

# Twin Falls, Idaho Transit Development Plan

OCTOBER 26, 2016

PREPARED FOR:



PREPARED BY:

## GRIDWORKS

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## About Twin Falls, ID

Twin Falls, ID is a growing community in southern Idaho, situated on the Snake River, less than 50 miles from the Nevada border. Twin Falls is the largest city in the Magic Valley area – an area historically known for agricultural production and increasingly known for outdoor adventure sports. Twin Falls currently does not have any fixed route transit service but is served by demand response transit services and other human services transportation services.

## About GridWorks

GridWorks is a Portland, Oregon-based consultancy, providing facilitation, research, evaluation, and management consulting services aimed at maximizing cost-effective, financially sustainable travel options for transportation disadvantaged populations. Our clients range from transit agencies and local governments, to nonprofits, app developers, and health insurance plans. While our clientele is diverse, our competencies are highly focused: We are experts in policy, finance, and technology services that support high-quality transportation options for non-drivers. GridWorks is an Oregon certified Emerging Small Business, an Oregon Benefit Company, and Oregon's first transportation consultancy certified as a B Corporation.

## About the project

When a city reaches a population of 50,000, it is required to establish or join a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to oversee the planning and programming of federal funds for streets and public transportation. By the 2020 Census, Twin Falls is expected to have a population larger than 50,000. To plan for this transition, Twin Falls contracted with GridWorks to plan for the future of transit in Twin Falls.



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# Executive Summary

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The Twin Falls population is expected to exceed 50,000 by 2020. When it reaches this mark, Twin Falls will need to establish a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to oversee the planning and programming of federal funds for streets and public transportation. Twin Falls will also become eligible for federal formula funding for public transportation.<sup>1</sup> We estimate available federal public transportation dollars will increase from \$550,000 to approximately \$1M. Meanwhile, rural funds will continue to be available in areas outside the MPO. Local match is needed in order to draw down the full amount of federal funds.

The Twin Falls Transit Development Plan is intended to identify what public transportation might look like in Twin Falls in five to ten years and what steps Twin Falls and its partners can take in the near-term to lay a foundation for that future. In this memo we provide six recommendations for the city's consideration.

Currently, Twin Falls' transit provider, Trans IV, serves many Twin Falls residents who cannot or do not drive. Trans IV is a dial-a-ride service where customers call in advance to schedule a ride between locations. While Trans IV's service is a critical one connecting customers to jobs, health care, and everyday needs, Trans IV (and dial-a-ride services) can only serve a small proportion of the population. Twin Falls' transit goals include:

- strengthening the economy and improving access to jobs and services;
- supporting the vitality of downtown Twin Falls; and
- ensuring transportation options for people who cannot or do not drive.

To meet these goals, Twin Falls hopes to implement fixed route service in the future. However, successful fixed route service requires a different set of land use, transportation, and partnership characteristics than Twin Falls' current transit services require. For this reason, GridWorks is recommending strategies to build the characteristics that will support a truly accessible, convenient, and cost-effective fixed route transit system in the future. By building a strong foundation for fixed route transit, Twin Falls can reduce or avoid challenges that other similar communities have faced and instead use resources efficiently, build community and political support for transit, and develop transit service that is responsive to community needs.

## 1) Get Mixed Use Right

Twin Falls is poised to adopt a comprehensive plan that includes expanded mixed use zoning. To support transit in the future, GridWorks suggests that the City concentrate resources in a smaller area to make the development of mixed uses, diverse housing types, and affordable housing align with future transit investments.

## 2) Build a Better Active Transportation Experience

Everyone – whether they're riding a bike, taking the bus, or driving a car – walks or rolls at some point in their trip. To create a truly transit-supportive city, Twin Falls will need to invest in improving the experience for people walking and riding bicycles. As walking and bicycling become safer and more accessible, it will be easier for individuals to choose not to drive for short trips – building a community of future transit users at the same time.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal formula funds are codified under FTA Section 5307 Urbanized Area Grants for Public Transit and are derived from fuel tax proceeds paid at the pump.

### 3) Update Parking Policy

Parking convenience, cost, and availability are important factors in whether or not a person will choose to drive when there are other transportation options available. Parking also factors in to the experience and safety of individuals walking and riding a bicycle for transportation. To build a more transit-friendly environment, Twin Falls should examine where existing parking policies support or create barriers to the kinds of land uses and walking and biking environments that support transit.

### 4) Develop Corridor Plan for Blue Lakes

Blue Lakes Boulevard is home to a large concentration of goods and services in Twin Falls and also connects Twin Falls to areas to the north and south. As a road that serves diverse trips – from local grocery runs to national freight movement – Blue Lakes Boulevard is a complicated corridor. It's also a corridor that will doubtlessly play a role in Twin Falls' transit future, so we recommend that Twin Falls devote time and resources to addressing the best way for Blue Lakes to continue to serve its current role while also planning for and transitioning to the land uses and transportation patterns that will best support transit in the future.

### 5) Develop Regional Partnerships

Many of the challenges facing Twin Falls are regional in nature, and the future Metropolitan Planning Organization for Twin Falls will necessitate enhanced regional decision-making. Twin Falls can prepare for the MPO transition by developing structures to work on regional issues, such as housing, economic development, and commuting patterns.

### 6) Work With What You Have

Twin Falls has the benefit of several large employers and an existing transit provider (Trans IV) and supportive programs (such as LINC). There is no need to wait for an MPO designation before starting to work more closely with existing community resources to support commuter and community transportation. Employer programs can improve employee retention, reduce congestion, and build a framework for employees to get around without driving alone. Innovative partnerships with existing resources can help Trans IV and LINC serve more individuals in the community who may not currently have access to their services or who may need to use services more often than is available currently.

### 7) Develop a Commuter Route Proposal for 5311 Funding in the Near-Term

Twin Falls faces the challenge of limited and potentially diminishing funding, due in part to Idaho Transportation Department's decision to give funding priority to areas with fixed route systems. Twin Falls also has an opportunity to benefit from strong business community interest in supporting employee transportation options. While we do not believe now is the right time to invest in general fixed routes in Twin Falls, a single commuter route may provide a cost-effective solution that allows Twin Falls to successfully compete for funding while also building on new partnerships with and benefits for employers and employees in the city.

# Chapter 1: Current Conditions

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Twin Falls is a dynamic, growing community – a city where major regional employers are relocating, residents are interested in preserving a small-town sense of community, and local leaders are planning for side-by-side economic development and quality of life improvements. Current conditions in Twin Falls provide some challenges but also some exciting opportunities to create a city rich with transportation options in the future.

This section details current conditions primarily for the City of Twin Falls and Twin Falls County. While these jurisdictional boundaries are convenient when using Census and American Community Survey data, they do not fully reflect the area likely to be included in the MPO planning boundaries (discussed later in this document in Part 5 - Recommendations, Figure 13). Unlike the Census, which counts each individual in the United States every ten years, the American Community Survey is on-going, with statistical surveys sent out monthly to nearly 300,000 addresses. When data is presented from 2014, that data is most often from the American Community Survey 2014 5-year estimates.

The most important current conditions<sup>2</sup> are those directly related to the very definition of public transit: “Public transit consists of regularly scheduled vehicle trips, open to all paying passengers, with the capacity to carry multiple passengers whose trips may have different origins, destinations, and purposes.”<sup>3</sup> Each element of the definition factors into what kind of public transit will be most successful – for example, are the passengers commuters traveling to work within the same county? Are the passengers medically vulnerable and traveling from home to medical care in another county?

## Population

In previous plans and outreach efforts in Twin Falls, two groups of passengers – non-drivers and workers – were most often prioritized in discussions about transit; tourists emerged as a tertiary priority.

### Non-drivers

There are many reasons an individual might not drive. Census data includes some proxy measures that are closely related to individual driving habits; disability, income, vehicle access, language barriers, and age are particularly relevant factors. In Twin Falls:

- In 2014, an estimated 5,625 (civilian, non-institutionalized) individuals had a disability - 12.7% of the population. Over 1/3 (or 36%) of residents aged 65 and older experienced some sort of disability.
- In 2014, 13.6% of households had incomes under the poverty guideline. Non-family households fared even worse, with just over 1 in 4 non-family households (or 25.2%) having an income below the poverty guideline.
- Households without a car make up 6.3% of households, or about 1,032 households. In Twin Falls County, 5.2% (or about 1,481) of households do not have a vehicle available, and in Idaho,

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<sup>2</sup> For more detailed current conditions see Appendix B “Memo 3: Current Conditions”

<sup>3</sup> Walker, Jarrett. 2012. *Human Transit: How Clearer Thinking about Public Transit Can Enrich Our Communities and Our Lives*. Washington, DC: Island Press. Walker’s book includes many easy-to-understand examples of the decisions that need to be made in designing a transit system. The authors of this memo owe a great deal of debt to Walker and his willingness to share his ideas through his book and blog: <http://humantransit.org/>

4.6% (or about 26,743) of households do not have a vehicle available. In 2014, over 1/3 of Twin Falls households (34.7% in the city and 36.2% in the county) without access to a vehicle were headed by an individual 65 years or older.

- Among non-English languages spoken at home, Spanish, Serbo-Croatian, and Russian are the most common, with over 4,500 Spanish speakers. About 16.8% of individuals speak a language that is not English.
- In 2014, people aged 15-34 made up 27.1% of the population. If national trends hold true in Twin Falls, these individuals will be more likely than other age groups to: take fewer and shorter car trips; take more walking, biking, and transit trips; prefer to live in dense, walkable, urban areas; and use technology-based services to expand their transportation options and/or reduce their need for transportation.

## Workers

In 2014, among the households in the City of Twin Falls, 76.3% had one or more workers, for an estimated total of 20,174 workers over the age of 16. Among workers, 2.8% of individuals (or about 565 people) had no vehicle available, and among households with workers, 8.5% of households (or about 1,058 households) had fewer vehicles available than workers.

In 2014, the industries employing the largest percentage of workers in Twin Falls were:

- Educational services, health care, and social assistance (21.1%);
- Retail trade (16.9%);
- Manufacturing (10.9%);
- Professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services (9.1%); and
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services (8.6%).

According to the 2014 ACS data, only 82 out of 20,174 workers over the age of 16 commuted to work by public transit. Because this number is so small in a set of data that is estimated, we should be cautious in using it to draw conclusions. Still, the public transit commuter information in ACS raises questions that should be considered in Twin Falls' transit future.

For example, among the estimated 82 workers commuting by public transit:

- 34.1% speak English less than "very well";
- 81.7% earned \$14,999 or less in the previous 12 months;
- over 1/3 worked in manufacturing and nearly half in arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodation and food services;
- 7.3% worked outside of their county of residence, and 92.7% worked outside of their state of residence; and
- they had a mean travel time to work of 58.5 minutes compared to 14.4 minutes for people who drove alone and 21.4 minutes for people who carpooled.

## Land Use

Transportation is not an end in itself – it provides a means for us to access the places we need and want to go every day. The location and design of land uses affects both the origin and destinations of public transit trips, factoring into what type of public transit can effectively serve those places. Because many commute and non-commute trips begin at home, housing is one of the most important land uses to consider. Key destinations may vary for different groups of people, but they

often include employment areas, schools, health care, other daily destinations (like grocery stores, pharmacies, and other shopping and services), and community assets (like churches, parks, or art and recreation centers.) Other land uses can make public transit work well or hinder its effectiveness too. Parking availability and pricing is one of the most significant factors that influences whether or not an individual chooses to drive, including whether they choose to drive instead of use transit for a particular trip.

## Housing

Citywide housing development and policy impacts the kinds of housing available, the affordability of those homes, and how many people live within a certain area. For public transit, we must consider how these citywide trends interact with the places where people can access transit – the bus stops and stations.

The development of multi-family housing and housing for seniors has not kept pace with the need in Twin Falls. Across the U.S., the impacts of the recent recession contributed to an uptick in the creation of multi-family housing. Housing development in Twin Falls did not follow this pattern, with only one major apartment complex completed between 2007 and 2014. Many assisted living homes are located in residential areas near the edge of town, with a few located north of Pole Line Rd.

Written in 2009, Vision 2030 noted the trend over the past decades towards more suburban development and warned against a focus on “a narrow range of residential and commercial models, which is undesirable.” The plan also emphasized the need for housing development: “The number of housing units needed for the city’s growing population is forecast to nearly double over the 30 year forecast period from 2000 to 2030.”

Unfortunately, between 2009 and 2012, in Twin Falls County, the number of new housing units permitted dropped from previous years. Multi-family units fared worse, with only one two-family building permitted each year in 2010 and 2012, and no multi-family development permitted at all in 2011. Between 2010-2014, by Census estimates, Twin Falls County had 31,394 housing units. Of these, 24,825 were single-family units (80 percent), 4,159 were multi-family (two or more families, 13 percent), and 2,410 were mobile homes or other structures (7 percent).

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development considers housing “affordable” if a low-income (compared to median income) household does not spend more than 30% of household income on housing. Housing affordability goes beyond housing costs alone, though. Housing location impacts transportation costs as well, so the Center for Neighborhood Technology’s (CNT) Housing and Transportation Affordability Index combines information about neighborhood and household characteristics with transportation usage data to estimate household transportation costs. This information is combined with Census data about household income to create the index, which shows where a higher proportion of the population is likely to be burdened by the combined costs of housing and transportation. CNT uses 45 percent of household income as the benchmark for combined housing and transportation affordability. According to their model, households in Twin Falls spend, on average, 56% of their income on the combined costs of housing and transportation. Fewer than 2 percent of households in Twin Falls have a combined cost of housing and transportation that is less than 45 percent.

As shown in Figure 1 and according to CNT’s model, downtown Twin Falls has the lowest combined housing and transportation costs. Housing density is shown in Figure 2. Note that housing densities greater than 3.5 units per acre are typically needed to generate ridership sufficient for public transportation to be considered cost-effective.

Figure 1: Twin Falls housing and transportation costs as a percentage of income<sup>4</sup>

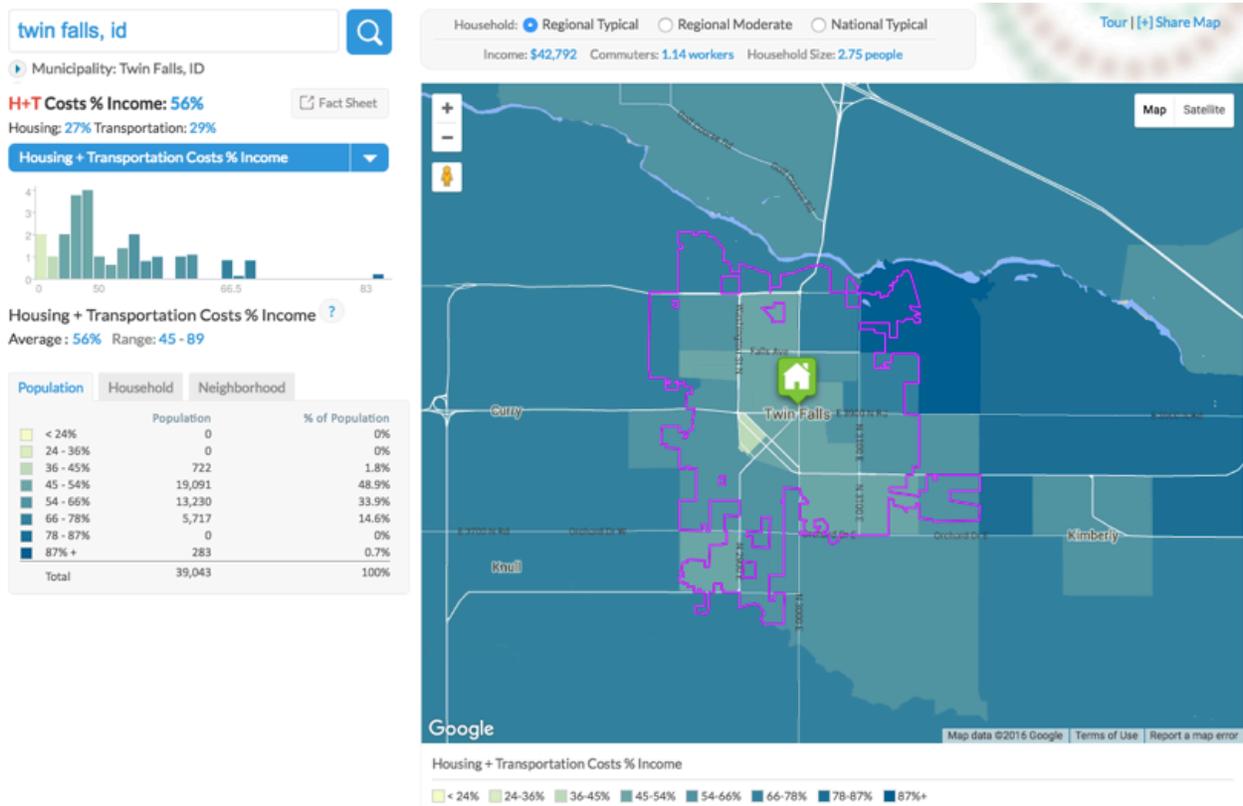
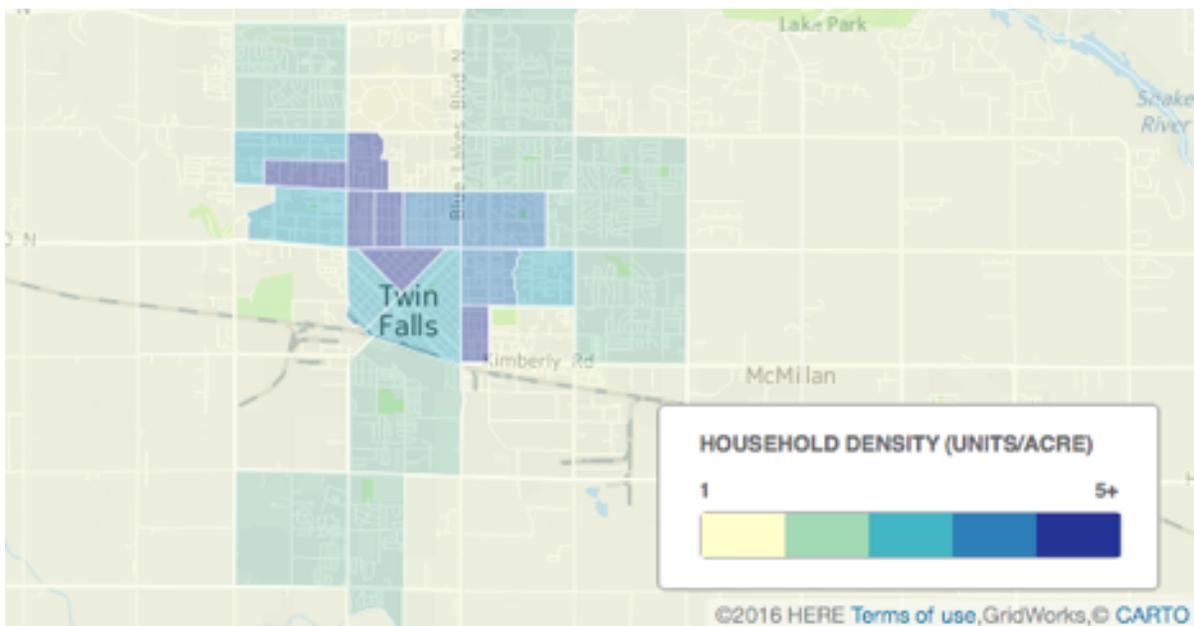


Figure 2: Twin Falls housing density<sup>5</sup>



<sup>4</sup> H+T Affordability Index. Center for Neighborhood Technology, 10 July 2016. Web. 10 July 2016. <http://htaindex.cnt.org/map>

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census, American Fact Finder, August 2016. Web. <https://factfinder.census.gov/>

### Destinations

Many Twin Falls destinations are located along Pole Line Road and Blue Lake Boulevard – including many pharmacies and health care providers. St. Luke’s Magic Valley Regional Medical Center, which is a major regional employer in addition to being a prominent health care provider, is located on Pole Line Road. Other major employers are located to the southwest, south, and southeast of downtown near Highway 30 and the Eastern Idaho Railroad line. The College of Southern Idaho, also a major destination and employer, is bounded by roads on all four sides of the 300 acre campus.

### Parking

Surface parking lots surround many of Twin Falls’ major destinations. For example, CSI and many of the major retailers along Blue Lakes Boulevard are surrounded by a ring of parking lots. To access the college on foot from the surrounding road network, a visitor is likely to cross one of the several lots. Glancing at a map of Blue Lakes Blvd (Figure 3), the most prominent features are the large surface parking lots on the north end of the road. The same is currently true of downtown Twin Falls as well. Twin Falls’ city code calls for 1 space per 250 square feet of gross floor area for retail buildings and two spaces for each single-family and duplex residential dwelling unit.

Figure 3: Surface parking lots in Twin Falls



Imagery ©2016 Google, Map data ©2016 Google 500 ft

## Transportation

It takes more than public transit passengers and vehicles to create a successful transit system. Public transit vehicles drive on the roads, where traffic signals, road quality, congestion, and the network of roads all impact transit performance. The roads impact access to the bus stops, too – for both passengers and for the bus itself. All transit trips include another mode of transportation – from walking and rolling, to riding a bike or parking at a park-and-ride. Just as with the roads, sidewalks characteristics, such as maintenance, space (both sidewalk width for people using the sidewalks and separation from fast-moving traffic or other hazards), and the network of sidewalks and paths, impact a person’s ability to access transit.

### Roads

Twin Falls’ road network is characterized by suburban-style residential road networks, with the exception of downtown’s grid network and the large-block grid immediately to the north and to the east of downtown - areas that also happen to contain the greatest residential densities in Twin Falls. Two state-operated routes – US 30, US 93 – run through Twin Falls, and these two roads carry the majority of the trips in Twin Falls. Several intersections along Blue Lakes Boulevard are considered “high accident” intersections by ITD, and residents have raised concerns about safety as well as congestion during outreach for this project and previous planning projects. In 2014, there were 368 car crashes in Twin Falls. Among those, 3 were fatal, and 195 resulted in injuries.<sup>6</sup>

### Sidewalks

Like the street network, the pedestrian network is mostly characterized by suburban development, with sidewalks in some areas and missing in others. Around major destinations, like CSI or St. Luke’s, it is common to see sidewalks on only one side of the street (or in the case of the photo below, a path that goes from paved to unpaved past the intersection).

Figure 4: Pedestrian facilities on the north side of CSI



Image capture: Oct 2012 © 2016 Google

<sup>6</sup> <http://itd.idaho.gov/ohs/2014Data/Analysis2014final.pdf>

Sidewalks along Pole Line Road and Blue Lakes Boulevard are curb-tight (the sidewalk edge abuts a travel or parking lane with no buffer in between) and narrow.

