniors and persons with disabilities) grants in the greater Missoula planning area include:

- MUTD
- The ARC Western Montana
- A.W.A.R.E.
- Opportunity Resources, Inc (ORI)

The transportation providers are described in detail below.

Missoula Urban Transportation District

MUTD, operator of Mountain Line, is a local agency that has been offering transportation options to the Missoula area since December 1977. A seven-member board of directors appointed by elected officials in the Missoula city and county governments oversees the organization. Staff at MUTD consists of seventy-two operators, sixteen maintenance employees, eleven direct supervisors and twenty administrative/management employees. Mountain Line's vision is to create a flexible and innovative transit system that serves an expanding community. Mountain Line promotes community involvement and ownership, actively seeking productive partnerships with other community agencies, businesses, and government.

Currently, Mountain Line operates within a 70-square mile area, serving the communities of Missoula, East Missoula, Bonner, Target Range, and the Rattlesnake. Mountain Line provided 1,221,669 rides in fiscal year 2024 on fixed-route and 77,055 on paratransit and shuttle van combined.

In January 2015, Mountain Line launched a zero-fare service as a three-year demonstration project, funded by community partners, that was extended another three years. The program is now entering its tenth year, having increased pre-

pandemic ridership by seventy percent. This program is now funded with local tax dollars as approved by the voters in 2021.

Mountain Line provides the following services:

Fixed Routes: Twelve fixed routes provide various levels of service, including 15-minute, all day service on Routes 1 & 2. Over twenty vehicles provide this service during weekday peak periods, seventeen during midday, and 6 during the late evening service. Nine buses provide regular Saturday and Sunday service. Buses generally operate between 5:30 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. on weekdays, 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Sundays. This represents over 6,000 hours of revenue service a week.

ADA Comparable Paratransit Services: This program has been in effect since 1991 and provides transportation for ADA eligible passengers. Sixteen paratransit buses carry an average of over six thousand passengers per month. ADA comparable paratransit service operates weekdays from 5:30 a.m. until approximately 11:00 p.m., Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and Sunday 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Shuttle Van: The shuttle van began operation on July 1, 2008. The service is designed for people over sixty who do not qualify for the ADA paratransit service. The shuttle van operates Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This service uses fully accessible buses and vans with lifts that can be used for wheelchairs, scooters and walkers, so there is no need to use the steps. This is a curb-to-curb service unlike ADA paratransit's origin-to-destination, but with fewer restrictions on eligibility and more limited hours of operation. Advanced reservations and a brief registration form are required. Any cost is waived as part of the zero-fare program.

Special Services: Mountain Line provides seasonal service to popular community events such as Out to Lunch and the Saturday farmers markets.

Mountain Line expanded service in summer of 2022. These changes are the implementation of phases one, two, and three of MUTD's 2018 strategic plan that include services earlier in the morning and later in the evening Monday through Saturday and introducing Sunday and limited holiday service to all modes. This resulted in a thirty percent increase in staffing and increase the service hours.

MUTD is currently working on the 2025 Strategic Plan, a RAISE funded BRT feasibility study, and is at 30% design phase on a new maintenance, operations, and administration building.

Financial Request for FFY 2026: MUTD requests approximately \$407,000 in 5310 funds with a fifteen-percent local match, totaling \$478,066, for funding two battery electric, side-entry, accessible, full-size vans with camera systems. These vans are

for fleet expansion. The total ask is \$406,357 with a local match of \$71,710. These vans have been prioritized as numbers one and three by STAC.

The Arc Western Montana (Narrative provided by same)

The Arc Western Montana (The Arc), formerly the Missoula Developmental Service Corporation, provides people with developmental disabilities and their families with the skills, tools, and supports that foster self-determination and inclusion so they thrive as integrated members in their communities. The Arc envisions a world in which people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are leading lives of influence, purpose, and mutually beneficial relationships within the communities where they live, learn, work, and socialize.

