

# Bonner County Transit Service Considerations and Options



Selkirks - Pend Oreille Transit Authority  
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## Considerations

- Leadership
  - SPOT Board members represent each partner
  - All are appointed by the agency they represent
  - Staff carries out the direction of the Board
- Ridership 163,000 rides in Bonner County and Boundary County
  - Seniors = 39,000
  - Disabilities = 4,600
  - Youth = 16,400
  - General = 103,000
- Fixed route (Blue and Green Routes) = Paratransit Service
  - Impact from development and growth

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## Bonner County Percentage of Boardings

- Fixed Route

- Dover = .87%
- Kootenai = 6.08%
- Ponderay = 30.95%
- Sandpoint = 62.09%

- Paratransit

- Dover = 0%
- Kootenai = 3.47%
- Ponderay = 26.58%
- Sandpoint = 69.94%

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## Return on Investment

- Estimated \$18,000 additional funding for every \$10,000 local dollars
  - Greater dollars spent in our local economy
  - Every \$10,000 local match plus \$18,000 federal = \$28,000 Operating funds
- Local investment improves economy, safety and mobility
  - Local cost per fixed route ride = \$2.72
  - Local cost per Paratransit ride = \$8.93
- Riders spend money and/or make money
- Increased well-being and independence
- Fulfill Strategic and Long-range Plans
  - No parking required at their destination
  - Three downtown stops = 9,560 boardings in 2024

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## Funding for SPOT



### • Grant funding

- ALWAYS COMPETITIVE
- Federal Transit Authority (FTA), CARES, VIP
  - State of Idaho
  - Apply every two years for operating and capital grant funding
  - Occasionally one-time funds

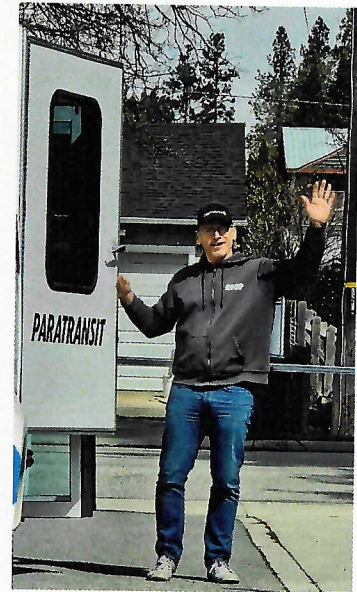
### • Grants require local match

- Current match = \$207,890.00
- Current other match funds = \$112,500.00

**\$320,390.00**

### • Cost to provide services **\$1,096,342.00 (2023-2024 budget)**

- **Operating** - fuel, wages, insurance = **64%**
- **Administrative** - accounting, legal, admin., office = **16%**
- **Maintenance** - regular maintenance, cleaning and repairs = **20%**



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## Pursuing Opportunities and Options

- SPOT continues existing services.
  - Exploring all options to assist with local match
- Marketing/promotion - donated radio spots = \$7,800.00 per year
- Low staff turnover - Two retired
- PISNI Volunteers = 3 or 4 people one day every week three to four hours. Clean buses and shelters = \$5,250.00 match/year.
- Receipt of two 2017, FREE buses. Refurbish grant.
- SPOT Bus awarded all required and requested funding October 2024 - September 2026 = \$3,306,207.00
  - Local match required = 24.5% vs. 34%
- Alternative funding sources for match
  - Advertising on buses
  - In-kind rides
  - Donations (tax-exempt)

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## Additional Match

- Selling old o/s buses Capital (6) \$5,500
- Advertising on buses (estimate \$30,000 to \$108,000)
  - One Boundary County Bus
  - Four Bonner County Buses
- In-Kind Match sources:
  - PISNI Match \$ 5,250.00/yr
  - Radio ad's Match \$7,480.00/yr
  - Bus bench and shelter donations (grant specific)
- Private donations

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## Another option - Bus Fares

- Charge \$1.00 per ride = \$162,000.00 (includes 92,000 Schweitzer rides - Big buses)
  - No match credit for the amount generated, reduces grant
  - Slows bus operation significantly
    - Exact change impacts passenger convenience and driver attention to amount paid
  - Card systems
    - Card Vendors
    - Lost cards
    - Card swipe or verification
    - Percent goes to the vendor/broker
- No Fares
  - Speed up boarding
  - Encourage bus ridership to lighten traffic and need for parking spaces
  - Choose the bus instead of paying for parking

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## Considerations

- SPOT Bus service is established and well funded
  - No lapse in service
  - Opportunity for expansion (requires match)
    - Impact fees
  - Explore variety of options for match
- On the flip side ~
- At current local match contributions, SPOT will be forced to cut approximately 5,000 hours of existing service
  - 1/3 of Bonner County service
  - 97 hours each week
  - Sandpoint service

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## Bonner County Transit Service Questions and Discussion



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Ridership table Paratransit Bonner County sample week Feb 3 – 7, 2025

Boarding at	Destination/drop off	Total Paratransit Rides = 173		
Kootenai	Kootenai, Sandpoint and Ponderay	6	3.47%	Kootenai = 3.47%
Ponderay	Kootenai	3	1.73%	Ponderay = 26.58%
Ponderay	Ponderay	13	7.51%	
Ponderay	Sandpoint	30	17.34%	
Sandpoint	Kootenai	4	2.31%	Sandpoint = 69.94%
Sandpoint	Ponderay	33	19.08%	
Sandpoint	Sandpoint	84	48.55%	

Frequent Pickup and drop-off places – Does not include all stops.