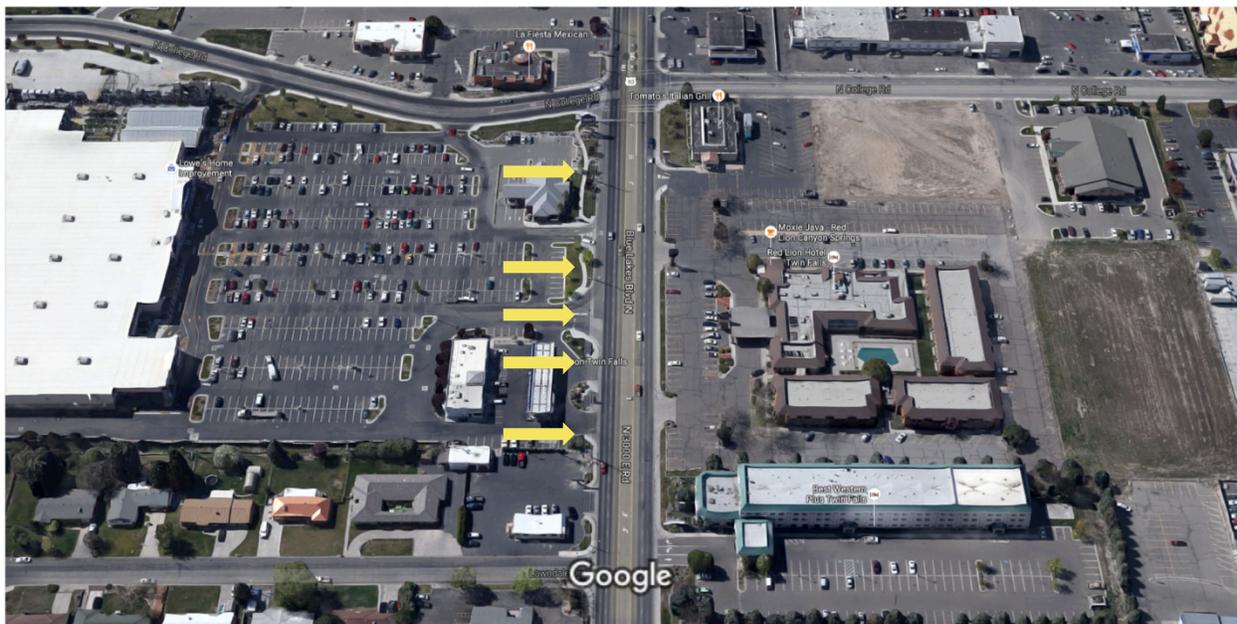
Figure 5: Narrow sidewalks on Blue Lakes Boulevard



Image capture: Jul 2015 © 2016 Google

In some areas, pedestrians must cross many driveways in a row. Areas where the curb is cut for car traffic to enter create points of potential conflict between people driving and people walking or biking. These are often the sites of crashes.

Figure 6: Multiple driveways entering Blue Lakes Boulevard



Imagery ©2016 Google, Map data ©2016 Google 50 ft

In the downtown area, sidewalks are wider; some areas include trees between the sidewalk and the street, and many street areas include space for parking.

Figure 7: Wider sidewalks with planting strips downtown



Image capture: Jul 2012 © 2016 Google

## Other Transportation Options

The 2013 Local Mobility Management Network 4B Local Mobility Plan catalogued existing mobility services in the 4B area, which includes the counties of Twin Falls, Gooding, and Jerome.<sup>7</sup> There have been a few changes since the LMMN report. The report's "Appendix D: Existing Mobility Services" section provides comprehensive information and easy-to-understand organization, so this section builds from that 2013 resource with some unchanged language and some additions and revisions to update the information and make it more relevant to this specific project. Two major shifts have occurred in the transportation landscape since 2013, and our updated list of categories reflects those with the inclusion of transportation network companies and the separation of non-emergency medical transportation into its own category.

### Local public transit

Trans IV, Twin Falls' public transit provider since 1979, is operated by the College of Southern Idaho. Services are oriented "to meet the needs of working commuters, students, agency clients, the elderly, and the disabled."<sup>8</sup> Services are provided by appointment only, and rides must be scheduled by at least 2:00 p.m. the afternoon before the ride is needed.

- Service between Twin Falls and Kimberly, Hansen, Jerome, Filer, and Buhl: This is essentially a flexible "subscription" service designed to accommodate Medicaid and other trips between these cities. It is open to the public and individuals not regularly scheduled can access the service with a phone reservation one day before the date of the trip. Generally these trips run once in the morning and once in the afternoon, although times can be changed to meet the needs of passengers. The service spans 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

<sup>7</sup> [http://iway.valitics.com/\\_literature\\_128133/2013\\_LMMN\\_4C\\_Mobility\\_Plan\\_-\\_Final](http://iway.valitics.com/_literature_128133/2013_LMMN_4C_Mobility_Plan_-_Final)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.csi.edu/support/transiv/tiv\\_body.html](https://www.csi.edu/support/transiv/tiv_body.html)

- **Burley Route:** This is a “point-to-point” service between Burley and the College of Southern Idaho.
- **In-Town Commuter Service:** This “subscription” service operates within Twin Falls, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Flexible routes are developed based on individual travel needs.
- **Dial-a-ride Service:** Demand response service is available in Twin Falls (M- F 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) and Jerome (M-F 9:00 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.). In 2012, this service along with the commuter service provided 31,908 rides.
- The general public fare for all services except the Burley route is \$5.00 per round trip for one individual and \$1.00 for other companions traveling from the same origin and destination. The Burley route is \$10 round-trip. Reduced fares for individuals are offered through the Office on Aging and LINC (Living Independently Network Corporation) through a user-side subsidy. Medicaid-eligible trips are billed directly to Medicaid. Trans IV provides coordinated human service transportation on its general public services. Trans IV has a fleet of 13 buses, all of which are lift-equipped.”

In 2009, Trans IV provided 54,019 passenger trips. Of these, 12,573 were along the Buhl-Twin Falls-Burley demand response route and 2,317 were along the CSI-Twin Falls-Burley-Rupert fixed route.<sup>9</sup> Currently, Trans IV provides about 2,800 trips each month.

#### Regional bus/intercity rail

Three regional intercity bus carriers serve Twin Falls:

- Salt Lake Express serves Twin Falls on its route between Boise and Pocatello (to Idaho Falls and Salt Lake City). This route makes three round trips per day. As of July 2016, the eastbound trip stops in Twin Falls at 10:25 a.m., 3:55 p.m., and 9:40 p.m.; the westbound trip stops in Twin Falls at 6:00 a.m., 10:35 a.m., and 3:40 p.m. Fares vary by distance traveled and time of departure; for example, from Twin Falls to Boise is either \$29 or \$36.25.
- Greyhound serves Twin Falls on its route between Boise and Salt Lake City. This route makes two round trips per day. As of July 2016, the eastbound trip stops in Twin Falls at 12:35 p.m. and 1:30 a.m.; the westbound trip stops in Twin Falls at 4:45 a.m. and 7:45 p.m. Fares vary by distance traveled and trip date; for example, from Twin Falls to Boise is \$19-55, and Twin Falls to Salt Lake City is \$28-66.
- Cactus Pete’s in Jackpot, NV runs busses between Jackpot and Magic Valley every day of the week. The bus leaves from CSI at 12:30am, 5:30am, 8:30am, 1:30pm, 4:30pm, and 9:30pm, and the tickets cost \$2.

The nearest intercity passenger rail stops are in Elko, NV and Salt Lake City, UT.

#### Human services agencies

Human service agencies typically provide services for their program participants to access agency programs or activities integral to the agency’s mission. Among human service agencies in the area, two - the Living Independence Network Corporation and the CSI office on Aging - are especially active in transportation provision.

The Living Independence Network Corporation (LINC) is a non-profit serving people with disabilities and people 60 and older. Their services include subsidizing transportation through Trans IV or private providers in addition to directly providing some transportation services. LINC

<sup>9</sup> <http://static1.squarespace.com/static/52f124e8e4b03e1f2f5548ca/t/53222b82e4b0f75d17d31bf6/1394748290552/Intercity+corridor+definition+final+b.pdf>

uses Section 5310 funding for a user-side subsidy program serving Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, and Twin Falls Counties. For eligible individuals, LINC issues a monthly punch card, which, with a co-payment, is accepted by area taxi companies (including Magic Valley Cab, Twin Falls Taxi, Karen's Errands, and MS Yellow Cab, as well as public transit provider Trans VI). The transportation customer arranges their own transportation with their provider of choice, and the cab companies invoice LINC for the remaining cost of the ride. In 2012, almost 12,000 used this program. LINC's transportation program is a crucial lifeline for many clients, but as recently as early 2016, a significant funding gap resulted in LINC putting the program on hiatus - and this after funding cuts had already reduced the number of trips clients were allowed to use the program for. The program serves about 800 individuals.<sup>10</sup>

College of Southern Idaho (CSI) Office on Aging is the Area IV Agency on Aging (serving Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls Counties). This office funds transportation services for elderly persons to access medical appointments, shopping, personal business and services. This is an umbrella organization that provides funding and oversight to many of the local senior centers. CSI provides funding to LINC, Trans IV, and Interlink Volunteer Caregivers (IVC). IVC runs Senior Assisted Services, which provides volunteer-operated van transportation for elderly persons in Jerome. CSI's Senior Companion Program provides one-on-one assistance to the frail elderly and other homebound persons who have difficulty completing everyday tasks. In addition, CSI's Refugee Center has several vans and provides transportation services through the Center.

The following human service agencies either provide transportation services, or provide financial assistance to their participants for transportation purposes, in Twin Falls: American Cancer Society, CSI Office on Aging (see description at the beginning of this section), Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Idaho Commission on Aging, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Behavioral Health, Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Living Independence Network Corporation (LINC, see description at the beginning of this section), and Magic Valley Youth and Adult Services, Inc.

#### Non-emergency medical transportation

Non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) is a benefit available to eligible Medicaid recipients. The NEMT benefit includes transportation to and from medical services. States can manage Medicaid benefits themselves or contract out the management to another entity. No matter the structure, NEMT programs must:

- “Ensure necessary transportation to and from providers;
- Use the most appropriate form of transportation; and
- Include coverage for transportation and related travel expenses necessary to secure medical examinations and treatment.”

States are not required to provide the NEMT benefit for all Medicaid recipients - they “may require that there be an unmet transportation need.”<sup>11</sup>

As of July 1, 2016, the State of Idaho contracts with Veyo to “administer, coordinate, and manage all NEMT for eligible Idaho Medicaid participants.”<sup>12</sup> Veyo's headquarters are in San Diego, CA, and

<sup>10</sup> [http://magicvalley.com/news/local/subsidized-transportation-for-disabled-elderly-disrupted-in-magic-valley/article\\_d57453ea-c217-5087-b8e7-bebe427ebcc1.html](http://magicvalley.com/news/local/subsidized-transportation-for-disabled-elderly-disrupted-in-magic-valley/article_d57453ea-c217-5087-b8e7-bebe427ebcc1.html)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-medicare-coordination/fraud-prevention/medicaid-integrity-education/downloads/nemt-booklet.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Medical/Medicaid/MedicalCare/MedicalTransportation/tabid/704/Default.aspx>

they provide transportation brokerage services for Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, and Texas. Veyo is a transportation network company (discussed later) that utilizes independent paid drivers who use their own non-commercial vehicles to transport patients. According to some of the professional NEMT providers who were serving clients before the transition to the Veyo brokerage system, the mileage rates offered by Veyo are lower than under the previous system.<sup>13</sup> In addition to its network of independent drivers, Veyo also contracts with commercial taxis, stretcher and ambulance providers, and Trans IV to provide demand responsive NEMT rides.

#### Rideshare/vanpool

Two rideshare programs include Twin Falls in their service area:

- Mountain Rides Vanpool - Mountain Rides Transportation Authority (MRTA), based in Ketchum, provides equipment and support for commuter vanpool routes serving Twin Falls/Jerome/Shoshone to Hailey/Ketchum/Sun Valley, and Gooding to Fairfield. 13 vanpools handle 44,000 annual passenger trips. As of July 2016, for individuals living in Twin Falls and working in Shoshone, monthly fare is \$55; for those living in Twin Falls and working in Hailey, the monthly fare is \$135.
- IdahoRideshare.org – Residents of Twin Falls can be matched with others with whom to share rides in carpools and vanpools through the statewide rideshare program, online at Idaho Rideshare. Idaho Rideshare also provides information and referral to transportation alternatives, and tools for employers.

#### Transportation network companies

Transportation network companies (TNCs) provide a kind of ridesharing. Customers connect to non-commercial drivers through a website or mobile phone app and pay the driver to transport them. Popular TNCs include Uber, Lyft, and Via. In April 2015, the Idaho state legislature passed enabling legislation to allow Uber to operate in the state. In early August, Uber began operating in Twin Falls. Upon beginning service, there were 12 drivers in Twin Falls.<sup>14</sup>

#### Park & ride lots

There are no formal park and ride lots in Twin Falls.

#### Non-motorized transportation (bicycle & pedestrian)

As of May 2015, there were three, striped, on-street lanes marked for bicycles. “1) East side of town, from the City/YMCA pool along Falls Avenue to the top of the grade at Shoshone Falls, 2) West side of town, from North College Road West, south on Sparks to Blake St. N. east on Shoup Avenue West to Harrison St. then north on Harrison to Falls Avenue. There is also a section of this lane that is along Caswell Avenue in front of I.B Perrine Elementary school and Robert Stuart middle school, and 3) South side of town, from the south water tanks, north on Washington St. South to Park Avenue, then west on Park Avenue to Oregon Trail Elementary School, and including a short section on Lois Avenue along the Oregon Trail Youth Complex.”<sup>15</sup> According to the draft comprehensive plan, there are “19 miles of existing bike routes and 3 miles of proposed bike routes that follow the Canyon Rim Trail and connect to the street network in town.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.idahoproviders.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/idaho\\_nemt.pdf](http://www.idahoproviders.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/idaho_nemt.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> [http://magicvalley.com/news/local/uber-to-launch-in-twin-falls-this-weekend/article\\_0d570db1-b3e8-5eb2-9a08-daa691a961f0.html](http://magicvalley.com/news/local/uber-to-launch-in-twin-falls-this-weekend/article_0d570db1-b3e8-5eb2-9a08-daa691a961f0.html)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.tfid.org/Archive/ViewFile/Item/2119>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.tfid.org/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/2690>

In addition, “The canyon rim trail system is designated as a shared use path, along with the pathway on Washington St. N. from Falls Avenue to Pole Line Road and the sidewalk along Pole Line Road.”<sup>17</sup>

#### Taxi services

Several taxi companies serve Twin Falls, and most accept LINC vouchers. A couple of taxi companies also provide non-emergency medical transportation under contract to Veyo.

#### Schools/education

As previously described, the College of Southern Idaho operates the Trans VI Buses and senior transportation services through the Office on Aging.

According to the Twin Falls School District policies: “Transportation is provided [by Western States Bussing] to students who live at least one and one-half miles from school, or for those students who require transportation as part of a specialized program.”<sup>18</sup>

#### Aeronautic

The Magic Valley Regional Airport (Joslin Field), five miles outside of Twin Falls, is home to one commercial airline, two air charter services, and other general aviation services. Delta/Sky West offers three flights each day between Twin Falls and Salt Lake City, UT, and Joslin Field is as alternate Sun Valley destination in case of inclement weather. Precision Aviation, Inc. and Spur Aviation offer charter flights. The airport is undergoing a \$4.3 million expansion in 2016 and is in the process of updating its Master Plan.

There are also municipal airports located in Buhl, Jerome, Gooding and Hazelton.

#### Veteran’s transportation

Transportation to health care at the VA hospital in Boise is provided to veterans 4 days a week, leaving Twin Falls in the morning and returning in the evening. Van drivers are volunteers, and trips are organized by the county’s Veteran Services Officer. Another group of volunteers picks veterans up from the rural areas to transport them into the VA clinic in Twin Falls.

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.tfid.org/Archive/ViewFile/Item/2166>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.tfsd.k12.id.us/tfsd/schools/District%20Policies.htm>

## Chapter 2: Current and Future Funding

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Effective public transportation requires public investment. In the United States, most public transportation systems are supported through some form of local, state, and federal tax revenue. The two most common sources of funding for public transportation are federal gas tax proceeds, which flow back to States and local governments in the form of formula grants. These grants require a local match ranging from 20 percent for one-time capital purchases to 50 percent or more for operational expenses, such as fuel and drivers' salaries.

### Current Funding

Currently, the Twin Falls area receives federal funding for public transportation through two primary sources: Section 5311 Formula Funding for Rural Public Transportation and Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and People with Disabilities. These programs currently support the Trans IV dial-a-ride service and LINC's transportation voucher program.

The largest source of local match currently used for public transportation in Twin Falls is the cash and in-kind contributions made by CSI in support of these programs. The next largest source of local match is contract revenue earned by Trans IV by providing rides for Medicaid-funded non-emergency medical trips. Revenue from Medicaid is an allowable source of match for Federal Transit Administration funds. Other local sources of match include discretionary grants provided by Twin Falls through its Municipal Powers Outsource Grant (MPOG), which has provided between \$18,000 to just under \$32,000 per year for a total contribution of approximately \$350,000 between 2002 and 2016.

Local options for raising funds for public transportation are limited in Idaho. Idaho is among a small group of states in the U.S. that do not allow local governments to raise taxes to fund public transportation. Resort communities have access to a local option sales tax for public transportation, but a similar mechanism is not available to non-resort communities. This is why areas such as the Hailey, Ketchum, and Sun Valley area have robust fixed route transit services, while other areas, including Boise, struggle year to year to find sufficient funding for transit services<sup>19</sup>.

The funding picture in Twin Falls is particularly challenging. Despite a strong local economy and an extraordinarily low unemployment rate, Twin Falls has experienced declining funding for public transportation in recent years. Table 1 summarizes existing funding levels and provides a forward looking assessment of what funding might be available in the near term, between now and 2023, and after Twin Falls is certified as an urbanized area (expected after 2023).

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<sup>19</sup> Local Option History in Idaho <http://www.boiseweekly.com/boise/road-to-nowhere-the-state-of-public-transportation/Content?oid=2980105>

Table 1: Current and future federal funding outlook

Program Name	Program Description	Current Levels	Near-Term	Post MPO
<b>5311</b>	Federal Transit Administration Rural Public Transportation	Approximately \$500,000 per year in support of Trans IV.	Declining due to prioritization of fixed routes in Idaho.	Not available in urbanized area.
<b>5310</b>	Capital and Operating Assistance for Seniors and People with Disabilities	Approximately \$150,000 per year in support of LINC's voucher program.	Steady growth, but competitive. New discretionary pilot program in FY 2016 supporting healthcare access.	Steady growth through 2020. Unknown after 2020.
<b>5339</b>	Capital funding for bus and bus facilities		Substantial increase (over 38 percent in 2016) but competitive and limited to capital purchases.	Flat funding levels through 2020. Unknown after 2020.
<b>5307</b>	Federal Transit Administration Urban Public Transportation	Not Available	Not Available	Up to approximately \$1.8 M depending on the availability of local match.
<b>Medicaid NEMT</b>	Non-Emergency Medical Transportation	Declining <sup>20</sup>	Declining	Uncertain

<sup>20</sup> GridWorks submitted a Freedom of Information request to the State of Idaho to retrieve cost information for NEMT expenditures in the Region V area. At the time of publication the data had not yet been received. This table will be updated with the information as soon as it is available.

## Future funding

### Section 5307 Formula Funding for Public Transportation in Urbanized Areas

The funding landscape has the potential to improve when Twin Falls becomes an urbanized area and begins receiving the urban equivalent of Section 5311 funds. Federal formula funding for public transportation in urbanized areas is provided through FTA's Section 5307 program. Communities that are between 50,000 and 200,000 in population are eligible to receive 50 percent federal match for operating expenses.<sup>21</sup>

Under the FAST Act, the most recent federal legislation authorizing funding for highway and public transportation spending, Congress authorized a total of \$4.4B for the Section 5307 program. In the formula used to determine how these funds are apportioned, 9.23 percent of the total 5307 funding amount goes to small urbanized areas. Half of these funds are distributed based on population, and the remaining amount is distributed based on population and population density. Denser communities receive a greater share of the funding.

We are unable to directly estimate the amount of 5307 funds that will be available without knowing what other MPOs are likely to form after the 2020 Census. Instead of directly calculating the estimate from the amounts listed in the FAST Act, we use the funding per capita levels for existing similarly sized MPOs to estimate a range. Based on historic apportionments and population levels and the current authorized funding amounts contained in the FAST Act, we anticipate Twin Falls will be eligible to receive up to \$1M in federal section 5307 funding per year. This amount will increase annually in rough proportion to population growth. However, it should be noted that this amount is based on funding under the FAST Act, which expires in 2020. Future amounts may be different.

### Section 5311 Formula Funding for Public Transportation in Rural Areas

While the urbanized area funding will increase after Twin Falls is designated an urbanized area, it will also mean the city will no longer have access to the rural formula funds.

It will be more difficult to organize cost-effective fixed route services in outlying areas. If ITD's current emphasis on fixed route services continues into the future, the amount of funding available in the non-urbanized areas surrounding Twin Falls may drop below the historic levels of 5311 funding the region previously experienced.

### Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and People with Disabilities

At the federal level, 5310 funds are programed to increase by approximately 2 percent per year through 2020. Once the Twin Falls area becomes urbanized, it will draw from the small urban share of 5310 funds. This pot of funding is the same size as the rural 5310 funding but is shared among a smaller number of subrecipients. The 5310 program will likely continue as a discretionary grant program with increasing competition in years to come.

### Local Funding

In order to match the full amount of federal Section 5307 funds available, the City of Twin Falls would need to raise between \$500,000 and \$600,000 in eligible local matching funds. Table 2 below shows a selection of peer cities and the per capital local contributions raised in each city.

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<sup>21</sup> In Twin Falls and in cities in other western states with large tracts of public land the local match requirement is slightly lower as a result of FTA's sliding scale matching policy.

Table 2. Funding Levels among Peer Cities (2014)

	Pocatello, ID	Idaho Falls, ID	San Luis Obispo, CA	Logan, UT
<b>Urbanized Area Population</b>	81,730	90,733	206,008	95,500
<b>Total Local Contribution</b>	\$706,325	\$147,184	\$5,605,288	\$3,190,803
<b>Local Contribution per Capita</b>	\$8.64	\$1.62	\$27.21	\$33.41
<b>Federal Contribution</b>	\$1,376,831	\$613,600	\$2,555,447	\$1,714,946
<b>Total Funding</b>	\$2,083,156	\$760,784	\$8,160,735	\$4,905,749

As a comparison, table 3 shows the amount of local and federal funds that would be raised at varying levels of per capita local match in Twin Falls. In order to fully match the maximum available federal amount about of approximately \$1M, Twin Falls would need to generate a local contribution equivalent to \$12 per capita. This amount is lower than the local funding levels in two of the case studies San Luis Obispo and Logan Utah, but higher than local funding levels in Idaho Falls and Pocatello.

Table 3. Hypothetical Funding Levels for Twin Falls

Local Contribution per Capita	\$4.00	\$8.00	\$12.00
<b>Total Local Contribution</b>	\$220,000	\$440,000	\$660,000
<b>Federal Contribution</b>	\$343,750	\$687,500	\$1,031,250
<b>Total Funding</b>	\$563,750	\$1,127,500	\$1,691,250

### Other Discretionary Grants

Under the Obama administration the Federal Transit Administration has emphasized the use of discretionary grants to incentivize innovation. Under the Section 5310 program The FAST Act contains on-going funding for pilot projects aimed at increasing access to healthcare services through coordinated transportation systems. The first round of these grants was recently announced as part of the Rides2Wellness program.<sup>22</sup>

### Conclusion

The funding landscape for public transportation in Twin Falls is fraught. It appears based on current trends that available funding for public transportation will likely decline between now and the time Twin Falls becomes an urbanized area. This gap poses a risk to services that rely on federal funding such as the 5311 and 5310 programs. ITD's funding two-year funding cycle will open up next in early 2017 for the 2018 through 2020 fiscal years. Because of the long lead times between funding cycles, it is important that the Twin Falls region put forward competitive applications for 5311 and 5310 funds during each funding cycle. While we do not recommend Twin Falls pursue a system of multiple fixed-routes, we do recommend multiple strategies for strengthening future 5311 and 5310 grant applications, including a recommendation for developing targeted fixed route services for commuters routes (see Recommendation # 7).

