

# Central Yavapai Transit Implementation Plan Update

## Final Report



**CYMPO**  
Central Yavapai Metropolitan  
Planning Organization



# Acknowledgements

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# About This Report

This report serves as a guide to the elements that led to the recommendations of the Central Yavapai Transit Implementation Plan Update. It is designed to provide the reader with the information need to understand the recommendations and the process used to create them.

Acronym	Definition
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADOT	Arizona Department of Transportation
CYMPO	Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GM	General Manager
JPO	Joint Powers Organization
NACOG	Northern Arizona Council of Governments
YRT	Yavapai Regional Transit

**Chapter 1** provides an overview of the recommendations for transit services in Central Yavapai

**Chapter 2** provides background on why transit services are recommended for Central Yavapai and what the region hopes to accomplish by moving forward with investments in public transit.

**Chapter 3** describes further details of the recommendations, including governance and funding assumptions.

**Chapter 4** describes the process that guided the Central Yavapai Transit Implementation Plan and the collaboration process that led to the recommendations.

# 1. Recommendations

Central Yavapai is proposing to move forward with a **demonstration project** to test the need and opportunity for public transportation in our region. We recommend operating the service for 3 years, evaluating it each year, and deciding at the end of the demonstration period if the service is effective.



The new regional network is designed to balance the need for local circulation and regional connections.



It is designed to be simple, easy to understand and easy to use. This means as much as possible, services operate with consistent patterns and use the same path traveling in and out of town.



Bus schedules are intended to support traditional work hours and provide access to region's largest employment markets in Prescott and Prescott Valley.



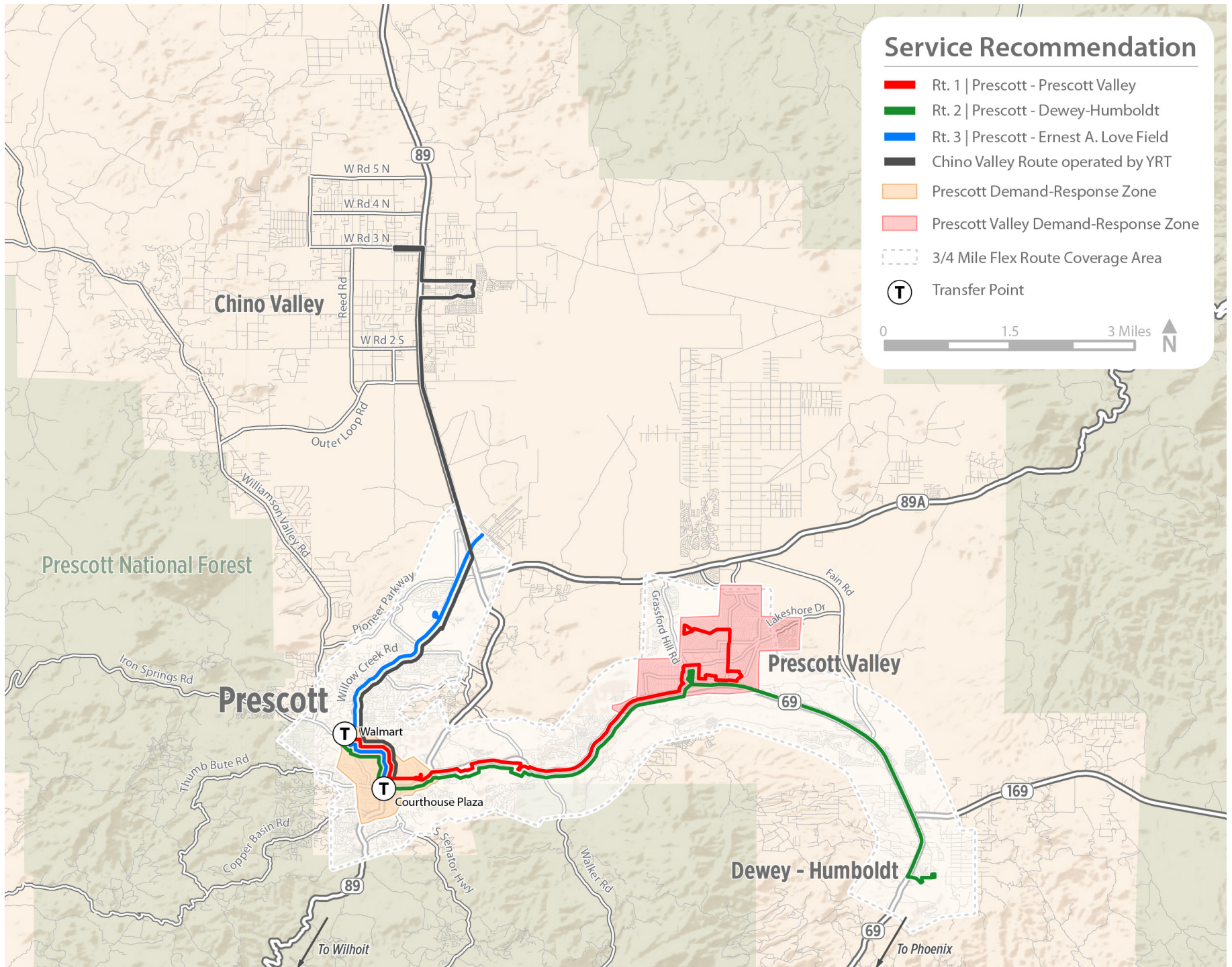
Other commuter needs will be met through vanpool service. Vanpools are effective at longer distance commuters and will help workers traveling longer distances, to jobs at the Bagdad Mine as well as in Sedona, Flagstaff and Phoenix.



Complementary ADA service will be provided as part of the flex route service.



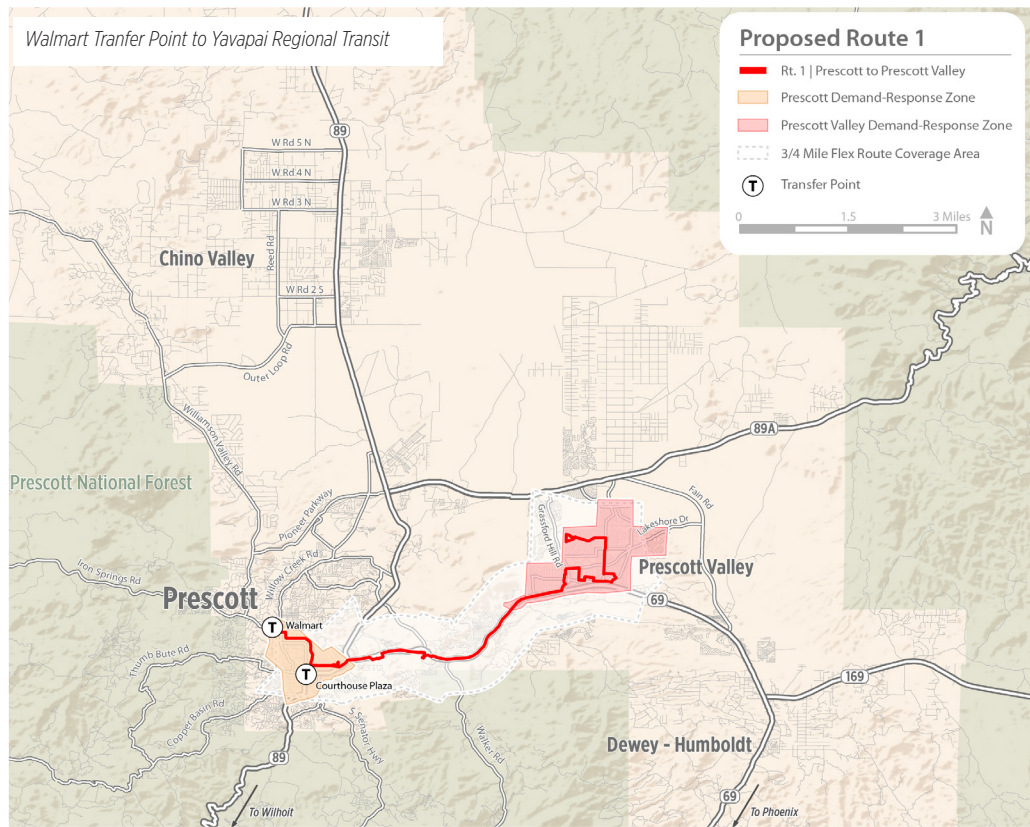
Proposed services will connect with existing routes operated by Yavapai Regional Transit.





# Scheduled Bus Services

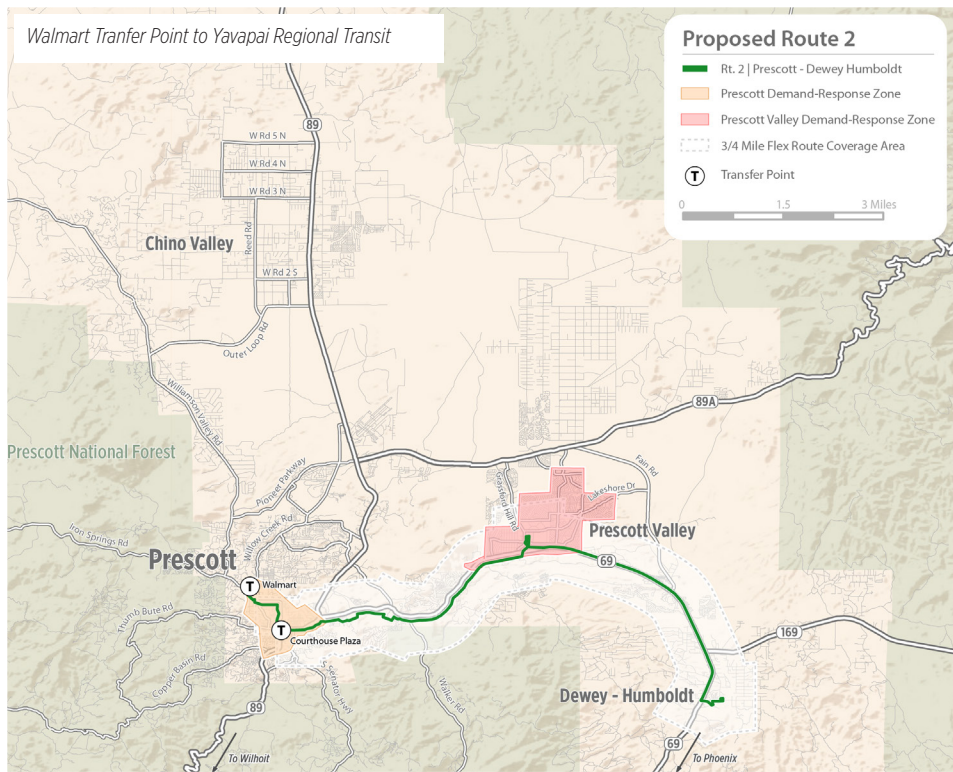
The demonstration project will include three scheduled bus services that connect the region’s major employment, shopping and service centers. Other regional services, including those operated by Yavapai Regional Transit, will connect with these routes.



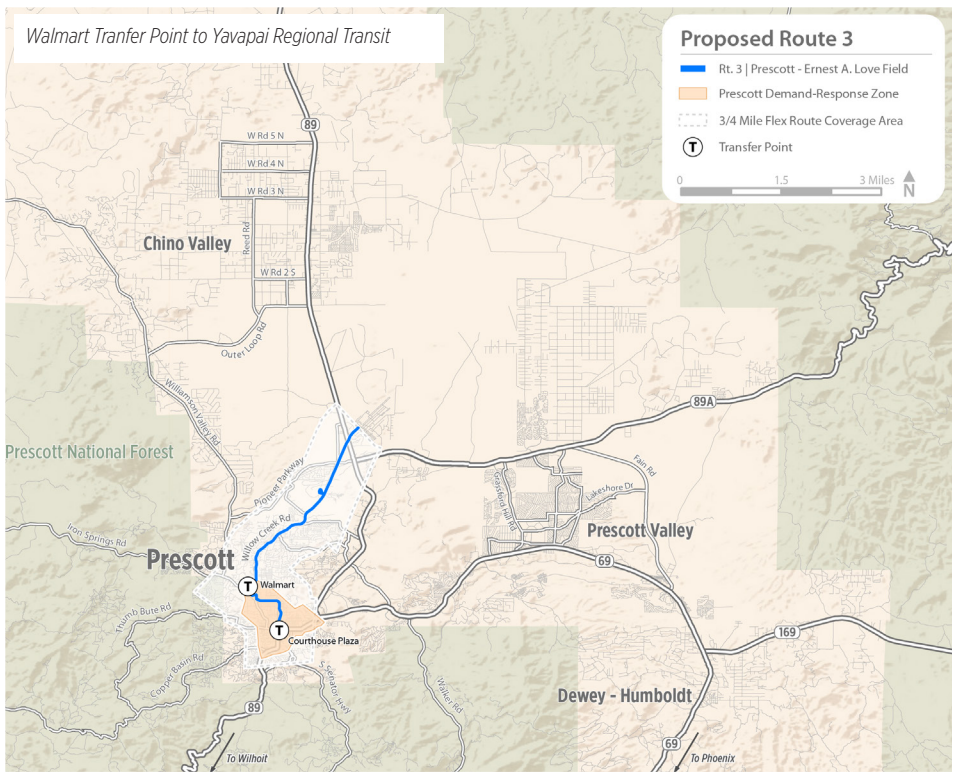
## Route 1 Prescott - Prescott Valley

Depart Prescott	Arrive Prescott Valley	Depart Prescott Valley	Arrive Prescott
6:00 AM	7:00 AM	6:00 AM	7:00 AM
7:00 AM	8:00 AM	7:00 AM	8:00 AM
8:00 AM	9:00 AM	8:00 AM	9:00 AM
9:00 AM	10:00 AM	9:00 AM	10:00 AM
10:00 AM	11:00 AM	10:00 AM	11:00 AM
11:00 AM	12:00 PM	11:00 AM	12:00 PM
12:00 PM	1:00 PM	12:00 PM	1:00 PM
1:00 PM	2:00 PM	1:00 PM	2:00 PM
2:00 PM	3:00 PM	2:00 PM	3:00 PM
3:00 PM	4:00 PM	3:00 PM	4:00 PM
4:00 PM	5:00 PM	4:00 PM	5:00 PM
5:00 PM	6:00 PM	5:00 PM	6:00 PM

# Route 2 Prescott - Dewey Humboldt



# Route 3 Prescott - Ernest A. Love Field



Arrive / Depart Prescott	Arrive / Depart Prescott Valley	Arrive Dewey-Humboldt
7:30 AM	8:00 AM	8:30 AM
11:30 AM	12:00 PM	12:30 PM
3:00 PM	3:30 PM	4:00 PM

Depart Dewey-Humboldt	Arrive/ Depart Prescott Valley	Arrive/ Depart Prescott
8:30 AM	9:00 AM	9:30 AM
12:30 PM	1:00 PM	1:30 PM
4:00 PM	4:30 PM	5:00 PM

Depart Prescott	Arrive Ernest A. Love Field
6:00 AM	6:30 AM
7:00 AM	7:30 AM
4:00 PM	4:30 PM
5:00 PM	5:30 PM

