

## CHAPTER II

### CITY OF BILLINGS TRANSIT DIVISION

#### SECTION I UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM ELEMENTS

##### 44.21.00 PROGRAM SUPPORT & ADMINISTRATION

<b>01 ADMINISTRATION</b>
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#### OBJECTIVE

- To provide program support, general administration and grant administration
- To provide training in support of transit planning activities.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS - FISCAL YEAR 2020

Conformance with federal, state, and local administrative and regulatory requirements for maintenance of transit planning and development as well as execution of developed plans.

Staff remained informed of Federal and State requirements concerning all federal funding sources including, but not limited to, sections 5303, 5307, 5310, and 5339. Staff also adjusted grants in response to the CARES Act and Federal Transit Administration COVID response.

Staff continued to manage and execute programmed aspects of previously awarded 5339(B) funding for years FY18 and FY19.

Researched and procured automated passenger counters to aid in increased data collection efficiency and accuracy.

Staff attended training opportunities to enhance knowledge and skills, including the Transit Bus Conference, the Montana Transit Association NTD training, and multiple webinars focusing on the Transit Safety Plan requirements, Transit Asset Management, and COVID response.

Staff maintained and updated the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan with upcoming and in-process capital projects, as well as fleet and facility metrics to ensure accurate capital and asset planning.

Staff worked on improvements to electronic data-keeping practices to enhance grant management, National Transit Database reporting, and the overall planning process.

In response to findings of the 2019 Triennial Review, staff authored, and received approval of, updated Financial and Procurement Policies and Procedures, a Public Participation Plan, an updated Title VI plan, and an updated Equal Employment Opportunity policy and plan.

Staff managed FTA Section 5303 grant activities and prepared the transit aspect of Unified Planning Work Program.

Significantly revised the Billings Area Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan and Committee structure to support improved project guidance and discussion.

Transit members attended and participated in diverse range of transit-related and general community meetings including the Billings Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC), City of Billings Transportation Team meetings, Healthy By Design Coalition meetings, and various project specific coordinating committees for transportation related projects. As the lead agency on the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan Committee, staff also provided guidance and updates to the plan and submitted required annual grant forms.

## **PROPOSED ACTIVITIES - FISCAL YEAR 2020**

All administrative functions necessary in support of transit planning and development will be performed under this work element. Activities will include:

- Continuing to improve data-keeping and gathering practices with further technology utilization and process improvement.
- Quarterly progress and expenditure reports will be prepared and transmitted to the Montana Department of Transportation, Urban Planning Division to maintain funding requirements.
- The FY 2021 UPWP will be monitored and revised as necessary.
- The FY 2022 UPWP for transit activities will also be developed within this element.
- Staff will execute grant administrative functions; staff will continue research and development regarding the utilization of FTA funding, including furthering innovative funding practices and partnerships as well as ensuring proper execution of COVID related activities and expenditures
- Maintenance of coordination agreements with 5310 providers and, as the lead agency, updates to the Billings Area Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan.
- Development and application for capital grants as advised by the Transportation Coordination Plan Committee.
- Development and application for capital grants in the 5339(B) Bus and Bus Facilities program and other funding opportunities.
- Participation in recognized and approved training programs in order to improve skills and capabilities.
- Division policy assimilation of documents, regulations, codes, and practices to ensure compliance

with federal, state, and local requirements as they relate to the transit planning process.

- Participate with the TAC, Transportation Coordination Plan Committee, citizen advisory boards and other committees throughout the community as needed.
- Staff will continue updating and maintaining the FTA mandated Transit Asset Management Plan
- Staff will continue to develop and implement the required Public Transit Agency Safety Plan including research and development of significant training and safety programs.