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/fy-2016-rides-wellness-demonstration-and-innovative-coordinated-access-and-mobility>

## Chapter 3: Transit Options

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As a preface to our recommendations, we offer this section as a primer on transit planning concepts. Much of the material in this section is inspired by Jarrett Walker's *Human Transit*.<sup>23</sup>

Transit services can be designed to serve different populations and to meet different community goals. In general, the design of services will rest on the trade-off between two goals – coverage and ridership. For transit service with a goal of maximizing coverage, routes will be designed to serve as many households as possible, spreading out resources over a large area and resulting in infrequent and cost-inefficient service.

For transit service with a goal of maximizing ridership, routes will be designed to serve higher-density areas, concentrating resources and resulting in more frequent service. Another common transit service goal, equity, aims to serve the population most in need of transit service – individuals who cannot drive due to income, physical ability, age, or other factors. Twin Falls' current transit service, Trans IV, is dial-a-ride service designed around equity and primarily serves individuals who are unable to drive.

Given a fixed budget, transit programs that fail to specifically articulate their goals typically struggle to serve any particular market well. This situation can trigger a downward spiral of low public support and low ridership. These factors feed on one another and can be difficult to overcome.

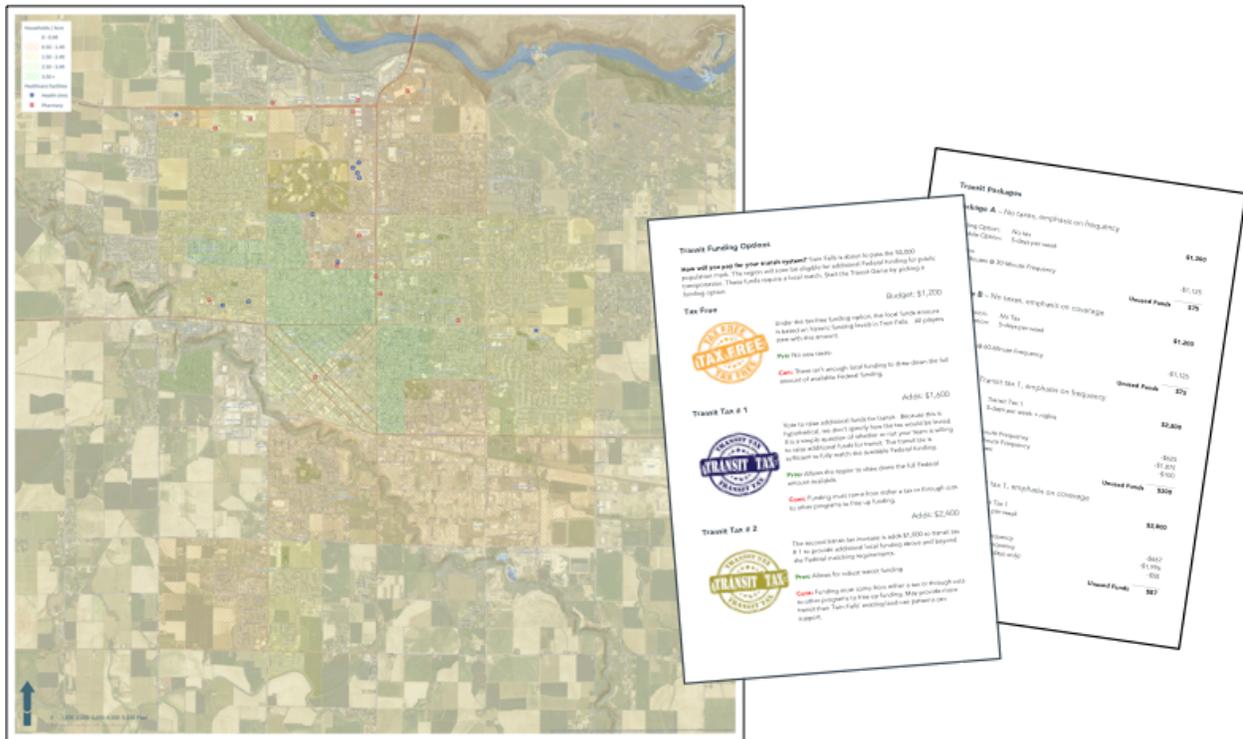
### What might a successful transit system look like in Twin Falls?

In July of 2016, GridWorks conducted a series of workshops with citizens, business leaders, elected leaders, and would-be public transportation users. The goal of the workshops was to answer the simple question: What might a successful transit system look like in Twin Falls? The workshops were centered around a hands-on game in which participants were challenged to plan a hypothetical transit system using a map of Twin Falls, string, and monopoly money. The results of the transit game were informative in many ways.

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<sup>23</sup> Walker, Jarrett. 2012. *Human Transit: How Clearer Thinking about Public Transit Can Enrich Our Communities and Our Lives*. Washington, DC: Island Press. In Walker's book, he describes the equity goal as one related to density-distributional equity – a place twice as dense as another receives twice as much service. Equity has different definitions across jurisdictions. For a detailed discussion of different kinds of transportation equity, see *Evaluating Transportation Equity: Guidance for Incorporating Distributional Impacts in Transportation Planning* by Todd Litman of the Victoria Transport Policy Institute: <http://www.vtpi.org/equity.pdf>.

Figure 8: Transit game board and game cards



GridWorks’ major takeaways from the exercise are:

- **Unclear goals:** Agreement about how transit should be structured in Twin Falls is limited. In other words, community leaders, business leaders, and residents have a wide range of views on how transit should be structured; to many, it isn’t clear whether the goal should be ridership, coverage, or equity. This is also reflected in the goals described later in this chapter.
- **Limited support for taxation:** Support for raising taxes to pay for transit in Twin Falls is mixed. The workshops were not conducted in a randomized manner, so the results are not representative of public opinion as a whole. However, even within the mostly self-selected sample of participants, support for raising taxes to support public transportation was limited.
- **The challenge of building transit in a car-town:** Twin Falls’ low-density, automobile-oriented design makes it difficult for transit. Participants struggled to strike a balance between their limited resources available in the game and providing access to key areas of the city.
- **Uncertainty for the future and hope for new transportation technologies:** Many participants expressed a hope that the face of public transportation may look very different over the next five to ten years as commercial transportation options (including TNCs like Uber) continue to expand and as autonomous vehicles become more available to the general public.

Twin Falls is in a challenging position when it comes to planning for a fixed route system. Challenges include the tradeoffs between coverage and ridership (which every community faces) and the added difficulties of building successful transit in an environment without a major university, without a readily available funding mechanism, and without supportive land uses. These findings ultimately lead us to the recommendations outlined in Chapter 4, which *do not include general fixed route public transit in the near-term*.

Appendix A includes a more detailed summary of the findings from these workshops.

### Why not implement just one fixed route bus to preserve funding levels?

A group of stakeholders involved in the development of this study raised the question of whether Twin Falls could support a single fixed route bus. The question of whether or not Twin Falls should have a fixed route bus system has become more urgent because of a recent state-level policy shift that prioritizes funding for fixed route transit systems over demand responsive public transportation services.

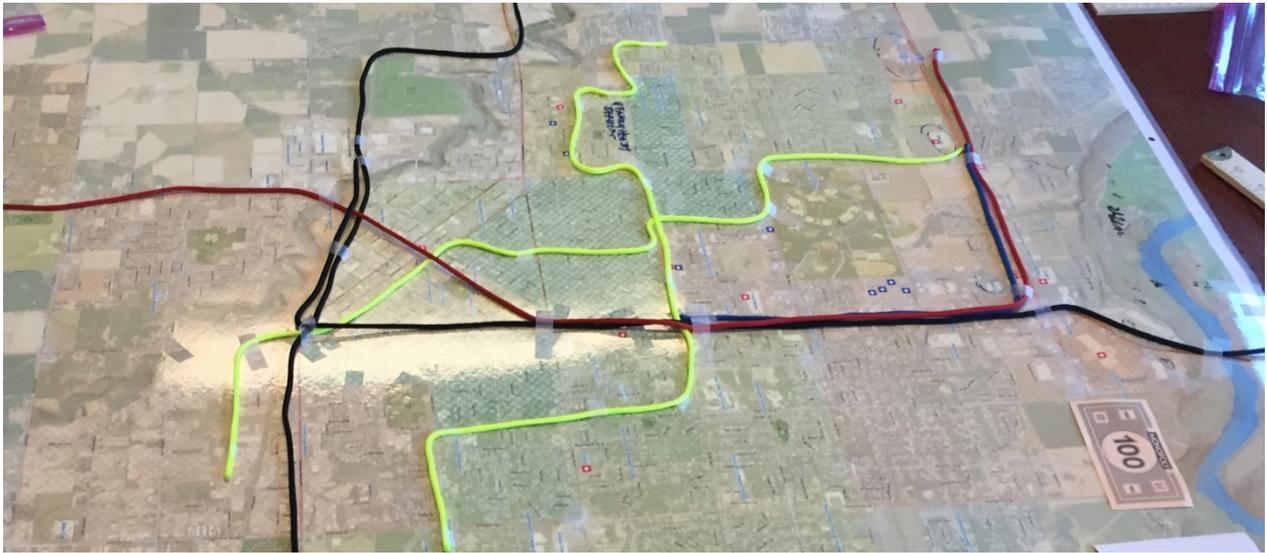
Based on what we learned from the transit game, it is clear that public support for a fixed route transit system in Twin Falls would likely suffer if new routes were under utilized. Empty busses would damage the future success of transit in Twin Falls because of the chilling effect on voters' perceptions of the usefulness and effectiveness of public transportation.

Any fixed route service in Twin Falls will need to demonstrate a reasonable level of ridership. A standard measure of ridership in the transit industry is a fare recovery ratio. A fare recovery ratio measures the percent of operating costs that are recovered through customer fares. For example, rural and small urban public transportation systems in California are required to achieve a Fare Recovery Ratio of at least 10 percent. This percentage reflects the amount of fares collected relative to the total cost of operating the bus. We can use the 10 percent threshold as a benchmark for determining an acceptable level of ridership for proposed fixed route systems. In order to operate in this range, fixed routes must offer direct and convenient service to riders and operate within walking distance of a large number of households.

Among all maps produced by participants of the transit game, the one produced by participants at the CSI Refugee Center was the most likely to generate ridership in this range. For this reason, we use their map as an example of what a fixed route transit system might look like in Twin Falls and to demonstrate why now is not the time to invest in fixed route public transportation (see Figure 10).

The map produced by participants of the workshop at the CSI refugee center is based on the middle funding option (see Appendix A for a description of funding options and game rules). It emphasizes frequent buses to gain more riders. The two relatively direct, 30-minute frequency fixed routes in the center serve the highest density neighborhoods in Twin Falls and connect to key job, shopping, and health care centers, including CSI. Commuter routes provide job access from outlying areas into Twin Falls. If Twin Falls were to pursue a fixed route system, a route structure similar to this one would likely achieve the highest fare recovery ratio compared to other possible configurations. But even this route configuration would require a tax increase.

Figure 9: Result of transit game played at CSI Refugee Center



Instead of implementing one or more general public fixed-routes, we recommend beginning with a small-scale commuter route in partnership with local employers with clear ridership targets. See recommendation # 7, below.

### How Can Twin Falls Reach its Goals?

Looking to the Twin Falls' future public transit service, existing plans and outreach efforts for this Transit Development Plan indicate that Twin Falls has many goals for public transit in the area. The City pursued grant funding for the Transit Development Plan to begin planning for transit service that:

- “Strengthens the economy by improving access to jobs, healthcare, and retail;
- Helps to support and improve the vitality of the downtown area, and;
- Facilitates independent living for seniors, people with disabilities, low-income and zero-vehicle households by providing more options to access health care, social services, shopping, and educational opportunities.”<sup>24</sup>

In early outreach efforts with community stakeholders, we heard that long-term goals for public transit in Twin Falls include:

- Serves region beyond city boundaries
- Feels safe & comfortable
- Seniors, people with disabilities, non-drivers can get where/when they need to go
- Buses consistently being utilized by many riders
- Attract new business & activity on public transit corridors
- Promote walkable, multi-modal communities
- Financially sustainable

<sup>24</sup> [http://twinfalls.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=2&clip\\_id=283&meta\\_id=13474](http://twinfalls.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=283&meta_id=13474)

These many goals will require different kinds of transit service, some of which will not be able to operate safely and cost-effectively in Twin Falls right now, and some of which will need to be defined in greater detail in the future. While dial-a-ride services like Trans IV can effectively serve seniors, people with disabilities, and other non-drivers, they do so at a higher cost than fixed route service and are able to serve fewer riders overall than fixed route service.

The success of fixed route services, though, requires the area being served to have sufficiently high residential densities and a safe and convenient network for people accessing transit and destinations. Whether Twin Falls' highest priority for fixed route transit is to promote economic development or to be financially sustainable, creating the conditions for high ridership will require a shift in development patterns along future transit corridors.

Twin Falls can benefit from lessons learned by other cities with newly developed and even decades-old transit systems. Established metropolitan areas (like the Seattle region) that have invested resources into monitoring and evaluating their public transit system performance can provide valuable information to help guide Twin Falls' planning and investment decisions to most efficiently accomplish the community's transit goals. For example, the Puget Sound Regional Council (the Seattle-area MPO) published "Transit-Supportive Densities and Land Uses" guidance in 2015. Through previous experience, peer cities research, and an examination of the existing research literature, PSRC identified four conditions necessary for public transit to "achieve and sustain high ridership and productivity:

- Critical mass of potential transit patrons
- Travel demand throughout the day
- Local connectivity to transit via multiple modes
- Regional connectivity to high-demand destinations"<sup>25</sup>

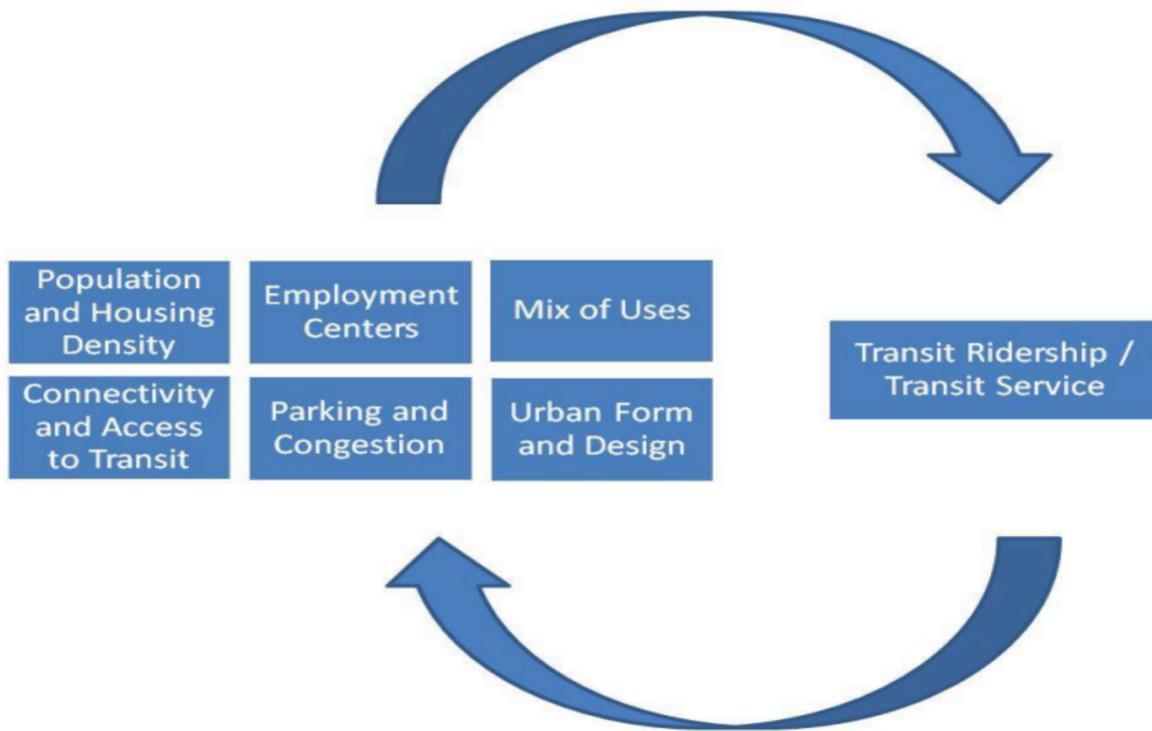
Because Twin Falls' population is much smaller than that of the Seattle region, the intensity of these conditions will look different in Twin Falls; but the conditions themselves, and the steps to achieve them, are similar. Based on these necessary conditions and the evidence represented in Figure 11, PSRC developed guidance that Twin Falls should consider when planning for a transit-supportive future environment. Guidance from PSRC includes:

- "Increase densities around transit stations and stops to increase ridership.
- Establish transit-supportive density goals based on locally relevant data and policies.
- Maximize land use potential within transit walksheds.
- Promote employment growth at station areas in transit corridors.
- Plan for and encourage mixed uses and transit-supportive design.
- Incentivize alternatives to automobile travel in station areas."

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<sup>25</sup> Puget Sound Regional Council. 2015. Transit-Supportive Densities and Land Uses: A PSRC Guidance Paper. <http://www.psrc.org/assets/12239/TSDLUGuidancePaper.pdf>

Figure 10: The evidence-based relationship between ridership and the built environment<sup>26</sup>



There are several ways to begin to implement this guidance. Based on current conditions in Twin Falls (Part 1 of this memo), lessons learned from similar cities (Part 3 of this memo), and community feedback (Part 4 of this memo), we have drafted recommendations for a range of next steps Twin Falls can take to support more robust public transit in the future.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p.8.

# Chapter 4: Recommendations

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In 2014, Transit Center – a transit research, advocacy, and funding organization – conducted a nationwide study to understand “the differences in attitudes and behaviors among the US population with respect to public transportation and neighborhood choice.”<sup>27</sup> They learned that neighborhood density is the top predictor of whether or not a person will use transit at least occasionally. Neighborhood density is the most important, but the whole list of predictors includes:

- High population density of home neighborhood (positive effect on transit ridership)
- Being employed or a student (positive effect)
- Being an ethnic minority (positive effect)
- High-quality local transit (positive effect)
- High income (negative effect)

To support future transit services in Twin Falls, we recommend building off of Twin Falls’ existing policy and infrastructure foundations while keeping in mind Transit Center’s major finding – “Transit-oriented development and policies that promote density are the most powerful way to encourage transit use...Most people will abandon their cars not when they are enticed onto transit, but when they are able to move to a mixed use neighborhood.”<sup>28</sup>

Twin Falls’ draft comprehensive plan includes goals and policies that, if supported by actions in the coming years, will build the vibrant small-town community where Twin Falls residents (and 20% of respondents in a national survey) want to live.

Recognizing that Twin Falls is not well positioned for a high-performing fixed route transit system today, our recommendations are to build on the current comprehensive plan to create a more transit friendly future for Twin Falls. We recommend Twin Falls focus on the following five areas:

- Get Mixed Use Right
- Build a Better Active Transportation Experience
- Update Parking Policy
- Develop a Corridor Plan for Blue Lakes
- Develop Regional Partnerships
- Work With What You Have
- Develop a Commuter Route Proposal for 5311 Funding in the Near-Term

Each of these recommendations is explored in further detail with examples and a range of potential actions listed for each on the following pages.

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<sup>27</sup> <http://transitcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/WhosOnBoard2014-ForWeb.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

## Recommendation # 1: Get Mixed Use Right

Mixed use development is not a new idea – it is instead a return to a very old idea. Mixed use simply refers to the existence of different kinds of land uses – residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, etc. – in one place, where these uses are well integrated and supportive of one another. Mixed use development can refer to a place as small as one building or as large as a neighborhood. In a recent survey, 58% of respondents said their ideal neighborhood was one with a “mix of houses, shops, and businesses,” in an urban area (10%), suburban area (28%), or small town (20%).<sup>29</sup> Employers are increasingly moving their offices back into downtown areas with walkable mixed use neighborhoods to help attract talented employees.<sup>30</sup>

Twin Falls’ draft comprehensive plan includes a future land use designation called “Mixed use.” Descriptions of the “Downtown/high density residential” designation and the “Neighborhood commercial” designation also include a mix of residential, retail, and office uses.

As discussed earlier in this memo, the most important measure of density to support transit is the density near transit stops, not the density across whole neighborhoods or the entire city. The three areas identified in the comprehensive plan as places to promote a mix of uses encompass a large proportion of the city – including areas (such as downtown) that already have mixed use foundations, like pedestrian-scale development and a well-connected street network, and areas (such as the intersection of Blue Lakes Boulevard and Pole Line Road) that are currently not designed to support mixed use development. At the same time, the areas just to the north and immediately east of downtown have a more connected road grid and higher residential density than other parts of town, but these have not been designated for a mix of uses.

Currently, downtown is among the highest-density residential areas in Twin Falls, and, on average, people living downtown pay a smaller proportion of their income on the combined costs of housing and transportation. As Twin Falls implements community goals around downtown revitalization and mixed use development, land values in these areas are likely to increase. Policies and programs designed to maintain residential and commercial affordability should be developed in parallel with policies and programs that support vibrant, walkable, mixed use neighborhoods with a variety of housing types. Communities across the country are grappling with the challenge of how to maintain affordability – for the stability of residents in existing neighborhoods, for the competitive edge it offers businesses in attracting talent, and for the benefits that diverse, mixed-income neighborhoods afford to all residents. Twin Falls has an unusually low proportion of multi-family housing options; stakeholders agreed that many individuals who work in Twin Falls are unable to live in Twin Falls due to affordability and/or lack of housing options.

The draft comprehensive plan’s land use designations provide a guide for how Twin Falls should develop in the long-term. Because mixed use is a broad concept, we recommend that the city refine the three land use designations that include a mix of uses and develop other complementary policies to ensure successful mixed use development and a mix of housing types. Specifically, we recommend that the City of Twin Falls:

- **Identify specific, small-scale areas to plan for and incentivize mixed use development.** Consider existing infrastructure and land uses in the identification of these priority areas, so that Twin Falls can get a head start on building the kinds of neighborhoods desired by residents and needed to support transit.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Smart Growth America, 2016. Core Values: Why American Companies Are Moving Downtown. <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/core-values.pdf>

- **Research and address barriers to multi-family development and mixed use development.** There are many factors that influence the type of housing and mixed use development likely to be proposed and/or likely to succeed in Twin Falls. Zoning designations, building codes, parking requirements, permitting timelines, and financing structures are among the issues that Twin Falls should consider discussing with community stakeholders to better understand how to support mixed use development and the development of more **diverse housing** options.

The American Planning Association Policy Guide on Housing suggests several tools to “encourage and implement residential development practices that result in more innovative housing options,” including: regulations that allow “accessory apartments, cluster housing, elder cottages, manufactured housing, mixed-income housing, shared residences, accessory dwelling units, and single room occupancy (SRO) developments.”

–<https://www.planning.org/policy/guides/adopted/housing.htm>

- **Develop context-sensitive, mixed use zoning designations and accompanying code language.** Consider the goals for each area. Long-term, investigate **form-based code** as a tool for allowing a mix of uses that are compatible with the community’s vision.

**Form-based code** considers the form of the building and how it relates to the built environment around it. Nashville, TN introduced form-based codes in 2001 alongside Design Studio, a: “program to help individual property owners, developers, and design professionals create great site layouts, select appropriate building types and details, and incorporate appropriate streetscape elements into their projects.” –Amazing Place: Six Cities Using the New Recipe for Economic Development, Smart Growth America, June 2016

- **Create incentives for mixed use developments.** Consider pilot programs to fund mixed use development, such as a business improvement district, local improvement district, tax increment financing, transfer of development rights, technical assistance, and public/private partnerships. Market studies can help identify areas best suited for different kinds of assistance and expected return on investment.
- **Maintain affordability of housing.** Consider workforce and other affordable housing provisions, including policies such as inclusionary zoning, rent control, cooperative ownership models, elimination of no-cause evictions, and low-income homeowner and renter housing support.