The Arc has been a voting member of STAC since its inception. The Arc provides residential habilitation (group home), day support, retirement, nursing, behavioral supports services, and employment to people with developmental disabilities primarily in the Missoula area.

The Arc has twenty-eight vehicles used for demand-responsive transportation twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Of the twenty-eight vehicles, eight are ADA. The Arc supports 60 people who are unable to transport themselves or access public transportation. 16 people utilize wheelchairs and four people utilize walkers.

The Arc has ten group homes throughout the Missoula area and one day center. The Arc's vehicles fleet supports an average of one thousand roundtrip rides per week. The fleet is used every day to transport individuals to the center, take people on community outings and fun activities, transport people to medical appointments, and complete errands.

Financial Request for Fiscal Year 2026: The Arc requests approximately \$256,848 in 5310 funds with a local match of \$45,327, totaling \$302,175 for funding two ADA conversion minivans and a mid-top extended van AWD ADA. The mid-top van has been assigned priority two and the minivans are priority four and five.

Opportunity Resources, Inc. (Narrative provided by same)

Opportunity Resources, Inc. (ORI) is a non-profit agency whose overall mission is to support individuals with disabilities by enhancing their quality of life and their inclusion within the Missoula community. Working toward this mission, ORI provides a multitude of training and support services, including specialized transportation. ORI has been in operation for over sixty years in the Missoula community.

ORI currently provides specialized transportation services to just over 225 individuals who are unable to transport themselves or access public transportation. These individuals represent approximately fifty percent of the total number of consumers ORI serves. Of the individuals currently needing specialized transportation services, fifty-three are non-ambulatory and use wheelchairs. Another twenty individuals have mobility impairments causing them to need/use crutches or other assistive devices. ORI provides over 7,200 rides per month in the Missoula community.

ORI provides demand-responsive services to meet the individualized transportation needs of the consumers it serves. Routine weekday services are scheduled to transport individuals to and from seven activity sites throughout the community. Routes are revised when passengers change residence, transition to other services, and when new individuals access services. Demand-responsive services are also arranged to enable individuals to access various community activities relating to their living and recreational needs. In addition, specialized transportation is provided to consumers for needed medical services.

Transportation services are provided throughout the day and evening to help passengers access both work and community activities. All vehicles commence transporting individuals by 7:30 a.m. and are used intermittently throughout the day until 11:00 p.m. at night. Nine of the sixteen vehicles used in providing services to consumers are based at residential facilities and operate seven days a week. The other seven service vehicles are based at work centers and are used regularly seven days a week.

Transportation services are contracted with both the Developmental Disabilities Program and the Medicaid Services Division. Operations need to be further subsidized by revenues generated from the sales of products and services contracted to ORI's work program. To maximize the efficiency and utilization of community resources, ORI has extended considerable effort in collaborating with the local STAC in coordinating transportation services. Examples of such collaboration include:

1. ORI provides ongoing training instructing consumers how to access public transportation. Over two hundred ORI consumers now use MUTD fixed-route services on a regular or seasonal basis. In response to this increased usage,

MUTD placed a bus stop in front of the ORI main offices on Russell Street in Missoula.

2. ORI also contracts with MUTD to provide specialized transportation services for a number of consumers who commute to ORI services at varying times of the day. MUTD currently provides an average of eighty monthly trips. To reduce over-use of this service, ORI has lowered its average use by almost thirty trips per week. ORI also provides extensive assistance to consumers in scheduling MUTD paratransit services for personal, business and community access.

3. The YMCA (Y) has developed numerous programs in which many people served by ORI participate. ORI and the Y share in transporting consumers to both recreation and fitness programs. ORI assists with the Y's annual fundraising activities for Special Olympics, the revenues from which have been applied toward the purchase of the Y's passenger vans. ORI has collaborated in the past with the Y's Special Olympics Program to provide transportation to statewide competitions.

