



Northern Arizona Intergovernmental Public Transportation Authority

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DATE PREPARED: June 15, 2017

DATE: June 27, 2017

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council

FROM: Kate Morley, NAIPTA Mobility Planner
Jim Dickey, NAIPTA Planning Services Manager

SUBJECT: Winslow Transit Plan Update

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for discussion and direction; the Council may take action, but no recommendation is being made.

BACKGROUND:

The Winslow Transit Plan officially kicked off on January 19, 2017 and established the project mission, "To present a Winslow Transit Plan to the Winslow City Council that is financially viable, operationally specific, supported broadly by the community and effectively meets Winslow's mobility goals."

Specifically, the plan will:

- Cover a 5-year timeframe;
- Establish base performance measures to guide funding decisions;
- Forecast ridership;
- Study a variety of levels of service for "right size" including fixed route, paratransit and vanpools;
- Study sustainable funding opportunities including establishing a sales tax;
- Explore creative mechanisms so services pay a higher than typical portion of operating costs; and,
- Identify potential service provision options, both public and private.

NAIPTA staff have made two previous presentations to Winslow City Council, one on April 26, 2016 and another on February 28, 2017. The Council expressed strong support for the plan and identified a need for transit service at each hearing.

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

One phase on public outreach has already been completed and a second is currently underway. Phase 1 was meant to identify high level needs and desires for service while phase 2 is drilling further into specific needs in terms of timing and origin and destination information. Phase 2 has included a multi-faceted public outreach campaign is being undertaken, including radio spots, postcards, press releases and two in-person meetings drawing about 30 people. Staff have also met with a variety of experts and stakeholders including Twin Arrows, NACOG, ECoNA, ADOT, Hopi Senom, Navajo Transit, several human service agencies, educational institutions, medical centers and major shopping destinations amongst others.

Utility Mailer Survey

Phase 1 outreach included a public survey completed through a mailing to all Winslow Utility customers in March 2017. The survey yielded 445 valid responses.



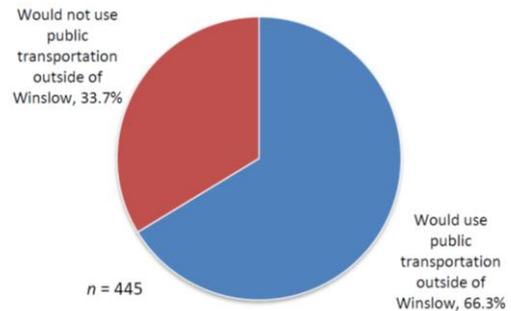
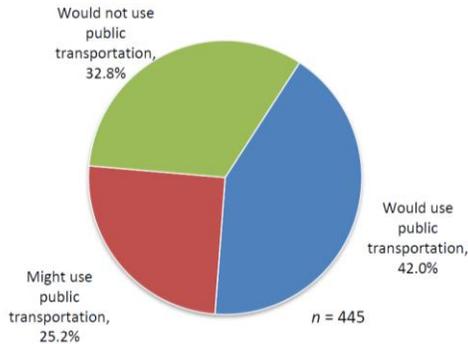
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Left graph shows responses regarding use of local transit services while right graph shows responses indicating use of regional services.

SERVICE ALTERNATIVES

In response to public input, NAIPTA has developed several alternatives, each meeting a unique need for the community. They have broken down here into three categories: service to Flagstaff, service to Holbrook and local Winslow service.

Connections to Flagstaff

The largest need for service to/from Flagstaff comes from commuters. The U.S. Census estimates there are about 1,000 people commuting daily along I-40 from 25 or more miles away. Results from the utility mailer survey conducted in March of 2017 show 60% of respondents would be interested in regional service to Flagstaff and 30% would be interested in services to Twin Arrows. Weekday service was the most desired travel time confirming the desire for commuter service. Two main methods have been identified for providing this service: vanpools or commuter bus service.

Vanpool Program

Vanpool programs can provide cost effective, flexible schedule commuter services at a low cost to communities. Vanpools are groups of riders with similar commutes who choose to lease a vehicle and "pool" together. The work for best for commuters with regular schedules and do not accommodate occasion risers easily. Unlike a carpool, costs are not negotiated among participants, but rather the cost of a monthly vehicle lease and fuel are shared by the group. They can represent a low cost way the City can provide commuter services as capital investments are low and route timing is flexible to small groups of rides.