To **maintain affordability** while supporting mixed-use development, Denver approached the solution from the supply and demand side. Denver, CO adopted context-based zoning codes to allow for appropriate development along transit corridors and created a Revolving Housing Fund, Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, and Metro Mortgage Assistance Plus Program to maintain residential affordability.

## Recommendation # 2: Build a Better Active Transportation Experience

Every transit user is a pedestrian.<sup>31</sup> To support fixed route transit in the future, Twin Falls will need to increase investment in pedestrian-supportive policies and infrastructure now. This recommendation goes hand-in-hand with the preceding and following recommendations, as successful mixed use development supports and is supported by a better walking experience, and parking policy impacts the pedestrian environment and the potential success of mixed use zoning. Areas of Twin Falls already have some of the characteristics and infrastructure that make it safe, convenient, and pleasant for people to walk, while other areas that are heavily used are lacking these characteristics.

The same is true for bicycle infrastructure. People walking and people riding bicycles have some different needs in terms of infrastructure and supportive programs, but many of the barriers they face to having a safe and accessible experience are the same. Bicycling complements transit – if transit users can choose to ride a bike to or from transit stops, the reach of the transit network is expanded greatly. In addition, when people in a community have multiple transportation options (including walking, biking, taking transit, carpooling, using a car-sharing or bike-sharing service, or hailing a taxi or other ride service), it is easier to reduce car-dependence in the community. As more people choose options other than driving alone, benefits range from individuals spending less on transportation to the community as a whole experiencing reductions in air pollution and reductions in vehicle crashes.

To support the community's vision from the comprehensive plan, promote economic development,<sup>32</sup> and build an environment where transit can be successful, we recommend that the City of Twin Falls:

- **Create a pedestrian plan.** Consider including existing conditions, the proposed pedestrian network, pedestrian design guidelines, plans and processes for infrastructure maintenance, the relationship between Twin Falls' ADA Transition Plan and future transit investments, and other policies and programs (addressing the 5 Es: education, encouragement, engineering, enforcement, and evaluation).

Pittsboro, NC faced challenges related to an incomplete sidewalk network with most infrastructure on arterial roads, US-501 running straight through the heart of town, and few existing traffic control devices like pedestrian signals or marked crosswalks. In 2009, the City adopted a comprehensive **Pedestrian Plan** in consultation with NCDOT and community stakeholders.

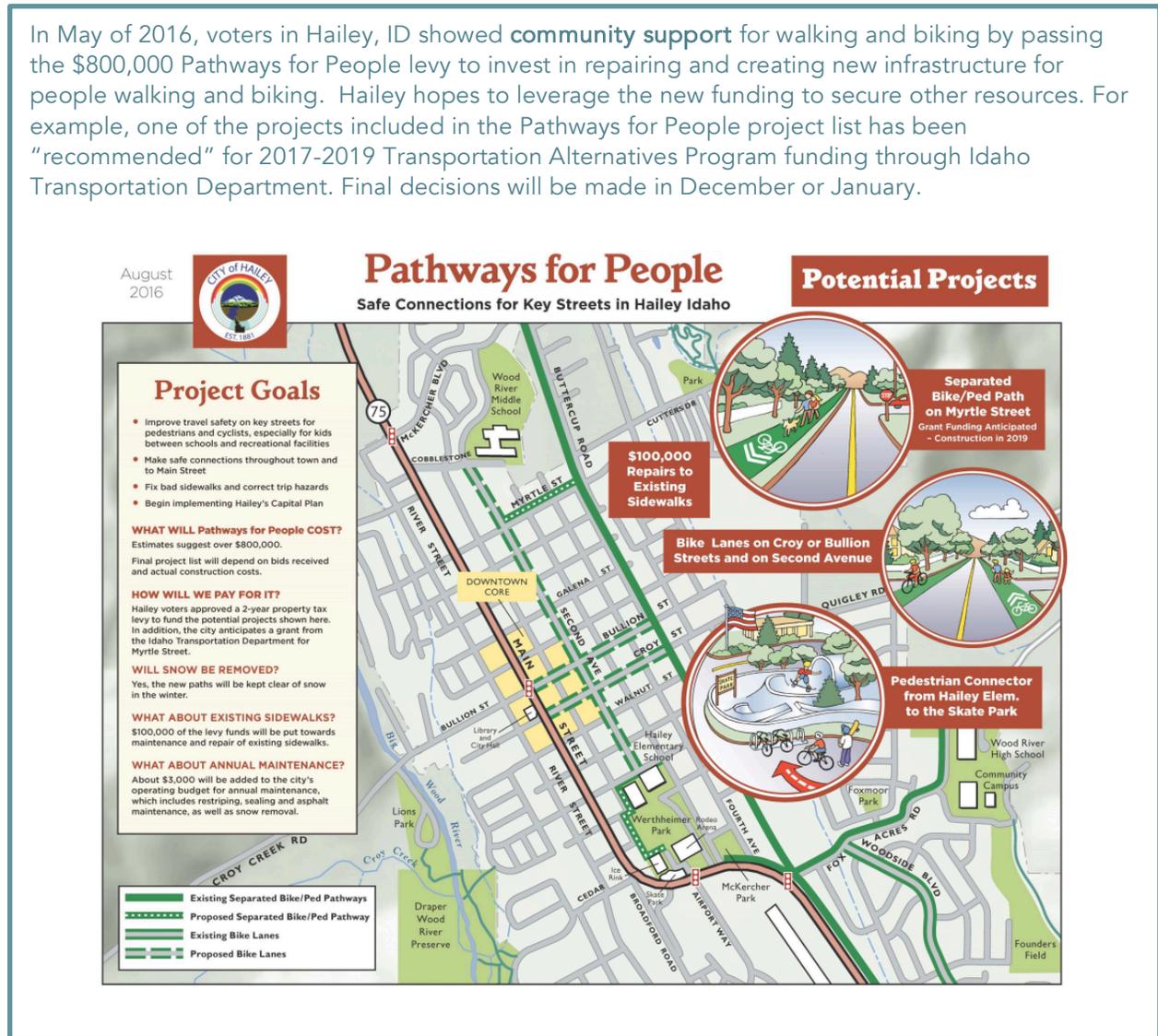
- **Create a bicycle plan.** Twin Falls has already completed some preliminary work to identify facility gaps, but a more comprehensive and strategic approach is needed to create a bicycling network that is safe and accessible in Twin Falls. A robust network of bicycle facilities acts as an extension of both the transit and pedestrian networks; bicycles are one of the most effective

<sup>31</sup> We use the term pedestrian in a broad sense. "While everyone is a pedestrian, not everyone walks. Walkable/rollable and accessible are used interchangeably as a reminder that a pedestrian network must accommodate all of its users including persons using mobility devices. Please consider 'walking' as shorthand for 'walking/rolling.'" – Getting Around on Foot Action Plan, Willamette Pedestrian Coalition, 2010.

<sup>32</sup> In a study of 500 companies that "relocated, opened new offices, or expanded in walkable downtown between 2010 and 2015," the companies' average Walk Scores increased from 52 to 88. Average Transit Scores increased from 52 to 79. (<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/core-values>)

solutions to transit’s first- and last-mile challenges.<sup>33</sup> A bicycle plan should include facility design guidelines (including travel facilities like bicycle lanes and markings and support facilities like signage and parking), the future bicycle network with identified funding priorities, and programs to support individuals and employers interested in increasing bicycle use. Ultimately, a strong network of bicycling and walking infrastructure can create the environmental conditions and **community support** for more investment in active transportation that supports non-driving options.

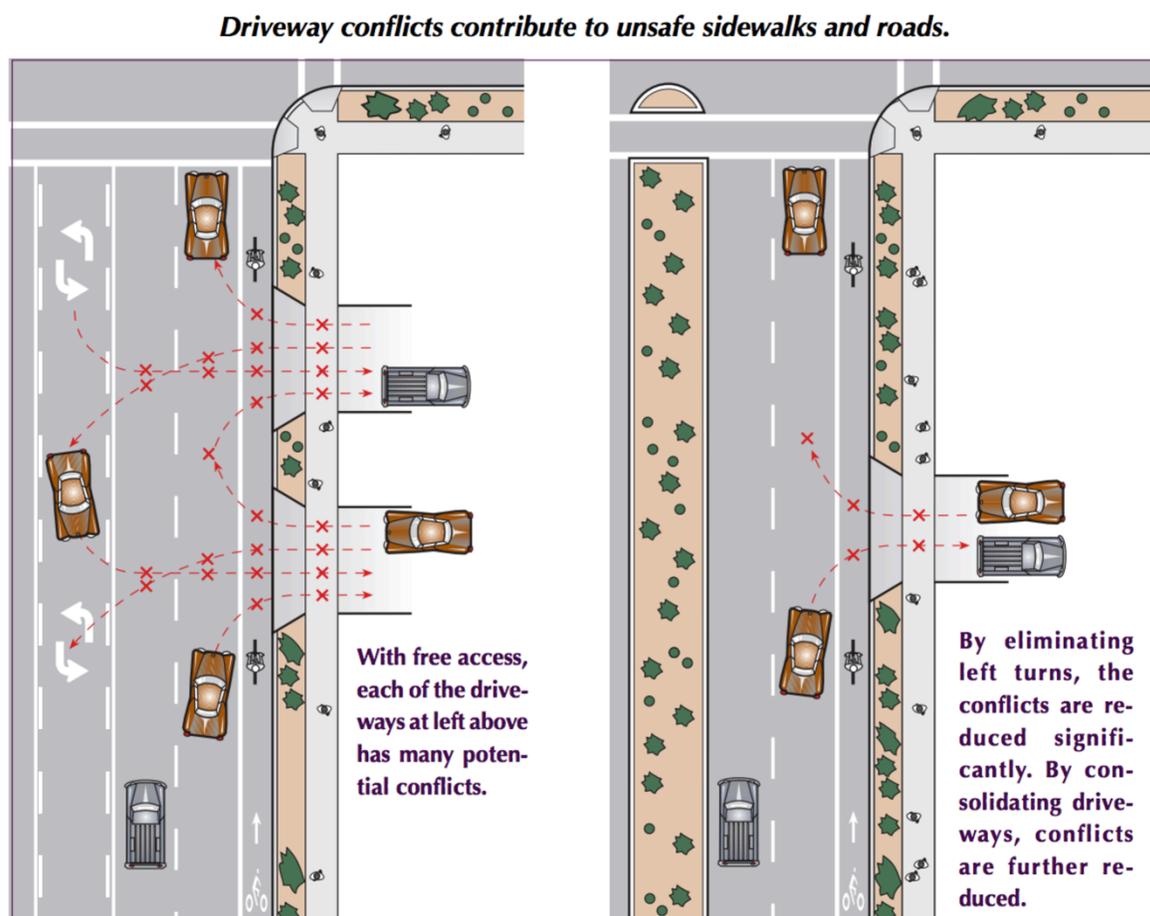
In May of 2016, voters in Hailey, ID showed **community support** for walking and biking by passing the \$800,000 Pathways for People levy to invest in repairing and creating new infrastructure for people walking and biking. Hailey hopes to leverage the new funding to secure other resources. For example, one of the projects included in the Pathways for People project list has been “recommended” for 2017-2019 Transportation Alternatives Program funding through Idaho Transportation Department. Final decisions will be made in December or January.



<sup>33</sup> “What is public transit’s first-mile/last-mile (FM/LM) problem? It begins with a ¼ mile. Most people in the United States are “comfortable” walking less than a ¼ mile to or from public transit stops. The problem arises when a potential rider is further than a “comfortable distance” to the necessary fixed route stop. Of course, what you define as a “comfortable distance” may be very different than what I consider to be a “comfortable distance,” and this distance may vary based on uncontrollable variables such as weather and time of day.” - <http://transloc.com/eliminating-public-transits-first-milelast-mile-problem/>

- **Revise codes related to landscaping and buildings to improve the experience of people walking in Twin Falls.** Topics include building setbacks from the property line, location of main entrance, height and mass, sidewalk-facing façades, and bicycle parking facilities.
- **Ensure that other transportation plans and policies support pedestrians, including parking policy (see next recommendation) and street design and engineering.** Roadways impact people walking – people walk near roads, cross roads, and watch out for cars crossing from the roadways to driveways and parking lots. Street design elements that should be examined and revised to support a safe pedestrian environment include: wide turn radii; free right turns (or right-on-red); left turn lanes instead of pedestrian medians on wide roads; design and posted speed of roads; access management – including driveways and other curb cuts. Consider adopting a Complete Streets policy. Complete Streets policies can be tailored to address multiple issues. For example, some communities' Complete Streets policies also include management of other utilities such as storm water.

Figure 11: Access management can reduce conflicts between drivers and between drivers and people walking.<sup>34</sup>



<sup>34</sup> ODOT. 1999. Main Street...When a Highway Runs Through It: A Handbook for Oregon Communities. <https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/BIKEPED/docs/mainstreethandbook.pdf>

## Recommendation # 3: Update Parking Policy

Parking policy impacts the transit-friendliness of an area in several ways. In multi-family units, parking is often bundled with housing, causing households to pay (included in their rent) for parking even if they do not own a vehicle. Free parking creates an incentive for an individual to choose to drive, even though their choice may create social costs such as increased congestion, poor use of public space (to park private vehicles in lieu of other public uses of the space such as sidewalks or transit lanes), and decreased air quality.

Parking minimums in Twin Falls do not currently reflect the community vision put forth in the comprehensive plan. With two parking spaces required for each single-family residence and one space required for each 250 ft<sup>2</sup> of retail space, Twin Falls may be overbuilding parking, making it difficult to realize the walkable community vision supported by residents. As noted above, although Blue Lakes Boulevard and Pole Line Road are not currently well-suited for their mixed use land use designation (in part because these areas are not pedestrian-friendly), these areas also have some advantages for future pedestrian-scale development. For example, in a pedestrian friendly area, buildings are oriented towards the sidewalk instead of a parking lot. In older downtown where buildings front the sidewalks, sidewalk infrastructure cannot be expanded without serious impact to existing buildings. In the case of much of Blue Lakes Boulevard, large parking lots sit between the sidewalk and the retail and service destinations that people walking are trying to access, which means that pedestrian infrastructure can be improved without impacting buildings.

A transit-supportive environment requires the right mix of supportive land uses. In addition, the more that the social cost of driving (e.g. costs of public-right-of-way used for parking, air quality deterioration, crashes and injuries) is internalized by each individual choosing to drive, the more competitive other modes like transit, walking, and biking become. To create a transit-supportive city, we recommend that the City of Twin Falls:

- **Develop incentives for the redevelopment of surface parking lots** into higher value land uses, especially in areas designated for mixed use or along transit corridors.

In Greenville, SC, “Main Street was originally built as a four-lane highway with narrow sidewalks that made walking unsafe, and vacant storefronts dotted the street as a result. Greenville’s leaders knew that if they wanted to attract visitors downtown, they would have to make the street safer and more welcoming for people walking. In the 1970s the City redesigned the street, transforming the fast-moving highway into a two-lane, pedestrian-focused boulevard with wide sidewalks and angled parking. The City also financed structured parking garages, freeing up land that had previously been used for **parking lots** for new development. And the City planted hundreds of street trees, which are now a signature of downtown Greenville.” –Amazing Place: Six Cities Using the New Recipe for Economic Development, Smart Growth America, June 2016

- **Revise parking policies and codes to meet the comprehensive plan’s goals, improve the walking conditions in Twin Falls, support mixed use development, and reflect modern understanding of the implications of parking minimums.** A parking study should be the foundation for the policy revision. A study would allow the City to understand existing parking infrastructure and work with community members and businesses to determine goals for parking. Many of the traditional beliefs about parking have not been proven true in recent studies, and **parking minimums** have come under scrutiny by active transportation advocates and business owners alike. The City can play a role in understanding the impacts of parking and communicating those to stakeholders.

Fayetteville, Arkansas (population 80,000) recently **eliminated parking minimums** for commercial development. Commissioners agreed that “forcing businesses to include a set amount of parking spaces not only leads to the construction of massive parking lots that discourage pedestrian and bicycle transport, but also limits both development and redevelopment of properties around town,” and that “by eliminating minimum parking standards...Fayetteville could position itself as a more business-friendly city.” –Fayetteville Flyer <http://www.fayettevilleflyer.com/2015/08/10/fayetteville-considers-eliminating-minimum-parking-standards-for-businesses/>

## Recommendation # 4: Develop Corridor Plan for Blue Lakes

Blue Lakes Boulevard runs through the heart of Twin Falls. Blue Lakes is operated by ITD, home to many shopping and service centers (including regional centers), and includes several high crash intersections. With a new comprehensive plan “Mixed use” designation, we expect substantive future investment in improving resident and traveler experience on Blue Lakes.

To ensure that these investments holistically and efficiently address the complex nature of Blue Lakes Boulevard, we recommend that the City of Twin Falls:

- **Complete a corridor study of Blue Lakes and parallel routes to identify existing challenges and opportunities.** Because Blue Lakes serves so many different and potentially conflicting purposes in Twin Falls, future plans for the corridor need to be based on a thorough understanding of existing challenges and **balancing the needs** of all stakeholders – including ITD, freight, local businesses, residents, and people traveling through the city.

Several small cities in Oregon have a Main Street that is also a state highway. Oregon’s DOT developed a handbook for **balancing the needs** of state highway mobility and local mobility and livability. Typical concerns included: safety, security, speed, and congestion. The handbook includes design guidance for addressing Main Street concerns in the context of a state-operated highway. Main Street...When a Highway Runs Through It: A Handbook for Oregon Communities, 1999.

- **Work with ITD to develop a land use and corridor plan specific to the Blue Lakes Boulevard corridor and nearby street network.** Components of the plan could include a market feasibility study, an examination of planned investments in the short and long term to better align those investments with community goals for Blue Lakes, an inventory of public property and right-of-way available for development and infrastructure improvements, and a decision-making process that ensures a **clear process** for effective communication between ITD and local stakeholders. ITD’s 2013 Roadway Manual calls for context-sensitive solutions to “protect and enhance the natural environment and communities affected by highway transportation” and uses the NEPA project development process as an example of an opportunity for integration of innovative solutions. A formal corridor planning process could create another such opportunity.

In Oregon, communities with a state highway for Main Street can create a Special Transportation Area (STA). The STA provides a **clear process** for exemptions from or waivers of ODOT standards and includes design standards, access management plans, operation strategies, parking policies, and other planning strategies. –Main Street...When a Highway Runs Through It: A Handbook for Oregon Communities, 1999.

## Recommendation # 5: Develop Regional Partnerships

The new MPO boundaries are likely to include areas outside of the City of Twin Falls and Twin Falls County, and transportation and land use issues are not limited to jurisdictional boundaries. For example, many MPOs support employer transportation demand management strategies to reduce drive-alone trips, reducing congestion, reducing employer need for parking, and providing extra benefits to employees. With over 14,000 individuals working in Twin Falls and living elsewhere, there is a clear need for regional coordination to influence commute trips.

In preparing for the new MPO and for the area's transit future, we recommend that the City of Twin Falls:

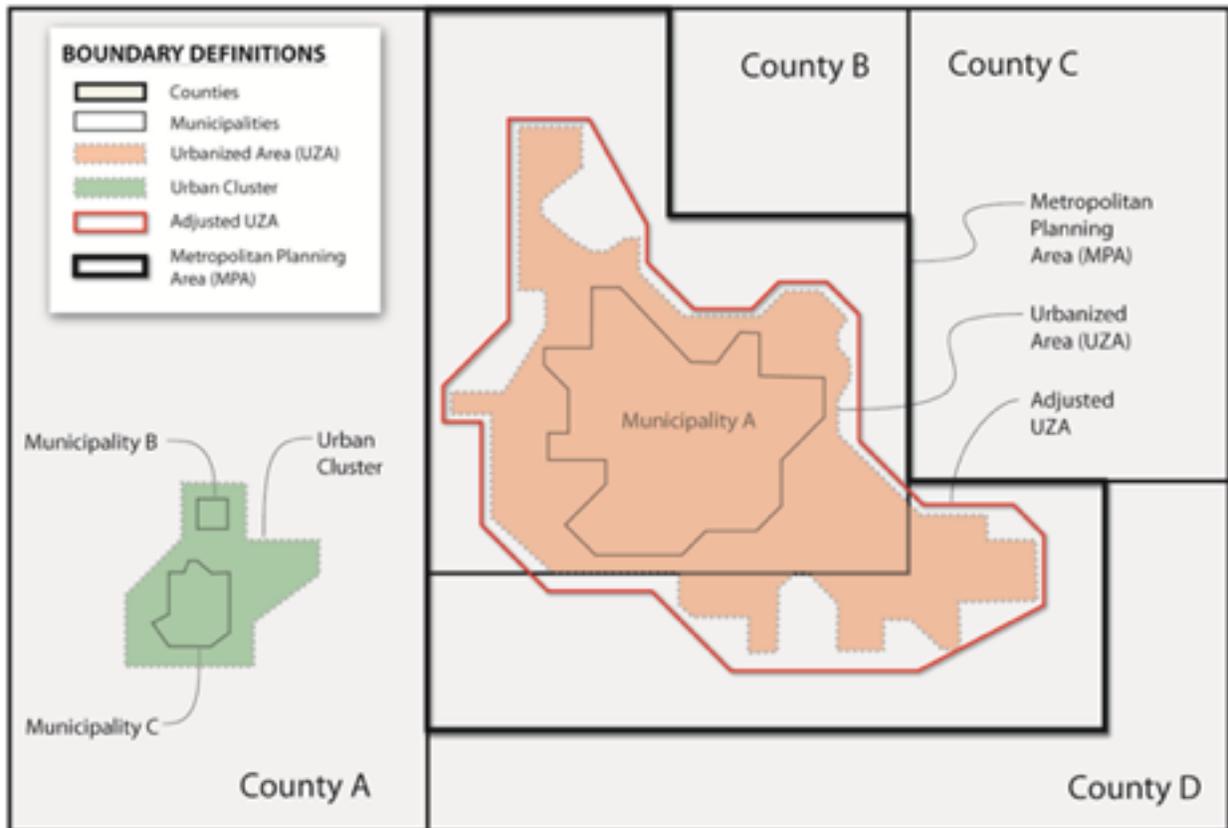
- **Develop a regional working group to work cooperatively on issues that cross municipal boundaries.** The working group should include jurisdictions likely to be included in the MPO – both those mandated and those likely to be included to improve regional coordination. The future Twin Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), according to federal transportation law, will need to plan for an area (the Metropolitan Planning Area, or MPA) that at least includes the urbanized area and the contiguous areas that are likely to become urbanized in the next 20 years (see Figure 18). According to federal law, decisions regarding MPA boundaries and MPO membership and governance structure should include the Idaho Department of Transportation, the governor, and “units of general purpose local government that together represent at least 75 percent of the population to be included in the MPA.”<sup>35</sup> Topics most effectively addressed at the regional scale include freight movement, transportation demand management (TDM), housing, and transit funding.