4. With Medicaid approval, arrangements are made with Mission Mountain Medicab to transport ORI consumers to medical services.

5. ORI has also transported other persons with disabilities not served by ORI to special events. These events include but are not limited to: Missoula Recreation Department's Haunted Forest and Fall Fest, the Missoula County Fair, city concerts, and much more.

6. ORI participates annually in the City of Missoula Bike/Walk/Bus week events. This event is held annually by the city to encourage the use of alternative transportation.

7. ORI allows the Missoula City Fire Department/Police Department to borrow a lift van each summer to transport kids with disabilities to summer camp.

8. Other miscellaneous monthly events.

This review of coordinated activities illustrates ORI's concerted effort to enhance transportation for its consumers. ORI currently has a staff member working on the STAC with many other community agencies to identify the Missoula area's shortcomings in specialized transportation. This group is working extensively to coordinate all local agencies with specialized transportation needs. STAC currently holds monthly meetings as well as committee meetings. Consumers served by ORI access all service options for which they are eligible at this time.

While considerable coordination is extended in maximizing resource utilization, transportation is yet limited and insufficient in meeting the needs of persons with disabilities in the Missoula community.

Financial Request for FFY 2026: ORI did not submit a request this year.

1.1. Other Area Providers and Key Stakeholders

Other area providers and key stakeholders involved in the Coordination Plan include:

ASUM Office of Transportation
University of Montana
Vickie Rectenwald
University Center, Ste. 114
Missoula, MT 59801
243-2045

A.W.A.R.E. Inc.
Ron Knight
2300 Regent St. #103
Missoula, MT 59801
543-2202

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes
Corky Sias
P.O. Box 278
Pablo, MT 59855

Missoula Aging Services
Lisa Sheppard
337 Stephens Avenue
Missoula, MT 59801
728-7682

Missoula Transportation Planning
Services
Charles Menefee
127 W. Spruce Street
Missoula, Mt 59802
552-6630

Missoula/Ravalli Transportation
Management Assn.
Lyn Hellegaard
2820 S. Higgins Ave.
Missoula, MT 59801
327-8707

Mineral County Commissioners
PO Box 922
Superior, MT 59872
822-3577

Sanders County COA
Tony Tannaci
P.O. Box 519
Hot Springs, MT 59845
827-6966

Missoula Aging Services (Narrative provided by same)

Missoula Aging Services (MAS) is a nonprofit organization established by Missoula County in 1982. It is the Area VII Agency on Aging covering Missoula and Ravalli Counties and is also an aging and disability resource center. MAS's mission is to promote the independence, dignity, and health of older adults and those who care for them through advocacy, education, services, and volunteer opportunities.

MAS has been represented on STAC for over twenty years, advocating for the transportation needs of older adults. MAS's current area plan on aging, effective October 2023-September 2027, is based on extensive community input, including a statistically valid and benchmarked survey of older adults. The plan identifies available, affordable, accessible transportation, as a key to aging at home successfully. Additionally, MAS's new strategic plan, starting January 2024, lays out transformative pathways to "aging with confidence and without fear" and includes this outcome, "transportation options span the community and meet people's diverse needs as they age." As a result of these two planning efforts, MAS is considering innovative ways to fill service gaps in coordination with Mountain Line. As an example,

within the last year, MAS partnered with Mountain Line to launch the Confident Rider program where MAS volunteers trained by Mountain Line staff in turn train older adults to use the fixed-route system. In the first quarter of 2024, MAS also expects to begin offering volunteer rides to older adults who need transportation to and from medical procedures requiring sedation and help “through the door.” MAS will also continue to assist older adults to apply for and navigate paratransit services. The MAS website links to Mountain Line schedules and routes, services, and how-to videos.

ASUM Transportation (Narrative provided by same)

Established in 1999, the Associated Students of the University of Montana Transportation (ASUMT) promotes and provides safe, sustainable, and equitable transportation options to the University of Montana campus community.

