

**TRANSPORTATION COORDINATION PLAN
LAUREL TRANSIT**

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
FY-26**

**Prepared by:
City of Laurel**

Kelly Strecker, Clerk/Treasurer

Scheduled for City Council Adoption: January 14, 2025

Montana Coordination Plan Outline

Adoption by Transportation Advisory Committee:

The relevant transportation providers and agencies are described in more detail.

Laurel Transit:

Laurel Transit (also referred to as the transit system) is working to provide a successful on-demand service for public transportation within the City limits of Laurel while offering regular service to Billings. Laurel Transit is looking to contract with as many agencies in the area as possible to provide expanded service. It is currently not feasible for Laurel to have a fixed route system; however, accommodations for such a system are being discussed such as bus benches and signs within the City.

Laurel Transit Schedules:

Laurel Transit operates Monday-Friday 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. The Billings service route begins at 7:30 and in-town service begins at 10:00 am. Appointments are taken Monday-Friday 8:00 AM-5:00PM.

Laurel Transit Fleet:

Laurel Transit has 3 vehicles in our fleet.

2009 Dodge Sprinter: 10 Passenger Van. Mileage is 98,000 and is ADA compliant.

2023 Transit Van: 13 Passenger Van. This is our newest Van. Mileage in under 1,000 and is ADA compliant.

2024 Endra Van: This is 14 Passenger Van. Mileage is 5,000 and is ADA compliant.

Agencies Involved:

- Adult Resource Alliance of Yellowstone County -- ARAYC has partnered with the City of Laurel to provide the driver for the bus and the cell phone. ARAYC previously operated the senior bus in Laurel, which was absorbed with the formation of Laurel Transit. The

City works very closely with ARAYC to ensure the level of service delivered through the senior bus program is continued in Laurel Transit.

- Tender Nest Assisted Living—Contact with Tender Nest Assisted Living continues, and the facility has contracted with the City for vouchers.
- COR – There is a plan to include COR in future TAC meetings.
- Riverstone Health – The transit system is working to contract demand/response service for Riverstone Health patients.
- Laurel Senior Center – The Sprinter bus is currently stored in a garage at the Senior Center. Frequent trips are taken to the senior center for rider visits.
- Laurel Health and Rehab- Continues to utilize the bus service for transportation purposes for their clients and residents.
- MET- contact with MET in Billings has been made in hopes to grow the Laurel Transit system and gain new ideas.

Public Involvement:

The Transportation Advisory Committee meets quarterly. Meetings notices are published on the City of Laurel website and at City Hall. Meetings are open to the general public. For more participation at TAC meetings, more community outreach will be done to involve public participation.

Private Sector:

The City of Laurel does not have any private transportation system available.

Needs Assessment and Plan to Increase Ridership:

The Laurel Transit will be starting focus groups this fiscal year in order to determine the needs of the community and their transit provider. The focus groups will include current riding members, City staff, other transportation providers, healthcare employers, and other members from the community. The groups will focus on the current challenges the transit program faces and get a better idea of how to improve the system. The City was awarded a grant for a new 14-passenger bus. The date of delivery is still unknown.

The Laurel Transit System has stepped up its advertising strategies by designing and distributing flyers with route information and publishing that flyer in the Laurel Outlook on a regular basis. There have been talks with the Adult Resource Alliance regarding placing advertisements on the

new transit bus. This type of advertisement may be an option for other local businesses, once the new transit bus arrives.

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Meetings:

The Laurel TAC meets on a quarterly basis. The TAC is comprised of City staff, community interested members and representatives from Residential Support Services, the Adult Resource Alliance of Yellowstone County, and other interested parties. For more participation at TAC meetings, more community outreach will be done to involve public participation.