“Part of Denver’s sustained success is due to leaders thinking about the region as a cohesive whole and **working cooperatively** across jurisdictions. The Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (Metro Denver EDC), a regional business group made up of 70 counties, cities, and economic development groups tackles problems that affect businesses and residents across the region. One priority area for the group is housing. Metro Denver EDC joined the Metro Mayors Caucus, Downtown Denver Partnership, housing advocates, and business and economic development groups to form the Homeownership Opportunity Alliance. The Alliance has worked to encourage construction of owner-occupied, attached housing, which had stalled due to construction defects-related lawsuits.” –Amazing Place: Six Cities Using the New Recipe for Economic Development, Smart Growth America, June 2016

- **Consider pre-MPO structures such as RPO or COG frameworks to begin piloting regional governance and collaboration.** While developing a regional working group is an important first step towards solving regional issues, the establishment of the Twin Falls area MPO will rest on important decisions about governance and decision-making that can be determined separately from the information and resource sharing needed to support employer TDM programs or to study regional housing issues. The most recent federal transportation authorization, the FAST Act, builds upon the previous MAP-21 authorization in requiring that MPO planning processes incorporate performance measures and targets in project identification and selection. Working within a pre-MPO structure to identify and build consensus around performance measures for future transportation investments will provide a strong foundation upon which to build the MPO structure.

<sup>35</sup> [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census\\_issues/urbanized\\_areas\\_and\\_mpo\\_tma/faq/page03.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census_issues/urbanized_areas_and_mpo_tma/faq/page03.cfm)

Figure 12: Example UZA and MPA boundaries<sup>36</sup>



<sup>36</sup> [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census\\_issues/urbanized\\_areas\\_and\\_mpo\\_tma/faq/page01.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census_issues/urbanized_areas_and_mpo_tma/faq/page01.cfm)

## Recommendation #6: Work With What You Have

While the near-term funding outlook for transit in Twin Falls is bleak, the City of Twin Falls has resources – existing and yet to be tapped into – that can be further developed to improve transportation options now and support transit in the future.

In particular, the stakeholder advisory committee emphasizes employers and existing transit providers and programs. Although work commute trips generally make up less than 20% of travel, they are the focus of many transportation policies and programs. The majority of work trips are concentrated during a couple of hours in the morning and the evening, and there are many individuals traveling to major employment areas and to large employers on a regular basis. As a result, work trips are a major contributor to peak hour congestion, and reducing these trips can have a significant, positive impact on major roads like Blue Lakes Boulevard.

On the other hand, non-work trips make up the majority of trips that people take, and there are services and programs in Twin Falls now that help community members, especially community members who cannot or do not drive, make those trips. While Twin Falls looks to develop more robust public transit options in the future, existing programs need more resources to meet the needs of current non-drivers.

To make the most of existing resources, we recommend that the City of Twin Falls:

- **Partner with local employers to develop transportation demand management programs<sup>37</sup>:** Transportation demand management (TDM) gained popularity in the 1970s in response to fuel shortages and again in the 1990s in response to poor air quality from vehicle emissions. Today, TDM is used to meet many goals, including to: improve air quality, reduce drive-alone trips, reduce congestion, and benefit employees and employers. Employers in Twin Falls have expressed interest in better understanding employee transportation needs and in exploring TDM options like **vanpools**, **employer-sponsored shuttles**, or on-site childcare.

One of the most promising strategies to reduce vehicle miles traveled and improve health of employees is for employers to help form and share the costs for carpools and **vanpools** for their employees or to provide transportation services themselves. For example, employers can work with existing services, such as Enterprise Rideshare to make it easier for employees to share rides. Valley Regional Transit recently chose Enterprise as “the preferred vanpool provider,” to “make the development of vanpool services easy, scalable and affordable for local employers so they can offer one of the most cost-effective transportation alternatives as an added benefit to their employees.” Another cost-effective option is for individual companies or groups of companies to hire drivers and vehicles for **employer-sponsored shuttles**. This option works well for large employers and companies located in a concentrated employment area.

–<http://www.newson6.com/story/33075515/enterprise-rideshare-expanding-vanpool-opportunities-throughout-southwest-idaho>

<sup>37</sup> Transportation demand management (TDM) encompasses strategies to provide diverse transportation options. “Traditionally, TDM has been used primarily to reduce automobile traffic congestion and to help areas meet air quality standards related to regulation. TDM differs from other, often costlier and/or shorter-term solutions to congestion and air quality...TDM achieves these goals by influencing people's decisions around four major factors: mode, time of day, route, and location.” <http://www.upstreampublichealth.org/sites/default/files/TDM%20Report%202013%20FINALreduced.pdf>

- **Help secure resources for LINC and Trans IV.** As described in Chapter 1: Current Conditions, Trans IV provides dial-a-ride services in Twin Falls. LINC provides subsidies to reduce the cost of Trans IV rides and of other transportation services like taxis and Uber. While we do not have a comprehensive understanding of current unmet transportation needs among the individuals who rely on Trans IV and LINC, it is clear from stakeholder engagement and from the community response when LINC had to suspend services due to funding issues, that LINC and Trans IV provide critical lifelines for some of the most vulnerable community members in Twin Falls.

It is our understanding that LINC's proposals applications for the 5310 program have not been as competitive as they have been in the past. Twin Falls could provide support for programs like LINC by providing technical grant writing assistance. In an era of increasing mobility options and emerging new technologies, the concept of using public funds to pay for a portion of a ride rather than creating an entire service to provide rides directly is gaining traction. Transportation Network Companies throughout the U.S. have begun working with cities and transit agencies to provide public transportation in areas where it is not cost effective to provide services with traditional public transportation. The City of Twin Falls could work with LINC to strengthen future 5310 grant applications by highlighting the critical role subsidies can play in establishing a transportation options that are both private-sector friendly and cost effective.

## Recommendation #7: Develop a Commuter Route Proposal for 5311 Funding in the Near-Term

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is responsible for overseeing Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for rural public transportation (known as Section 5311 Formula funding for Rural Public Transportation). Every two years, when ITD's Public Transportation division ranks funding applications during its competitive funding cycle, systems with at least one fixed route are given a higher priority than purely demand responsive systems.

This new policy adds to the challenges that Twin Falls already faces in funding and operating public transit. Stakeholders have asked GridWorks to weigh in on whether it would be worth it to implement a single fixed route to gain a higher share of the 5311 formula funding. While we do not believe now is the right time to invest in general fixed routes in Twin Falls, we believe that Twin Falls has other options to explore that may help the city successfully compete for funding while avoiding spending resources and community will on a system is not ready to function effectively.

To maintain a competitive edge while using resources in a way that support community economic development goals, we recommend that the City of Twin Falls:

- **Work with employers and employees to explore the creation of commuter transit service.** Over 14,000 workers come into Twin Falls from other communities for work, and over 7,000 Twin Falls residents leave the city for work. Commuter transit service can serve limited stops along a fixed route and at limited times of day, allowing for an initial focused investment likely to attract a specific and limited pool of customers. This recommendation will be most effective if complemented by employer TDM programs and improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure; employees who take transit into work need to know that there are options available to them to leave for lunch, pick up a sick child from work, or get home if they miss the commuter transit line in the evening.

# Appendix A: Stakeholder Engagement

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GridWorks completed three in-person stakeholder engagement trips. Our first trip resulted in a Memo (Memo 1: Stakeholder Kickoff Summary) for Twin Falls, and the second and third trips have been detailed in this appendix, following Memo 1.

**MEMORANDUM**

FROM: Jeremy Dalton  
 DATE: February 3, 2016  
 PROJECT: Twin Falls Transit Development Plan  
 SUBJECT: MEMO 1: Stakeholder Kickoff Summary

**Purpose**

This is the first in a series of memos for the Twin Falls Transit Development Plan. It collects findings from our first trip to Twin Falls, including a summary of the Stakeholder Kickoff meeting and notes from initial interviews and meetings with individual stakeholders. The memo also provides a brief outline of next steps for the project.

**Stakeholder Kickoff**

The stakeholder kickoff meeting was held on the morning of Thursday, January 21, 2016 at the Twin Falls City Council Chambers. At this meeting we discussed some of the factors that will shape the future transit in Twin Falls, and presented the project scope and timeline. We then had a conversation about the outcomes that this plan should achieve.

A list of invitees was compiled with assistance from City staff. The final list of invitees included 36 individuals from the public and private sector, including major employers, social service organizations, community advocates, and transportation service providers. Table 1 includes the organizations and individuals who attended the stakeholder kickoff meeting.

Table 1: Stakeholder Kickoff Attendees

ORGANIZATION	NAME
City of Twin Falls	Mitch Humble
City of Twin Falls	Travis Rothweiler
City of Twin Falls	Mandi Thompson
College of Southern Idaho	Jeff Fox
College of Southern Idaho	Jeff Harmon
CSI - Office on Aging	Suzanne McCampbell
CSI - Trans IV	Jim Boehm
CSI - Trans IV	Lynn Baird
CSI - Refugee Center	ZeZe Rwasama
Community Council of Idaho	Mike Gaxiola
Idaho Department of Labor	Jan Roeser
St. Luke's Magic Valley	Lisa Hollibaugh
Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers	Edie Schab
Lamb Weston	Creighton Knight
Living Independence Network Corp (LINC)	Lorie Jeske
Living Independence Network Corp (LINC)	Melva Heinrich
Mountain Rides	Jason Miller
Twin Falls County Treatment and Recovery Center	Jaci Urie
Twin Falls School District	Brady Dickinson
Twin Falls Social Service Providers	Leanne Trappen

## Project Overview

The Stakeholder kickoff agenda consisted of three main components. The first section was a project overview presentation that included a discussion on the factors that will impact transit development in the years to come. Key takeaways from the project overview presentation include the following:

- **What:** The Transit Development Plan (TDP) provides a vision of how transit should look and function in the future; it does not provide detailed design specifications or recommended routes and stops.
- **Why:** There are three overarching themes driving the need for the TDP:
  - The City and the region are growing, with nearly 50,000 people in the City of Twin Falls and another 30,000 or so who come to the city every day to access employment, entertainment, or other services.
  - Technology and mobility needs are changing rapidly. Specific factors that are already affecting the way we interact with transit include:
    - Increasing demand for walkable neighborhoods and mixed-use areas with a range of housing, employment, and entertainment options
    - Uncertainty around gas prices in the future
    - Lower rates of car ownership for people 35 and younger
    - Transportation Network companies like Uber and Lyft
    - Car sharing systems like Zipcar and Car2Go
    - Low cost bike-sharing systems in urbanized areas
    - Autonomous self-driving vehicles
    - Online shopping and autonomous delivery technology decreasing the frequency of certain shopping trips
  - The TDP gives the future Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) a head start on creating a transit system for the region.
- **How:** There are three major components of the project approach:
  - The TDP process will focus on desired outcomes, and work back to identify appropriate strategies to achieve them given available resources.
  - The TDP will build on the planning work that has been done – and is currently being done – in the region, including the following:
    - 2016 Comprehensive Plan – in progress
    - 2013 Local Mobility Plan
    - 2013 2030 Community Strategic Plan
    - 2009 Transportation Master Plan
    - 2004 TDP for Trans IV
  - The TDP will incorporate feedback from the community about potential options and recommendations

- **Who:** The plan will rely on continued involvement by the stakeholder group as well as a series of public outreach activities to be articulated in the upcoming Public Engagement Plan.
  - **Stakeholder Group:** In addition to helping to establish the desired outcomes for the plan, the stakeholder group will provide feedback on potential options for consideration and on the final recommendations in the plan.
  - **Public Engagement:** The second memo will consist of a public engagement plan, built around feedback provided by the stakeholders.
- **When:** The project is expected to run through late June. Key check-in points are scheduled in April to present and discuss options for consideration, and May to present and collect feedback on the draft recommendations.

### Desired Outcomes

The second portion of the meeting featured breakout groups where stakeholders discussed desired outcomes. Outcomes discussed included long-term outcomes for transit in Twin Falls as well as short-term outcomes for the plan to achieve. Table 2 includes a summary of the short-term and long-term outcomes presented and discussed by the stakeholders.

Table 2: Desired Outcomes for the TDP and for Transit

SHORT TERM: OUTCOMES FOR THE PLAN	LONG-TERM: OUTCOMES FOR TRANSIT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Populations of likely transit riders are well defined</li> <li>• Resources for adequately funding transit are identified</li> <li>• Long-term roadmap for a robust transit system is created, including timeline and phasing</li> <li>• Demographic changes in the region are identified</li> <li>• Strategies for marketing transit to specific populations are presented</li> <li>• Goals of the TDP are incorporated into ongoing regional planning, including the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan</li> <li>• Key destinations are identified and prioritized</li> <li>• Short-term and long-term corridors are identified</li> <li>• Different options are considered and assessed, including Vanpool and Demand-Response</li> <li>• Planning process engages major employers and their employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit that serves the region beyond the city boundaries</li> <li>• Transit that feels safe and comfortable</li> <li>• Seniors, people with disabilities, and other non-drivers can get where they need to go when they need to go</li> <li>• Buses are consistently being utilized by many riders</li> <li>• Transit helps attract new business and activity along transit corridors</li> <li>• Transit system helps promote walkable, multi-modal communities</li> <li>• Transit system is financially sustainable</li> </ul>

The short-term outcomes will guide the contents of the final TDP, while the long-term outcomes will shape the options and recommended strategies. Both the short-term and long-term outcomes will be further refined throughout the planning process, based on feedback from the public engagement activities and continued feedback from the stakeholder group.

## Public Engagement

The final portion of the meeting included a roundtable discussion about public engagement strategies. Stakeholders were asked to think about suggestions or leads for a specific group of potential transit riders in their community. These could include a tip about a specific event, a point of contact for a particular community gathering place, or a suggested activity in a certain neighborhood. The goal was to leverage the local knowledge of the stakeholders encouraging them to consider how transit could serve the different communities and constituencies that they interact with.

One week after the kickoff meeting, a follow-up email was sent to stakeholders soliciting suggestions for engagement opportunities in the spring. These responses were collected and will be incorporated into the public engagement plan.

## Next Steps for the Stakeholder Group

The stakeholder group will be convened again in mid April. At this meeting we will present findings from the existing conditions analysis and best practices from other peer cities. This second meeting will also include a discussion about different options for transit, such as governance structures, and trade-offs between coverage, frequency, and service span. In the meantime, certain individual stakeholders will be engaged to assist in arranging specific outreach activities.

## Initial Stakeholder Interviews

On January 21 and 22, 2016 the consultant met individually with a handful of stakeholders. There were two primary goals of these meetings:

- To get a better understanding of existing transportation services in the region
- To identify expected future growth, including existing and future housing, employment, and activity centers.

Table 3 includes the stakeholders interviewed, listed in chronological order of the date and time that each interview occurred.

Table 3: Initial Stakeholder Interviews

INTERVIEWEE(S)	ORGANIZATION	REASON
Lynn Baird, Jim Boehm	CSI - Trans IV	Trans IV is the current demand-response transit provider in the region and a recipient of funding to support transit.
Melva Heinrich, Lorie Jeske	Living Independence Network Corp (LINC)	LINC provides transportation vouchers for transportation-disadvantaged populations through federal funding passed through ITD.
Reneé Carraway	City of Twin Falls	As the Planning & Zoning Manager for the City of Twin Falls Reneé Carraway is plugged-in about current and future development and growth within the city. She provided important insights about existing zoning and the comprehensive plan, as well potentially helpful contacts in the development community.

INTERVIEWEE(S)	ORGANIZATION	REASON
Mitch Humble	City of Twin Falls	As the Community Development Director for the City of Twin Falls Mitch Humble oversees a number of key departments, including Planning & Zoning, Building, Airport, Public Works, Parks & Recreation, and Engineering.
Jason Miller	Mountain Rides	Mountain Rides has the only fixed route transit system in the greater region. As their Executive Director, Jason Miller provided important insights into specific policies and opportunities around transit.
Paul Gaff	Twin Beans Coffee	Located on Main Street, Twin Beans Coffee is a frequent meeting place and destination in downtown Twin Falls. As owner, Paul Gaff has a unique perspective on the opportunities and challenges of transit in the central city.

## Next Steps

The information gathered during the consultant's trip to Twin Falls will greatly inform future tasks and deliverables of the TDP. In particular, stakeholders identified additional contacts to interview for the existing conditions and public engagement tasks.

The next memo will include the public engagement plan, incorporating suggestions from stakeholders and other activities identified by the consultant. Some of the activities currently being considered include the following:

- A presentation and discussion with the Chamber of Commerce
- A presentation and discussion at the South Central Community board meeting
- A focus group with CSI students
- Intercepts or informal outreach at the St. Edward's soup kitchen
- A happy hour open house at Von Scheidt Brewing
- An open house or focus group at Twin Beans
- An activity at the Twin Falls Senior Citizens Center
- An activity at Bridgeview Estates

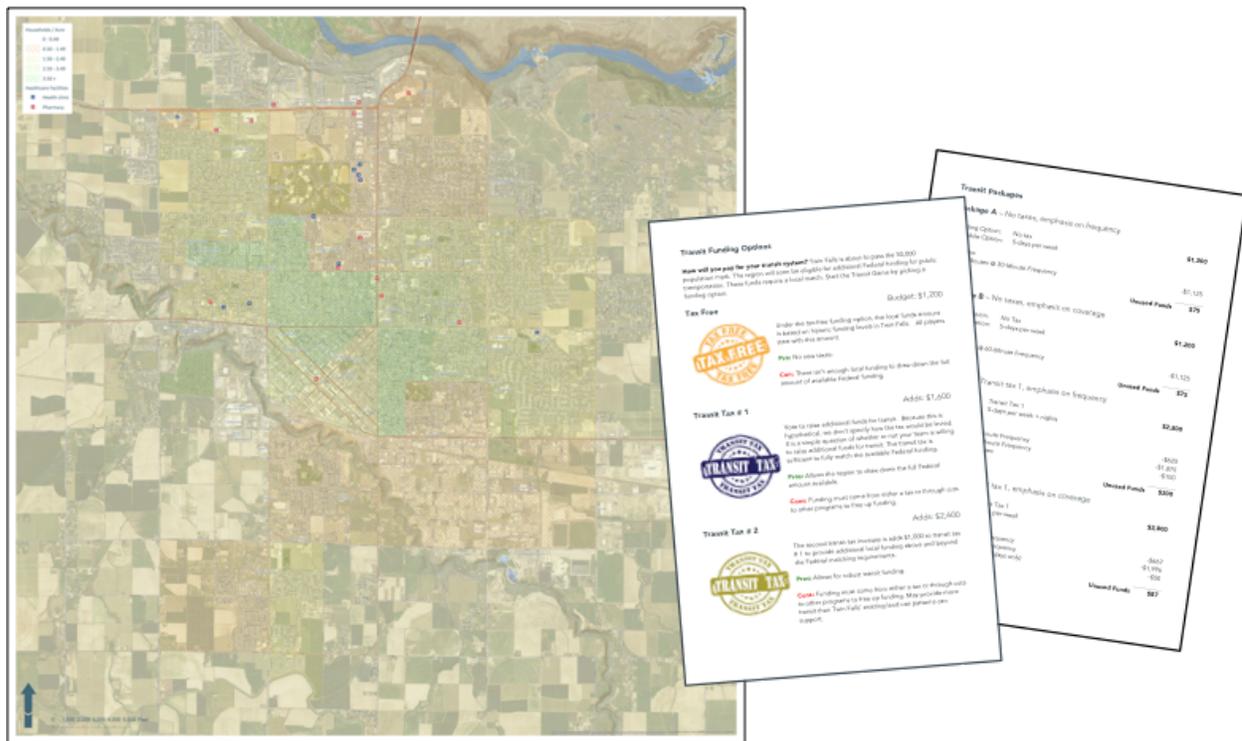
It is important to note that this is an early list. Only some of these activities will make it into the final public engagement plan, and there may be activities in the final plan that are not listed above.

## GridWorks Stakeholder Engagement 7/12/16-7/13/16

GridWorks visited Twin Falls July 12 and 13 to carry out variety of meetings in which we conducted an interactive transit planning game. The game was played by a wide range of stakeholders at the following locations. Results and insights gained at each location are described further on the following pages.

- Twin Falls Senior Center: Game played 3 times by a total of approximately 5 people
- Twin Falls Municipal Fair: Game played 3 times by a total of approximately 10 people
- Twin Falls at Night Street Event: Game played 5 times by a total of approximately 15 people
- Project Advisory Committee Meeting: Game played 1 time by approximately 8 people
- Twin Falls Chamber of Commerce: Game played 1 time by approximately 10 people
- CSI Twin Falls Refugee Center: Game played 1 time by 4 people

Figure 1: Transit game board and game cards



The game begins with the question of whether or not to raise a tax, and, if so, by what amount. The objective of this question is to gauge player appetites for taxing themselves to fund public transportation. Based on the funding level selected, the players then choose from one of two sets of game pieces. The first set of game pieces emphasizes ridership, while the second emphasizes coverage. The game board is a scaled, high-definition map featuring major job centers, shopping, education, healthcare, assisted living, and other public facilities. The objective of the game is to plan a bus system that best matches the players goals and aspirations for public transportation in their community.

### Senior Center

We visited the Twin Falls Senior Center in the late morning of July 13 and stayed until lunch started. Three seniors played the game and we also spoke to three or four additional individuals who came by the table.

Figure 2: Playing the transit game at the Twin Falls Senior Center



#### Common Themes:

- All players selected the no-tax option and the coverage-emphasizing game pieces.
- Those who played the game identified shopping as an important destination for transit service: Walmart, Magic Valley Mall, and Fred Meyer were identified as key locations.
- Independence and the freedom to travel were common desires among those who played and among those with whom we spoke.
- Public safety – participants expressed that unsafe older drivers who drive because they have no other options pose a public risk
- Participants noted that many folks at the Senior Center come in from areas outside of Twin Falls (Filer, etc.)

### City Fair

We set up a table during the Twin Falls Municipal Fair the afternoon of July 13 . While attendance of members of the public was low during the event, a number of city officials were able to participate. Participants included city staff, a city council member, and a police officer.

Figure 3: Game participants and completed maps during the fair



#### Common Themes:

- Elected leaders and city staff learned a lot and had fun.

- Participants had high quality conversations around tradeoffs. Participants noted that under lower funding options, it is difficult to serve CSI, the hospital, job centers, and higher density neighborhoods all with adequate frequency.
- Some officials expressed a desire for a walkable, bikeable city.
- Participants noted that Blue Lakes is problematic, with a high number of accidents along the corridor and congestion during the morning and afternoon commute periods.

### Twin Falls at Night Event

After the fair, we moved our tables up Main Street to the Twin Falls at Night event. About five different groups played the game: two families, a young couple, and several individuals. Two participants use mobility devices.

Figure 4: Playing the game during the Twin Falls at Night event



#### Common Themes:

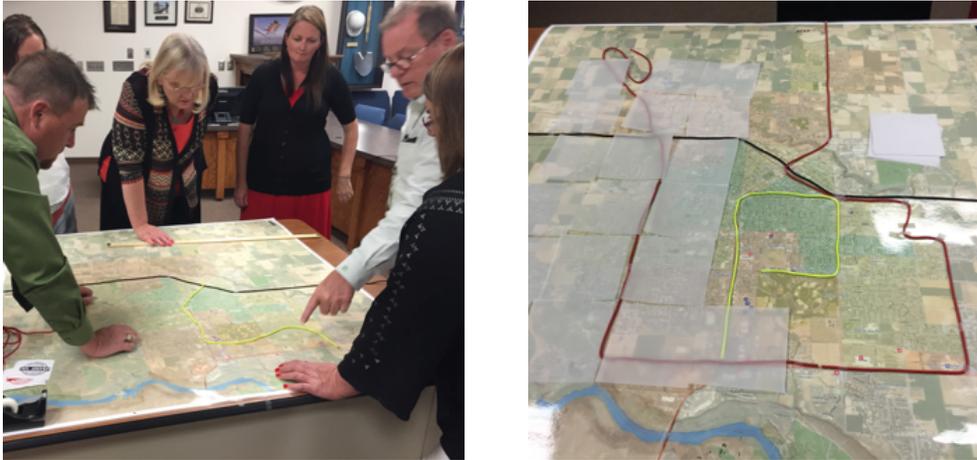
- There was a lack of consensus among participants - maps varied from high coverage to high frequency route designs.
- Most participants elected for coverage, while one felt that frequency and a high level of investment is needed to serve people who are unable to drive.