ASUM’s park & ride system started with a 15-passenger van providing 3,860 fare-free rides in 2000 and developed into the UDASH transit system, currently on track to provide 150,000 trips in 2024-2025. UDASH provides fixed-route service during the fall and spring semesters, with no service available during the summer and winter breaks.

UDASH currently operates two 40-foot battery-electric buses, three 35-foot battery-electric buses, three 35-foot diesel buses and one 28-foot diesel bus. One of these vehicles has been removed from active service and we predict it will be retired from the fleet by the end of this fiscal year. UDASH service includes five fixed routes, all of which pass through the UM transit hub located near the music building on UM’s main campus.

- Red Line serves the three south campus UM housing complexes, two park-and-ride lots, and the west side of the main campus, with stops located on Arthur, South, and Higgins Avenues.
- Blue Line serves as a peak-hour capacity overlay for the Red Line and also as the only main campus circulator, serving the MMAC, University Center, and science complex in addition to all Red Line stops.
- Green Line serves as a loop between the main campus, the Missoula College at River Campus, and downtown Missoula, including a privately-owned student living complex.
- Purple Line serves clusters of student population along the Cregg/Wyoming corridor, Russell Street, and Catlin Street, including a privately-owned student living complex.
- Gold Line connects south campus student housing to the main campus and downtown during evening hours.

UDASH service is fare-free and open to the public. Every UDASH bus is ADA accessible and all operators are trained in ADA requirements and mobility device securement. All UDASH operators are UM students enrolled in at least six credits. The UDASH driver pool varies between 18-25 students each semester and is managed by a team of four full-time permanent staff.

In addition to UDASH fixed-route service, ASUM Transportation contracts with campus affiliates to provide zero-fare shuttle service for large campus events such as Grizzly football games, Grizzly hockey games, and stadium concert events. ASUM Transportation offers a variety of contract charter services to University of Montana affiliates within the immediate Missoula area, including Griz Airport Shuttles and Griz Field Trips. UDASH also provides shuttle service to the broader Missoula community, including river float shuttles.

ASUM Transportation also operates the ASUM bike program. A fleet of one hundred rental bicycles are currently available at low cost to UM students, staff, and affiliates. The bike fleet is predicted to expand to 150 bikes by July 1, 2025. The ASUM bike program also maintains open bike shop hours and conducts bike education outreach activities. This program has contributed to University of Montana's Gold level designation as a bike friendly university.

ASUMT promotes many services to the UM community, including but not limited to: Mountain Line, MRTMA, Missoula in Motion, and Free Cycles. ASUMT coordinates services with Mountain Line by educating riders about transit options, promoting Mountain Line service, sharing bus stops, and engaging in joint planning endeavors. ASUMT and Missoula in Motion work jointly to promote transportation options and the Way to Go Club. Student visits to Free Cycles are subsidized by ASUM Transportation.

ASUMT fixed-route services are funded by a mandatory transportation fee set by the Montana Board of Regents. As of fall 2024, full-time students pay \$49 per semester, and part-time students pay \$38 per semester. The projected UDASH budget to support fixed-route services in the 2024-2025 academic year is \$875,000. Charter service expenses are not supported by the transportation fee, but instead are billed to the contracting party.

Financial Request for FFY 2026: ASUM Transportation is not submitting a request this year.

City of Missoula Public Works and Mobility Department (Narrative provided by same)

As staff to the Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Public Works and Mobility Department participates in and coordinates the transportation planning program for the Missoula metropolitan planning area in accordance with federal law. This program is a collaborative effort conducted in cooperation with the City and

County of Missoula, MUTD (Mountain Line), Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and other local, state, and federal agencies. The mission of the Transportation Division is:

“To plan and program a safe and efficient transportation system for the Missoula area that increases access and mobility through multimodal options, improves the environment and supports economic development, thereby enhancing quality of life.”