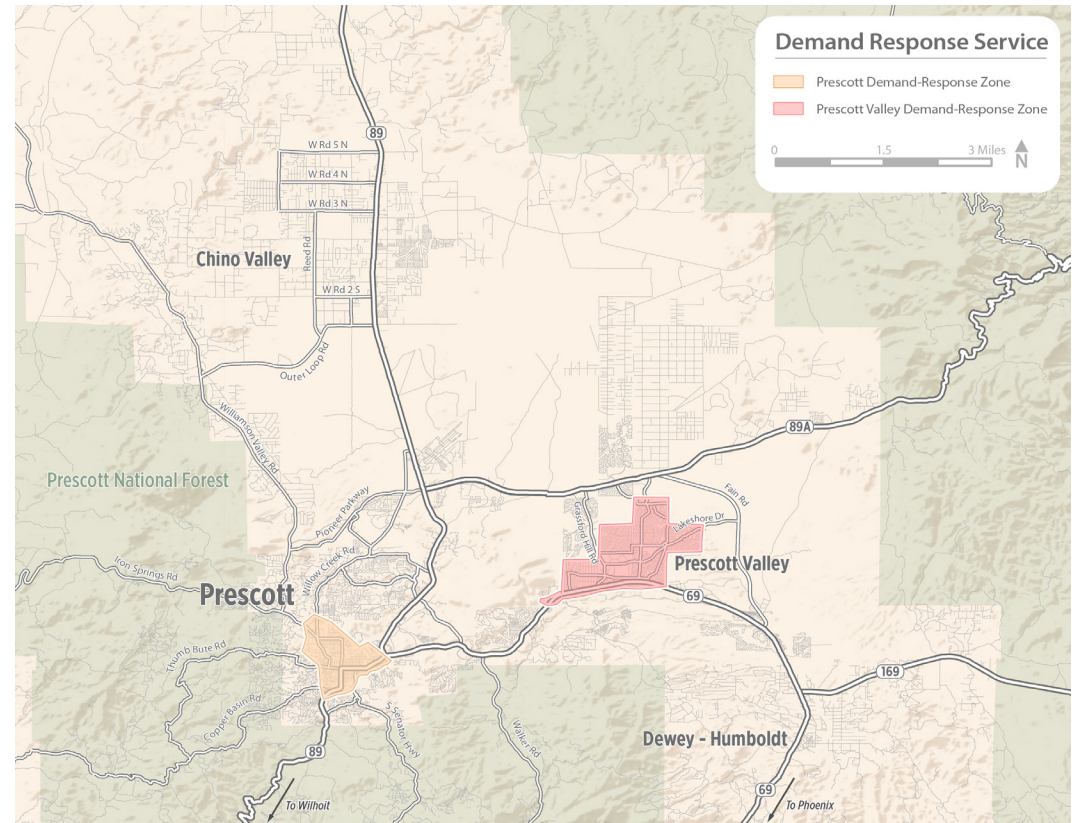
Depart Ernest A. Love Field	Arrive Prescott
6:30 AM	7:00 AM
7:30 AM	8:00 AM
4:30 PM	5:00 PM
5:30 PM	6:00 PM

# Demand Responsive Service

In addition to scheduled bus service, the proposed Central Yavapai transit service will offer general public demand response service. Demand response service means that people who need a ride but do not live near the fixed route request a bus to pick them up. The bus (or van) will pick them up where they are and drop them off where they want to go within the designated zone. In most cases, the service will be curb-to-curb but in others, able bodied riders may be asked to walk to the nearest corner.

Demand response service will be available for travel within the City of Prescott and within the Town of Prescott Valley. It will operate on weekdays and Saturdays between the hours of 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM. The service is shared, which means other riders may be on the bus (or van).

People can book their rides either by calling a telephone number or using an app on their mobile phone or computer. Trips can be scheduled in advance and can also be requested on the day of travel, as available.





# Benefits & Costs of Central Yavapai Transit

Central Yavapai has examined the need for public transportation several times over the past 10+ years. The region is already investing in transportation services, but existing services are focused on specific clients or areas. To date, no service has considered regional needs.

With this history and background, Central Yavapai is proposing to test the concept of regional transit services. This means operating the service for a limited time – 3 years – and evaluating the costs and benefits to determine if the service is appropriate and effective.

## Expected Benefits

As Central Yavapai region continues to attract people and jobs, the need for transportation choices is increasing. The transit demonstration project is designed to create these choices and make the region more accessible for more people. Specific benefits include:



**Access to jobs** and job markets. The planned bus services will connect people with jobs, in downtown Prescott, in Prescott Valley and along the corridor connecting the two communities.



Create a **more efficient transportation network**. Currently, several non-profit organizations operate their own transportation services. The proposed network will help increase coordination among these services, so they are more efficient and cost effective.



Serve **veterans, older adults and people with disabilities**. Some community members are not always able to drive themselves places. Investing in a public transportation network will give these individuals choices and opportunities to live independent and productive lives.

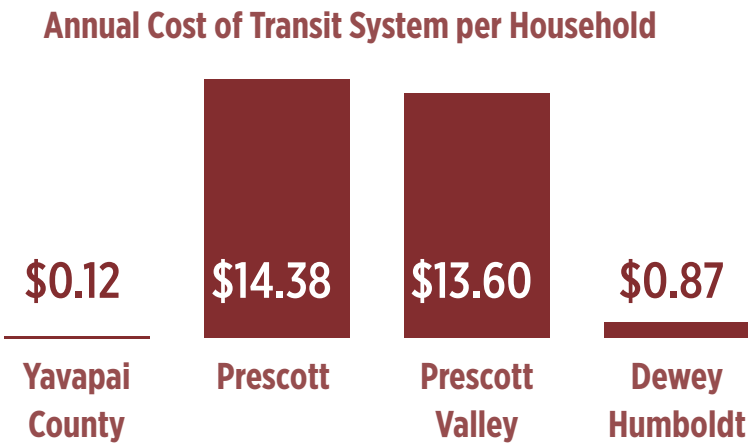
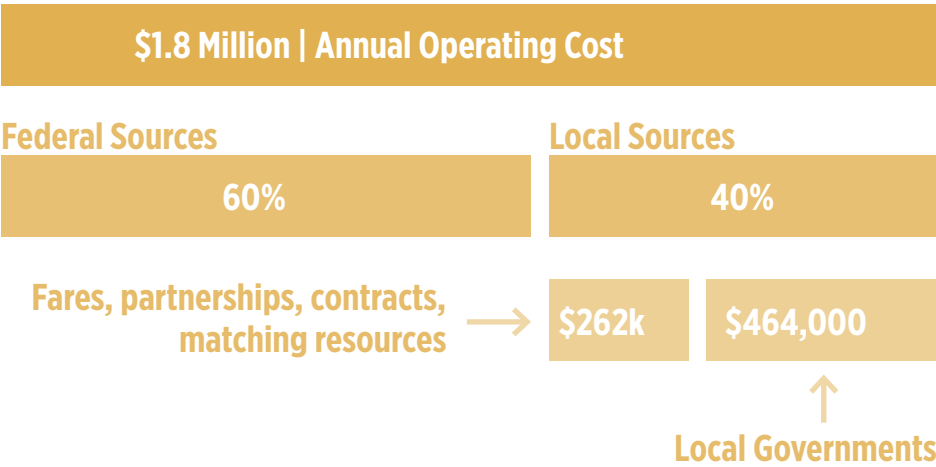
# Estimated Costs

The proposed transit service is estimated to cost about \$1.8 million per year to operate. This includes the costs to administer and manage the program, the cost of owning and operating vehicles and capital investments for vehicle technology, bus stop signs and shelters.

About 60% of the total cost can be raised through federal grants. This leaves about 40% of the cost, or about \$720,000 that needs to be raised each year from local sources.

Our analysis suggests that roughly \$250,000 can be raised through partnerships, passenger fares, contracts and in-kind matching resources, leaving about \$450,000 to be raised through contributions from local governments.

Costs are expected to increase about 2.5% each year, so over the 3-year period, the local match will increase from \$720,000 to about \$755,000.



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# 2. Background

## Introduction

### **The Central Yavapai Transit Implementation**

**Plan** is an action plan that provides a guide for improving public transit service in the Central Yavapai region. The plan will identify what type of transit service is needed in the region and, more importantly, the benefits and direct impacts that transit can bring to the region.

The region has undertaken numerous past planning efforts, which focused on assessing the need for public transportation. Those past plans serve as a foundation for this plan, which represents a change from focusing on *if* transit service is needed to *how* to effectively strengthen public transit in the region. Now, with the region prepared to take action, this effort will establish a clear set of action items to improve and expand public transit service in Central Yavapai and address the local need and desire for transit service.

Led by the Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization (CYMPO) and supported by a committee of key stakeholders in the region, this plan will set forth a clear road map for how to develop stronger transit services in Central Yavapai. Our goal is to solidify the commitment of local leadership - including elected leaders, businesses, medical providers, college administrators, human services agency leaders, and residents - to provide an efficient network of public transportation services in Central Yavapai.

**As the Quad Cities continue to add people and jobs, the need for more transportation choices is growing. This chapter describes the opportunities and benefits associated with developing stronger and more accessible public transportation.**

# Why Invest in Transit in Central Yavapai?



## Transit Supports Economic Development

The historic character and high quality of life make Central Yavapai a desirable place to live and visit, but can also drive up housing costs, making it difficult for people working locally to also live in town. Public transportation services that link job-rich destinations with affordable housing create a larger employment base and increase opportunities for workers.



## Transitioning from Human Service to Public Transportation Increases the Efficiency of Existing Regional Investment

Non-profit organizations in Central Yavapai are already spending \$1.15 million a year to provide transportation to their clients. Although some programs will need to keep offering service, by consolidating some of these services and programs and incorporating them into public transit service, the region can create a network of transportation services that will be more cost effective, more efficient and serve more people.



## Transit Benefits Communities Financially

Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates approximately \$4 in economic returns. Every \$10 million in transit investment creates and supports 500 jobs.



## Transit Increases Disposable Income

Owning a car is expensive and often more expensive than people realize. Commuting 10 miles a day (round trip) can cost between \$25 and \$75 a month. Commuting 50 miles round trip (for example, driving between Prescott and Dewey-Humboldt) likely costs between \$125 and \$350 a month. Rather than paying for gas and all of the costs associated with a vehicle, a person could pay \$1 to \$2 for a single bus ride.



## Transit Enhances Personal Opportunities

Access to public transportation gives people options to get to work or go to school. Nationally, 49% of transit trips are to reach employment centers and another 6% are to go to schools. Access to public transportation also helps older adults and people with disabilities get to services, activities and lead active, vibrant lives.



## Transit Contributes to Improved Air Quality

Congestion contributes to higher emissions from vehicle idling and stop-and-go travel, impacting public health and the environment. Today, residents must travel long distances for work, healthcare, or other services, and traffic is increasing: The number of vehicles traveling on Route 69 has increased 7% in the last two years. If these trips could be combined with public transit service, they could reduce single occupancy travel as well as the associated emissions.

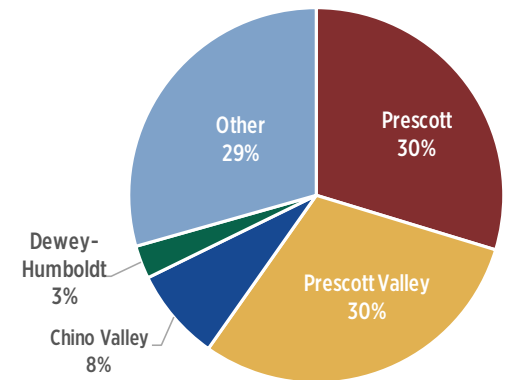
# Growth and Development in Central Yavapai

Central Yavapai, located in the Yavapai County central basin, was designated as an urbanized area in 2003 by the US Census.\* The region is comprised of the City of Prescott and the Towns of Prescott Valley, Chino Valley, and Dewey-Humboldt and is often referred to as the Quad Cities. Much of the surrounding land outside of these urban centers is publicly owned, largely consisting of National Forest, state land trust, US Bureau of Land Management property, and tribal land. In total, the region spans over 400 square miles and includes a diverse range of urban and rural areas.

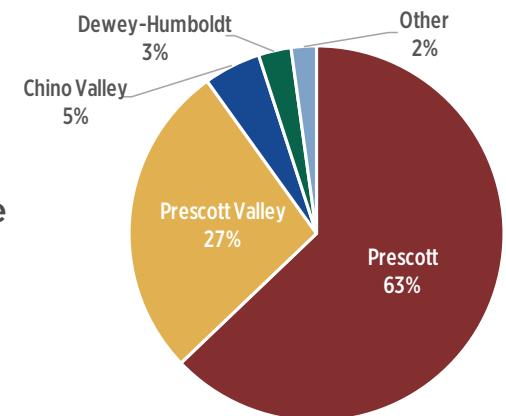
**Between 2010 and 2017, Central Yavapai added 7,622 residents, an increase of 6%,** reaching a total population of 139,600. The communities with the most growth were Prescott Valley (3,173 new residents, or an 8% increase) and Prescott (1,625, or a 4% increase). The region accounted for 77% of Yavapai County's population growth during this time.

Employment growth has also been significant, with **7,625 jobs added to the region between 2010 and 2016 (a 24% increase)**, bringing total employment to 39,200. The largest employment growth was focused in Prescott (3,131 added jobs, or a 15% increase) and Prescott Valley (2,754 added jobs, or a 35% increase).