### Project Stakeholder Committee Meeting

On Thursday morning, we met with the Project Advisory Committee to play the game and to discuss the lessons learned from playing the game with others in the community. Advisory committee

members selected funding option 2 and package D (emphasizing coverage). As the participants were about to finish laying out their routes, we began exploring the idea of exchanging the 60-minute routes with dial-a-ride zones, which led to a discussion of whether or not fixed route transit is needed in Twin Falls and if the existing dial-a-ride program could be expanded with the new funding. The game board was not completed, but a rich conversation ensued.

Figure 5: Advisory committee members playing and the uncompleted map



#### Conversation Notes:

- After playing the game, the advisory committee sat down for a working meeting to discuss the lessons learned from the game. We began the conversation by clarifying that creation of an MPO does not automatically necessitate the development of a fixed route transit system. While it is clear that ITD is prioritizing high-ridership systems in its funding formulas for the rural 5311 program, this does not mean that Twin Falls must develop a fixed route system once it becomes an urbanized area.
- Early on it became clear there is a need for feedback on priorities. There seems to be some fogginess in what people are asking for. Some participants expressed a desire for fixed routes, but when pressed about priorities, they indicated the system should really focus on seniors, people with disabilities, and refugees. There seemed to be an expectation that fixed route simply meant more transit, when it could actually mean less coverage if the funding policy results in a system that requires high ridership.
- As we talked about the system providing independence for people who cannot drive, regardless of where they want to go, we returned to our map and its suggestions toward a hybrid system of both fixed routes and dial-a-ride services. The facilitator pointed out that a hybrid system inherently “spreads the peanut butter thin” and comes with consequences. We talked about how the Idaho Falls system has struggled to gain sufficient riders because of its long, indirect routes and low frequency.
- Others pointed out that the project advisory committee comprises folks who represent the needs of seniors, people with disabilities, and refugees and is not representative of the larger general public or employers. Since committee members value of public transportation is really in getting people to work and in providing access to healthcare and education, the advisory committee members expressed a need to reach out to stakeholders in these industries.
- We talked about the cost of dial-a-ride transportation ranging from as low as \$14 a ride to as high as \$80 a ride in an urban setting and that there are emerging technologies like Uber and

Lyft that could really change our options in the future. Fixed route buses may be obsolete by the time Twin Falls implements its system. How do autonomous vehicles factor in and how will services like Uber and Lyft will change the dynamics?

- We talked about subsidies and the politics of transit and the reality that local elected officials may not be willing to subsidize a fare-free system unless it is used by a lot of people, suggesting that it would need to be frequent service and operate in areas with high residential density.
- We ended by asking committee members to think more about priorities and to come back ready at our next meeting to be able to talk about priorities with more clarity.

### Chamber of Commerce

We met with representatives of local businesses and employers at the Twin Falls Visitor Center the afternoon of Thursday July 14. Representatives included Clif Bar, Glanbia, St. Luke's, Blue Lakes Inn, Woodbury Properties, and other local businesses.

Figure 6: Playing the transit game with local business leaders



### Common Themes:

- Initially participants focused on coverage, followed by an immediate shift to frequency once they started playing; participants traded in all red 60-minute routes for yellow 30-minute routes. Route designs focused on directness.
- Participants realized that commuter routes from outlying areas might be effective at reducing congestion on Blue Lakes, and would also be cost-effective by bringing in funding from neighboring communities.
- Several of the south-side manufacturing employers didn't think their employees need public transit.

## Refugee Interpreter Focus Group

Our final stop during the trip was to play the game with several refugee interpreters at the CSI refugee center.

Figure 7: Playing the transit game at the CSI Refugee Center



### Common Themes :

- Top three destinations: St. Luke's Magic Valley Medical Center, Walmart, and Winco.
- Participants noted a large number of refugees in inner neighborhoods.
- Women who don't drive for cultural reasons need transportation options.
- Lamb Westin and Chobani were identified as priorities for transit service. This was in contrast to what we heard during the meeting with the Chamber, leading us to wonder whether employers understand where their employees are coming from and what their transportation needs are?
- Reflections: The routes selected by this group would likely have the highest ridership of any routes drawn by game participants across the different meetings.

## Summary

Opinions about how transit should be funded and organized are mixed in Twin Falls.

Participants expressed a wide range of opinions about how transit should be funded. Seniors - presumably those who would benefit the most from a transit system and for whom many participants indicated the system should be geared, expressed the lowest level of support for funding public transportation options. Employers expressed enthusiasm for the various roles they can play in supporting low-cost options such as vanpool and regional commuter routes. However, some employers also seemed unaware of the transit needs of their employees. While the majority of participants elected some form of tax, we realize the participants were more or less self-selecting and likely represent a disproportionately high percentage of transit supportive individuals in the community. The desire for a system that emphasizes both coverage and frequency in a community where a number of voters will likely expect transit to “pay for itself” will require Twin Falls to make some priorities.

Table 1: Summary of game results

Game & Location	Funding Option	Game Pieces	Notes
Senior Center 1	No Tax	Coverage (Option B)	
Senior Center 2	No Tax	Coverage (Option B)	
Senior Center 3	No Tax	Coverage (Option B)	
City Fair 1	Second Tax	Frequency (Option E)	Used spare cash for dial-a-ride in outlying neighborhoods
City Fair 2	Single Tax	Frequency (Option C)	Used spare cash for vanpool and park and ride lots
City Fair 3	Single Tax	Coverage (Option D)	Used spare cash for vanpool and park and ride lots
Street Event 1	Single Tax	Coverage (Option D)	
Street Event 2	Single Tax	Coverage (Option D)	
Street Event 3	Second Tax	Frequency (Option E)	
Street Event 4	Second Tax	Coverage (Option F)	
Street Event 5	No Tax	Coverage (Option B)	
Project Advisory Committee	Single Tax	Coverage (Option D)	Exchanged one 60-minute route for dial-a-ride tiles
Chamber of Commerce	Single Tax	Coverage (Option D), but then turned in all 60-minute routes for 30-minute routes	Purchased extra regional commuter routes by partnering with neighboring communities
CSI Refugee Center	Second Tax	Frequency (Option E)	Spent \$100 on vanpool and gave back remaining funds.

## GridWorks Stakeholder Engagement 8/23/16

GridWorks visited Twin Falls on August 23<sup>rd</sup> for two meetings in which we discussed our draft recommendations with stakeholders. City staff members and elected officials participated in the first meeting, and stakeholder advisory committee members participated in the second meeting.

In both meetings, participants were presented with a summary of existing conditions, future options, case studies, outcomes from earlier stakeholder engagement, and recommendations for the Twin Falls Transit Development Plan.

### Meeting #1 with City of Twin Falls staff and elected officials

GridWorks met with staff members and elected officials at City Hall downtown. The most-discussed topics in meeting #1 included: multifamily housing development, housing affordability, and the demand for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. As a result of the conversation, GridWorks revised the recommendations to emphasize these topics and provide more specific implementation information in the recommendations. Overall, participants supported GridWorks' draft recommendations and agreed that it would be very difficult to develop effective fixed route transit service in Twin Falls in the near-term future.

Table 1: Participants in meeting with Twin Falls staff and elected officials to discuss draft recommendations:

Name	Position
Shawn Barigar	Mayor; President & CEO, Chamber of Commerce
Nikki Boyd	Councilwoman
Renee Carraway-Johnson	Zoning and Development Manager
Jon Caton	Public Works Director
Jackie Fields	City Engineer
Mitch Humble	Deputy City Manager, Community Development
Dean Littler	Street Superintendent
Nathan Murray	Economic Development Director
Brian Pike	Deputy City Manager, Public Safety
Travis Rothweiler	City Manager
Jonathan Spendlove	Planner
Mandi Thompson	Grants and Community Relations Manager
Mark Thomson	Assistant Street Superintendent
Troy Vitek	Assistant City Engineer

### Meeting #2 with stakeholder advisory committee

GridWorks met with stakeholder advisory committee members in the Visitor's Center on 93, north of the intersection of Blue Lakes Boulevard and Pole Line Road. The most-discussed topics in

meeting #2 included: multifamily housing development, housing affordability, the demand for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, the role of employers, and the challenges and opportunities of existing transportation providers and programs. As a result of the conversation, GridWorks further refined existing recommendations and added a recommendation related to near-term solutions involving employers and existing transportation providers and programs. Overall, participants supported GridWorks' draft recommendations. Participants had differing views on the development of fixed route transit and the role that the City of Twin Falls should play, with expressed views including: it would be very difficult to develop effective fixed route transit service in Twin Falls in the near-term future, Twin Falls should start with one route soon and refine the service from there, and the City Twin Falls should be preparing to take over operation and funding of Trans IV and creating fixed routes.

Table 2: Participants in meeting with stakeholder advisory committee to discuss draft recommendations

Name	Position
Lynn Baird	Director, Trans IV Buses
Jeff Fox	President, College of Southern Idaho
Jeff Harmon	Vice President of Administration, College of Southern Idaho
John Hathaway	Regional Director, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Melva Heinrich	Director, LINC Twin Falls
Tanya Hollon	LINC Twin Falls
Creighton Knight	Production Superintendent, ConAgra Foods Lamb Weston
Suzanne McCampbell	Director, Office on Aging, College of Southern Idaho
Jason Miller	Executive Director, Mountain Rides
Jan Roeser	Regional Economist, Idaho Department of Labor
Leanne Trappen	Community Services/Housing Director, South Central Community Action Partnership

## Appendix B: Memo 3, Current Conditions

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Memo 3 was completed prior to stakeholder meetings in August, 2016. Information about CSI's services through the Office of Aging and Trans IV's service was subsequently revised to reflect the most current conditions.

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mandi Thompson  
FROM: Heidi Guenin  
DATE: Wednesday, October 26, 2016  
PROJECT: Twin Falls Transit Development Plan  
SUBJECT: Memo 3 – Current Conditions

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### Purpose

The City of Twin Falls is growing, and this growth presents challenges and opportunities related to how people travel within, to, from, and through Twin Falls. Previous planning efforts have noted the need for improved transit options in Twin Falls and the surrounding area, and the city's growth will bring new funding opportunities and planning requirements to plan for and build these options. To prepare for the future, Twin Falls has contracted with GridWorks to create a Transit Development Plan. This Current Conditions Memo provides information that the public and decision-makers may find valuable in considering how to plan for and create better transit options for Twin Falls.

### Background

The future of Transit in Twin Falls will be influenced by the factors detailed in this Current Conditions Memo. These factors include Twin Falls' population, land use pattern, and the current transportation system. The issues described in this memo are closely related to the need for and effectiveness of a public transit system. To put the Twin Falls-specific factors into context, it is important to also understand the impact of upcoming funding and governance changes and the relationship between transit and the broader land use and transportation system.

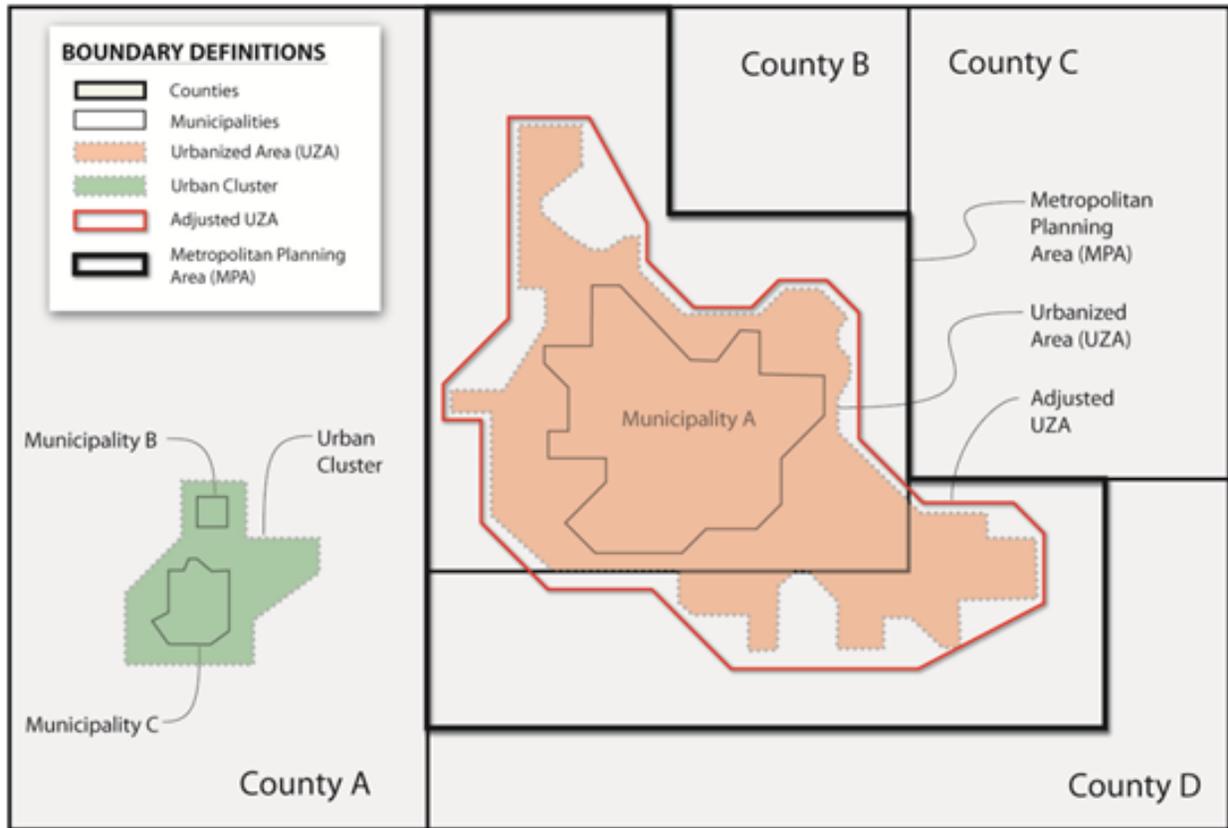
### Funding and Governance Changes

During the 2010 Census, 44,125 people were living in Twin Falls - almost 10,000 more than during the previous Census in 2000. If this growth rate continues, by the next Census in 2020, over 57,000 people are expected to be living in the city of Twin Falls. Once the population of a city exceeds 50,000, the city is considered an urbanized area (UZA). Being designated an urbanized area will result in some significant changes for Twin Falls. Currently, transit in Twin Falls is primarily funded with rural public transportation dollars through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Section 5311 formula funding. Urbanized areas are not eligible for 5311 funds and instead receive FTA's Section 5307 funds. For more information about likely changes to Twin Falls' transit funding, please refer to the "Options" section of the upcoming meeting materials for August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016.

Urbanized areas are required by federal transportation law to establish a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to oversee the planning and programming of federal funds for streets and public transportation. Once an area has been designated as an urbanized area by the Census Bureau, the area has 12 months to create or join an existing MPO.

The future Twin Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), according to federal transportation law, will need to plan for an area (the Metropolitan Planning Area, or MPA) that includes, at least, the urbanized area and the contiguous areas that are likely to become urbanized in the next 20 years. According to federal law, decisions regarding MPA boundaries as well as MPO membership and governance structure should include the Idaho Department of Transportation, the governor, and “units of general purpose local government that together represent at least 75 percent of the population to be included in the MPA.”<sup>38</sup>

Figure 1: Example UZA and MPA Boundaries



[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census\\_issues/urbanized\\_areas\\_and\\_mpo\\_tma/faq/page01.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census_issues/urbanized_areas_and_mpo_tma/faq/page01.cfm)

<sup>38</sup> [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census\\_issues/urbanized\\_areas\\_and\\_mpo\\_tma/faq/page03.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/census_issues/urbanized_areas_and_mpo_tma/faq/page03.cfm)

## Where Are We Now?

To plan for the future of transit in Twin Falls, we must understand the current conditions most relevant to transit use and efficiency - such as who is living in Twin Falls both now and in the future, and the types and locations of the trips people make and will want to make in the future.

### Population

The following data is taken from the Census and the American Community Survey (ACS). While Census and ACS data is valuable for understanding some trends, important factors in a small urban area like Twin Falls can be hard to identify through these data sets alone. Often times, the number of individuals in a specific racial group may be too small to allow for analysis that is statistically significant. This may be the case for some of the populations most recently immigrating to the city. Twin Falls stakeholders and staff, in Twin Falls Vision 2030, noted some population trends that should be considered in the development of the transit plan. "The City has become more diverse, as reflected by the growing Hispanic population, the migration of new residents attracted to the pleasant lifestyle, and the establishment of a refugee center operated by the College of Southern Idaho. The latter has brought significant numbers of people from Bosnia- Herzegovina, the former Soviet Union and other world locations to Twin Falls."<sup>39</sup>

As noted earlier, Twin Falls is growing rapidly. As of the 2010 Census, 44,125 people were living in Twin Falls, up 28% from the city's population of 34,469 in 2000. According to Census data and estimates, the population of Twin Falls grew 7.1% between 2010 and 2016, up to approximately 47,468 individuals. This growth rate is higher than that of Twin Falls County (6.7%), the state of Idaho (5.6%), and the U.S. as a whole (4.1%). Growth results from two factors - new residents migrating to the city or from births in the city outpacing deaths (natural change). From 2010-2015, Twin Falls experienced a lower rate of growth from natural change (3.4%) than Idaho as a whole, but Twin Falls' net in-migration growth (3.2%) outpaced Idaho's as a whole (1.9%)

### Household type

As the population grows, the composition of Twin Falls is also shifting. As in many cities across the country, married couples are making up a smaller proportion of household types than in previous decades, and single female householders are making up a larger share. In 2014, the city of Twin Falls, female-headed households with children (no husband present) made up 22.2% of households with families living with their own children, compared to 19.0% in Twin Falls County and 16.7% in Idaho.<sup>40</sup> Non-family households with more than one person are also increasing their proportion of households.

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<sup>39</sup> <http://www.tfid.org/DocumentCenter/View/333>

<sup>40</sup> In Twin Falls, households with own children under 18 years old numbered 11,538 with a +/-485 margin of error. Within that group, female-headed households with no husband present numbered 2,569 with a +/- 632 margin of error. Comparable households for Twin Falls County number 19,863 +/- 425 and 3,771 +/-720; for Idaho these households number 392,839 +/- 1,765 and 65,767 +/-2,477.

U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, B09002; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder;

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016).

Table 4: Change in Household (HH) Type, 2000-2014<sup>41</sup>

	HH in 2000	Proportion of total HH 2000	HH in 2014	Proportion of total HH 2014	Change in proportion of total HH 2000-2014
<b>Total</b>	13,273	100%	16,412	100%	
<b>Family households</b>	8,902	67.07%	11,109	67.69%	0.62%
<b>Married-couple family</b>	6,816	51.35%	8,337	50.80%	-0.55%
<b>Male householder, no wife present</b>	506	3.81%	638	3.89%	0.08%
<b>Female householder, no husband present</b>	1,580	11.90%	2,134	13.00%	1.10%
<b>Nonfamily households</b>	4,371	32.93%	5,303	32.31%	-0.62%
<b>Householder living alone</b>	3,577	26.95%	4,089	24.91%	-2.03%
<b>Householder not living alone</b>	794	5.98%	1,214	7.40%	1.41%

### Race and Ethnicity

The city has become more racially and ethnically diverse over time. From 2000 to 2010, the number of persons of Hispanic or Latino origin in Twin Falls grew 84.78% - from 3,120 to 5,675. The change in population by race between 2000 and 2010 shows all groups experiencing a higher percentage of growth than the White alone population, though the White alone population experienced more growth in terms of absolute numbers.

Table 2: Change in Population 2000-2014, by Race and Ethnicity<sup>42</sup>

	Change	Percentage Change
<b>Race</b>		
<b>American Indian and Alaska native alone</b>	108	41.06%
<b>Asian alone</b>	404	105.21%
<b>Black or African American alone</b>	206	251.22%
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific native alone</b>	20	51.28%
<b>Some other race alone</b>	1,113	85.09%
<b>Two or more races</b>	305	36.97%
<b>White alone</b>	6,270	19.12%
<b>Hispanic or Latino Origin (any race)</b>		
<b>Persons not of Hispanic or Latino origin</b>	5,781	17.74%
<b>Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin</b>	2,645	84.78%

41 U.S. Census Bureau; Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table P012; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder; <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016). U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B11001; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder; <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016).

42 U.S. Census Bureau; Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table P006 and Summary File 1, Table P006; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder; <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016). And: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B02001 and Table B03002; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder; <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016).

By 2014, the percentage of the non-White alone population in Twin Falls had increased 2% from 2000.

Table 3: 2014 Population Estimate by Race and Ethnicity<sup>43</sup>

Race	Persons	Percentage of Population
<b>Race</b>		
<b>American Indian and Alaska native alone</b>	679	1.50%
<b>Asian alone</b>	1,107	2.44%
<b>Black or African American alone</b>	370	0.82%
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific native alone</b>	4	0.01%
<b>Some other race alone</b>	1,326	2.92%
<b>Two or more races</b>	1,019	2.25%
<b>White alone</b>	40,857	90.97%
<b>Hispanic or Latino Origin (any race)</b>		
<b>Persons not of Hispanic or Latino origin</b>	38,044	83.9%
<b>Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin</b>	7,318	16.1%

#### Age

The median age in city of Twin Falls (32.2) is lower than in the median age in Idaho (35.2). Since 2000, the proportion of the population 19 years and younger has held fairly steady in the city, growing to 30.42% from 30.35%. Individuals aged 20-64 made up a greater share of the population by 2014 (56.15%) than they did in 2000 (54.67%), while those aged 65 and over made up a smaller share in 2014 (13.43%) than in 2000 (14.98%).

During the same period of time, Twin Falls County saw a different trend - with people under 19 making up a smaller proportion of the population in 2014 (30.07%) than in 2000 (31.3%). The proportion of those aged 20-64 grew to (55.54%) in 2014 from (54.53%) in 2000, while the proportion of those aged 65 and older held fairly steady between 2000 (14.15%) and 2014 (14.39%).

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B02001 and Table B03002; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder; <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016).

Table 4: Change in Population Age, 2000-2014<sup>44</sup>

	Persons 2000	Proportion of total persons 2000	Persons 2014	Proportion of total persons 2014	Change in proportion of population 2000- 2014
<b>19 and under</b>	10,463	30.35%	13,798	30.42%	0.06%
<b>Under 5</b>	2,698	7.83%	3,903	8.60%	0.78%
<b>years</b>					
<b>5 to 9</b>	2,391	6.94%	3,878	8.55%	1.61%
<b>10 to 14</b>	2,471	7.17%	2,923	6.44%	-0.73%
<b>15 to 19</b>	2,903	8.42%	3,094	6.82%	-1.60%
<b>20 to 64</b>	18,844	54.67%	25,472	56.15%	1.48%
<b>20 to 24</b>	2,848	8.26%	3,952	8.71%	0.45%
<b>25 to 34</b>	4,429	12.85%	6,855	15.11%	2.26%
<b>35 to 44</b>	4,605	13.36%	5,702	12.57%	-0.79%
<b>45 to 54</b>	4,155	12.05%	4,449	9.81%	-2.25%
<b>55 to 59</b>	1,536	4.46%	2,302	5.07%	0.62%
<b>60 to 64</b>	1,271	3.69%	2,212	4.88%	1.19%
<b>65 and older</b>	5,162	14.98%	6,092	13.43%	-1.55%
<b>65 to 74</b>	2,311	6.70%	3,131	6.90%	0.20%
<b>75 to 84</b>	1,949	5.65%	1,949	4.30%	-1.36%
<b>85 and older</b>	902	2.62%	1,012	2.23%	-0.39%
<b>Total</b>	34,469		45,362		

Youth and older adults are more likely to use transit in everyday travel than other age groups, so their travel habits and age trends throughout the potential service region should be considered a priority during the development of the transit plan. Before the age of 15, youth cannot receive a driver's license, and obtaining a driver's license does not mean that a youth will have access to a car. Even among individuals aged 18-34 in the U.S., the number of cars purchased has been falling since at least 2007.