The State of Montana designated the Missoula Consolidated Planning Board as the MPO in 1982, when the urbanized area reached a population of 50,000. Governance of the MPO is provided by the Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee, composed of City and County elected officials, MUTD leadership, MDT district and state-wide representatives, and the Missoula Air Quality Board. TPCC is supported by the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee that includes staff from agencies represented in the MPO.

Prior to 2005, MPO staff was part of the long-range planning section of the Office of Planning and Grants (OPG) and its predecessor agencies. Under the interlocal agreement between Missoula County and the City of Missoula signed August 11, 2005, transportation became a separate division within OPG. In January 2013, the transportation planning division was relocated to the City of Missoula Development Services office, where it continued to provide transportation services to both the city and county in the Missoula urbanized area under a new interlocal agreement signed October 9, 2013. In 2020, as part of a City of Missoula reorganization effort, the MPO was a part of the Department of Public Works and Mobility.

In addition to the committees noted above, MPO staff participates in STAC, a coalition of organizations that provide and use specialized (curb-to-curb, demand responsive) transportation services.

Transportation staff manages the preparation and updating of federally mandated planning documents that maintain the region’s eligibility to receive federal highway and transit funds. These documents include the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the Public Participation Plan (PPP). MPO staff works to assure that all transportation planning activities comply with the MPO’s adopted public participation plan.

MPO staff manages four cooperative agreements related to required coordination. The four agreements are listed below and are also posted on the MPO website under the “Gov’t Agreements” at:

1. Memorandum of agreement between the City and County of Missoula and the State of Montana regarding disbursement of federal transportation planning funds, dated November 17, 2021.

2. Agreement between Missoula County, the City of Missoula, the Missoula Consolidated Planning Board, MUTD and the State of Montana establishing the urban transportation planning program, dated June 23, 2021.
3. Memorandum of agreement between MUTD and the Missoula Consolidated Planning Board (MCPB) dated February 16, 1995.
4. Interlocal agreement between Missoula County and the City of Missoula for transportation planning services dated October 9, 2013.

Beyond the federally mandated planning processes, the Missoula MPO instills its mission through funding and leading supportive planning efforts, policy development and federal infrastructure grant writing.

Missoula Ravalli TMA (Narrative provided by same)

Missoula Ravalli Transportation Management Association (MRTMA) is a private, non-profit agency that has been offering transportation demand management services and resources since 1996. A six-member board of directors, selected from the public at large in Missoula and Ravalli Counties oversees the organization. MRTMA consists of a staff of one full-time office and four part-time office and management staff. The mission of MRTMA is to create a more livable region, by promoting the availability of transportation options to effect the reduction of single occupancy vehicle use. To accomplish this, MRTMA provides ride sharing programs, ride matching and scheduling services, and coordination in the development of park & ride facilities. In 2004, MRTMA, in partnership with the University of Montana, constructed a transit center on the south side of Missoula. The facility is used by carpoolers, riders of ASUM Office of Transportation and Mountain Line.

The communities served by MRTMA are in Missoula, Ravalli, and Lake Counties. The affected Missoula County communities are Missoula, Lolo, and Evaro, and Frenchtown. The affected Ravalli County communities are Hamilton, Corvallis, Victor, Stevensville, and Florence. The affected Lake County communities are Arlee, Charlo, and Ronan.

MRTMA Vanpool program provided 19,434 rides in Fiscal Year 2024.

Missoula Ravalli TMA provides the following services:

- Vanpool Program: The I Ride Vanpool program is designed to serve the commuter workforce living in communities along the Highway 93 corridor and I-90 and working in the Missoula urban area. The program also provides reverse commute service to Missoula residents working in outlying communities such as Hamilton and Arlee. The vanpool program controls operating costs through a volunteer-driver program. The vanpool program currently has nineteen routes serving fifty-six individuals and twenty-five worksites.
- Special Services: MRTMA provides transportation services for government officials touring community development projects.

