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Chapter 9: Options, Alternatives, and Recommendations

1. Introduction

As identified in Chapter 1, this Plan is designed to:

- Identify a variety of transit service alternatives, both within the city of Winslow and to adjacent communities along I-40, and
- Recommend a detailed, financially feasible operating plan to meet those alternatives.

Based upon surveying, public input, discussions with providers, ridership analysis, discussions with city staff and elected leaders, this chapter recommends a 5-year phased approach to implementing both commuter and local service.

Many inputs have been considered to create this phased recommendation. Chapter 2 looks at the demographics that impact the need for and ridership numbers on transit. Chapter 3 discusses a variety of capital investment options and pairing the right capital solutions with the selected service options. In Chapter 4, service alternatives are explored for both commuter service to Flagstaff and Holbrook, and local services in Winslow. These alternatives are the basis of analysis for revenues and expenditures for operations, administration, and capital needs, including both the cost per hour of service and capital investments in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 explores the risks associated with provided service and strategies to mitigate them. Chapter 7 discusses the creation of performance measures to guide decision-making and Chapter 8 compares anticipated performance of each scenario to peer cities.

2. Summary of Alternatives

This Plan identifies a variety of transit alternatives within and around Winslow. Alternatives identified below are a summary of alternatives identified in Chapter 4 and are supported by detailed budgets as identified in the Appendix A.ⁱ

Commuter Options (including capital)

The largest group of potential riders along the corridor are regular commuters. Three alternatives for commuter service are identified in this plan.

- Winslow- Flagstaff Commuter Bus: A commuter bus service with a stop at Twin Arrows Casino Resort. The proposed service is provided with one bus running once in the morning and once in the evening, offering one trip in each direction.
- Winslow -Holbrook Commuter Bus: A commuter bus service running three times per day, morning, midday, and evening with a potential stop at Joseph City.
- Vanpool: As an alternative commuter bus service, a start-up effort that focuses on Vanpool programs can provide cost-effective, flexible schedule commuter services at a low cost to communities. Unlike other Federally funded

transportation programs, vanpools may count rider fares as their **local match** for the program, meaning that while the City could add a subsidy to increase affordability, no local dollars are required.

Figure 9.1 Commuter service options

Service	Stops	Frequency	Annual cost ¹	Vehicle recommendation
Winslow-Flagstaff	Twin Arrows	2 roundtrips per day: once morning, once evening	\$66,000 at \$59/hour	2 small busses less than 30 feet. (\$150,000 each)
Winslow-Holbrook	Joseph City	3 roundtrips per day: once morning, once midday, once evening	\$75,000 at \$59/hour	2 small busses less than 30 feet. (\$150,000 each)
Vanpool	N/A	Dependent upon group	\$34,000 at \$400 monthly subsidy per van	2- 6 Sedans and SUVs with capacity for 7-15 passengers. (\$50,000 each)

Local service Options (including capital)

The need for local transit service in Winslow is evidenced evident by key demographics. Highlighting important figures are that 30 percent of households are in poverty, 45 percent of households have one vehicle or less, 14.5 percent of people under 65 have a disability, and 10 percent of the population is age 65 or older.

(The frequency and coverage alternatives, service alternatives serve major destinations but have slightly different focuses. The frequency alternative prioritizes service every forty minutes to fewer locations to shorten wait times for the bus. The coverage alternative would only run once an hour but would allow people to walk shorter distances to catch a bus, though their wait time would be longer. The Frequency alternative will likely produce higher performance measures such as trips/hours and lower costs per passenger.)

Fixed Route:

- Winslow Frequency Fixed-Route Local Service Alternative: This route focuses on serving a primary **passenger** base interested in accessing important origins and destinations in the core of the business community along Business Route 66 as well as the central I-40 interchange where primary commercial and retail businesses are located. The route is proposed to run in two-hour time blocks, three times per day. The route makes three laps every two hours for a total of nine loops per day.

¹ Annual costs are total e operating and administration. See Chapter 4 pages 54-58 for more detail.

- Winslow Coverage Fixed Route Local Service Alternative: This route includes main locations identified in the frequency routes, plus housing locations on the west, south, and east sides of the community, and on the south side of the BNSF right-of-way. The route is proposed to run in two-hour time blocks, three times per day. The route can make one loop per hour for a total of six trips per day.
- The Hopi Senom Transit option: Hopi-Senom currently runs a commuter route with several stops in Winslow twice a day. The route begins and ends on north Highway 87. Partnership with Hopi Senom could provide additional mobility opportunities. (Chapter 4, Page 62)

Required ADA services:

- Complementary Paratransit: The FTA requires complementary **paratransit** services within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of any fixed-route bus system, providing origin-to-destination services to those riders who are functionally unable to ride the fixed-route bus or for whom the bus stop is not accessible. This service would require six hours of paratransit time to complement fixed route service schedules above.
- Deviated fixed-route: Though like fixed-route, a **deviated fixed-route service** may divert from its regular route to pick up or drop off passengers within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile surrounding the fixed route and within its schedule, usually through a dispatching scenario. This type of system meets the ADA complementary paratransit service requirement through deviation, and can allow the bus system to operate with only one vehicle rather than multiple vehicles at a time, saving money. Costs for deviations are similar; however, this affects the **frequency** of service—by way of extended travel time, meaning that there would be fewer loops made for the same amount of money.

Demand Response:

A community may elect to offer **demand-response** services. These services can be pre-scheduled and/or requested on-demand through a dispatch system. Services can be tailored to local preferences, including the service area, days and hours of operation. Clients can be the general public or limited to seniors, those with disabilities, or any number of other categories as determined. Because of the nature of the service, ADA requirements are automatically met using this method. This service could be provided from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekdays.