Research increasingly indicates that young Americans, particularly Millennials - those born between about 1983 and 2000 or so - drive less than previous generations did at their age, even when accounting for factors like household income. In Twin Falls in 2014, people aged 15-34 made up 27.1% of the population. If national trends hold true in Twin Falls, these individuals will be more likely than other age groups to: take fewer and shorter car trips; take more walking, biking, and transit trips; prefer to live in dense, walkable, urban areas; and use technology-based services to expand their transportation options and/or reduce their need for transportation.

<sup>44</sup> U.S. Census Bureau; Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table P008; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder; <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016). And: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B01001; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder; <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016).

## Disability

In 2014, an estimated 5,625 (civilian, non-institutionalized) individuals in the city of Twin Falls had a disability - 12.7% of the population. Over 1/3 (36%) of Twin Falls residents aged 65 and older experience some sort of disability.

Table 5: 2014 Estimate, Individuals with a Disability by Age and Disability Type<sup>45</sup>

	City of Twin Falls			Twin Falls County		
	Total	With a disability	Percent with a disability	Total	With a disability	Percent with a disability
<b>Total civilian non-institutionalized population</b>	44,391	5,625	12.70%	77,736	9,686	12.50%
<b>Population under 5 years</b>	3,903	134	3.40%	6,209	134	2.20%
Hearing difficulty		107	2.70%		107	1.70%
Vision difficulty		109	2.80%		109	1.80%
<b>Population 5 to 17 years</b>	8,670	670	7.70%	15,466	990	6.40%
Hearing difficulty		67	0.80%		71	0.50%
Vision difficulty		128	1.50%		204	1.30%
Cognitive difficulty		437	5.00%		647	4.20%
Ambulatory difficulty		104	1.20%		108	0.70%
Self-care difficulty		103	1.20%		192	1.20%
<b>Population 18 to 64 years</b>	25,974	2,574	9.90%	45,013	4,572	10.20%
Hearing difficulty		704	2.70%		1,311	2.90%
Vision difficulty		537	2.10%		930	2.10%
Cognitive difficulty		1,032	4.00%		1,692	3.80%
Ambulatory difficulty		1,083	4.20%		2,024	4.50%
Self-care difficulty		361	1.40%		691	1.50%
Independent living difficulty		937	3.60%		1,548	3.40%
<b>Population 65 years and over</b>	5,844	2,247	38.40%	11,048	3,990	36.10%
Hearing difficulty		1,055	18.10%		1,896	17.20%
Vision difficulty		574	9.80%		906	8.20%
Cognitive difficulty		504	8.60%		1,004	9.10%
Ambulatory difficulty		1,393	23.80%		2,520	22.80%
Self-care difficulty		508	8.70%		855	7.70%
Independent living difficulty		1,048	17.90%		1,724	15.60%

45 U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table B18101; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder;

<<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016).

### Foreign-born population

By 2014, 9.44% of the population of the city of Twin Falls was foreign-born, with the majority of individuals coming from Latin America (2,406) and Asia (1,037). Among the foreign-born population (about 4,284 in 2014), 33.94% had been in Twin Falls since between 2000 and 2009; 56.93% of the foreign-born population had been in Twin Falls since 1999 or earlier.

### Language

Among non-English languages spoken at home, Spanish, Serbo-Croatian, and Russian are the most common, with over 4,500 Spanish speakers in Twin Falls. About 16.8% of the individuals in Twin Falls speak a language that is not English.

### Vehicle access

Between 2000 and 2014, the proportion of households without a vehicle changed little, but the biggest change was seen for households where the head of household was 65 and older, from 3.09% of the population in 2000 to 2.18% of the population in 2014.

Households without a car make up 6.3% of households in Twin Falls, or about 1,032 households. In Twin Falls County, 5.2% (or about 1,481) of households do not have a vehicle available, and in Idaho, 4.6% (or about 26,743) of households do not have a vehicle available. In 2014, over  $\frac{1}{3}$  of Twin Falls households (34.7% in the city and 36.2% in the county) without access to a vehicle were headed by an individual 65 years or older.

### Income

Income is directly related to the transportation options that an individual and members of a household have access to. In 2014, the federal poverty guideline for a household of 2 people was set at \$15,730. While the guideline is used administratively to determine some federal benefits, it is well recognized that the guideline falls short of capturing economic insecurity or self-sufficiency. In Twin Falls, 13.6% of households fall under the poverty guideline. Non-family households fare even worse, with just over 1 in 4 non-family households (or 25.2%) having an income below the poverty guideline.

Table 6: 2014 Estimate, Household (HH) Income in the Past 12 Months (In 2014 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)<sup>46</sup>

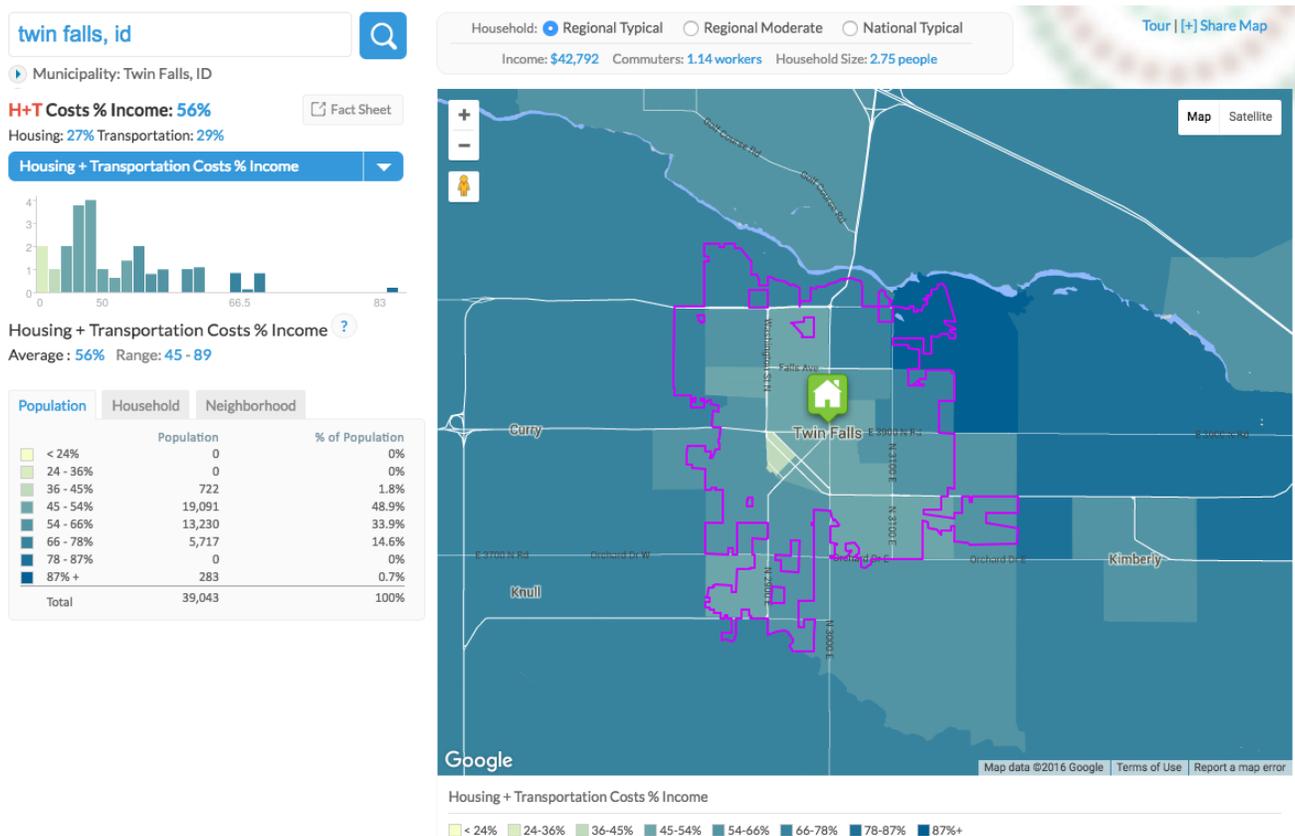
	City of Twin Falls				Twin Falls County			
	HHs	Families	Married couple families	Non-family HHs	HHs	Families	Married couple families	Non-family HHs
<b>Total</b>	16,412	11,109	8,337	5,303	28,581	20,291	15,722	8,290
<b>Less than \$10,000</b>	7.00%	4.90%	2.10%	13.30%	6.50%	4.70%	2.00%	13.10%
<b>\$10,000 to \$14,999</b>	6.60%	4.20%	2.50%	11.90%	6.10%	3.90%	2.00%	12.50%
<b>\$15,000 to \$24,999</b>	12.80%	10.70%	6.10%	20.00%	12.20%	9.60%	6.60%	20.20%
<b>\$25,000 to \$34,999</b>	15.00%	12.80%	12.10%	20.00%	14.80%	12.50%	11.30%	20.20%
<b>\$35,000 to \$49,999</b>	16.30%	16.70%	16.90%	15.50%	16.30%	17.10%	17.60%	14.30%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	21.00%	24.30%	29.10%	9.80%	20.80%	23.90%	26.70%	10.30%
<b>\$75,000 to \$99,999</b>	10.60%	14.10%	16.30%	4.60%	11.10%	13.90%	16.10%	4.20%
<b>\$100,000 to \$149,999</b>	7.70%	9.50%	11.80%	1.80%	8.60%	10.30%	12.50%	2.90%
<b>\$150,000 to \$199,999</b>	1.30%	1.80%	2.30%	0.20%	1.60%	2.10%	2.60%	0.20%
<b>\$200,000 or more</b>	1.50%	0.90%	0.90%	2.80%	2.10%	2.10%	2.50%	2.10%
<b>Median income (dollars)</b>	41,880	50,447	56,837	26,614	44,138	51,776	57,989	26,743
<b>Mean income (dollars)</b>	52,080	57,697	N*	37,112	56,693	63,624	N	36,354

\* ACS 2010-2014 5 year estimate: "An 'N' entry in the estimate and margin of error columns indicates that data for this geographic area cannot be displayed because the number of sample cases is too small."

<sup>46</sup> U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table S1901; generated by Heidi Guenin; using American FactFinder; <<http://factfinder.census.gov/>>; (10 July 2016). The margin of error for household numbers ranges between a high of +/-629 for Married-couple families in Twin Falls County to a low of +/-414 for Households in Twin Falls City.

Median household income in the city and in the county are comparable, but the mean (average) income in Twin Falls County is significantly higher than the average in the city. Household income is one important factor related to transit use, but it does not signify much alone. The Center for Neighborhood Technology’s (CNT) Housing and Transportation Affordability Index combines information about neighborhood and household characteristics with transportation usage data to estimate household transportation costs. This information is combined with census data about household income to create the index, which show where a higher proportion of the population is likely to be burdened by the combined costs of housing and transportation. The benchmark for housing affordability has traditionally been set at 30% of household income; CNT uses 45% of household income as the benchmark for combined housing and transportation affordability.

Figure 2: Twin Falls Housing and Transportation Costs as a Percentage of Income<sup>47</sup>



According to the H+T analysis, only 1.8% of the population of the city of Twin Falls would not be considered cost burdened by housing and transportation, and households located outside of the boundaries of the city are likely to experience a high cost burden.

<sup>47</sup> H+T Affordability Index. Center for Neighborhood Technology, 10 July 2016. Web. 10 July 2016. <<http://htaindex.cnt.org/map/>>.

## Housing

The development of multi-family housing and housing for seniors has not kept pace with the need in Twin Falls. Across the U.S., the impacts of the recent recession contributed to an uptick in the creation of multi-family housing. Housing development in Twin Falls did not follow this pattern, with only one major apartment complex completed between 2007 and 2014.

Written in 2009, Vision 2030 noted the trend over the past decades towards more suburban development and warned against a focus on “a narrow range of residential and commercial models, which is undesirable.” The plan also emphasized the need for housing development: “The number of housing units needed for the city’s growing population is forecast to nearly double over the 30 year forecast period from 2000 to 2030.”

Unfortunately, between 2009 and 2012, in Twin Falls County, the number of new housing units permitted dropped from previous years. Multi-family units fared worse, with only one two-family building permitted each year in 2010 and 2012, and no multi-family development permitted at all in 2011. Between 2010-2014, by Census estimates, Twin Falls County had 31,394 housing units. Of these, 24,825 were single-family units, 4,159 were multi-family (two or more families), and 2,410 were mobile homes or other structures.

More recently, demand for housing that is not traditional single-family home development is increasing. The Planning and Zoning Commission has discussed topics ranging from tiny homes to row houses, both of which generated opposition from neighboring property owners.<sup>48</sup>

## Parking

Surface parking lots surround many of Twin Falls’ major destinations. For example, CSI and many of the major retailers along Blue Lakes Boulevard are surrounded by a ring of parking lots. To access the college on foot from the surrounding road network, a visitor is likely to need to cross one of the several lots. Glancing at a map of Blue Lakes Blvd, the most prominent features are the large surface parking lots on the north end of the road. The same is currently true of downtown Twin Falls as well. Twin Falls City Code calls for 1 space per 250 square feet of gross floor area for retail buildings and two spaces for each single-family and duplex residential dwelling unit.

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<sup>48</sup> [http://magicvalley.com/business/big-plans-for-tiny-houses-city-codes-catch-up-with/article\\_c9025140-8f72-587e-a798-3aa9db697999.html](http://magicvalley.com/business/big-plans-for-tiny-houses-city-codes-catch-up-with/article_c9025140-8f72-587e-a798-3aa9db697999.html)

Figure 3: Surface parking lots in Twin Falls



Imagery ©2016 Google, Map data ©2016 Google 500 ft

## Employment

Twin Falls' largest employment sectors include healthcare, leisure & hospitality, and retail trade. Food processing and manufacturing has historically been a strong sector in south-central Idaho; Twin Falls has built upon and diversified out from this historical base. Twin Falls' recent development reflects these trends, with new construction for six hotels, health care centers (including a \$250 million hospital), and food processing manufacturing and research centers.

Much of the description of Twin Falls' economic development from Vision 2030 still holds true, with Twin Falls serving as a regional retail hub and tourism center. Vision 2030 also noted that in the past, "downtown Twin Falls was the traditional center of economic activity in the city. However, that function has changed as many new employers are locating in other parts of the city, especially on the Snake River Canyon rim." More recently, major employers appear also to be locating in the southeastern part of the city with access to I-30 and the rail lines.

Twin Falls' major employers include:

- College of Southern Idaho
- St. Luke's/  
Magic Valley Regional Medical Center
- Glanbia, Inc.
- Bridgeview Estates
- Independent Meat
- Amalgamated Sugar Company
- Glanbia, Inc.
- Walmart
- Transystems
- Loomix
- K & T Steel Corporation
- Clif Bar
- Chobani Greek Yogurt
- Rangen, Inc.
- Kapstone Paper
- Henningsen Cold Storage
- Seastrom Manufacturing
- Jayco RV
- Costco
- Solo Cup
- C3 Customer Contact Channels
- Con Agra/Lamb-Weston, Inc.
- Personnel Plus

## Other land uses

### Public schools

Students attending Twin Falls School District #411 schools are served by Western States Busing. More information about this service can be found later in the "Transportation services" section. In some school districts, public buses provide transport to and from school. Student transportation has not risen as a priority in previous planning efforts and public outreach in Twin Falls, but the current and future locations of junior high and high schools in particular should be considered in future transit planning efforts. This is to provide students with non-driving options not just for school attendance but for after-school activities and jobs. High school students in Twin Falls public schools in 2016 are projected to number about 2,550.

### Healthcare and pharmacy

St. Luke's/Magic Valley Regional Medical Center, is both a major employer in Twin Falls and a major destination for patients and their families. St. Luke's also has specialized medical clinics across the city. In addition to the pharmacy at the medical center, there are at least a dozen other pharmacies in Twin Falls.

### Grocery stores and other shopping

Twin Falls has several grocery stores, many of which, along with other shopping destinations, are located along or near Blue Lakes Blvd or Pole Line Rd.

## Transportation

It takes more than public transit passengers and vehicles to create a successful transit system. Public transit vehicles drive on the roads, where traffic signals, road quality, congestion, and the network of roads all impact transit performance. The roads impact access to the bus stops, too – for both passengers and for the bus itself. All transit trips include one or more forms of transportation – from walking and rolling to riding a bike or parking at a park-and-ride. Just as with the roads, sidewalks characteristics, such as maintenance, space (both sidewalk width for people using the sidewalks and separation from fast-moving traffic or other hazards), and the network of sidewalks and paths, impact a person’s ability to access transit. While commuting to work “constitutes approximately 16% of all person trips and 19% of all person miles of travel,”<sup>49</sup> it is the form of trip that we collect the most information about through the Census and the American Community Survey.

	Twin Falls city, Idaho			
	Total	Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	Public transportation (excluding taxicab)
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
<b>Workers 16 years and over</b>	20,174	16,604	2,008	82
<b>AGE</b>				
16 to 19 years	4.2%	4.1%	1.8%	0.0%
20 to 24 years	14.6%	15.3%	12.1%	0.0%
25 to 44 years	46.4%	46.7%	55.2%	31.7%
45 to 54 years	17.3%	15.9%	23.6%	45.1%
55 to 59 years	7.9%	8.5%	2.7%	12.2%
60 years and over	9.6%	9.4%	4.6%	11.0%
<b>LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME AND ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH</b>				
Speak language other than English	15.5%	15.9%	18.5%	41.5%
Speak English "very well"	8.3%	8.4%	11.1%	7.3%
Speak English less than "very well"	7.2%	7.6%	7.4%	34.1%
<b>EARNINGS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2014 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS) FOR WORKERS</b>				
<b>Workers 16 years and over with earnings</b>	20,174	16,604	2,008	82
\$1 to \$9,999 or loss	18.5%	16.5%	22.3%	24.4%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	9.9%	9.2%	12.5%	57.3%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	21.1%	22.9%	16.9%	0.0%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	17.8%	17.7%	22.0%	7.3%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	15.7%	16.6%	10.7%	0.0%
\$50,000 to \$64,999	8.6%	8.7%	9.7%	0.0%
\$65,000 to \$74,999	2.6%	2.8%	1.3%	0.0%

<sup>49</sup> [http://traveltrends.transportation.org/Documents/B2\\_CIA\\_Role%20Overall%20Travel\\_web\\_2.pdf](http://traveltrends.transportation.org/Documents/B2_CIA_Role%20Overall%20Travel_web_2.pdf)

	Twin Falls city, Idaho			
<b>\$75,000 or more</b>	5.7%	5.6%	4.6%	11.0%
<b>Median earnings (dollars)</b>	25,226	25,696	22,160	11,117
<b>PLACE OF WORK</b>				
<b>Worked in state of residence</b>	98.3%	98.8%	99.6%	7.3%
<b>Worked in county of residence</b>	88.3%	88.9%	82.2%	0.0%
<b>Worked outside county of residence</b>	10.0%	9.9%	17.3%	7.3%
<b>Worked outside state of residence</b>	1.7%	1.2%	0.4%	92.7%
<b>TRAVEL TIME TO WORK</b>				
<b>Less than 10 minutes</b>	33.1%	33.6%	21.3%	0.0%
<b>10 to 14 minutes</b>	26.2%	27.7%	17.9%	0.0%
<b>15 to 19 minutes</b>	21.9%	21.5%	32.5%	0.0%
<b>20 to 24 minutes</b>	5.9%	5.7%	6.3%	0.0%
<b>25 to 29 minutes</b>	1.3%	1.4%	0.7%	0.0%
<b>30 to 34 minutes</b>	3.9%	3.9%	3.1%	0.0%
<b>35 to 44 minutes</b>	1.4%	1.1%	4.3%	0.0%
<b>45 to 59 minutes</b>	3.4%	2.7%	9.0%	34.1%
<b>60 or more minutes</b>	3.0%	2.4%	4.8%	65.9%
<b>Mean travel time to work (minutes)</b>	15.2	14.4	21.4	58.5
<b>VEHICLES AVAILABLE</b>				
<b>No vehicle available</b>	2.8%	1.8%	0.9%	0.0%
<b>1 vehicle available</b>	19.5%	19.0%	21.5%	58.5%
<b>2 vehicles available</b>	42.8%	43.7%	38.7%	41.5%
<b>3 or more vehicles available</b>	35.0%	35.5%	38.9%	0.0%

## Roads

Twin Falls' road network is characterized by suburban-style residential road networks, with the exception of downtown's grid network and the large-block grid immediately to the north and to the east of downtown. Two state-operated routes – US 30, US 93 – run through Twin Falls, and these two roads carry the majority of the trips in Twin Falls. Several intersections along Blue Lakes Boulevard are considered “high accident” intersections by ITD, and residents have raised concerns about safety as well as congestion during outreach for this project and previous planning projects. In 2014, there were 368 car crashes in Twin Falls. Among those, 3 were fatal, and 195 resulted in injuries.<sup>50</sup>

## Sidewalks

Like the street network, the pedestrian network is mostly characterized by suburban development, with sidewalks in some areas and missing in others. Around major destinations, like CSI or St. Luke's, it is common to see sidewalks on only one side of the street (or in the case of the photo below, a path that goes from paved to unpaved past the intersection).

Figure 4: Pedestrian facilities on the north side of CSI

<sup>50</sup> <http://itd.idaho.gov/ohs/2014Data/Analysis2014final.pdf>



Image capture: Oct 2012 © 2016 Google

Sidewalks along Pole Line Road and Blue Lakes Boulevard are curb-tight (the sidewalk edge abuts a travel or parking lane with no buffer in between) and narrow.

Figure 5: Narrow sidewalks on Blue Lakes Boulevard.



Image capture: Jul 2015 © 2016 Google

In some areas pedestrians must cross many driveways in a row. Areas where the curb is cut for car traffic to enter create points of potential conflict between people driving and people walking or biking. These are often the sites of crashes.



## Other Transportation Options

The 2013 Local Mobility Management Network (LMMN) 4B Local Mobility Plan catalogued existing mobility services in the 4B area, which includes the counties of Twin Falls, Gooding, and Jerome.<sup>51</sup> There have been a few changes since the LMMN report. The report's "Appendix D: Existing Mobility Services" section provides comprehensive information and easy-to-understand organization. This section builds from that 2013 resource with some unchanged language and some additions and revisions to update the information and make it more relevant to this specific project. Two major shifts have occurred in the transportation landscape since 2013, and our updated list of categories reflects those with the inclusion of transportation network companies and the separation of non-emergency medical transportation into its own category.

### Local public transit

Trans IV, Twin Falls' public transit provider since 1979, is operated by the College of Southern Idaho. Services are oriented "to meet the needs of working commuters, students, agency clients, the elderly, and the disabled."<sup>52</sup> Services are provided by appointment only, and rides must be scheduled by at least 2pm the afternoon before the ride is needed.