- Ride Matching Program: The ride sharing/carpooling program is designed to serve the commuter workforce living in communities in Montana and working in other communities, individuals seeking to trip share and agencies/organizations providing rides between communities to post-ride availability. The program is maintained by and accessed through the MRTMA website.
- Guaranteed Ride Home Program: MRTMA has developed a guaranteed ride home program for vanpoolers. The MRTMA program utilizes Huckleberry Express Taxi, BitterRoot Bus and Confederated Salish and Kootenai Transit for vanpoolers living in working in Ravalli and Lake Counties.

- MRTMA coordinates with the following:
 - BitterRoot Bus through client referrals, Guaranteed Ride Home and technical assistance.
 - Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes through client referrals, Guaranteed Ride Home, ETA voucher program and technical assistance.
 - Lake County Council on Aging through Guaranteed Ride Home Program, client referrals, accounting and technical assistance.
 - Mineral County Pioneer Council through referrals and technical assistance.
 - Bitterroot Taxi: ETA voucher participant.
 - Mountain Line through vanpooler access when in Missoula Urban Area and utilization of MRTMA transfer center.
 - ASUM Office of Transportation through utilization of MRTMA transfer center.
 - Opportunity Resources through client referrals.
 - Summit Independent Living Center through client referrals.
 - Vocational Rehabilitation through referrals and purchase of vanpool transportation services.
 - Airport Shuttler through referrals.
 - Missoula Parking Commission financial support and free parking passes.
 - UM Foundations through employer sponsored vanpool.
 - GlaxoSmithKline through employer sponsored vanpool.
 - Designs for Health through employer sponsored vanpool.
 - Community Medical Center through preferred parking for vanpool, ETA voucher program and technical assistance.
 - Flathead Transit through referrals, ETA voucher program and technical assistance.
 - Sanders County Council on Aging through client referrals, ETA voucher program and technical assistance.
 - Clark Fork Valley Hospital through the ETA voucher program.
 - Mineral County Attorney's Office through the ETA voucher program.
 - Western Montana Mental Health through agreement and use of MRTMA vehicles for after hour and client group trip service.
 - Seeley Lake Community Foundation through technical assistance.

- Seeley Lake School District through technical assistance.
- Lake and Missoula County Job Service through technical assistance and ETA voucher program.
- Huckleberry Express Transportation through referrals and ETA Voucher.
- Seeley Lake Community Foundation technical and capital assistance.
- Valley Veterans Service Center provides vehicle and operating funds for transport to Missoula Vet Clinic and Ft. Harrison.

SERVICE OPERATION: MRTMA will be applying for \$195,650 in 5311 and \$113,974 in CMAQ operating funding for FY 2024. MRTMA will be applying for one replacement minivans vans for the FY2026 grants.

BitterRoot Bus (Narrative provided by same)

The BitterRoot Bus provides on demand bus service in the Ravalli County area (Hamilton, Corvallis, Victor, Stevensville, Darby and surrounding areas). BitterRoot Bus also provides weekly trips to the Missoula metro area every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. The bus arrives in Missoula around 10 a.m. each day and departs no later than 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday and 4:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. While in Missoula, the bus will generally take passengers to up to two locations, such as a doctor's appointment and shopping. Passengers are encouraged to use Mountain Line if more than the allotted stops are needed. This service is available to the general public. Scheduling rides in advance is required. +

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A.W.A.R.E., Inc. (Narrative provided by same)

AWARE (Anaconda Work and Residential Enterprise) is a private, non-profit corporation started in Anaconda, Montana in 1976 by a small group of parents whose discussions of opportunities and possibilities for their children with special needs led to the opening of a small furniture refinishing business. This business was a place where people with developmental disabilities could learn a trade and make a valuable contribution to the community. Since AWARE started forty-seven years ago, it has continued to help thousands of people across Montana achieve their potential.