Commuter Bus

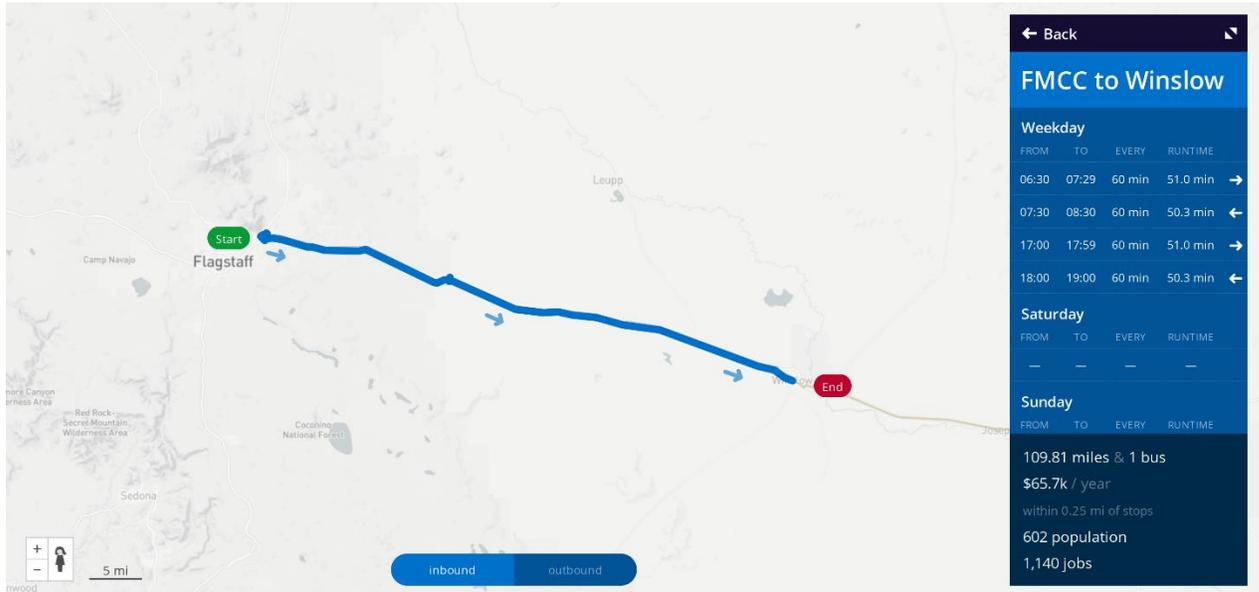
Alternatively, the City could provide commuter bus service between Flagstaff and Winslow. A likely schedule would be to provide one trip each direction in the morning and one trip each direction in the evening centered around standard work hours of 8am to 5pm. Such a route is estimated to cost about \$65,700 per year to operate.





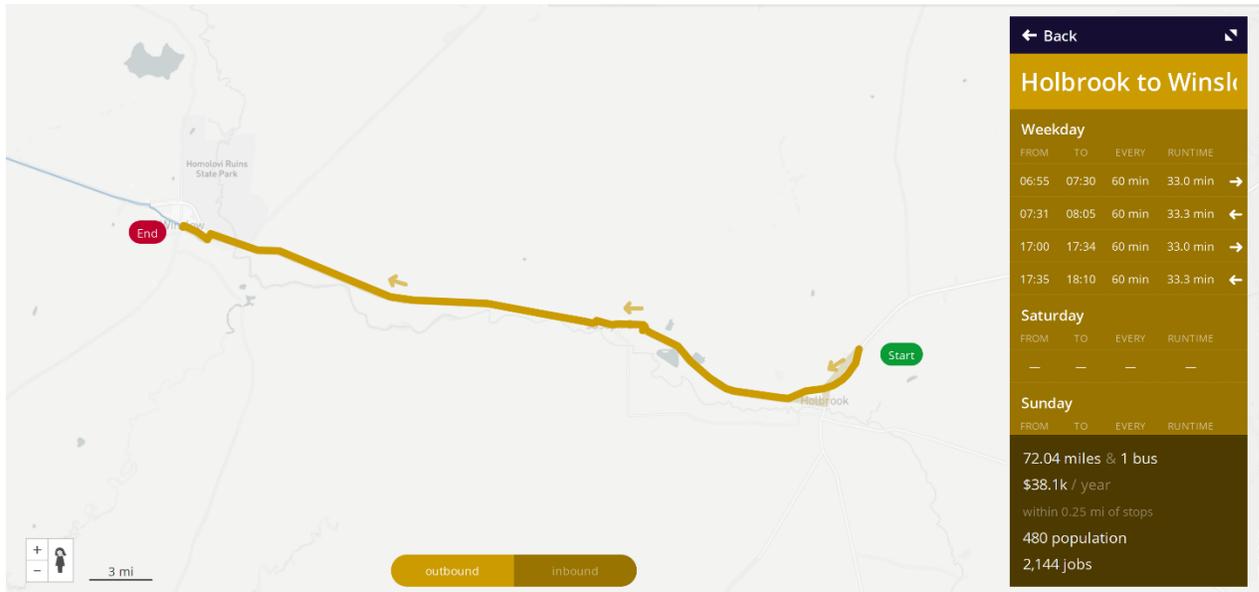
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Connections to Holbrook