Pick-up	Number	Drop-off	Number
Alpine Vista/Halley St. Bristlecone – Pine Street East of Division	18	Alpine Vista/Halley St. Bristlecone – Pine Street East of Division	18
Behind Fair Samuelson/Scotchman Loop	14	Behind Fair Samuelson/Scotchman Loop	14
BGH	10	BGH	9
Foodbank	4	Foodbank	4
Kaniksu	1	Kaniksu	1
Lakeside Assisted Living	10	Lakeside Assisted Living	8
PISNI	2	PISNI	5
Pine Grove	1	Pine Grove	1
Safeway Complex	2	Safeway Complex	4
Super1	8	Super1	6
Goodwill	9	Goodwill	9
Walmart	10	Walmart	10
Yokes//Dollar Store/Bonner Mall	3	Yokes//Dollar Store/Bonner Mall	3

Fixed Route	Jan. – Dec. '24	Boardings	Percentage	FIXED ROUTE TOTALS 2024		
<b>Blue Route</b>	Sandpoint 17	21,561	.3526 35.26%	<b>Sandpoint</b>	<b>37,967</b>	<b>62.09%</b>
	Ponderay 7	10,529	.1722 17.22%	<b>Ponderay</b>	<b>18,923</b>	<b>30.95%</b>
				<b>Kootenai</b>	<b>3,720</b>	<b>6.08%</b>
<b>Green Route</b>	Sandpoint 9	16,406	.2683 26.83%	<b>Dover</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>.87%</b>
	Ponderay 7	8,394	.1373 13.73%			
	Kootenai 3	3,720	.0608 6.08%	44 stops	<b>61,144 rides</b>	
	Dover 1	534	.0087 .87%			

Existing Service Operating Expense ***Oct. 2023 to September 2024***

City	Fixed Rides X \$7.54	Paratransit Rides X \$24.76	Operating Cost	Local Cost 36%	Current contribution
Sandpoint	37,967 x \$7.54= \$286,272	4,816 x \$24.76 = \$119,246	\$405,517	\$145,987	\$85,000
					\$87,290

Operating Expenses = \$822,552.00 October 2023- September 2024

**Cost Per Ride and Cost Per Mile**

**Fiscal Year October 2023 – September 2024**

Bonner County **OPERATING** cost per ride summary

Blue and Green Route Average cost = \$7.54.

**Local cost (36%) = \$ 2.72**

Paratransit Route Average cost = \$24.76.

**Local cost (36%) = \$ 8.93**

**COST FOR EACH RIDE**

<b>Fixed Routes</b>	<b>Cost Per Ride</b>	Rides	Cost
Blue and Green	<b>\$ 7.54</b>	62,187	\$ 468,824
<i>If add Admin</i>	<b>Add \$1.04/ride</b>	141,365	<i>\$ 147,000</i>
Avg. cost per ride	<b>\$ 8.58</b>		

<b>Demand Routes</b>	<b>Cost Per Ride</b>	Rides	Cost
Bonner County Paratransit	<b>\$ 24.76</b>	6,886	\$170,465
If add Admin	<b>Add \$3.63/ride</b>	9,110	\$33,000
Avg. cost per ride	<b>\$28.39</b>		

**COST FOR EACH MILE DRIVEN**

Route	<b>Cost per mile</b>	Expense w/o Admin	Total Miles	Passenger miles	Service miles
Bonner Fixed	<b>\$3.04</b>	\$468,824	154,291	147,919	6,372
Bonner Paratransit	<b>\$5.25</b>	\$170,465	32,470	30,301	2,169

**COST PER HOUR OPERATION (without Admin. Factor)**

Route	<b>Cost per hour</b>	Expense operating	Total hours (Actual Drivers Hours 10/2023 to 9/2024)
Bonner Fixed Green	<b>\$46.69</b>	\$468,824	5,020.75
Bonner Fixed Blue	<b>\$46.69</b>		5,020.75
Bonner Paratransit 1	<b>\$43.30</b>	\$170,465	1968.75
Bonner Paratransit 2	<b>\$43.30</b>		1968.75
Updated May 28, 2025		Total Admin = \$180,166	Total operation hours 18,532