AWARE is directed by a seven-member board of directors and currently employs approximately eight hundred people in multiple communities across Montana, including Missoula. AWARE offers a variety of services in fully licensed and nationally accredited programs geared towards improving lifestyles and opportunities for Montanans affected by disabilities or mental challenges.

AWARE has provided services in Missoula since 1993 and currently operates four adult developmentally disabled group homes. The residential services mission is “to provide clinical supervision, care and life counseling, to clients and their families with severe emotional/cognitive challenges that will guide the individual towards independence”. To this end, AWARE provides transportation on a daily basis to group home residents and staff, transporting them to and from employment or interviews, medical and dental appointments, planning meetings, community outings, church, grocery and personal shopping and other errands as required. In some instances, the residents are from different counties and are required to participate in meetings and court hearings in their respective communities. Transportation is also provided to allow visits with family members in Missoula and the surrounding area. Approximately 397 rides per month were provided for 2023. This ridership number is down from the previous year because two youth group homes closed down.

Relative to coordination efforts, AWARE is represented on STAC and shares the commitment of its members to coordinate public transportation services within the Missoula urban area thereby maximizing funds and equipment available to provide transportation services to all who need it. No increase in ridership is projected for FY 2023-2024.

AWARE, Inc. Missoula Fleet

- Mileage is as of December 2023
- 2014 Dodge Grand Caravan / 6 passenger / 128,631
- 2017 Dodge Grand Caravan / 72,237 (totaled in accident)

Financial Request for FFY 2026: None

2.0 Agencies Not Involved

All agencies active in the Special Transportation Advisory Committee were given the opportunity to participate in the update and review of this plan.

Jefferson Lines, Beach Transportation, and Airport Shuttler have been invited to collaborate in the review of this plan but have chosen not to participate.

3.0 Needs Assessment

Public outreach was conducted through a variety of means. A public notice advertisement requested comments in writing or at STAC public meetings or the MUTD Board of Directors meetings.

Among those agencies solicited for input were STAC members, local government offices connected to transportation issues, Opportunity Resources, and Missoula Aging Services.

Missoula Urban Transportation District Planning Efforts

During 2017, MUTD conducted a comprehensive operational analysis of Mountain Line and a long-range plan for strategic vision through 2043. The result of the public-intensive planning process was the creation of a five-phase blueprint for the future of Mountain Line services that creates a primary transit network for land use planning, and a strategy of increased frequency of Mountain Line buses for a transit system that is both more user friendly and efficient. Included in the long-range plan is planning for important paratransit and shuttle van services.

Over the next few years, the policy recommendations and action items outlined in the planning efforts will help MUTD to:

- **Focus Investment** on the primary transit network that will support high ridership in alignment with projected job and population growth patterns, including senior and disabled residents.
- **Improve Service Quality** that makes transit more competitive with the private auto by enhancing travel time and reliability and improving services on the primary transit network.
- **Foster Community** to leverage transit investments in support of growth management and development goals, enhance place-making, and achieve environmental goals.
- **Develop and Foster Partnerships** for high quality transit, requiring investment from many public and private stakeholders. For MUTD to succeed, it needs to build and maintain political, financial, capital development, and marketing support from multiple partners.
- **Provide Education and Outreach** to development and enhance education and financial incentive programs that support transit use in Missoula.
- **Monitor Progress** by creating performance measures to help the city monitor long range plan implementation and changes in transit performance levels and quality. This includes tracking mode shift, improved health and safety, and reduced emissions to demonstrate return on transit investment.

4.0 Public Involvement

STAC meets monthly, and the primary providers involved in this coordination agreement meet at least quarterly. All members of both committees have ongoing public outreach programs that continually canvas riders and other members of the public to assess the growing needs for public transportation in the Missoula area. Individual agencies allow for public comment at board meetings and conduct periodic service analysis and public outreach efforts.