**STAFFING**

- 190.0 Transit Manager Staff Hours
- 57.0 Transit Supervisor Staff Hours (4 positions)
- 68.4 Administrative Support Staff Hours (2 positions)
- 38.0 Aviation/Transit Director Staff Hours

**353.4 Total Staff Hours**

**FUNCTIONAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY**

City of Billings Transit Division – MET Transit

**PRODUCT**

- An ongoing administrative program to carry out the transit elements identified within this UPWP
- Administrative oversight and execution of transit planning, development functions.
- Enhancement of transit division skills and knowledge.
- Proper maintenance and administration of grant related activities.

**FUNDING SCHEDULE - ADMINISTRATION**

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2020**

**FUNDING SOURCE**

AGENCY	LOCAL	FTA	TOTAL
MET	\$6,247	\$24,988	\$31,235
TOTAL	\$6,247	\$24,988	\$31,235

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2021**

**FUNDING SOURCE**

AGENCY	LOCAL	FTA	TOTAL
MET	\$5,743	\$22,973	\$28,716.00
TOTAL	\$5,743	\$22,973	\$28,716.00

## 44.24.00 SHORT RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

### 01 FUTURE SERVICE EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

#### OBJECTIVE

To facilitate considerations of means to ensure citizens will have acceptable public transportation alternatives in the future, including during times of limited financial resources.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS FISCAL YEAR 2020

Members of the transit division updated projections of future revenues and expenses and directed annual budget and financial resources analysis, including multi-year forecasts.

Staff arranged for and ensured execution of on-going data gathering and analysis efforts to monitor current system effectiveness and efficiency. This assisted in identification of operating and capital needs required to ensure a reliable and effective system into the future.

Staff assisted with and prepared related grant applications, grant revisions, and budget documents.

Researched, procured, and implemented a cloud-based software solution to assist with fixed-route planning and analysis.

Transit Division members performed an in-depth operational analysis of the transit system including analysis and implementation of potential system wide changes focused on increased frequency in key geographic areas. This process also included an initial assessment of moving the system to designated stops and away from the “flag stop” process currently in place.

Staff planned, created, and executed a Community Wide Transit Survey for feedback on potential future system modifications, receiving 627 total response. 446 responses received were from City of Billings residents; when considering a population of approximately 120,000, this means the survey results were well within a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error. The results are being utilized in both future service evaluation as well as current service enhancements.

Staff tracked and compiled on-going ridership metrics by route and mode to support planning practices.

Staff provided information and comments related to transit at meetings geared toward development, annexation, and traffic projects. Staff also received and responded to system inquiries, concerns, complaints, and suggestions.

## **PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FISCAL YEAR 2021**

Functions necessary in support of future transit planning and development will be performed under this work element, including continuation of activities undertaken in FY 2020. These activities necessitate the ongoing cloud-based software costs for route development and planning, which is included under this element. Activities are as follows:

- Develop and implement a Transit Development Plan including both short term and long term transit goals. Staff may utilize consultation services in regards to development of this plan as needed.
- Complete an in-depth analysis of the financial and operational feasibility of transitioning the system to designated stops and develop a bus stop master plan to support future planning.
- Finalize fixed-route system analysis in pursuit of additional service hours, additional routes to address growth projections, and more efficient and effective use of existing resources.
- Continue investigating feasibility of expanding service beyond existing city limits and engage county stakeholders in discussion regarding potential for service to outlying areas.
- Performance of financial analysis and planning in support of modified frequency and expanded service
- Assessing ongoing and future capital and operating requirements based upon projected demand and growth.
- Continued research on feasibility of additional technology conveniences for passengers including electronic signage and amenities at transfer centers and stop locations.
- Continuation of planning efforts regarding public and stakeholder involvement and input opportunities, including recruiting involvement from key partners.
- Facilitation of public meetings to support planned system improvements as well as specialized services for seniors and disabled.

## **STAFFING**

475.00	Transit Manager Staff Hours
261.25	Transit Supervisor Staff Hours (4 positions)
194.75	Administrative Support Staff Hours (2 positions)
<u>95.00</u>	Aviation/Transit Director Staff Hours

**1026.00 Total Staff Hours**

## **PRODUCT**

- Identification of and plans for efficient and effective transit service into the future.
- Financial and capital analyses for future transit enhancements.
- Identification and assistance in implementation of future system modifications.

**FUNCTIONAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY**

City of Billings Transit Division – MET Transit

**FUNDING SCHEDULE – FUTURE SERVICE EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS**

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2020**

**FUNDING SOURCE**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>FTA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MET	\$14,171	\$56,686	\$70,857
TOTAL	\$14,171	\$56,686	\$70,857

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2021**

**FUNDING SOURCE**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>FTA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MET	\$18,906	\$75,623	\$94,529
TOTAL	\$18,906	\$75,623	\$94,529

## **02 CURRENT SERVICE ENHANCEMENT**

### **OBJECTIVE**

To improve service, ridership, and effectiveness of the existing transit system.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS FISCAL YEAR 2020**

Division members assessed upcoming and immediate operational needs and made recommendations on capital and operational projects. Staff successfully completed the implementation of multiple technology enhancements including:

- Automated passenger counters
- On-board wireless internet access
- Pilot of automated voice annunciation in existing fleet vehicle; addition of annunciation systems to current fixed-route vehicle order at completion of pilot
- Electronic fare card implementations.

All of these systems also allows for the enhanced gathering of metrics including ridership and mileage while also enhancing customer experience.

Formulated contingency plans for potential service reductions and other impacts in response the COVID-19 health crisis.

Staff assisted in significant revisions to specifications for new fixed-route rollingstock and subsequently procured a significant number of replacement vehicles to support and enhance continuing service.

Staff reviewed ridership data in analysis of system functioning and updated passenger miles travelled metrics; members also provided monthly ridership analysis (including ADA lift use and bike rack use), assessed ridership trends, and prepared other information on system functioning as requested.

Staff prepared National Transit Database reports for monthly submission of required metrics as well as annual reporting requirements

Division members monitored operational data to analyze ongoing improvements to routes and schedules, identifying minor system changes and implementing improvements as possible to existing routes and services.

Staff members regularly participated in group meetings and committee meetings (both in person and

virtual) to solicit partner and public feedback on current system usage, demands, successes and shortfalls.

Staff successfully planned and implemented employee and passenger safeguarding procedures and policies in response to the COVID-19 health crisis.

## **PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FISCAL YEAR 2021**

Functions necessary in support of planning and development of enhancements to the current systems will be performed under this work element, including continuation of activities undertaken in FY2020. Activities are as follows:

- Develop and implement a master marketing strategy to guide market research, promote public awareness and increase ridership. Staff may utilize consultation services in regards to development of marketing strategies as needed.
- Continue implementing current marketing strategy to attract and educate new transit users and existing passengers on how to utilize the transit system, including providing travel training options to the public; this will also serve to enhance the public image of the existing system and services
- Develop and implement further outreach programs to increase community engagement through partnerships and other forms of participation.
- Identification and implementation of means to improve current service, including full system analysis of efficiency and effectiveness with recommendations on immediate improvements for the current transit system.
- Assessment of current personnel usage for areas of improvement in utilization of resources and effectiveness.
- Procurement and implementation of further technology enhancements to the existing technology solutions system to gather data, improve efficiency, provide further customer conveniences, and enhance safety.
- Maintain monthly ridership figures and summary figures for effective decision-making. ; complete related National Transit Database reports.
- Solicit and record public reaction to any modified routes, schedules, marketing efforts, and technology enhancements.
- Assessment of current budgetary impact of potential improvements.

## **STAFFING**

440.00 Transit Manager Staff Hours  
242.00 Transit Supervisor Staff Hours (4 positions)  
180.40 Administrative Support Staff Hours (2 positions)  
88.00 Aviation/Transit Director Staff Hours

**950.40 Total Staff Hours**

**FUNCTIONAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY**

City of Billings Transit Division – MET Transit

**PRODUCT**

- Information relating to potential enhancements for existing service and system.
- Recommendations for immediate improvements.
- Information and recommendations on passenger marketing and outreach
- Analyses of current system functions.
- Budget alternatives.