Regional service to Holbrook represents different needs than service to Flagstaff. While the U.S. Census estimates that there are about 150 people who commute from Holbrook to Winslow and an additional 350 Winslow residents who commute more than 25 miles to the east along I-40, its Holbrook's function as the Navajo County Seat and sister Northland Pioneer College campus that drive demand. As the Navajo County Seat, residents have expressed the need to be able to access important government services and the City provides its own host of employment, shopping, and transit connections. The White Mountain Connection provides service to Holbrook and connections to Pinetop-Lakeside, Show Low, Snowflake and Taylor. Holbrook is also a stop on the Greyhound bus system with destinations across Arizona and the U.S. The map below identifies a service alternative between Winslow and Holbrook. The alternative shown below only identifies one evening and one morning commute, however, do the nature of services residents are trying to access, it may be necessary to add a mid-day route to make the service more flexible. As shown, the service is estimated to cost \$38,100 per year.



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Local Services

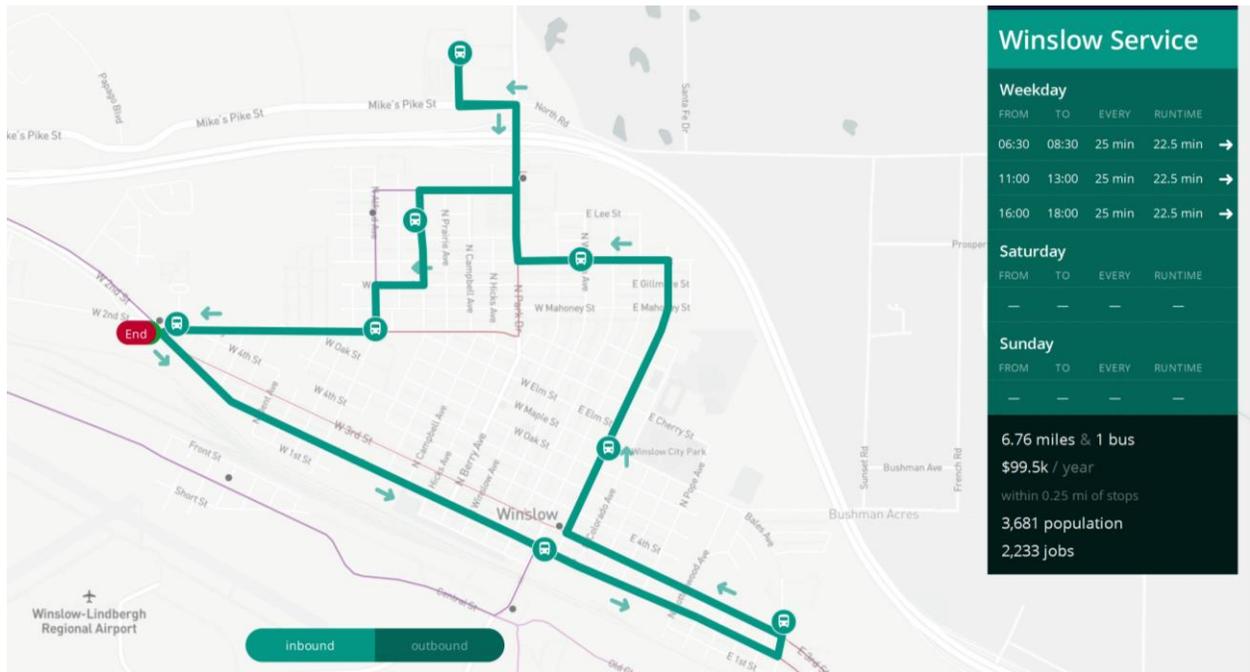
Fixed route

Based on survey responses regarding priority origins and destinations, Winslow Fixed Route Local Service Ridership Alternative was completed. However, at the May 2017 Stakeholders Workshop and Open House, the community indicated they would like to see service to outlying areas with high levels of human service need. Based on that feedback, a second Winslow Fixed Route Local Service Coverage Alternative. Both service alternatives hit major destinations but have slightly different goals. It's important to note, both services are not being recommended to operate together but rather a policy decision to be made about which service best meet community desires.