**Prescott and Prescott Valley are each home to about one third of Central Yavapai residents...**



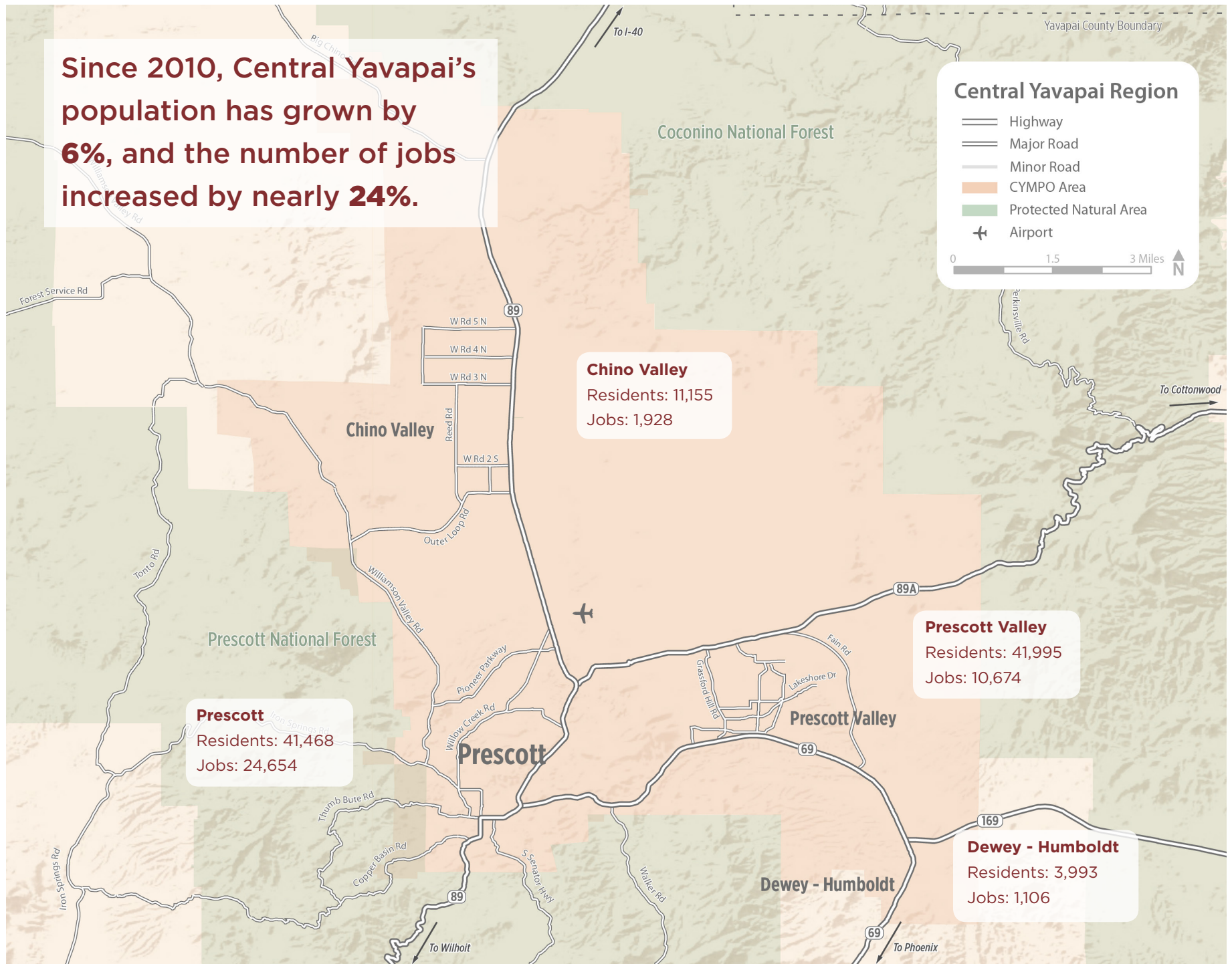
**...but nearly two thirds of the region's jobs are in Prescott.**



\* Prescott Valley-Prescott, AZ Urbanized Area; has since been designated as Prescott Valley-Prescott, AZ Metropolitan Statistical Area



Since 2010, Central Yavapai's population has grown by **6%**, and the number of jobs increased by nearly **24%**.



# Previous Plans, Studies, and Efforts

2003



The **Central Yavapai Metropolitan Planning Organization (CYMPO)** is established after the region is designated as a small urbanized area by the US Census Bureau.

2007



The **Regional Transit Needs Study** was the first comprehensive assessment of the need for public transportation in the Central Yavapai region. The study identified a wide variety of disparate services that already provided some kind of transportation service or support; as of 2007, human service agencies alone collectively spent about \$500,000 annually on myriad passenger transportation services serving different users and trip types.

As a fast-growing region, job access and congestion emerged as key issues, and respondents were hopeful that regionally coordinated transit service would play a major role in improving mobility and quality of life in the region. The study produced four service alternatives, which provided four different approaches to supporting or providing service and presented different needs for funding and governance.

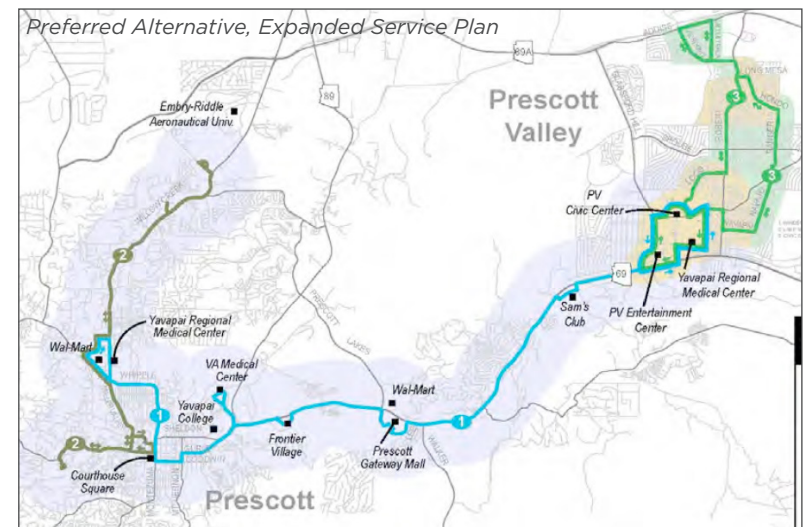
2009



The **Transit Implementation Plan** built upon the 2007 study as the next step in developing a regional public transportation network. The plan identified a preferred service alternative and outlined a framework for rolling out transit service.

The preferred alternative provided common ground for the communities of Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Yavapai County, and addressed the desire for a fixed-route service within a fiscally constrained budget. This included fixed-route, fixed-schedule service within Prescott and between Prescott and Prescott Valley, flex service within Prescott Valley, and general public transportation vouchers in areas beyond the reach of fixed-route or paratransit service.

The Central Yavapai Transit Implementation Plan Update will build on this previous work to recommend transit services that meet current needs and opportunities.



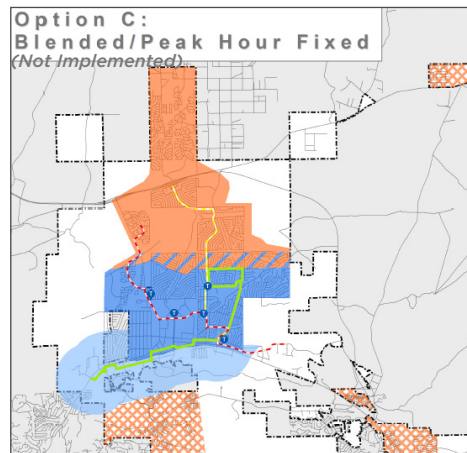
2015

The **Regional Transportation Plan Update 2040** provided a program of transportation projects for the region. No transit projects were included in the plan, but it does discuss the limited availability of local funds for public transportation. Prescott Valley stopped receiving Local Transit Assistance Fund (LTAF) revenue from the State of Arizona in 2012, and the 2015 repeal of the LTAF made Arizona one of just five states that provides no funding for public transportation. The lack of local funding for transit limits the ability to secure various federal funding sources, particularly for transit operations, since these generally require a local match.

The **City of Prescott General Plan** discussed public transportation as part of its transportation element, with the goal to “support and participate in regional public transportation when such a system is financially feasible”. In particular, the plan cites the city’s growing percentage of residents who are unable to drive due to age, cost, or ability reinforcing the need for transit service.

2016

The **Town of Prescott Valley Transit Evaluation** was designed to identify transit services that would be appropriate within the Town of Prescott Valley and how services might be funded. The analysis acknowledged that ideally, services local to Prescott Valley would be part of a larger regional transit network. The Town evaluated three alternative service plans, with different combinations of fixed-route and demand-response services, hours of service, and coverage area. The preferred alternative has two fixed routes, a flex route, and two demand response zones, with some services running all day while others operate only during peak or midday hours.



2017

The **Yavapai County Regional Mobility Management Implementation Plan** addressed opportunities to improve mobility options across Yavapai County. Transit is not currently coordinated county-wide, and individual municipalities, human service agencies, and private businesses all operate their own transportation services. The plan identified existing mobility challenges in the region, and outlined several strategies for improving transportation options, including public transit as well as vanpools, customer information, volunteer drivers, and other mobility management services.

A key recommendation of the plan was to build a strong governance foundation, with a defined administrative structure for all mobility services. The plan defines a potential governance structure and decision-making process, and defines the next steps for implementation.

The plan also noted that, without local funding sources to match federal funds, communities in Central Yavapai are missing out on over \$1 million a year in federal transit funding. Federal transit dollars are raised through taxes, including taxes paid by Central Yavapai residents.

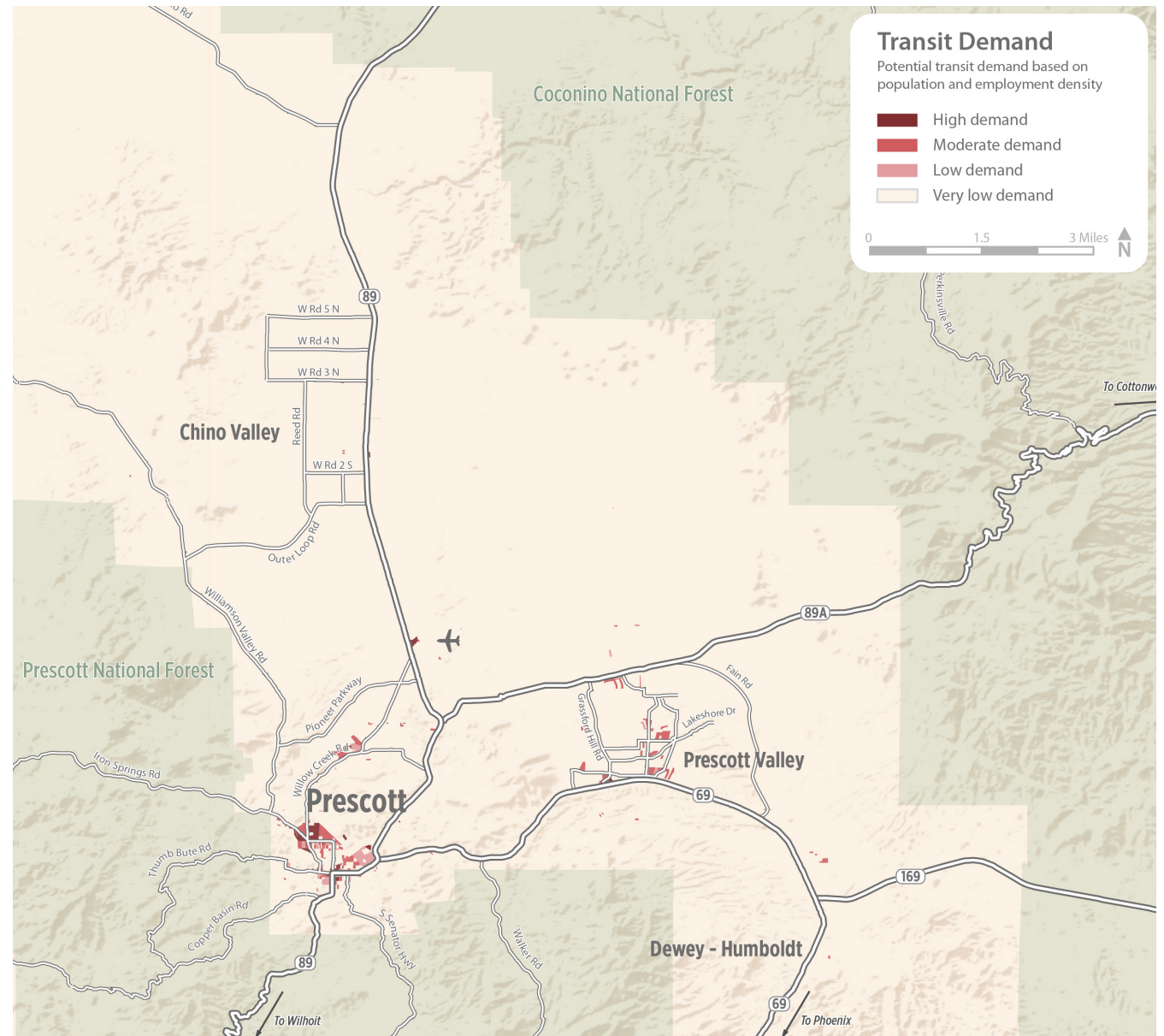


# The Market for Transit

## Where is the *highest potential demand* for public transportation?

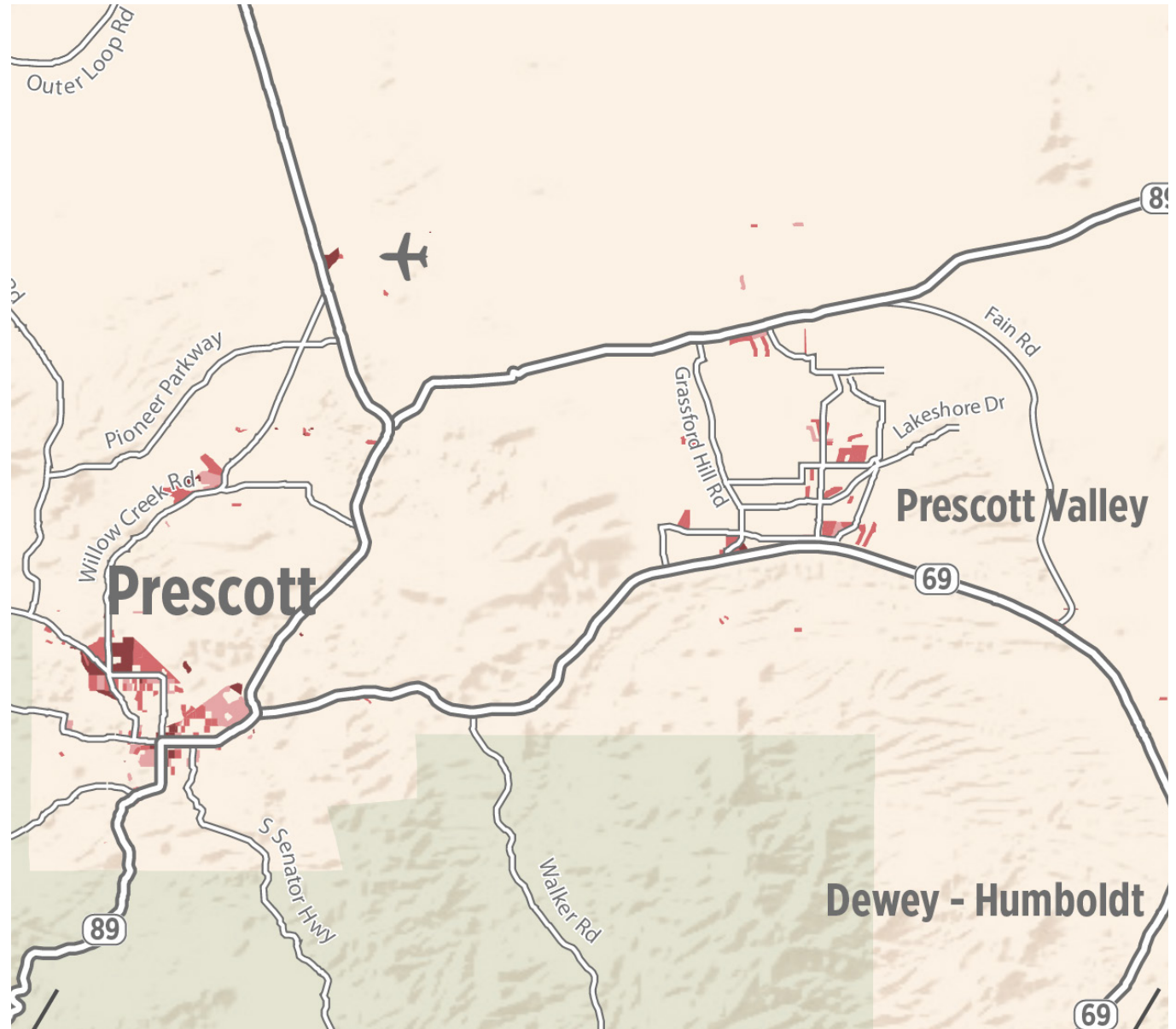
Places with large numbers of people, jobs, and other activities produce the largest demands for transit service. As a result, population density (people per acre) and employment density (jobs per acre) can provide an indicator of just how much demand there is for transit in a particular area; higher population and job densities can support higher levels of transit service. As shown in the map to the right, potential transit demand is most notable in downtown Prescott and just northwest of downtown, and in parts of Prescott Valley.