**FUNDING SCHEDULE – CURRENT SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS**

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2020**

**FUNDING SOURCE**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>FTA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MET	\$14,479	\$57,918	\$72,397
TOTAL	\$14,479	\$57,918	\$72,397

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2021**

**FUNDING SOURCE**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>FTA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MET	\$14,734	\$58,935	\$73,669
TOTAL	\$14,734	\$58,935	\$73,669

**44.25.00      Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

<b>01      T.I.P</b>
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**OBJECTIVE**

To maintain a viable five year program of transit improvements for the Billings Urbanized Area.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS FISCAL YEAR 2020**

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) was updated to more effectively reflect project status and include upcoming projects. The TIP underwent an significant formatting change that resulted in an improved sharing of information regarding area projects. Updated projects were also added to the Division’s Transit Asset Management Plan (TAM), Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), and Equipment Replacement Plan (ERP).

An MPO representative was directly integrated into the Human Services Transportation Committee to assist in community-wide Section 5310 project prioritization for inclusion in the TIP. The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) process was also addressed and monitored.

**PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FISCAL YEAR 2021**

Functions necessary in support of transit related project inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program will be performed under this work element. Activities are as follows:

- Division members will develop and compile information on operating and capital projects which MET Transit plans to pursue grant assistance for inclusion in the TIP; this includes utilizing and updating the Division’s TAM, CIP, and ERP as required.
- All applicable projects will be provided to the MPO for inclusion in the program.
- Staff will monitor inclusion in the TIP and STIP to ensure ability to obtain federal Sections 5307, 5310 & 5339 and other applicable grants are not affected.

**STAFFING**

- 67.30    Transit Manager Staff Hours
- 20.19    Transit Supervisor Staff Hours (4 positions)
- 24.23    Administrative Support Staff Hours (2 positions)
- 13.46    Aviation/Transit Director Staff Hours

**125.18 Total Staff Hours**

**FUNCTIONAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY**

City of Billings Transit Division – MET Transit will provide transit-related information to the City/County Planning Department for the MPO's inclusion in the TIP document.

**PRODUCT**

- Updated Division plans including Transit Asset Management, the Capital Improvement Program, and components of the Equipment Replacement Plan
- Annual inclusion of projects in TIP as necessary per FTA regulations.
- Amendments to TIP as necessary to include new projects.

**FUNDING SCHEDULE – T.I.P.**

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2020**

<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>			
<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>FTA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MET	\$2,127	\$8,509	\$10,636
TOTAL	\$2,127	\$8,509	\$10,636

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2021**

<b>FUNDING SOURCE</b>			
<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>FTA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MET	\$2,034	\$8,138	\$10,172
TOTAL	\$2,034	\$8,138	\$10,172

## **44.26.00 Implementation of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

### **01 Implementation of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

#### **OBJECTIVE**

To ensure optimal use of City of Billings funds in meeting the transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in both specialized and fixed route transportation in accordance with Federal Regulations, especially concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

#### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS FISCAL YEAR 2020**

Divison members significantly improved the paratransit Eligibility Certification process, including streamlining the application and addressing operational policy issues.

Staff investigated methods to improve paratransit efficiency and cost-effectiveness, including assessing and procuring new a dispatching and scheduling software solution.

Members also assessed financial and operational functioning of paratransit services including contractual agreements with area agencies including the Adult Resource Alliance and the State of Montana Developmental Disabilities Bureau. These agreements were subsequently re-negotiated, updated, and modified to ensure more effective transportation service to seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Staff monitored procedures and policies involving lift-equipped fixed-route service and other accessibility features/requirements; this included assessing future vehicle needs and relevant procurement of vehicles as related to service for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Staff familiarized seniors and individuals with disabilities with fixed route system use as appropriate via MET's travel training program.

Staff continued to coordinate transportation services among 5310 transit providers, social service agencies and the general public to provide an overall strategy to enhance transportation access, minimize duplication of services and facilitate the most appropriate cost-effective transportation possible within available resources. This also included outreach and engagement to improve and advance the coordination plan as well as to improve community relations.