Information below is taken from the LMMN report with minor changes:

- Service between Twin Falls and Kimberly, Hansen, Jerome, Filer, and Buhl: This is essentially a flexible "subscription" service designed to accommodate Medicaid and other trips between these cities. It is open to the public and individuals who are not regularly scheduled can access the service with a phone reservation one day before the date of the trip. Generally these trips run once in the morning and once in the afternoon, although times can be changed to meet the needs of passengers. The service spans 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
  - Burley Route: This is a "point-to-point" service between Burley and the College of Southern Idaho. The first bus departs Burley at 6:40 AM from in front of JC Penny's in the old K-Mart parking lot (701 N. Overland). The second bus departs Burley at 9 AM from the same location. The buses drop off at the bus stop at CSI. The return trips are at 2:10 PM and 4:30 PM from the CSI Bus stop. The cost for the general public is \$10 for a round trip. This service operates during the CSI Academic year. If a person with a disability is unable to access the Burley stop, a special pick-up/drop-off can be made upon request.
- In-Town Commuter Service: This "subscription" service operates within Twin Falls, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Flexible routes are developed based on individual travel needs.
- Dial-A-Ride Service: Demand-response service is available in Twin Falls (M- F 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) and Jerome (M-F 9:00 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.). In 2012, this service along with the commuter service provided 31,908 rides.
- The general public fare for all services except the Burley route is \$5.00 per round trip for one individual and \$1.00 for other companions traveling from the same origin and destination. The Burley route is \$10 round-trip. Reduced fares for individuals are offered through the Office on Aging and LINC (Living Independently Network Corporation) through a user-side subsidy. Medicaid-eligible trips are billed directly to Medicaid. Trans IV provides coordinated human service transportation on its general public services. Trans IV has a fleet of 13 buses, all of which are lift-equipped."

<sup>51</sup> [http://iway.valitics.com/\\_literature\\_128133/2013\\_LMMN\\_4C\\_Mobility\\_Plan\\_-\\_Final](http://iway.valitics.com/_literature_128133/2013_LMMN_4C_Mobility_Plan_-_Final)

<sup>52</sup> [http://www.csi.edu/support/transiv/tiv\\_body.html](http://www.csi.edu/support/transiv/tiv_body.html)

In 2009, Trans IV provided 54,019 passenger trips. Of these, 12,573 were along the Buhl-Twin Falls-Burley demand response route and 2,317 were along the CSI-Twin Falls-Burley-Rupert fixed route.<sup>53</sup> Trans IV experienced a 25% increase in rides in 2014.<sup>54</sup>

### Regional bus/intercity rail

Two regional intercity bus carriers serve Twin Falls:

- Salt Lake Express serves Twin Falls on its route between Boise and Pocatello (to Idaho Falls and Salt Lake City). This route makes three round trips per day. As of July 2016, the eastbound trip stops in Twin Falls at 10:25 a.m., 3:55 p.m., and 9:40 p.m.; the westbound trip stops in Twin Falls at 6:00 a.m., 10:35 a.m., and 3:40 p.m. Fares vary by distance traveled and time of departure; for example, from Twin Falls to Boise is either \$29 or \$36.25.
- Greyhound serves Twin Falls on its route between Boise and Salt Lake City. This route makes two round trips per day. As of July 2016, the eastbound trip stops in Twin Falls at 12:35 p.m. and 1:30 a.m.; the westbound trip stops in Twin Falls at 4:45 a.m. and 7:45 p.m. Fares vary by distance traveled and trip date; for example, from Twin Falls to Boise is \$19-55, and Twin Falls to Salt Lake City is \$28-66.
- The nearest intercity passenger rail stops are in Elko, NV and Salt Lake City, UT.

### Human services agencies

Human service agencies typically provide services for their program participants to access agency programs or activities integral to the agency's mission. Among human service agencies in the area, two - the Living Independence Network Corporation and the CSI office on Aging - are especially active in transportation provision.

The Living Independence Network Corporation (LINC) is a non-profit serving people with disabilities and people 60 and older. Their services include subsidizing transportation through Trans IV or private providers in addition to directly providing some transportation services. LINC uses Section 5310 funding for a user-side subsidy program serving Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, and Twin Falls Counties. For eligible individuals, LINC issues a monthly punch card, which, with a co-payment, is accepted by area taxi companies (including Magic Valley Cab, Twin Falls Taxi, Karen's Errands, and MS Yellow Cab, as well as public transit provider Trans VI). The transportation customer arranges their own transportation with their provider of choice, and the cab companies invoice link for the remaining cost of the ride. In 2012, almost 12,000 individuals used this program. LINC's transportation program is a crucial lifeline for many clients, but as recently as early 2016, a significant funding gap resulted in LINC putting the program on hiatus - and this after funding cuts had already reduced the number of trips clients were allowed to use the program for. The program serves about 800 individuals.<sup>55</sup>

College of Southern Idaho (CSI) Office on Aging is the Area IV Agency on Aging (serving Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls Counties). This office funds transportation services for elderly persons to access medical appointments, shopping, personal business and services. This is an umbrella organization that provides funding and oversight to many of the local senior centers and includes the following program that provides transportation:

- The Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) is made up of volunteers who take clients to medical appointments or grocery shopping. The driver stays with the client and then takes

<sup>53</sup> <http://static1.squarespace.com/static/52f124e8e4b03e1f2f5548ca/t/53222b82e4b0f75d17d31bf6/1394748290552/Intercity+corridor+definition+final+b.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> [http://itd.idaho.gov/public\\_transportation/documents/Submitted%20Applications/D4%20-%20Trans%20IV/VIP/2016-2018%20VIP%20application.pdf](http://itd.idaho.gov/public_transportation/documents/Submitted%20Applications/D4%20-%20Trans%20IV/VIP/2016-2018%20VIP%20application.pdf)

<sup>55</sup> [http://magicvalley.com/news/local/subsidized-transportation-for-disabled-elderly-disrupted-in-magic-valley/article\\_d57453ea-c217-5087-b8e7-bebe427ebcc1.html](http://magicvalley.com/news/local/subsidized-transportation-for-disabled-elderly-disrupted-in-magic-valley/article_d57453ea-c217-5087-b8e7-bebe427ebcc1.html)

them home. The service is currently providing about 12 trips per day. The program asks for 48 hours advance notice when possible, but will work on shorter notice if there is an emergency.

- The Senior Assisted Services (SAS) provided volunteer-operated van transportation for elderly persons in Jerome, but state budget cuts removed most of their funding. A grant through St. Luke's hospital enabled them to continue limited operations.
- The Senior Companion Program provides one-on-one assistance to the frail elderly and other homebound persons who have difficulty completing everyday tasks. Among the services is transportation to medical appointments provided by volunteers who are reimbursed for their mileage.

The following human service agencies either provide transportation services, or provide financial assistance their participants for transportation purposes, in Twin Falls:

- American Cancer Society – provides transportation to cancer patients in the area
- College of Southern Idaho (CSI) Office on Aging – see description at the beginning of this section.
- Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired - this state agency provides financial assistance for transportation to people with vision disabilities. The Twin Falls office serves Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls Counties.
- Idaho Commission on Aging – funds transportation services for seniors throughout the State.
- Idaho Department of Health and Welfare – funds transportation services for clients eligible for a variety of programs throughout the State, including Medicaid transportation. See the “Non-emergency medical transportation” section for more information on Medicaid transportation.
  - Idaho Department of Health and Welfare Behavioral Health – funds transportation services for clients to access mental health and substance abuse programs.
- Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – This state agency provides financial assistance for transportation for people with disabilities preparing for employment, including access training. The Twin Falls regional office serves Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Minidoka, Shoshone, and Twin Falls Counties.
- Living Independence Network Corporation (LINC) - see description at the beginning of this section.
- Magic Valley Youth and Adult Services, Inc. – located in Twin Falls, this agency coordinates transportation and assists job-seeking youths and adults under the Workforce Investment Act in Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls Counties.

### **Non-emergency medical transportation**

Non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) is a benefit available to eligible Medicaid recipients. The NEMT benefit includes transportation to and from medical services. States can manage Medicaid benefits themselves or contract out the management to another entity. No matter the structure, NEMT programs must:

- “Ensure necessary transportation to and from providers;
- Use the most appropriate form of transportation; and
- Include coverage for transportation and related travel expenses necessary to secure medical examinations and treatment.”

States are not required to provide the NEMT benefit for all Medicaid recipients - they “may require that there be an unmet transportation need.”<sup>56</sup>

As of July 1, 2016, the State of Idaho contracts with Veyo to “administer, coordinate, and manage all NEMT for eligible Idaho Medicaid participants.”<sup>57</sup> Veyo’s headquarters are in San Diego, CA, and they provide transportation brokerage services for Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, and Texas. Veyo is a transportation network company (discussed later) that utilizes independent paid drivers who use their own non-commercial vehicles to transport patients. According to some of the professional NEMT providers who were serving clients before the transition to the Veyo brokerage system, the mileage rates offered by Veyo are lower than under the previous system (under which rates hadn’t gone up in 10 years).<sup>58</sup>

- Precious Cargo – NEMT provider based in Twin Falls, serving South Central Idaho.
- Homebase Transport – NEMT provider based in Twin Falls.
- A to B Services - NEMT provider serving the Magic Valley (based in Rupert). Service is provided Mon-Fri 5:00 a.m.- 9:00 p.m.
- Karen's Errands – based in Twin Falls and provides NEMT.
- Twin Falls Taxi / Transportation – based in Twin Falls, serves Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Minidoka, and Twin Falls Counties 24 hours/7 days a week and provides NEMT.

### **Rideshare/vanpool**

Two rideshare programs include Twin Falls in their service area:

- Mountain Rides Vanpool - Mountain Rides Transportation Authority (MRTA), based in Ketchum, provides equipment and support for commuter vanpool routes serving Twin Falls/Jerome/Shoshone to Hailey/Ketchum/Sun Valley, and Gooding to Fairfield. 13 vanpools handle 44,000 annual passenger trips. As of July 2016, for individuals living in Twin Falls and working in Shoshone, monthly fare is \$55; for those living in Twin Falls and working in Hailey, the monthly fare is \$135.
- IdahoRideshare.org – Residents of Twin Falls can be matched with others with whom to share rides in carpools and vanpools through the statewide rideshare program, online at Idaho Rideshare. Idaho Rideshare also provides information and referral to transportation alternatives, and tools for employers.

### **Transportation network companies**

Transportation network companies (TNCs) provide a kind of ridesharing. Customers connect to non-commercial drivers through a website or mobile phone app and pay the driver to transport them. Popular TNCs include Uber, Lyft, and Via. In April 2015, the Idaho state legislature passed enabling legislation to allow Uber to operate in the state. In early August, Uber began operating in Twin Falls. Upon beginning service, there were 12 drivers in Twin Falls.<sup>59</sup>

### **Park & ride lots**

There are no formal park and ride lots in Twin Falls.

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<sup>56</sup> <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-medicaid-coordination/fraud-prevention/medicaid-integrity-education/downloads/nemt-booklet.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> <http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Medical/Medicaid/MedicalCare/MedicalTransportation/tabid/704/Default.aspx>

<sup>58</sup> [http://www.idahoproviders.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/idaho\\_nemt.pdf](http://www.idahoproviders.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/idaho_nemt.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> [http://magicvalley.com/news/local/uber-to-launch-in-twin-falls-this-weekend/article\\_0d570db1-b3e8-5eb2-9a08-daa691a961f0.html](http://magicvalley.com/news/local/uber-to-launch-in-twin-falls-this-weekend/article_0d570db1-b3e8-5eb2-9a08-daa691a961f0.html)

### **Veterans' transportation**

Transportation to health care at the VA hospital in Boise is provided to veterans 4 days a week, leaving Twin Falls in the morning and returning in the evening. Van drivers are volunteers, and the county's Veteran Services Officer organizes trips. Another group of volunteers picks veterans up from the rural areas to transport them into the VA clinic in Twin Falls.

### **Non-motorized transportation (bicycle & pedestrian)**

As of May 2015, there were three, striped, on-street lanes marked for bicycles. "1) East side of town, from the City/YMCA pool along Falls Avenue to the top of the grade at Shoshone Falls, 2) West side of town, from North College Road West, south on Sparks to Blake St. N. east on Shoup Avenue West to Harrison St. then north on Harrison to Falls Avenue. There is also a section of this lane that is along Caswell Avenue in front of I.B Perrine Elementary school and Robert Stuart middle school, and 3) South side of town, from the south water tanks, north on Washington St. South to Park Avenue, then west on Park Avenue to Oregon Trail Elementary School, and including a short section on Lois Avenue along the Oregon Trail Youth Complex.

In addition, "The canyon rim trail system is designated as a shared use path, along with the pathway on Washington St. N. from Falls Avenue to Pole Line Road and the sidewalk along Pole Line Road."<sup>60</sup>

### **Taxi services**

The following providers of taxi services serve Twin Falls:

- E-Z Ride – based in Twin Falls, accepts LINC vouchers
- Karen's Errands – based in Twin Falls, accepts LINC vouchers and provides Medicaid transportation
- King Allen Taxi – based in Twin Falls, accepts LINC vouchers
- Magic Valley Cab and Courier – based in Twin Falls, accepts LINC vouchers
- Snake River Yellow Cab – based in Twin Falls, accepts LINC vouchers
- Twin Falls Taxi / Transportation – based in Twin Falls, serves Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Minidoka, and Twin Falls Counties 24 hours/7 days a week, accepts LINC vouchers and provides Medicaid transportation.
- D & S Checker Taxi - based in Twin Falls, no longer accepting LINC vouchers.

### **Schools/education**

As previously described, the College of Southern Idaho operates the Trans VI Buses and senior transportation services through the Office on Aging.

According to the Twin Falls School District policies: "Transportation is provided [by Western States Bussing] to students who live at least one and one-half miles from school, or for those students who require transportation as part of a specialized program. Due to high traffic in some areas, the district has authorized safety bus routes... Students with a valid Idaho license may drive to the high school, the alternative high school, and the junior high/alternative middle high schools. Please check with school officials for rules regarding this privilege."<sup>61</sup>

### **Aeronautic**

The Magic Valley Regional Airport (Joslin Field), five miles outside of Twin Falls, is home to one commercial airline, two air charter services, and other general aviation services. Delta/Sky West offers three flights each day between Twin Falls and Salt Lake City, UT. Joslin Field is also an alternate Sun Valley destination in case of inclement weather. Precision Aviation, Inc. and Spur

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.tfid.org/Archive/ViewFile/Item/2166>

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.tfsd.k12.id.us/tfsd/schools/District%20Policies.htm>

Aviation offer charter flights. Other companies operating out of Joslin Field provide services such as fire suppression, aircraft rental, aviation instruction, aircraft maintenance, helicopters, and skydiving. The airport is undergoing a \$4.3 million expansion in 2016 and is in the process of updating its Master Plan.

There are also municipal airports located in Buhl, Jerome, Gooding and Hazelton.

# Appendix C: Case Studies

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## Selected Case Study Locations

We selected the following cities as examples of various alternative futures for Twin Falls.

- **Idaho Falls, ID:** Idaho Falls is similar to Twin Falls in many ways and currently has a relatively low performing transit system. TRPTA struggles to secure adequate funding for its fixed route system. Because of the low level of local investment, the transit system is less frequent than the other case studies and has substantially lower ridership. Its lower ridership levels make it difficult to convince elected leaders to invest adequate funding. The Twin Falls transit system will likely perform similar to the Targhee Regional Public Transit Authority system if existing transit funding and land use policies remain the same.
- **Logan, UT:** Logan is similar to San Luis Obispo in terms of its commitment to public transit investment, but with less of an emphasis on land use planning. Its fare free system has enabled it to build a robust transit system that balances high ridership with coverage and equity for non-drivers, despite its relatively low land use densities. Land use patterns in Logan are comparable to Twin Falls, but ridership is high because of the strong connections to Utah State University and the fare-free policy.
- **San Luis Obispo, CA:** SLO is a small urban area and a regional hub surrounded by agricultural land. It boasts a relatively dense transit network and relatively dense housing footprint, as well as robust regional transit connections to neighboring cities. San Luis Obispo has prioritized transit in its regional transportation plan, and its ridership and fare recovery ratios show that it is a high-performing small urban transit system.

We picked these cities not because they are a perfect match with Twin Falls, but because they offer interesting insights into the various ways policy can shape the performance of a transit system. These three cities highlight the significant roles investment, land use density, and connections to key trip generators play in establishing a transit system with high ridership. The following pages include detailed statistics for each community followed by a summary comparison. The transit route maps are each presented at the same scale.

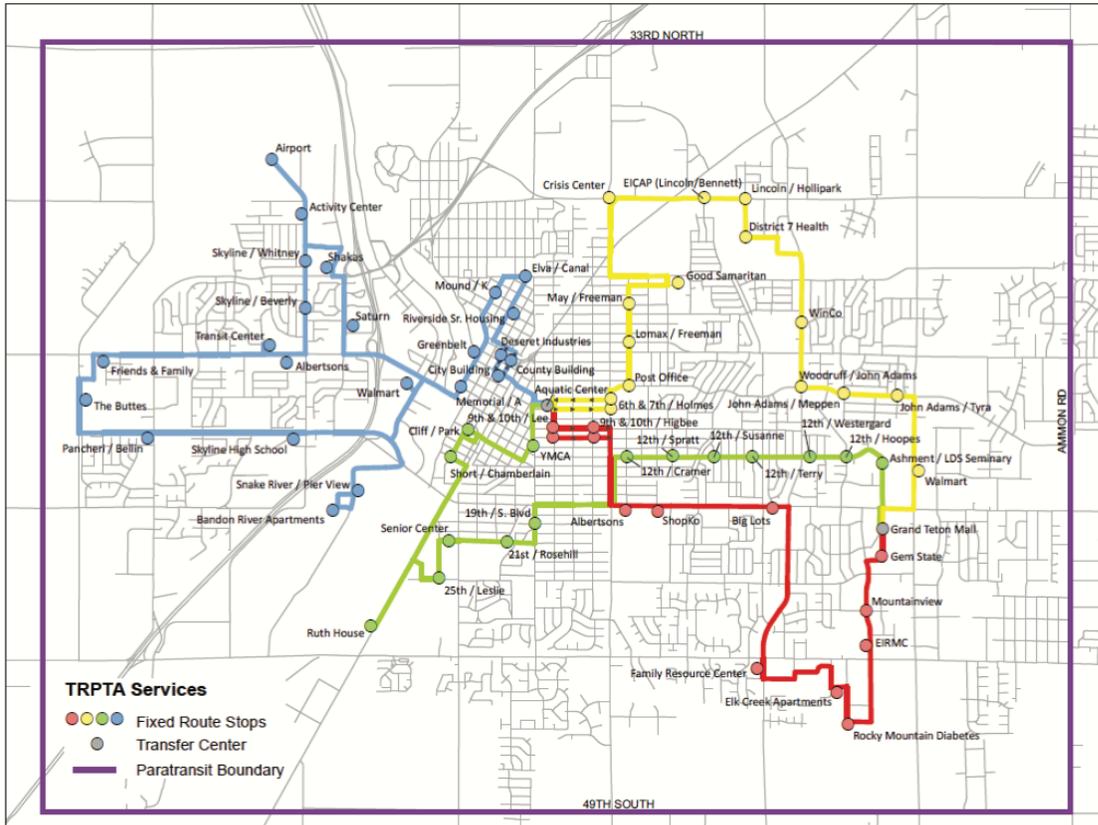
# Idaho Falls, ID

City Population	56,813
MPO	Bonneville Metropolitan Planning Organization
MPO Website	<a href="http://www.bmpo.org">http://www.bmpo.org</a>
Population Density	2,542 per square mile
Housing Density	3.81 HHs/Acre
Local College & University Enrollment	< 2,000



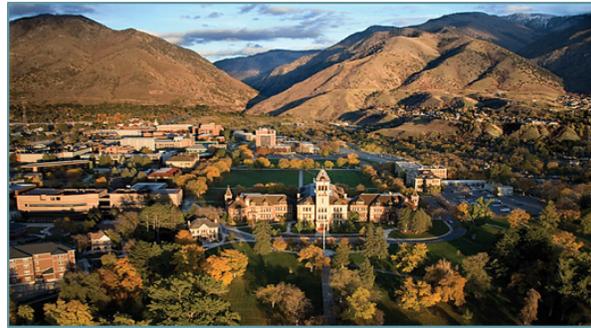
# Targhee Regional Public Transit Authority

Total Operating Expense	\$2M
Total Trips	134,860
Ridership per capita	1.5
Fare Box Recovery Ratio	3.73%
Number of Routes	5
Average Frequency	45 minutes
Average Fare	\$0.55



## Logan, UT

City Population	48,174
MPO	Cache County
Metropolitan	
	Planning Organization
MPO Website	<a href="http://cachemppo.org">http://cachemppo.org</a>
Population Density	2,731 per square mile
Housing Density	3.29 HHs/Acre
USU Enrollment	27,662



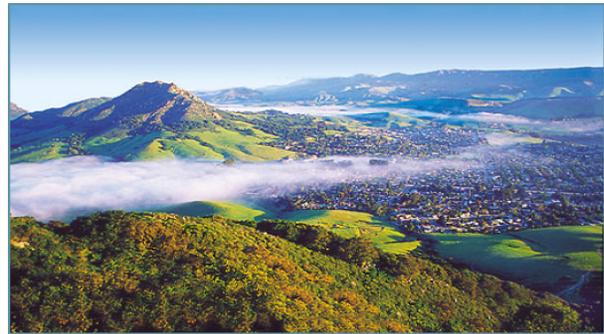
## Cache Valley Transit District

Total Operating Expense	\$5M
Total Trips	1,971,207
Ridership per capita	20.64
Fare Box Recovery Ratio	N/A
Number of Routes	16
Average Frequency	30 minutes
Average Fare	Free



# San Luis Obispo, CA

City Population	45,119
MPO	San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG)
MPO Website	<a href="http://www.slocog.org">http://www.slocog.org</a>
Population Density	3,489 per square mile
Housing Density	5.33 HHs/Acre
CalPoly Enrollment	20,944



## San Luis Obispo Transit and SLO Regional Transit Authority

Total Operating Expense	\$8.6M
Total Trips	1,087,419
Ridership per capita	5.28
Fare Box Recovery Ratio	N/A
Number of Routes	20
Average Frequency	30 minutes
Average Fare	\$1.56



## Twin Falls, ID

City Population	44,125
Population Density	2,437.8 per square mile
Housing Density	4.1 HHs/Acre
CSI Enrollment	7,615



## Trans IV

Total Operating Expense	~\$1M
Total Trips	33,600
Ridership per capita	0.4
Fare Box Recovery Ratio	2.69%
Number of Routes	N/A
Average Frequency	N/A
Average Fare	\$0.90

Table 1: Summary of peer city transit statistics

	TRPTA	CVTD	SLO Transit + SLO RTA	Trans IV
Service Area Population	90,733	95,500	206,008	82,375
Modal Mix	Fixed route, paratransit, dial-a-ride	Fixed route, paratransit	Fixed route, paratransit, dial-a-ride, trolley	Dial-a-ride
Total Annual Operating Expense	\$1,981,276	\$4,905,749	\$8,627,680	Approx. \$1,000,000
Total Annual Passenger Trips	134,860	1,971,207	1,087,419	33,600
Revenue Miles	638,524	942,228	1,874,091	180,000
Revenue Hours	46,825	64,244	82,128	14,400
Ridership Per Capita	1.5	21	5	0.4
Trips/Revenue Hour	2.9	30.68	13.24	2.3
Cost/Revenue Hour	\$42.29	\$76.36	\$105.05	\$75.83
Cost/Trip	\$14.70	\$2.49	\$7.93	\$32.50
Fare	\$0.55	Free	\$1.59	\$0.90
Fare Box Recovery Ratio	3.73%	N/A	20.05%	2.69%
Weekday Service Span (Hours)	10.5	15.54	14.01	11
Route Miles	88	102	166	N/A
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	21	22	41	N/A
Number of Routes	5	16	20	N/A
Average Frequency (Minutes)	45	30	30	N/A