Figure 9.2 Costs of local service

Service	Annual Costs²	Vehicle Recommendation³
Winslow Frequency	\$94,000 at \$54/hour	2 cut-away (body on Chassis (\$85,000 each)
Winslow Coverage	\$82,000 at \$54/ hour	2 cut-away (body on Chassis (\$85,000 each)
Hopi Senom	No current estimate	May require vehicle upgrades
Complementary Paratransit	\$103,000 at \$67/hour	2 ADA equipped vans (\$60,000 each)
Deviated Fixed Route	\$94,000 at 54/hour (commiserate with fixed route)	2 cut-away (body on Chassis (\$85,000 each)
Demand Response	\$206,000 at \$67/ hour	4 ADA equipped vans (\$60,000 each)

Startup Costs

There is a significant amount of capital that needs to be purchased in year one and should be planned for separately. Of particular interest are the large costs associated with purchasing rolling stock. The City could consider the purchase used vehicles to reduce these costs.

- New: Purchased during startup, amortized over their useful life, including local share.
- Used: One way to reduce startup costs is to consider other transit agencies may be disposing of capital assets that still meet the Federal definition of useful life, and can be “transferred” to other Federal recipients. The residual cost of those vehicles may help reduce the local share of purchase costs and still provide excellent service.

3. Other Investments

Investment in human resources is a key component to a successful transit system. As quantified in Chapter 5, administrative direction and support for a transit system will require a commitment to staff a position as Transit Manager. This position would be responsible for a variety of functions, including planning, system operations oversight, procurement, compliance and other accountability functions. Other staff, depending upon operating and governance structure, may be required.

Capital infrastructure investments are greatly dependent upon the type of services that are implemented. Chapter 3, page 44-55 identifies a range of costs based upon the type of capital investment made.

² See Chapter 4 pages 60-66 for more detail on annual costs

³ See Chapter 3 pages 36-37 for more detail on vehicle recommendations

Figure 9.3 Capital Improvements by service type⁴

Service	Stops	Other
Commuter Buses	Shelter-type stop	Commuter Transit Hub
Vanpool	None	Commuter Transit Hub
Local fixed route or deviated fixed route	Bench or shelter stop	Storage and office space
Paratransit or demand response	None	Storage and office space

All services require the following capital considerations:

- Software and Hardware to manage budgets, track or dispatch budgets, manage data and reporting, and to communicate with the public, both for marketing and communications, and for required public outreach.
- Fare management tools are necessary no matter what type of fare is collected, this can include cash boxes and vaults, to smart card or cell phone-enabled technologies.

4. Five Year Phased Recommendation

The goals of this Plan include recommendations for a detailed, financially feasible operating plan. The Charter directs identification of service alternatives that are “right size” and that are “achievable” in a five-year timeframe. An effective combination of service alternatives identified in the Plan, including both commuter options and local service, is recommended below. The recommendation is based in part upon:

- Financial capacity⁵
- Ridership goals
- Populations served
- Short-term versus long term transit goals

This five-year phased recommendation relies heavily on partnering with existing transit services where possible. Through the Mobility Management program at the Northern Arizona Council of Governments, the City of Winslow can receive assistance in establishing these partnerships.

Phase 1: January 2018- October 2019 estimated \$75,000 annual local match⁶

⁴ See Chapter 3 pages 44-46 for more information on bus stops and other horizontal capital investments

⁵ The Arizona Department of Transportation Section 5311 program funds is a competitive process. Budgets assume award of Section 5311 beginning Oct 1, 2018.

⁶ Phases do not include year 1 capital investments.

- Transit Manager \$40,000 in year 1⁷ and \$8,000 in subsequent years (local match)
- Establish vanpool program with services between Winslow and Flagstaff \$7,600 (local match)
- Establish vanpool program with services between Winslow and Holbrook \$3,800 (local match)
- Partner with Hopi Senom on current route (amount to be determined)
- Establish partnership with Greyhound which allows for stop in Winslow (amount to be determined)
- Establish Commuter Transit Hub \$12,000 (local match)
- Establish ride matching program \$3,000 (local match)

Phase 2: October 2019- October 2020 estimated \$150,000 annual local match

Phase 1 plus:

- Partner to establish Winslow-Flagstaff route \$35,000 (local match)
- Establish public demand response system \$85,000 (local match)

Phase 3: October 2020-January 2023 Estimated \$160,000 annual local match

Phase 1 and 2 plus:

- Partner with Navajo to establish Winslow- Holbrook route \$38,000 (local match)
- Transition from public demand response to deviated fixed route upon reaching an annual ridership of 20,000 passenger trips on demand response system \$60,000 (local match)

5. Summary

Developing a start-up transit systems requires decisions on many levels. As part of this study, a summary recommendation includes:

Beginning with:

1. Identify, recruit, and retain a Transit Manager
2. Start marketing vanpool services to build commuter ridership
3. Partner with Hopi to build bus stops and market existing route
4. Establish transit hub for park n' ride, vanpool, greyhound and Hopi to all connect
5. Establish ridesharing-matching program

Consider:

1. Establish a commuter service to Flagstaff
2. Establish a general public demand-response system

Future:

1. When the annual ridership of the on-demand service reaches 20,000, implement the deviated fixed route local service based on either the frequency or coverage alternative
2. Partner with Navajo to establish commuter route to Holbrook

⁷ Assumes transit manager would be hired prior to award of 5311 funds.

Endnotes

ⁱ Appendix A

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