## **PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FISCAL YEAR 2021**

Functions necessary in support of planning and development of transit related Americans with Disabilities projects, procedures, outreach, and other related activities will be performed under this work element. Activities are as follows:

- Plan and develop additional training for MET operators and employees focused on interacting with seniors and individuals with disabilities.
- Staff will continue to provide outreach and education for professionals, organizations, and other identified entities in the community including participating on advisory groups in order to maintain positive relationships with individuals with disabilities and senior communities.
- Staff will continue to facilitate and encourage involvement in regular Billings Area Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan meetings with human service providers, social service agencies, transportation providers and the public to coordinate efforts associated with transit capital and service planning.
- Continue to facilitate effective service provision and usage of lift-equipped fixed-route vehicles; assess and recommend capital and operational projects with the intent of supporting existing service and adding potential enhancements.
- Continue identification of means to address transit and paratransit needs, assessing both short and long term paratransit needs, the organizational and financial capabilities of addressing those needs, and the inclusion of such needs in an overall Transit Development Plan.
- Conduct an overall paratransit system analysis for efficiency and effectiveness in relation to the current COVID crisis, with emphasis on demand and best utilization of paratransit resources moving forward.
- Continue community outreach to the public and organizations in support of improving access to transportation for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income populations; continue participation on community committees meetings while exploring avenues for further outreach and engagement.
- Continue working with contracted providers in execution of agreements including existing agreements with the Adult Resource Alliance and the State of Montana, ensuring modifications are made as necessary to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of service.

## **STAFFING**

420.00 Transit Manager Staff Hours  
231.00 Transit Supervisors Staff Hours (4/ positions)  
172.20 Administrative Support Staff Hours (2 positions)

84.00 Aviation/Transit Director Staff Hours

**907.20 Total Staff Hours**

**FUNCTIONAL AGENCY RESPONSIBILITY**

City of Billings Transit Division – MET Transit

**PRODUCT**

- Continued consensus with and support of City of Billings compliance with ADA regulations related to transit
- Continued community consensus and support of City of Billings methods for addressing of specialized needs, including lift-equipped vehicles and other options for individuals with disabilities and seniors.
- Recommendations and proposals for enhancements to existing system and programs in support of ADA compliance and regulations aimed at increasing efficiency and effectiveness.
- Public involvement and feedback regarding potential system enhancements in support of transportation for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

**FUNDING SCHEDULE – T.I.P.**

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2020**

**FUNDING SOURCE**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>FTA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MET	\$13,093	\$52,373	\$69,228
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$13,093	\$52,373	\$69,228

**FUNDS PROGRAMMED - FISCAL YEAR 2021**

**FUNDING SOURCE**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>FTA</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
MET	\$14,064	\$56,257	\$70,321
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$14,064	\$56,257	\$70,321

## SECTION II FUNDING SUMMARY

### FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2021

WORK ELEMENT	FUNDING SOURCES FY 2021			STAFF HOURS
	LOCAL	FTA	EST. COST	
44.21.01 Administration	\$5,743	\$22,973	\$28,716	353.40
44.24.01 Future Service	\$18,906	\$75,623	\$94,529	1026.00
44.24.02 Current Service	\$14,734	\$58,935	\$73,669	950.40
44.25.01 T.I.P.	\$2,034	\$8,138	\$10,172	125.18
44.26.15 ADA Service	\$14,064	\$56,257	\$70,321	907.20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$58,481</b>	<b>\$233,926</b>	<b>\$292,407</b>	<b>3362.18</b>

### ALLOCATION OF COSTS

Expenditures identified include direct costs, benefits at the rate of 48% of direct salary or wages, and indirect costs at the rate of 11% of direct salary or wages.

Federal Transit Administration Section 5303 funding is available at an 80% reimbursement rate, meaning the local to FTA funding ratio for all categories is 20% local, 80% federal.