Opportunities for the public to participate in the development of this plan included:

- Solicitation of comments from area agencies including ORI, The ARC of Western Montana, MUTD Board of Directors, Missoula Development Services' transportation staff, and AWARE.
- Public comment at the February 21, 2025, STAC meeting.
- Public comment in writing via mail, fax or email.
- Public comment at the February 27, 2025, MUTD Board meeting.

5.0 Private Sector Providers

Regional and National Transportation Connections

Flathead Transit/Jefferson Lines

Flathead Transit, a service of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, provides passenger service between Missoula and Whitefish, and partners with Jefferson Lines to offer nationwide service. (406) 675-2700.

Jefferson Lines provides inter-city bus service from a bus terminal located at 1660 West Broadway in Missoula. Corporate offices are in Minneapolis, Minnesota. (612) 359-3400.

Beach Transportation

Beach Transportation provides school bus and charter services. (406) 549-6121.

Cab Services

None

Shuttles

The Airport Shuttler provides shuttle services to and from the Missoula, Montana Airport. (406) 543-9416.

Passenger Airlines

The Missoula, Montana Airport is served by five major airlines with regularly scheduled flights:

- Alaska Airlines – (800) 252-7522
- Allegiant Airlines – (800) 432-3810

- American Airlines - (800) 433-7300
- Delta Airlines – (800) 221-1212
- United Airlines – (800) 864 -8331

6.0 STAC

STAC meets monthly and the primary providers involved in this coordination agreement meet at least quarterly.

EXISTING SERVICE / PRIMARY SERVICE PROVIDERS

Primary providers in the Missoula urban area:

Organization	Name	Address	City, Zip	Phone
The ARC Western Montana	Aaron Atkinson	1005 Marshall	Missoula 59801	728-5484
Mountain Line	Jordan Hess	1221 Shakespeare	Missoula 59802	543-8386
Opportunity Resources Inc.	Josh Kendrick	2821 Russell	Missoula 59801	329-1754

As primary providers of community transportation services in the Missoula urban area, the parties agree to:

- Recognize this plan as the designated coordination plan for the Missoula urban area in the application process for funding requests presented to MDT and FTA.
- Recognize MUTD as the lead organization and decision-making transportation advisory committee for the administration of the Missoula Urban Area Public Transportation Coordination Plan.
- Meet with STAC a minimum of once every quarter.
- Coordinate the planning and delivery of services together to utilize existing capital and operating resources as productively as possible.
- Coordinate the planning and prioritizing of future capital and operating requests.
- Provide coordinated trip training, outreach and comprehensive service information to all participants of this plan.
- Work together to support, develop and expand existing programs.
- Continue to seek public involvement in all planning efforts.
- Update the transportation coordination plan annually.

7.0 STAC Members

STAC meets monthly to discuss issues related to transportation. Following is a roster of current STAC members.

- Tami Hoar, Summit Independent Living Center
- Lyn Hellegaard, MRTMA
- Jennifer Sweten, MUTD
- Kenton Hammon, Home & Community Based Services
- Tami Hoar, Missoula Aging Services
- Josh Kendrick, ORI
- Aaron Atkinson, The ARC
- Andrea Dahl, Consumers/Older Adults
- Glen Ingram, Missoula Development Services Transportation Division
- Ben Weiss, Bike/Pedestrian Committee
- Desiree Dean-Kaldor, Montana Vocational Rehabilitation
- Ron Knight, A.W.A.R.E., Inc.
- Tom Thompson, Consumer Representative

8.0 Attachments

- Coordination plan review and approval: February 27, 2025, MUTD Board Meeting Minutes
- Copies of letters requesting local agencies to participate in coordination plan development
- Various interlocal agreements
- Primary provider fleet roster
- Legal public notice and affidavit of publication
- MUTD system map and schedule
- MUTD SAMs number
- STAC meeting minutes through January 27, 2025