Figure 1: Transit Demand



Within Prescott, there is high underlying demand in the central part of the City, particularly in the area where Willow Creek Road converges with Iron Springs Road near Yavapai Regional Medical Center and several commercial areas. There are also areas with high and moderate demand in downtown Prescott. In Prescott Valley, there are several areas with moderate demand within the Town's core, along and just north of Route 69. Substantial investment in jobs and housing in the Town's Opportunity Zones will increase transit demand, and encouraging increased housing and job density in these Zones will help make the most of investments in transit service.

Figure 2: Transit Demand (Prescott and Prescott Valley)

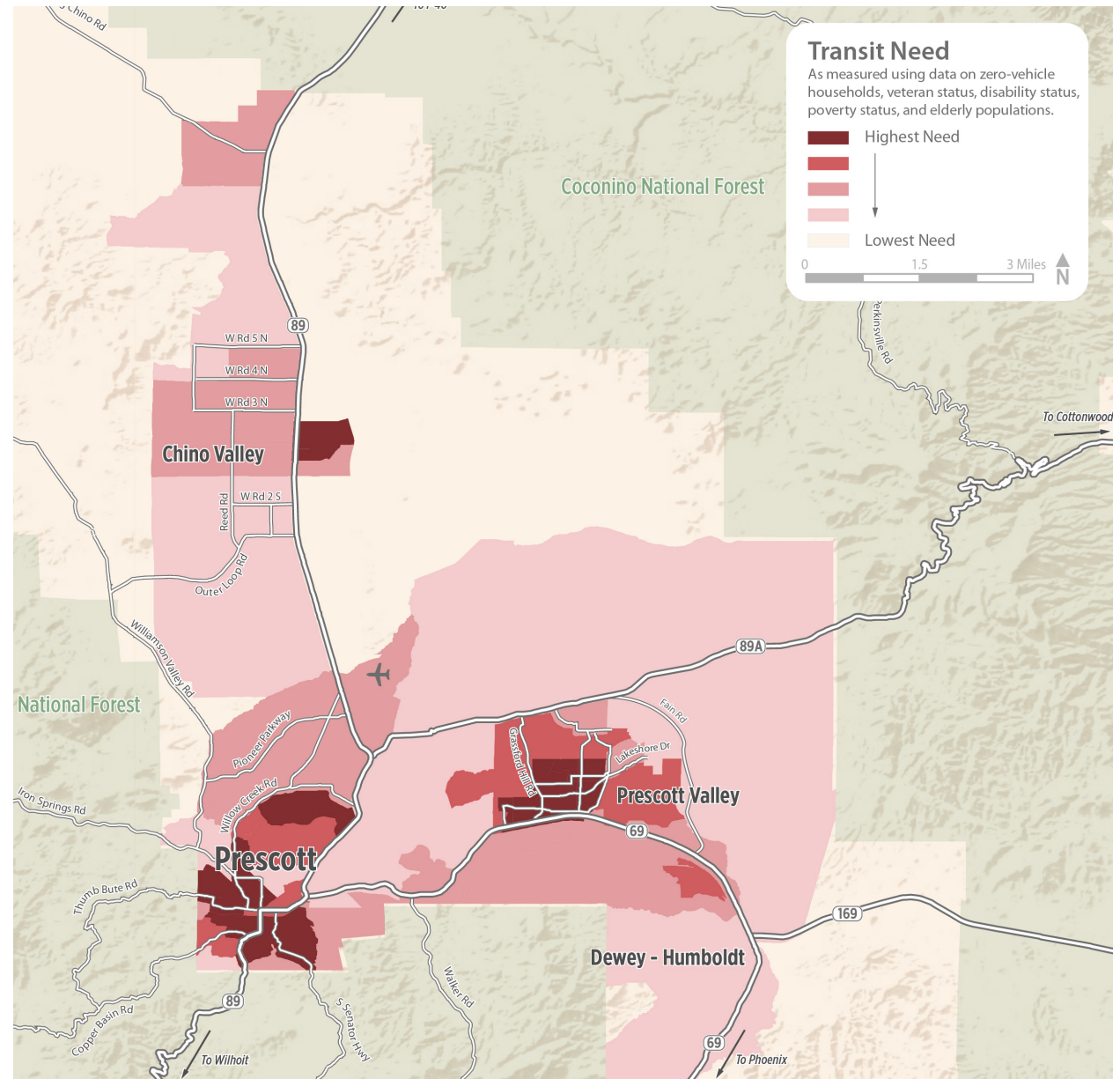


# Where is the *greatest need* for public transportation?

The Transit Need Index assesses the relative need for transit in Central Yavapai that combines the proportion of five demographic groups that indicate a higher than average likelihood to need, or rely on, public transportation: low-income residents, older adults, zero-vehicle households, residents with a disability, and veterans.

The Transit Need Index was calculated by block group, with a score of 1 to 5 assigned to each Census block group based on the concentration of each population subgroup in that block group. The highest possible score for a block group was 25, indicating the highest concentration of each of the five population subgroups. It is important to note that this index reflects relative need only; areas with higher concentrations of need reflect conditions in the study area and do not necessarily indicate need in absolute terms. The index also weights each characteristic equally.

Figure 3: Transit Need





The analysis shows there is relatively higher need for transit service throughout most of Prescott west of Route 89, in Prescott Valley, and in parts of Chino Valley.

### Veterans in Central Yavapai

Central Yavapai is home to a higher concentration of veterans than the state of Arizona and the United States as a whole. Veterans make up 14% of Central Yavapai residents, as compared to 9% of Arizona residents and 8% of all US residents. Within the region, veterans are concentrated in more rural areas such as in Paulden, north of Chino Valley, and the area around and south of the Prescott Airport. Veterans are also well represented in more dense neighborhoods in Prescott and Chino Valley.

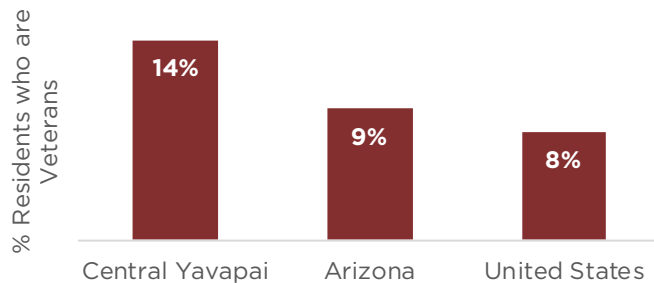
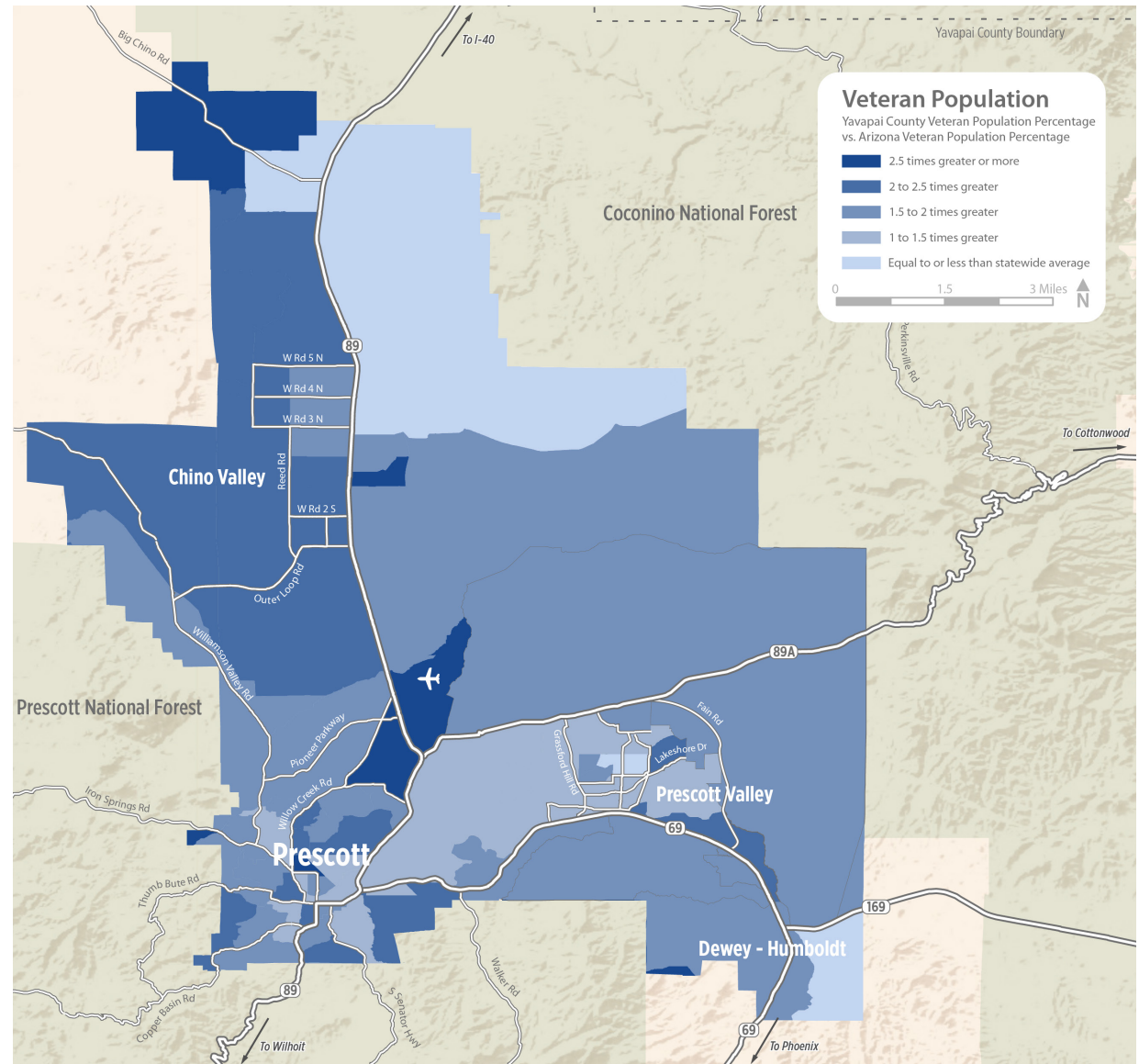


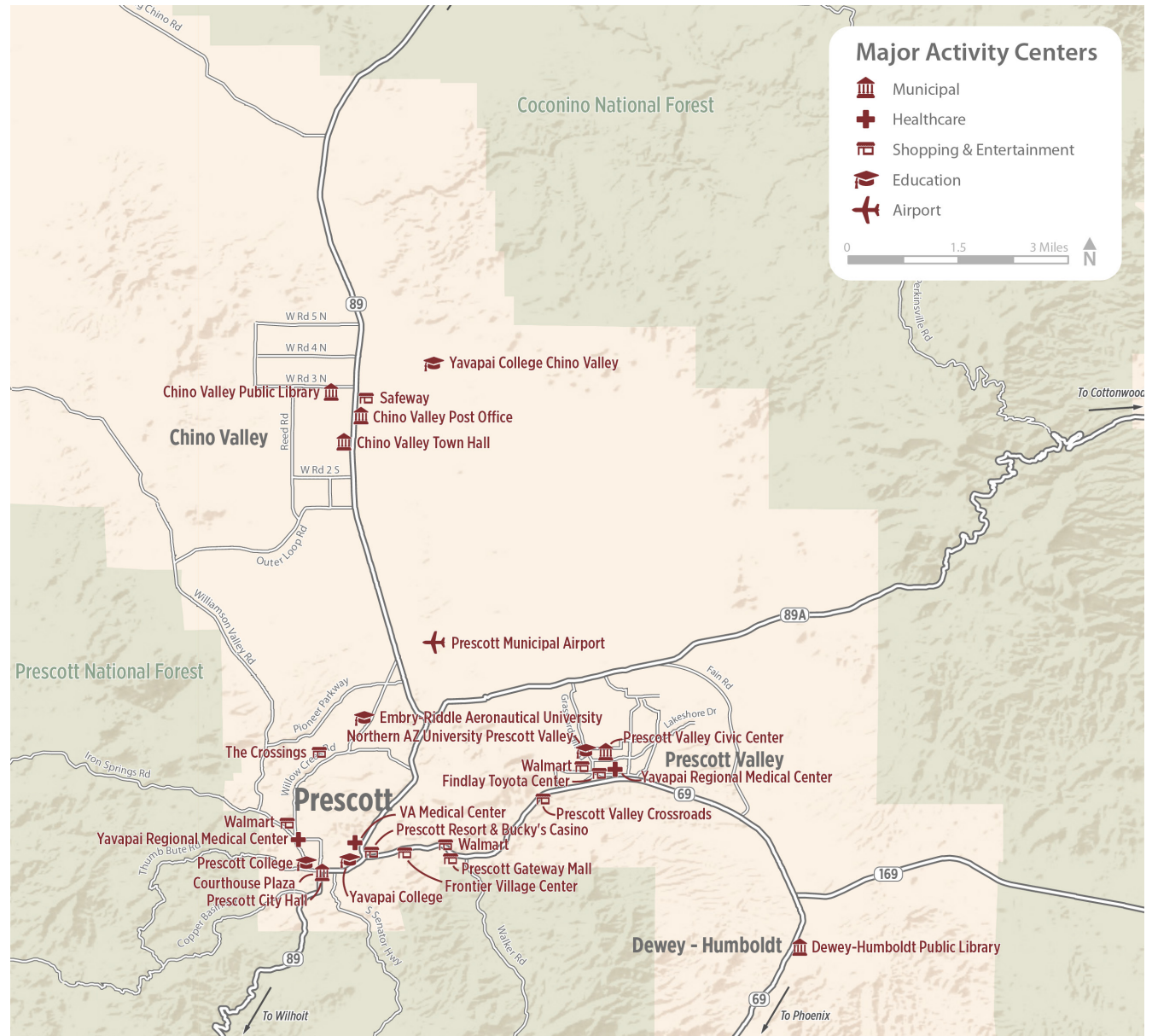
Figure 4: Veteran Population



# Major Activity Centers

Healthcare facilities, shopping centers, government offices, and other institutions are major destinations that regularly attract people for work or personal business, and can generate additional demand for transit. Most regional activity centers are concentrated in Prescott and Prescott Valley. Most shopping destinations are located along Route 69, while medical and other institutions, such as the Veterans Administration Medical Center and Prescott College, are focused closer to the City's core. Major activity centers in Prescott Valley, such as Northern Arizona University and Prescott Valley Civic Center, are more concentrated in its downtown area.