In the examples, the frequency alternatives prioritize service every half hour to fewer locations to shorten waits for the bus, making the time it takes to get to desired locations shorter overall. The coverage alternative would only run once an hour. It allows people to walk less distance to catch a bus though their waits are doubled.

It is important to note that when regularly scheduled fixed route services are provide, regardless of a ridership or coverage model, then complimentary Americans with Disabilities Act services must also be provided. Those ADA services are designed to provide transportation to those who may not be able to access the bus or the bus stop, or have some other qualifying condition. ADA services can be provided through a separate paratransit solution or by doing "deviated fixed route services" where the scheduled fixed route bus deviates from its route to pick up those who are ADA eligible. There is an associated cost to meet this requirement. Those costs include some administrative efforts for certification, registration, and reservation-taking. Commuter services do not have this additional federal requirement.

Winslow Fixed Route Local Service Ridership Alternative



The above map depicts the Ridership focused alternative which circulates a bus as quickly as possible between major origins and destinations people are trying to get to. It is scheduled to operate from

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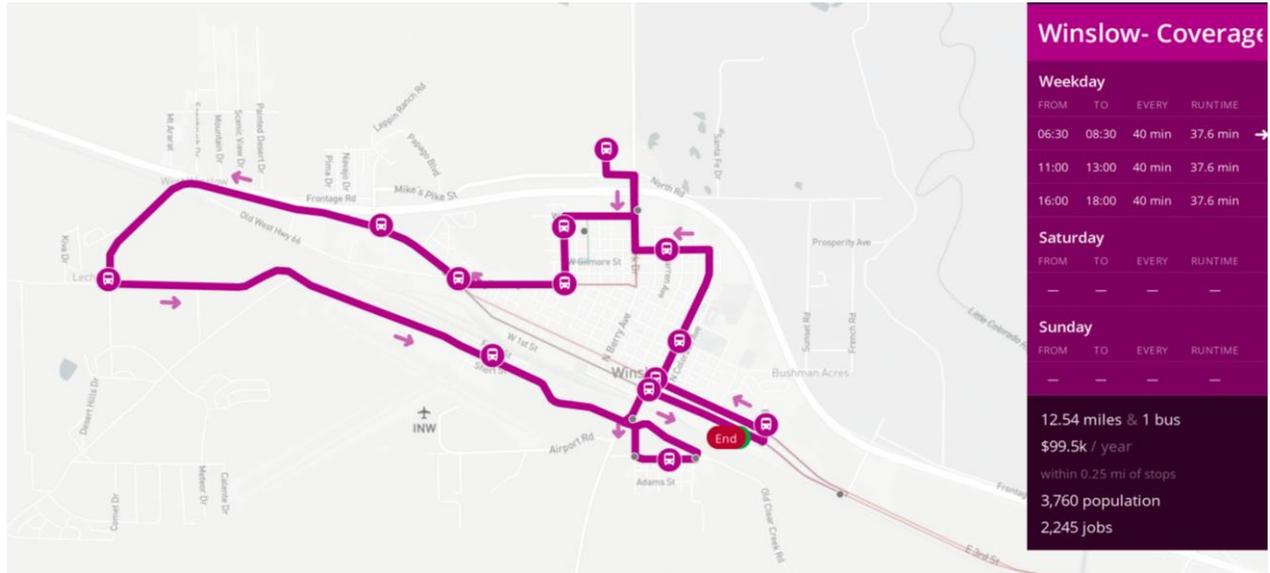


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6:30am to 8:30am, 11:00am to 1:00om and 4:00pm to 6:00pm to hit the highest need time periods. This alternative is estimated to cost \$99,500 dollars per year.

Winslow Fixed Route Local Service Coverage Alternative



The above map depicts the Coverage focused alternative which prioritizes getting buses closer to more places, enable those who have difficulty walking to more easily access the bus. It is proposed to operate the same time periods as the Frequency alternative and therefore also estimated to cost \$99,500 dollars per year.