Figure 5: Major Activity Centers



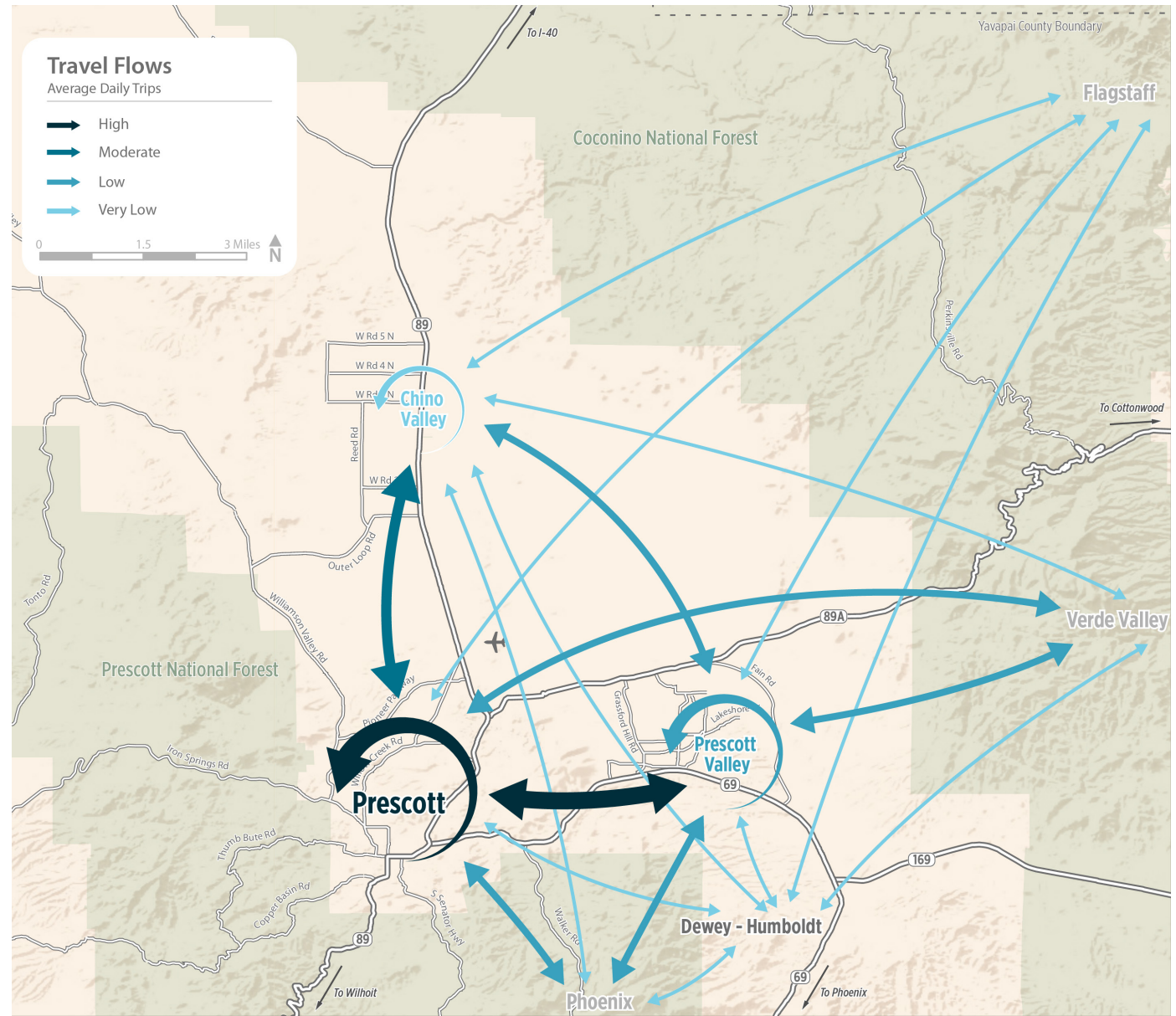


# Where People Travel Today

Data from the Arizona Statewide Travel Demand Model provides an estimate of all trips beginning and/or ending within the four Quad Cities over the course of a day.

Most daily travel is focused to and from Prescott. By far, the highest travel volumes are within Prescott and between Prescott and Prescott Valley. A moderate number of trips are made between Chino Valley and Prescott, and travel volumes are lower between Chino Valley and Prescott Valley. Travel volumes are very low to and from Dewey-Humboldt. Travel volumes are also low for trips beginning or ending in metropolitan areas outside of the Quad Cities, including Phoenix, Verde Valley, and Flagstaff.

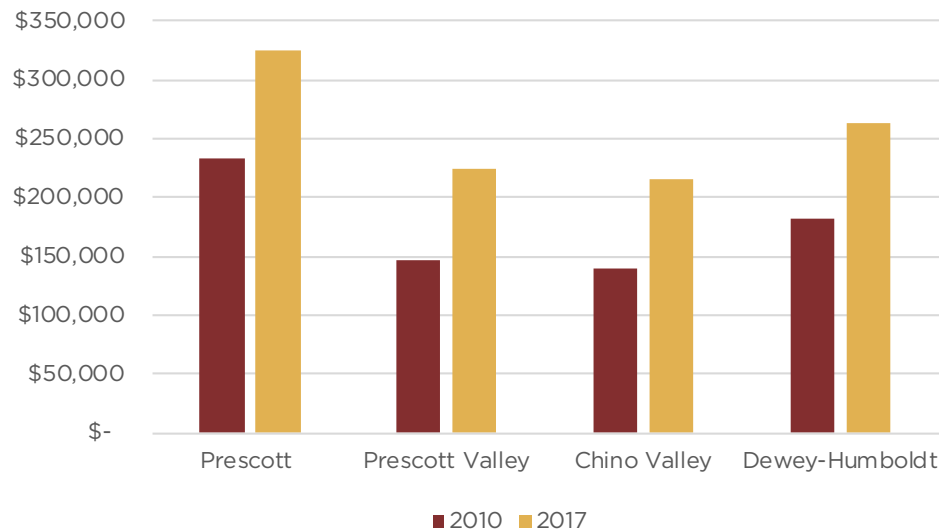
Figure 6: Travel Flows



# Affordability in Central Yavapai

Central Yavapai is an expensive place to live. Since 2010, home prices increased in all four of the Quad Cities. Based on data from the 2017 U.S. Census, nearly one third of households making under \$50,000 spent at least 30% of their income on housing.

Figure 7: Median Home Sale Price



Source: Zillow

All four of the Quad Cities experienced significant increases in home prices between 2010 and 2017, with median home sale prices rising anywhere from \$76,000 in Chino Valley to \$92,000 in Prescott.

Prescott has the highest housing prices of the four major municipalities being studied. According to Zillow, the median sale price of a home in Prescott increased from \$234,000 to \$326,000 (39%) between 2010 and 2017. Incomes in Prescott rose over the same period, but at a slower rate (15%) suggesting that increases in housing costs outpaced increases in wages.

In Prescott Valley, the median sale price of a home rose from \$147,000 to \$224,000 (52%), while the median household income rose 4.6%. In Chino Valley, the median sale price of a home rose from \$139,000 in 2010 to \$215,000 in 2017 (55%) while the median household income rose 15%. Dewey-Humboldt saw the median sale price of homes increase from \$183,000 in 2010 to \$263,000 in 2017 (44%). This increase was accompanied by an increase in the median household income in the town of 43%.

## What this Means for Transit Services

Prescott, and to a lesser extent Prescott Valley, is the region's economic engine. Prescott by far has the most jobs in the region, and the highest paying jobs. As people are unable to afford homes in Prescott, they are pushed to outlying communities, including Prescott Valley but also Chino Valley and Dewey-Humboldt.

While housing prices may be lower, moving to outlying communities also has costs. For example, when one considers the cost of traveling to Prescott from Chino Valley or Dewey-Humboldt, one could spend around \$500 each month to get to and from work (assuming a 50-mile round trip).<sup>\*</sup> Traveling between Prescott and Prescott Valley could cost nearly \$200 per month.

The impact of these travel costs on household budgets is significant:

- It would take two-and-a-quarter hours of work at a minimum wage (\$11/hour) salary for an employee to pay the daily transportation costs from Chino Valley to Prescott.
- Even a higher paid employee (\$25/hour) needs to work a full hour each day to pay for daily commute costs.

Fares on public transportation typically range from about \$1 to \$2 per one-way trip. People who travel to work by transit could save up to \$450 per month.

<sup>\*</sup> Includes gas, insurance, and vehicle wear and tear. Does not include car payments.

# Existing Investments in Public Transportation

While public transportation in Central Yavapai is limited, there are some transportation services available to residents. Yavapai Regional Transit (YRT), for example, provides rural transportation services connecting the communities of Chino Valley, Prescott, and Prescott Valley; YRT is a private non-profit that receives public support from Yavapai County and federal rural transit program (5311) funds through Arizona Department of Transportation. The Town of Prescott Valley also funds a voucher program that subsidizes about 6,000 rides per year. Other services are operated by non-profit organizations who provide transportation so that their clients can get to and from services, including medical appointments and treatments. The Veterans Administration Hospital, for example, is one of the largest transportation providers in the region. There are also a handful of nonprofits that also provide transportation to members of the general public.

There are an estimated 12 agencies providing transportation in the Quad Cities. Our partial data set suggests that the region is already spending \$1.15 million on these services and maintains a fleet of some 40 vehicles. Combined, these services provide nearly 35,000 trips annually.





# Opportunities for Transit in Central Yavapai

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We've been talking to regional stakeholders about the need for public transportation and how new services can help the region address its goals. Key comments include:

- The City of Prescott is booming. People like living in Prescott and the city continues to attract employers and add jobs. But, growth will be stalled, if we can't find workers to fill the jobs.
- Affordable housing is a real problem in Central Yavapai, especially the City of Prescott. In some cases, especially employees working in the service or retail industries, people working in Prescott can't afford to live in town, so they have to travel to get to and from work. Public transportation can help people get to and from work, especially if they can't afford to own a car or need to share a car with family members.
- People also need a way to get from Central Yavapai to Phoenix, Flagstaff and Sedona. I am interested in seeing public transportation help people with regional connections.
- Central Yavapai is a great place to live. We have colleges, hospitals, shopping and entertainment,

plus lots of parks and open space. But, if you can't get around, these amenities don't help you much. There are a lot of older adults and veterans in our community who don't always have a car but still need to get out and about.

- There are already several transportation services operating in the region. We should be able to coordinate and collaborate with these agencies to create a transportation system that more people can use.
- Helping people connect with jobs is a major issue.

A key issue we would like to explore is whether there are opportunities to coordinate and collaborate across existing resources, and whether there is potential to pool funding to create a network of transportation services that meets the needs of clients and members of the general public.

There are challenges associated with moving forward with broader implementation of public transportation services in Central Yavapai, including identifying a sustainable funding source that can support new services.

# 3. Recommendation Details

## Transit Service Investments

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The primary objective of the Central Yavapai Transit Implementation Plan was to develop a regional transit service plan that meets local and regional needs and makes effective, productive use of public resources. In addition, recommendations needed to be consistent with stakeholder needs and regional goals. With this perspective in mind, the transit plan was designed to provide a viable cost-effective transit service that:

- Connects people with jobs
- Improves access to essential services, especially for veterans, older adults, and people with disabilities
- Provides access to regional shopping areas and service centers
- Reduces traffic and parking congestion

Transit service recommendations were also organized around a handful of “design” principles that are essential for successful systems. The most important of these principles is that “simple is better than complex” so that services are easy to understand,

remember, and use. Designing simple transit service means creating schedules that are the same every day, operate at consistent intervals, are timed at easy-to-remember frequencies based on a clockface (i.e. on the hour or half-hour), and follow consistent patterns. The recommendations adhere to these principles to the greatest extent possible.

The study team also recommends that **transit services be implemented as a demonstration project** so that the region commits to provide transportation services for a three-year period with the option of two one-year extensions. Establishing transit on a demonstration basis allows the region to test the success of the service, but also creates an end point for detailed evaluation of the system’s success. At the same time, committing to at least three and up to five years of service is sufficient to attract riders and make minor adjustments to the system over time. The time period is also long enough to attract interest from private transportation service providers.

## ADA Complementary Paratransit

As part of accepting funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), transit agencies must offer complementary paratransit service to individuals unable to use the fixed-route service due to a disability. This service, referred to as “ADA complementary paratransit”, references the Americans with Disabilities Act and must be available on the same days and hours as the scheduled fixed-route service, and must serve the area within 3/4 of a mile of each side of the scheduled fixed route.

Proposed service for Prescott and Prescott Valley is expected to use FTA funds, and so ADA paratransit services will need to be provided. We recommend that this service is scheduled as part of the proposed service using a strategy called “deviated fixed-route service”, which allows riders with a disability to schedule a pick-up or dropoff within 3/4 of a mile of the bus route. The fixed route bus will deviate off the route to pick up or drop off passengers. This approach to delivering ADA services is widely used in rural and suburban communities around the United States. Both the FTA and ADOT approve of this approach to delivering service.

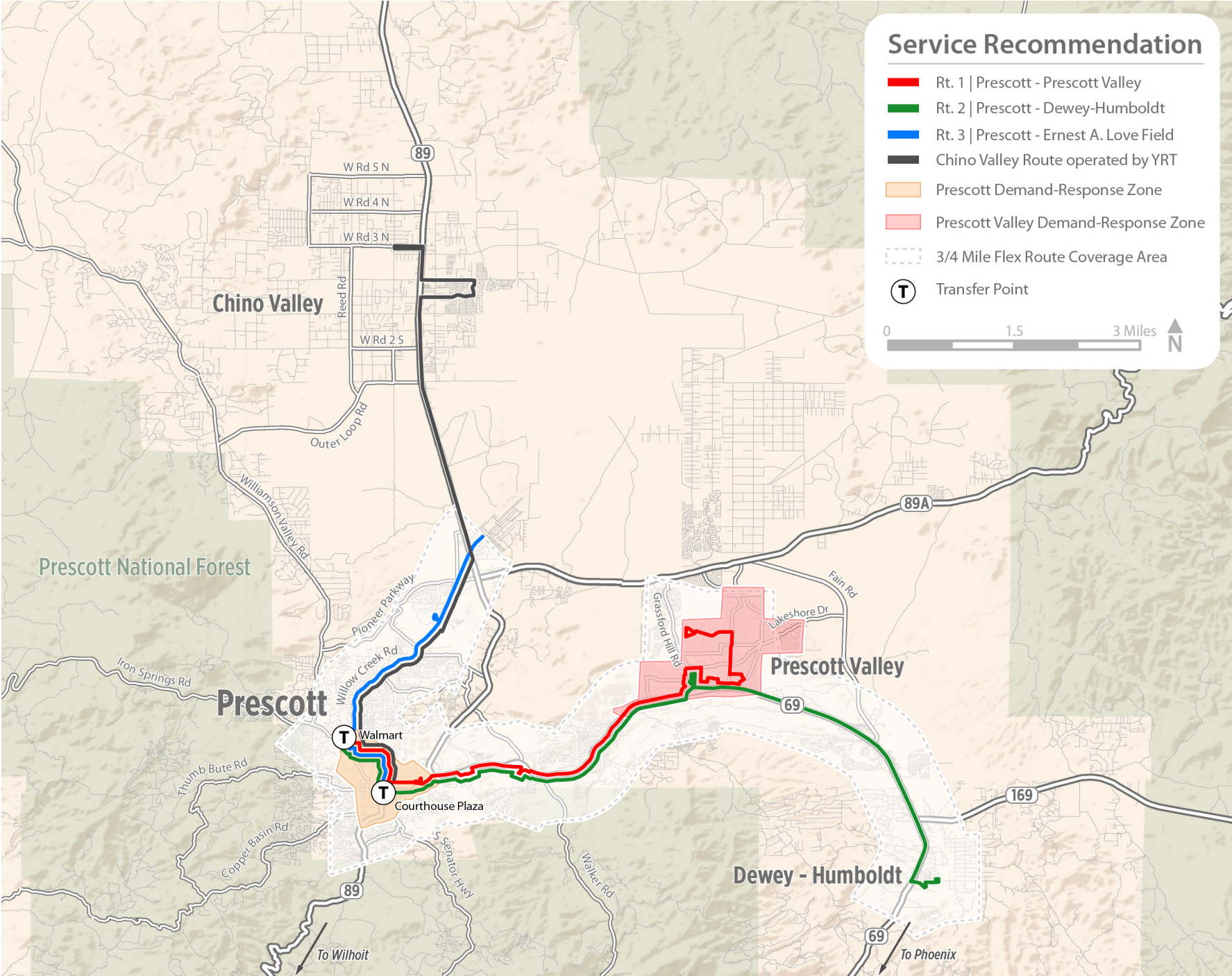
## Overview of Recommended Transit Services

As described, the proposed transit network is designed to connect people and jobs, improve access to medical services, and provide access to regional shopping and service centers. The network will provide new transit services in Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Dewey-Humboldt, and build on existing services currently operated by Yavapai Regional Transit (YRT). It will also include vanpool services to support commuters traveling longer distances to work, plus a “guaranteed ride home program” available to customers who may need to get home in case of an emergency when the proposed service is not available.

The proposed network will also include a handful of capital investments, including investments in technology to make sure the service is as easy to use and as accessible as possible to the greatest number of individuals. Other capital investments include installing shelters in select locations that provide additional protection from the weather, benches, and information about the bus service. Depending on the locations, shelters may also include trash cans and bike racks. Buses will also be equipped with bike racks.



Figure 8: Central Yavapai Recommended Transit Services



Recommended services include:

- 1. Route 1: Prescott and Prescott Valley** will be a deviated fixed-route service traveling between Prescott and Prescott Valley. The route will begin/end in Prescott near the Walmart Supercenter on Willow Creek Road and begin/end at Walmart Supercenter on Glassford Hill Road in Prescott Valley, traveling via Route 69. The service will have scheduled fixed time points and “deviate” up to 3/4 of a mile off route to pick up or drop off a rider. The proposal calls for buses to leave Prescott and Prescott Valley on the hour and operate from roughly 6:30 am to 6:30 pm. Service will be available on weekdays and Saturday. Connections to YRT service will be available at the Walmart Supercenter in Prescott.
- 2. Route 2: Dewey-Humboldt to Prescott via Prescott Valley** will provide bus service between Dewey-Humboldt and Prescott via Prescott Valley on Wednesdays only. In Prescott, service will begin/end near the Walmart Supercenter on Willow Creek, where it will provide connections to other Central Yavapai routes as well as YRT services. Route 2 will provide three trips each Wednesday. The trips will be scheduled with morning, midday, and late afternoon service to maximize flexibility for travelers. Like Route 1, this route will be scheduled but will deviate from the scheduled route to serve people with disabilities.
- 3. Route 3: Prescott to Prescott Airport (Ernest A. Love Field)** will connect Prescott with the Prescott Airport traveling through the neighborhoods along Willow Creek Road north of downtown Prescott. The route will also provide connections to/from Embry Riddle University, downtown Prescott, and Prescott Airport. Consistent with the other services, this route will operate as a deviated fixed route. Route 3 would operate on weekdays, with four trips each day. Riders will also be able to connect to YRT services at the Walmart Super Center.
- 4. Demand response zones in Prescott and Prescott Valley** will create flexible options for people traveling within the cities of Prescott and Prescott Valley. Service will be curb-to-curb and in some cases, if able, people may be requested to walk to the nearest corner. The service will offer shared rides, so people are likely to ride with other passengers. Demand response service is scheduled; people request a trip by either calling a telephone number, or requesting a ride via a computer or mobile phone app. This service will be available from 6:30 am to 6:30 pm and operate weekdays and Saturday.

## Transit Technology

The operation and delivery of transit service is changing with the introduction of new technologies, including systems and programs developed as part of transportation network companies, like Lyft and Uber. Some of the technology that has transferred to public transportation includes the ability to use a mobile phone or tablet to plan trips, request a ride, track the bus movements, and pay for fares. New transit services developed in Central Yavapai should implement as many of these technologies and systems as possible to help build ridership and create efficient operations.

5. **Vanpools** create options for workers traveling longer distances to work, such as commutes to Phoenix, Sedona, or the Bagdad Mines. Vanpools will be coordinated based on specific commute needs identified by employers or groups of employees.
6. **Guaranteed Ride Home Programs** provide vanpool and bus commuters with a “guaranteed” ride home if they take transit or a vanpool to work and need to leave early or late due to an unplanned

event or emergency. The program is designed to give commuters security and protection against unexpected events. The details of the program can be determined as it is established.

## Fares

Transit services typically charge riders a fare to ride the service, even though fares, while generating revenue, do not cover the cost of the service provided. We recommend adopting a simple fare structure, with higher fares for demand-response services. Transit services operating with FTA funds are required to offer half-fares to older adults and people with disabilities (including people with a Medicare card) traveling during peak periods. Given the regional nature of the service, we recommend that the half-fare program be available at all times and be extended to youths age 18 or younger.

The fare for the fixed-route service will be \$2.00 for a two-hour cash fare for adults, which allows free transfers between routes and to/from YRT. We also recommend offering an all-day pass for \$4.00 per day, including transfers. Youths, older adults, and people with disabilities will pay half the cost of the adult cash fare (see Table 1). Demand response service fares are priced at twice the cost of fixed route service, so a one-way trip would be \$4.00 for an adult, and youths, older adults, and people with disabilities



would pay half-fare, or \$2.00 for a one-way fare. This increased cost reflects the increased convenience for the demand response service. Riders can also purchase a monthly pass (\$60/adult and \$30/youth, older adult, and person with a disability). The monthly pass includes access to the Guaranteed Ride Home program and a discount on the demand response service.

We recommend that passengers be allowed to pay a cash fare upon boarding the vehicle, or electronically using a mobile device or personal computer. Monthly passes can be sold online as well as at key outlets, like the town halls, libraries, or convenience stores.

Table 1: Central Yavapai Transit Services: Proposed Fare Categories

Fare Category	Rider Category	Fare Amount
<b>Deviated Fixed-Route Bus Service</b>		
<b>Two-Hour Pass</b>	Adults	\$2.00
	Youths (aged 18 or younger)	\$1.00
	Older adults (aged 65+)	
	Individuals with disabilities or individuals with a Medicare card	
<b>All-Day Pass</b>	Adults	\$4.00
	Youths (aged 18 or younger)	\$2.00
	Older adults (aged 65+)	
	Individuals with disabilities or individuals with a Medicare card	
<b>Monthly Pass</b> <i>Monthly pass holders qualify for Guaranteed Ride Home and can access Demand Response service at half fare (\$2.00 for adults and \$1.00 for half fare riders)</i>	Adults	\$60.00
	Youths (aged 18 or younger)	\$30.00
	Older adults (aged 65+)	
	Individuals with disabilities or individuals with a Medicare card	
<b>Demand-Response Service</b>		
<b>Two-Hour Pass</b>	Adults	\$4.00
	Youths (aged 18 or younger)	\$2.00
	Older adults (aged 65+)	
	Individuals with disabilities or individuals with a Medicare card	



# Operations and Management

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Transit services will be a new resource in the Central Yavapai region. One of the first steps will be to identify a Transit Administrator. The Transit Administrator will be responsible for managing the service start-up and moving the network into full implementation. The expectation is that the Transit Administrator will contract with a private sector vendor to operate and manage the day-to-day service. Given that the project is envisioned as a demonstration project that will operate for three years with an option for two one-year extensions, the recommendation is for the contractor to provide a full “turnkey” operation, which will include all staff, vehicles, vehicle maintenance, hiring/training drivers. A contract length of three years with options for two one-year extensions is almost certain to attract bidders (see Appendix B for Contracting Guidelines). (Examples of transit agencies that contract for three year with two one-year options (or five years) include GoCary, 15 Regional Transit Authorities in Massachusetts, and Miami Beach Trolley.)

The Transit Administrator will be responsible for overseeing and managing the contractor and ensuring the service meets the requirements set out by funders, especially the FTA. The Transit Administrator will also be the primary community liaison, working with community partners to ensure the service meets local needs and is successfully attracting riders.

The Transit Administrator will be hired by and report directly to a Board of Directors (see Transit Governance section). The recommended program assumes the Transit Administrator will be housed within an existing public organization, ideally located in Central Yavapai, potentially co-located with public works offices in either the City of Prescott or Prescott Valley, or potentially CYMPO.

# Transit Service Costs

The proposed transit service is expected to cost \$1.8 million annually. This estimate includes all the costs associated with operating the bus service (driver wages, fuel, insurance, etc.) as well as the capital costs associated with the buses. In addition, the estimated cost includes costs associated with managing, administering, and marketing the transit service program. It also includes funds for investments in bus shelters, signage, and software to schedule and dispatch service.

Of these costs, the plan expects that roughly \$1.1 million will be raised through FTA grants available to support public transportation services in urbanized areas. This means that roughly \$726,000 must be raised locally. We expect that roughly \$262,000 can be raised through in-kind match, passenger fares, local partnerships, and contracts with human service agencies. This means the balance – roughly \$464,000 – will need to be raised through contributions from municipal partners.

## Contributions from Municipal Partners

The study team estimated that roughly \$464,000 needs to be raised annually by the municipalities in Central Yavapai, specifically Prescott and Prescott Valley, but also Yavapai County and the Town of Dewey-Humboldt. The project team distributed costs among the four partners using a combination of service hours and population and with the stipulation that Yavapai County would invest in regional services only. The resulting cost share formula allocates contributions according to population and amount of service hours so that the majority of costs are borne by Prescott and Prescott Valley (see Table 2).

Table 2: Central Yavapai Transit Service: Estimated Financial Contribution per Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Estimated Annual Contribution	Estimated Households	Annual Contribution per Household
Dewey-Humboldt	\$1,566	1,438	\$0.87
Prescott	\$225,801	15,469	\$14.38
Prescott Valley	\$225,391	16,340	\$13.60
Yavapai County	\$11,426	75,000	\$0.12

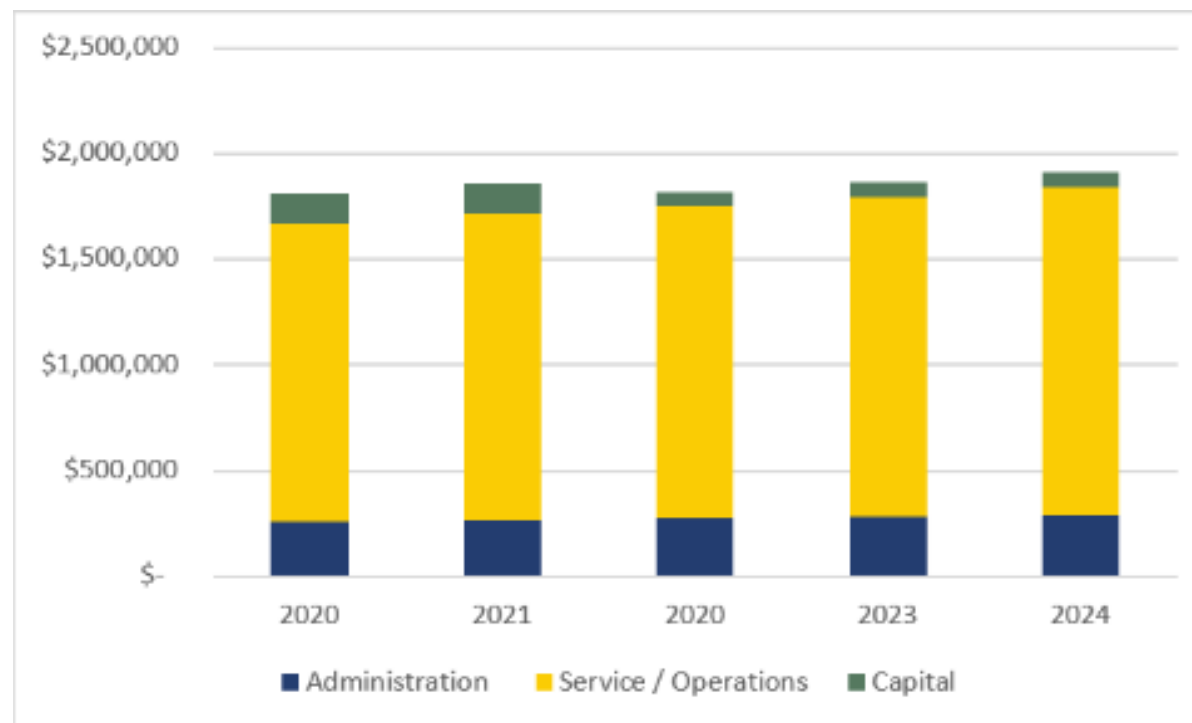
## Five-Year Cost Estimate

The 2020 estimate for the cost of transit services is \$1.8 million. This annual cost primarily consists of operating costs, but also includes small amounts for administration and capital.

As described, the service is structured as a three-year demonstration project with the potential for two one-year extensions. The annual cost of the service will

increase each year, in line with inflation. The financial model used to estimate transit service costs for the next five years assumes operating costs will increase at a rate of 2.5% and capital costs will increase by 4% per year (see Figure 2). This means that by 2024, the annual cost will increase from \$1.8 million to \$1.9 million over the five-year period, roughly a 5% increase. The increased cost does not include any expansion of service.