Paratransit

An alternative to providing a fixed routes system is simply providing a paratransit service. Paratransit, as defined, is a more personalized service that is managed through a call-in program, where customers call and reserve a ride (either on demand, or as a reservation) and a vehicle is dispatched to provide the service, origin to destination. This service can be specific to seniors, those with disabilities, or more broadly, to the general public. Until ridership estimation data is finalized, this program is more difficult to quantify, but it is the most expensive of transportation services on a per/hour basis when compared to local fixed route services. The estimated costs of \$280,500 are for 7am-6pm weekday only service.

CONNECTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Within the study area, there are five existing transit services already being offered. It is important to consider connections to these systems and the mobility they can provide on an even larger regional scale than simply what is being proposed under the scope of this plan. Second, they transit systems may provide opportunities for partnerships to provide service. This staff report simply provides a list of those transit systems and is not indicative of an agencies willingness or ability partner to provide any of the service alternatives described above.

1. White Mountain Connection/Four Seasons Connections Transit Services: Services provided through a partnership with several entities hosted by the City of Show Low, there could be a connection with this service in Holbrook. If commuter service to Holbrook were a Winslow solution, then working in tandem with Show Low staff could identify connections or partnerships.

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2. Greyhound: Already stopping in Holbrook and Flagstaff, the study team is working with Greyhound regional staff to identify a stop and schedule to serve Winslow, too.
3. Hopi-Senom Transit: Already serving Winslow with some local connections each weekday, the study team is working with staff at Hopi-Senom to determine what partnerships and/or connections can be made with their service.
4. Navajo Transit: In the past, and again part of future discussions, Navajo Transit services may provide I-40 service options to Flagstaff and/or Holbrook, or other solutions. The study team is working with Navajo Transit to identify relationships
5. NAIPTA Transit Services: And finally, being able to connect to the Mountain Line service in Flagstaff is a real option if commuter services from Winslow to Flagstaff is considered. As host of the study effort, NAIPTA staff continues to identify options that may include those connections and/or partnerships.

COSTS AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Costs

Although still in the preliminary stages, using comparative data from peer programs in Arizona, an estimated cost for each alternative is provided. The costs are determined using an average of costs from 2, 3, or 4 similar programs (depending upon the type of service example). In so doing, each example provides a snapshot of potential annual operating costs based upon the service parameters below.

ADOT hosts the Section 5311 program in a partnership with the Federal Transit Administration. As a result, there is a cost sharing approach, where approximately 58% of operating, 80% of administrative, and 90% of capital costs are borne by the FTA grant program. Assuming a successful grant application with ADOT for those FTA matching funds, the costs for the sample services herein are identified as total Operations Annual Estimated Costs and then approximate Annual Winslow costs. (This example DOES NOT include administrative costs or capital investments.)

<u>Type of service:</u>	<u>Annual Est Costs</u>	<u>Annual Est. Winslow Costs</u>
Winslow-Flagstaff Commuter Service	\$65,700	\$27,600
Winslow-Holbrook Commuter Service	\$38,100	\$16,050
Vanpool	\$48,000	\$9,600
Local Fixed Route Service	\$99,500	\$41,790
Complimentary ADA services	\$153,000	\$64,260
General Public Paratransit Service	\$280,500	\$117,810

Funding

Similar to the cost scenarios, a range of expected performance measures are being determined in order to rate the efficiency and effectiveness of any transit service offered. Using the same peer group identified herein, a range of performance indicators can begin to give a picture of what services may look like in Winslow:

Typical performance measures and an average peer standard are listed below (all costs expressed as total costs; these costs are associated with commuter/fixed route services only).

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<u>Measure</u>	<u>Avg. Peer Standard</u>
Cost/Passenger Trip	\$12.01
Cost/Mile	\$ 3.29
Cost/Service Hour	\$55.42
Passenger/Mile	0.93
Passenger/Hour	\$ 7.44

There are many other measures of service, including on-time performance, a variety of maintenance performance measures, and safety/security measures that can also be quantified.

COMMUNITY GOALS

Each of these scenarios represent different goals for a community. Its important that priority goals be identified to identify what service alternatives are most appropriate for meeting those goals for identify additional performance to track to ensure those goals are being met.

NEXT STEPS

As the study effort continues, major next steps include:

- Develop reliable ridership estimates (July)
- Refine paratransit estimations (July)
- Refine alternatives based upon ridership and public input (August)
- Identify capital infrastructure investments (August)
- Draft report for review and input (September)
- Final report and recommendations (November)
- ADOT Application period (Spring, 2018)

SUBMITTED BY:

Jim Dickey
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Kate Morley
NAIPTA Mobility Planner

ATTACHMENTS:

Full phase1 survey report available upon request.



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