Figure 9: Central Yavapai Transit Service: 2020–2025 Annual Cost of Planned Central Yavapai Bus Service



# Transit Governance

As part of the Transit Implementation Plan Update, the study team reviewed Arizona State Statutes that govern public transportation governance structures (see Appendix C). Based on this analysis, there are five potential structures that are feasible under state law:

- 1. County Transit System:** County provides public transit services as part of its role as a regional service provider
- 2. Metropolitan Public Transit Authority:** Counties and cities create MPTAs to acquire, own and operate public transportation authorities
- 3. Regional Transportation Authority:** Independent public, political sub-division with taxing authority.
- 4. Joint Powers Organization:** Counties, cities and other partners form a separate legal entity to operate transit services
- 5. Intergovernmental Agreement:** Counties, cities, and Indian nations develop intergovernmental agreements to operate public transit services. Intergovernmental agreements define respective roles and responsibilities.

These five governance structures were compared with the primary goals of a new transit agency, primarily that the authority would qualify for FTA urban formula transit grants (Section 5307 Urban Transit Formula Funds); provide direct representation for governments contributing to the funding of the organization; and create necessary authority and powers required to administer a public transit program (see Table 3). Based on this analysis, a Joint Powers Organization is recommended for the future Central Yavapai transit service.

A Joint Powers Organization (JPO) is authorized by Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) 11-951, 11-952, and 40-1152. Cities and towns would form a separate legal entity that can exercise the powers of the member agencies. Valley Metro light rail service is an example of a transit non-profit corporation formed by Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa, Glendale, Chandler, and Peoria in Maricopa County.

Table 3: Potential Governance Structures and Requirements for Proposed Central Yavapai Transit Service

Governance Structure	Receive Federal Transit Grants	Relative Complexity	Direct Representation for Funders
County Transit System	Yes	Low	No
Metropolitan Public Transit Authority	Yes	Medium	No
Regional Transportation Authority	Yes	High	Yes
Joint Powers Organization	Yes	Medium	Yes
Intergovernmental Agreement	Yes	Medium	Yes

The JPO is recommended because:

- **Partner Objectives:** The JPO offers the most direct and effective means of achieving transit service objectives identified by the potential transit service partners (Cities of Prescott and Prescott Valley, Towns of Chino Valley and Dewey-Humboldt, and Yavapai County)
- **Governance Needs:** The JPO simplifies administration of public transportation services by creating clear, direct accountability. It also allows the partners to formalize the rules of their regional transit partnership.
- **Financial Feasibility:** The JPO creates the most simple and effective cost structure for Central Yavapai transit. The structure permits contracting for service operations, ensuring cost-effective

operations. The JPO does not have taxing authority, but it could use county excise tax for public transportation with voter approval.

- **Operational Efficiencies:** The JPO formation offers operational benefits that would accrue regionally, including sharing of transit system overhead costs, management staffing, and marketing; better leveraging of federal capital funding; and better leveraging of political strengths in Phoenix and Washington.
- **Long-Term Opportunities:** The JPO offers flexibility so that other jurisdictions and partners can join the regional transit agency. The JPO can also expand or contract its geographic coverage.



# Implementation

Implementing the transit demonstration project requires continued effort. The key technical steps include:

- **Establishing the JPO legal structure to organize and operate transit services**
- **Hiring a General Manager**
- **Implementing transit service infrastructure**

## Establish a JPO structure

All Arizona subdivisions have legal authority to create JPOs. Moving forward, however, requires agreement among the partners for how the organization will function and be structured as well as financial commitments to support the transit service demonstration for a period of three years. The JPO agreement, including financial terms and organizational commitments must be negotiated by the legal teams of the major partners, primarily the City of Prescott and Town of Prescott Valley. The project team developed cost estimates for the transit service, including estimates of federal grant funds and the amount expected from municipal partnerships; this can be a starting point for a financial commitment.

Another item for negotiation is oversight of the organization. One of the underlying values guiding the recommendation of establishing a JPO is that the organizational structure provides for local control and specifically the funding partners have a direct say in how their resources are invested. Most JPOs create a system of shared local control by establishing regional boards funding partners either participate directly or appoint members to represent jurisdictions. Funding partners typically agree that partners with the largest stake in the service should have a larger say in the oversight of those resources. In this case, the City of Prescott and Town of Prescott Valley will contribute the vast majority of the local funds and therefore should have a larger role in governance. We recommend that the Central Yavapai Transit Demonstration Project establish a board with nine members; this allows for three seats each for Prescott and Prescott Valley plus one seat for Yavapai County and Dewey-Humboldt and a shared seat for institutional partners. Nine board members creates a structure that is large enough to share the governance work associated with a new organization across a medium sized organization and small enough to work efficiently.

## Recommended JPO Board

City of Prescott: 3 seats

Town of Prescott Valley: 3 seats

Town of Dewey-Humboldt: 1 seat

Yavapai County: 1 seat

Institutional Partners: 1 seat

Transit Board members are expected to be active participants in the start-up activities associated with getting the Central Yavapai Transit Demonstration Project underway. This includes developing a series of policies guiding service implementation. It also involves helping the General Manager establish local contacts with elected officials and develop partnerships with community institutions and leadership.

## Hire a General Manager

The Transit Board will set the policy direction and have fiscal responsibilities for the Central Yavapai Transit Demonstration Service. Responsibilities for implementing these policies and managing financial systems will rest with the General Manager, who is expected to be the transit organizations only full-time direct employee. The General Manager, in turn, will be responsible for contracting with a private

transportation provider to operate the fixed route and demand response service in Central Yavapai. Additional responsibilities assigned to the General Manager include:

- Reporting to the Transit Board.
- Hire a transportation service provider and then, managing and overseeing the transportation service contract to ensure services are meeting reliability and service standards.
- Evaluating service performance and potential changes to the service structure to improve effectiveness of transit services, information, and fares and fares structure (among others). Work with municipal partners to support transit capital investments, including (for example) posting and maintenance of information, maintenance of bus stops and bus layover locations.
- Reporting requirements associated with both FTA grants and to inform the Transit Board.
- Establishing and maintaining community relations, including relationship with the Transit Board but also a wider group of stakeholders. These stakeholders include elected officials, service partners (YRT and other human service transportation providers) and staff at municipal public works departments and the Prescott Airport,
- Attracting financial resources and partners to the service, especially from large employers, regional

institutions (hospitals, colleges and universities) and human service transportation providers. Large employers and major institutions are part of the system's target markets and potential partners in service delivery and funding, potentially through pass programs. The GM should consider the potential of contracting with human service agencies to provide service.

- Developing and implementing a clear marketing strategy that includes information and resources for riders and transit agency partners. One of the biggest challenges facing transit agencies around the country is ensuring people know the service exists and how to use it. Develop a fun and engaging name for the system and underlying brand and then disseminating this information to as wide an audience as possible is fundamental to the demonstration project's success. Marketing services will be an ongoing activity for the GM.

## Establish Transit Agency Infrastructure

The Central Yavapai Transit Demonstration Project will be a start-up. By hiring a private sector transportation service provider, the Transit Board and GM will outsource daily service operations. This will make implementation easier but does not absolve either the Board or the GM for responsibility of the service. Further as a start-up organization, the Transit Board and GM will need to develop institutional and

physical infrastructure to manage and oversee service implementation.

Ultimately the Transit Board and GM will need to determine how best to share specific responsibilities associated with service start up and ongoing operations (see Table 4). In general, however, the Transit Board will be responsible for the development of the policies and strategic direction of transit service implementation. This includes setting policies associated with fares, marketing and branding, advertisements on buses and at bus stops, and service and customer service standards. The Transit Board will also have financial oversight responsibilities for agency budget and grants management. Other responsibilities include helping the GM with community engagement and partnerships. The GM will be responsible for implementing the policy and strategic direction set by the Transit Board. This includes managing the service contract, managing agency budgets, grants and finances and establishing and maintaining community partner relationships. The transit contractor will be responsible for delivering and managing service on the street.

Table 4: Proposed Central Yavapai Transit Service – Responsibility Assignments

	Transit Board	General Manager	Transit Service Provider
Transit Policies (Fares, Advertisements, Customer Service)	Development and oversight	Implementation	No
Oversight	Implementation	Medium	No
Financial Management	Oversight	Responsible for contracting, grant management, reporting	Reporting
Community outreach with municipal partners, community institutions and stakeholders	Assistance	Responsible	Indirect responsibilities only (partner in delivery of clean, reliable, safe service)
Transit service operations and maintenance	Oversight	Manage contract	Yes
Oversight of service planning, standards and guidelines	Implementations (operations, maintenance, scheduling, dispatch, supervision, etc.)		
Marketing	Policy direction	Development and implementation	Implementation
Community infrastructure (website, information systems, bus stops, shelters, etc.)	Policy direction	Responsible to work with municipal partners (installation and maintenance)	Use of facilities



# 4. Plan Development Process

The Central Yavapai Transit Implementation Plan Update was developed using a combination of technical analysis and stakeholder and community input. The project team used technical analysis to understand and evaluate the region's land uses, socio-economic and demographic profile, and underlying travel patterns. The team also conducted

a peer review to understand how similarly sized and positioned transit services developed. We also evaluated existing services operated by YRT to understand how riders are using existing services as well as where there are opportunities for service efficiencies.

## Technical Approach

### Market Analysis

An analysis of the potential market for transit in Central Yavapai revealed the importance of destinations and employment markets in downtown Prescott and in Prescott Valley, plus three key regional corridors: Route 69 connecting Prescott and Prescott Valley, Willow Creek Road in Prescott, and N. Robert Road in Prescott Valley. Land use and travel patterns in Central Yavapai also highlight the importance of creating connections between the smaller communities of Chino Valley and Dewey-Humboldt and the larger communities of Prescott and Prescott Valley. These connections provide access to the expanded services available in the urban

core, including medical facilities as well as shopping. Connections between Chino Valley and Prescott are also essential to support employment, especially for lower wage service jobs whose workers may be priced out of Prescott and Prescott Valley.

Other potential opportunities identified as part of the market analysis include the need for commuter services to employment centers that are farther away, especially the Bagdad Copper Mine. The mine is located roughly 70 miles west of Prescott and 82 miles from Prescott Valley, and expects to continue hiring into the foreseeable future with additional staffing needed in the next year or two. While the mine does offer some housing on site, demand

exceeds supply and according to staff at the mine, some workers prefer to live in the urbanized area and commute to work. Offering vanpool services options to these workers would increase the accessibility of the job site in addition to safety and environmental benefits.

Findings of the market analysis are described in further detail in Part 1 of this document.

## Human Service Transportation Provider Inventory

The study team conducted an inventory of existing human service transportation providers, which are largely comprised of nonprofit organizations that operate transportation services for their clients. The Yavapai Transit Foundation maintains a directory of services for individuals looking for transportation, and this was a key input in the TIP's analysis as well. The inventory is an important piece of the analysis because it identifies transportation resources already invested in the community, and these resources can be coordinated with a new regional provider to create a larger, easier to use, and cost-effective service network. Some of these transportation providers are potential future partners of the regional transportation network.

## Peer Review

The study team examined six peer transit systems to provide context for assessing the potential for developing public transit within the CYMPO planning area. These systems were selected to provide insight into how the CYMPO planning area stacks up against transit systems providing service in similar settings. The peer systems selected include:

- Cottonwood Area Transit (CAT)/Verde-Lynx System
- Las Cruces RoadRUNNER Transit System
- City of St. George (UT) SunTran System
- Yuma County Area Transit (YCAT); Santa Fe Trails (Santa Fe, NM)
- Central Arizona Regional Transit (CART)/Cotton Express (Coolidge, AZ)
- Grand Valley Transit (Grand Junction, CO).

A full copy of the peer review is included as Appendix A. Key lessons learned from the peer review are summarized below.

- Municipal commitment is key to establishing service that the local community can rely on. Without the full support of the city or county, it will be an uphill battle.

Table 5: Inventory of Existing Service Providers

Service Provider	Service Type	Days and Hours of Service	Annual Ridership	Fare	Annual Operating Costs
Yavapai Regional Transit	Flex Route	Mon-Fri 8 AM - 6 PM, Varies by route	9,4000	Single ride (one-way) – \$2 Senior (60+) / Disabled (one-way) – \$1 Youth (8-17) – \$1 10-ride punch pass – \$16 10-ride punch pass for seniors and people with disabilities – \$8	\$426,000
Prescott Transit Authority	Demand-Response (no longer offers Citibus option)	24/7		Pickup Fee - \$3 Per Mile - \$2.25 Accepts all AHCCCS and NACOG Transportation Vouchers	
Adult Care Services - Susan Rheem Center	Transportation for SJRC day center participants only	Mon-Fri 8 AM - 4 PM	11,600	October 2017-August 2018: \$10 One-way, \$20 Round-trip September 1, 2018 Price Increase: \$12.50 One-way, \$25 Round-trip	\$126,100
NAU Civic Service Institute	Demand-Response	Varies		Organization is a service provider to pair participants with volunteers across the state to assist with all aspects of care, including transportation	
Northern Arizona VA	AMB and WC	8 AM to 4:40 PM	4,500	Free	\$720,000
Intermountain Centers for Human Development	Group Home	24/7	8 members	Part of Group Home Contract - No transport provided to those outside of our residential settings	
NAZCARE	Demand-Response	Mon-Fri, some Sat	2,400-2,700	Billed to insurance or \$25 per month	Not separated from other operating expenses
New Horizons D.E.C.	Demand-Response	Mon-Fri 5 AM to 8:30 PM Sat 5 AM to 10 AM	22,600	\$1.20 to \$1.75 per mile	\$920,000
People Who Care	Demand-Response				
Town of Prescott Valley (NACOG)	Vouchers	Varies	6,000		\$50,000
Servant's Heart Med Transport	Demand-Response	24/7 - with preferred scheduling 24-48 hours in advance		Pickup Fee (During Business Hours) with Wheelchair - ONE WAY - \$55 + 5 free miles, \$2.75 per mile after 5 miles Pickup Fee (During Business Hours) with stretcher - ONE WAY - \$110 + 5 free miles, \$3 per mile after 5 miles	

- The public can be your biggest asset. Among some peers, efforts to reduce or eliminate local funding by elected officials have been overcome by testimony from both the transit dependent community and choice riders that benefited from the transit service through enhanced levels of mobility.
- Slow incremental growth is most effective with proper phasing for warranted expansions. New services need to start with what they know they can deliver, but also need to fully commit to an initial service for a reasonable number of years, more than just a one- or two- year operation. For example, four to six months may be necessary to have patrons or residents even realize the service exists, notwithstanding positive impacts of a well-intentioned advertising campaign.
- Promote transit service vigorously. Remain committed to communicating with the public and advertising the service.
- Strong partnerships are critical to success. Important partners include Human Service Agencies, College/Universities, School Districts, Hospitals, and local, state and federal governments.
- Monitor operations and service quality consistently and frequently to optimize performance and work towards achieving the long-term vision for transit service.
- Higher frequency and improved travel time are important service elements that better serve existing riders and attract potential new riders.
- A dedicated funding source would be of great benefit. Competition for local property tax and sales tax funding is tough, and local governments generally do not have the capacity to undertake major new annual funding responsibilities for transit. In one case, the county and municipalities appropriate funds for transit operations and maintenance and transit capital needs. These funds currently are being provided to fund transit service as part of the existing Interlocal Agreement (IGA).
- Either hire a professional transit manager who knows about starting service, or get educated by visiting peer groups and learning firsthand what obstacles you will encounter. There are advantages to hiring a professional transit management operator during the early years of a transit system operation; start-up operations can be greatly enhanced with the expertise of an experienced transit operator.
- Turnover rates for drivers and staff can be minimized with a management style that is inclusive and open to new ideas to improve



efficiency. During the initial years of service, it is important to listen to the drivers for ideas and input related to safety and service improvements. By taking their input and acting on their suggestions, the service can be greatly optimized during the first three to five years of operation.

- An advisory Community Transit Committee can prove valuable for advising the Board of Directors about developing and sustaining transit services. Because the general public is both user and funder of service, it is important for the community to participate in identifying transportation issues and comment on potential alternatives. Such a committee would:
- Act as a sounding board for policies and plans.
- Provide a communication link between the residents of the service area and YCIPTA Board of Directors.
- Recommend plans, policies and procedures to the Board of Directors.
- Promote agency accountability.
- Form community partnerships.
- Address other public transit matters as requested by the Board of Directors or staff.
- Public information about service is important to ensuring that service is easy to understand

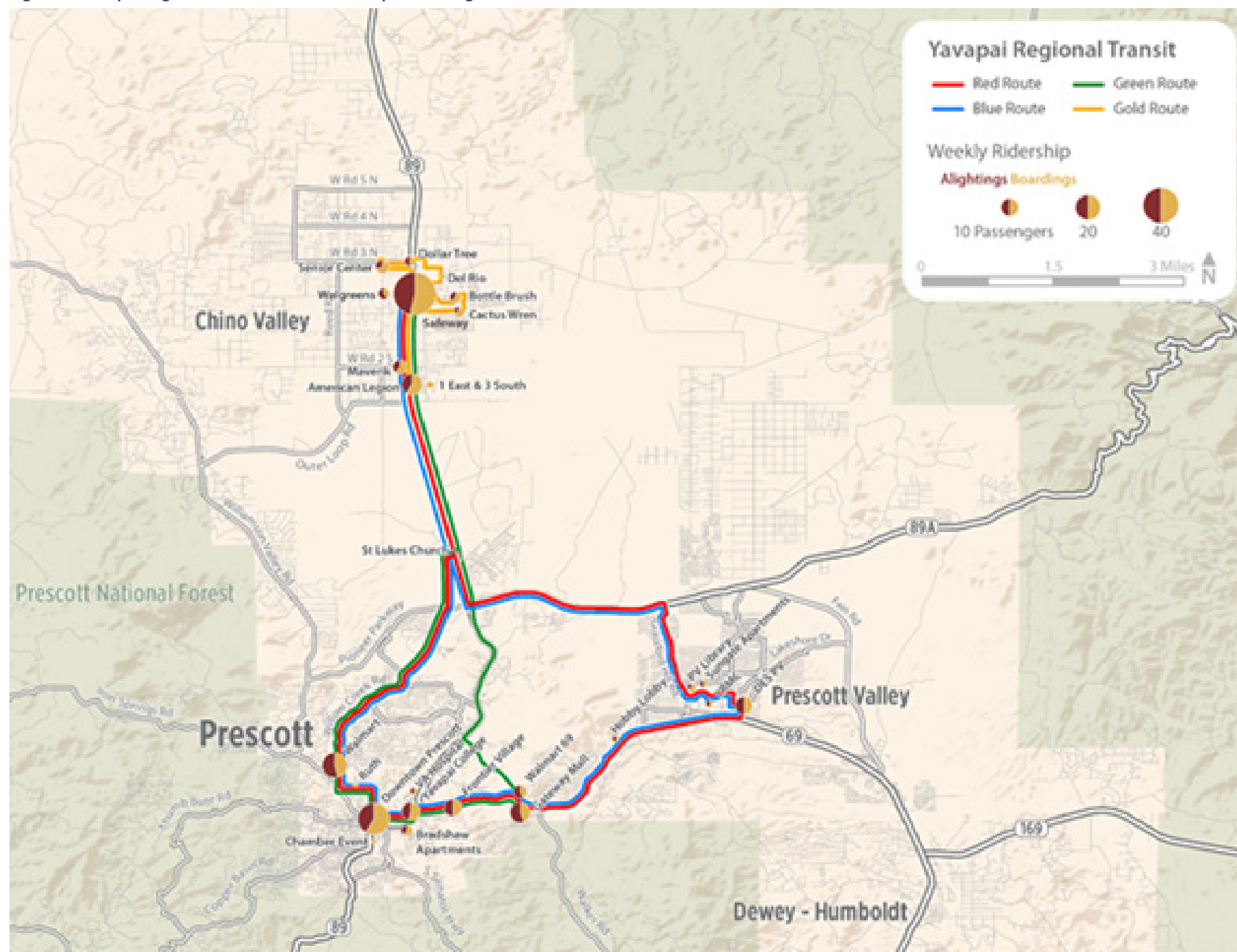
and use. For example, clear and effective route maps, identifying local points of interest and key destinations, should be posted clearly within the interior of each bus vehicle.

- Fare products can have a significant impact on the customer experience. For example, offering a day pass that is equivalent to two one-way trips removes the need for transfers and mitigates a lot of negative interaction between drivers and riders, such as issues with fare evasion, expired transfers, and riders trying to use transfers at stops not designated as transfer points or shared stops.
- Try to have at least one vehicle that is purchased with 100% local funds (no federal dollars). This will give you use of the vehicle without certain restrictions (charters, government use, local use) that come with federally funded vehicles.

## Yavapai Regional Transit Service Evaluation

Yavapai Regional Transit (YRT) is a nonprofit organization that provides general public transportation service in Chino Valley, Prescott, and Prescott Valley (see Figure 3). The system includes four routes, including local deviated flex-route service in Chino Valley and regional deviated flex-route service to Prescott and Prescott Valley. Service

**Figure 10: Yavapai Regional Transit Service: Ridership on Existing Service**



operates weekdays between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. All routes operate along a set alignment and adhere to a published schedule. As noted, all route service will “flex”, or deviate up to one mile to provide ADA curb-to-curb service upon customer request.

In 2018, YRT provided 9,390 customer rides, averaging almost five passengers per trip. Annually, YRT operated 75,000 service miles and provided over 5,000 service hours. Major destinations in the system include Chino Valley Safeway, Downtown Prescott, the Prescott Walmart, and the Gateway Mall.

YRT has a total annual budget of approximately \$415,300. The primary revenue source is FTA Section 5311 funds, which support rural transit service. As a result, YRT must operate in rural areas: all passenger pickups and dropoffs must be in designated rural areas. In addition to FTA funding, YRT is supported by local governments, businesses, in-kind donations, and fares.

## Service Improvement Opportunities

The project team prepared a detailed look at YRT’s existing service. The analysis was limited to the available data, which included overall ridership and ridership by stop. We used this information to identify opportunities to improve the bus service.

Opportunities represent ideas, not recommendations, and in some cases potential improvement opportunities may be contradictory, recognizing that there may be more than one way to improve service. Further, service recommendations are not fiscally constrained in order to ensure that all opportunities are presented. The analysis examines each route individually, and opportunities were identified for system-wide improvements as well as for individual routes. A full summary of the Route Evaluation findings and recommendations is available in Appendix D. Improvement opportunities are summarized below.

- **Publish a timetable with inbound and outbound time points.** A consistent barrier to transit riders is information. To access any service a customer must understand where a bus route goes, know on which side of the street to wait, and know how to read a schedule. Anything that transit providers can do to break down these complex barriers helps to attract potential customers. Simple solutions, therefore, involve creating clear, simple timetables that show when the bus is arriving and where passengers will be picked up.
- **Operate service earlier and later.** YRT currently operates service with the first trip starting at 7:55 AM and the last trip ending at 2:48 PM. While these trip times allow people to shop and access

services, they do not support most employment. The majority of jobs cover an eight-hour workday and traditionally require workers to be on site between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Starting service at 6:00 AM and ending service at 6:00 PM would provide better access to jobs.

- **Convert service to on-demand microtransit.** The transit industry has begun to utilize technology to rethink traditional on-demand service. Historically, on-demand service required advance reservations, and actual pickup and dropoff times could vary widely, making the service inconvenient for customers. New technologies in transit now allow for dynamic on-demand services that utilize pickup nodes or dynamic routing options to provide services comparable to taxi or ride-hailing services. These new technologies utilize smartphone apps, web-based scheduling, and traditional call-in services to provide convenient options for all customers. These options allow customers to schedule trips in real time and allow transit services to actively match supply with demand. The technology prioritizes pickups and drop-offs by geography, just as taxi or ride-hailing services do.

- **Convert service to a fixed route and offer complementary paratransit.** Deviated flex services, such as those currently offered, are inherently inconsistent due to the need to leave the fixed alignment and provide curb-to-curb service on request. This inconsistency leads to challenges in maintaining a schedule and can result in late trips and customer complaints. While more expensive, providing a separate complementary paratransit service creates better service for those using the fixed route as well as those using the curb-to-curb service.



# Stakeholder Input

## Stakeholder Interviews

The Central Yavapai transit recommendations were developed with extensive input from regional stakeholders. In total, the project team conducted 23 interviews with roughly 30 stakeholders, with several stakeholders interviewed multiple times (see Appendix G for listing of interviews). These interviews were conducted in roughly two rounds of meetings. The first set of meetings were focused on more general stakeholders (nonprofit organizations, major employers), and was used to collect general feedback about the needs, opportunities and challenges facing Central Yavapai as it worked to move forward with transit services. The second round of meetings were focused on elected officials and were designed to collect direct feedback on the service, funding, and governance proposals.

A summary of the initial round of feedback includes:

- Transit has history in the region. Prescott Whipple Stage started in 1922 and eventually became the Prescott city bus until the City dropped it in the 1950s. Privately operated since then, transit specifically served WWII vets.
- Most of the existing services have limited eligibility (for individuals or trip purposes) or are expensive. This includes the Prescott Valley voucher program – it is a good system but limited.
- Transit makes sense for a growing community like Central Yavapai. People need it to get to work, and it helps reduce congestion and improve air quality. Also, if people spend less money every month on transportation, they will spend more on other things.
- Successful transit service will be affordable, convenient, reliable, and clean. It also needs to be regional and cover the whole area and go between cities. It should cover Prescott, Prescott Valley, Chino Valley, Skull Valley (AM-PM commutes), Dewey/Mayer (AM-PM commutes), Spring Valley/Cordes (aging population coming to town for the day; low/fixed income, more likely to use than more affluent people in Prescott).
- The service should serve lower income residents, older adults, people traveling to work, and people who can't get around on their own. It needs to offer both fixed-route and door-to-door service.
- Launch a starter system with an implementation plan so it can grow organically with the community.

A summary of the second round of feedback includes:

- Community leaders and elected officials need as many details as possible about the proposed system. This includes how the system will be funded, not only the amounts but how local costs will be distributed among the communities.
- There is a lot of concern about escalating costs and creating a service that is affordable on day one but becomes unaffordable over time.
- Recognition that CYMPO is the best organization to facilitate this startup. Best chance of buy-in from agencies.
- Need to look at how young people will use it. Build system so it is attractive for students. It is a misconception that the region is all old people. Integrating schools could make the system more successful.
- Yavapai County currently provides funding for YRT and also supports Cottonwood. The County Board tends to consider its role as regional and oriented towards the unincorporated areas. Any funding formula should consider this.

## Stakeholder Meetings

CYMPO and the project team held 6 stakeholder meetings between January and November 2019 (see Appendix E for meeting materials). CYMPO and the project team used these meetings to present draft findings and collect information from the community about draft recommendations (see Table 5). The meetings were well attended and included representation from area nonprofits, employers, elected officials, and concerned citizens.

Table 6: Central Yavapai Transit Implementation Plan Update: Stakeholder Meetings

Meeting Date	Topics Covered	Location / Attendance
January 17, 2019	Introduce project and stakeholders Goals and desired outcomes, regional needs and opportunities	ADOT's Office
March 21, 2019	Existing conditions, initial findings and Central Yavapai peers	Prescott Valley Library
April 30, 2019	Transit planning exercise, discussion of governance and funding	Prescott Valley Library
June 3, 2019	Draft transit service scenarios, findings from community survey and peer review, discussion of governance options	Prescott Valley Library
August 20, 2019	Draft transit service scenarios, funding and costs	Prescott Valley Library
November 4, 2019	Final recommendations	Prescott Valley Library

# Community Input

In addition to meetings with stakeholders, the study team surveyed residents of Central Yavapai to clarify attitudes towards public transit and transportation challenges. The survey was available for people to complete from approximately May 1 until July 15, 2019. People could access the survey online (via Engage 76) and using printed copies. Residents were encouraged to complete the survey through the “CYMPO Engage” process, which made the survey available online via a Facebook group and at a “pop-up” event staffed by CYMPO staff at the YCC Home and Garden Show on May 17, 2019. Project stakeholders also distributed copies of the paper survey to their clients and constituents. A full summary of the report and findings is included as Appendix F.

## Summary of Findings

CYMPO surveyed residents of the Central Yavapai valley to understand attitudes and experiences related to public transportation services. In total, 399 completed surveys were completed. Key findings from the survey include:

- Roughly half of the survey respondents reported transportation problems. The most common transportation challenges included the cost of commuting and the desire for another easy, safe, and comfortable travel option.

- Transportation is especially challenging for lower income and unemployed individuals, students, and people aged between 18 and 24. In addition, people with limited access to a private vehicle were also likely to report transportation problems.
- The majority of survey respondents said they had used public transportation systems in other places. People have used Valley Metro and transit systems outside of Arizona most often, but respondents were almost as likely to have ridden Yavapai Regional Transit and intercity buses. The two reasons survey respondents cited for using transit were that 1) it was easier than figuring out how to drive and 2) it was less expensive.
- More than half of the survey respondents said they would use public transportation in the Quad Cities if it was available. Survey respondents more likely to express a willingness to use transit include younger residents and people with lower incomes.
- The most important transit service characteristic to encourage ridership among survey respondents was having a bus stop within walking distance of home. This was equally important among several demographic groups. The second most important transit service characteristic was that service be predictable and reliable.

# Appendices

**Appendix A** Peer Review

**Appendix B** Contracting Guidelines

**Appendix C** Arizona Governance Summary

**Appendix D** Yavapai Regional Transit Service Evaluation

**Appendix E** Stakeholder Meeting Presentation Materials

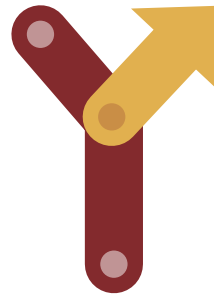
**Appendix F** Transit Community Survey

**Appendix G** Stakeholder Interviews

**Appendix H** Draft Transit Branding Concepts



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# CENTRAL YAVAPAI TRANSIT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE



**CYMPO**  
Central Yavapai Metropolitan  
Planning Organization