

UTAH INTERCITY BUS STUDY

FINAL | MARCH 2024



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1. Introduction

Intercity bus services are an essential part of a state’s transit system. Intercity buses often provide the only long-distance service that connects particularly rural and isolated communities to essential services, jobs, education, key activity centers, and destinations across the state. While car travel remains the dominant form of transportation, intercity bus service can bridge geographic and socioeconomic gaps for transit-dependent populations. Providing intercity bus service can influence people’s quality of life, create additional access to essential amenities, and promote mobility equality throughout the State of Utah.

This Intercity Bus Study (Study) is a part of the Utah Department of Transportation’s (UDOT) Rural Public Transit (RPT) team’s requirement to comply with the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) Intercity Bus Program Section 5311(f). As a part of this compliance effort, this Study analyzes existing intercity and regional bus connections between rural areas and Utah’s key destinations, assesses gaps and needs based on population and employment centers, and identifies implementation strategies to improve connectivity and access to services. This Study builds off and augments the information found in the September 2009 Utah Intercity Bus Study.

Background

Intercity bus service has and continues to be an important resource for many Americans and Utahns. It provides opportunities for Utah residents, workers and visitors to access employment, key services, and destinations, regardless of whether they own or can drive a car. UDOT’s Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan 2023-2050 (LRP) identifies that “an equitable transportation system provides access to jobs, education, services, and many other essential needs.” Intercity bus service is a key component of achieving an accessible and robust transportation system, particularly as Utah’s population and employment prospects grow.

The LRP states that “population growth presents the biggest challenge to Utah’s transportation system.” Utah is the fastest growing state in the United States as of 2023, and with that population growth, the need for efficient and accessible transportation is at an all-time high. UDOT has identified four outcomes that will help create and maintain an ideal transportation system. **Table 3** of the Existing Conditions section discusses how intercity bus service aligns with these four outcomes.

Despite the beneficial nature of intercity bus service, it has become harder to access in many areas of Utah. Several rural Utah communities have either lost or faced significant reductions to service over the past several decades. In fact, of the 12 providers listed in the 2009 Study (excluding Utah Transit Authority and Cache Valley Transit District services), only three remain: Greyhound, Salt Lake Express, and St. George Shuttle. New providers since the 2009 Study include Tufesa and Mountain States Express. Although FlixBus is also a new provider in Utah, their routes and stops have been excluded from this Study, as the relationship between Flix and Greyhound was not clearly defined at the onset of this study.

In response to these and other changes, the FTA, in cooperation with the intercity transit industry, has developed funding programs specifically for intercity public transit service. The Section 5311(f) program provides funding for intercity bus connections, defined as:

“Regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, if such service is available.”

Section 5311(f) requires that 15 percent of funds allocated through this program be spent on rural intercity bus projects unless the governor certifies that there are no unmet rural intercity needs. If a state makes this certification, then the 15 percent can be used to meet other rural transit needs. No such certification has been made in Utah to date. RPT has and continues to administer Section 5311(f). These funds currently subsidize two intercity bus routes, both served by Salt Lake Express.

Finally, the funding landscape for transportation has changed significantly in the last few years. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, or IIJA) has created new financial opportunities for states to fund public transit projects. States across the country are determining how to best use the swath of funds that are now suddenly available.

While this Study does not focus on how UDOT can utilize IIJA funds to support intercity bus service, they should consider this new opportunity to determine how these funds may impact all services, both intercity and public transit.

2. Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

This report describes the public outreach and intercity bus provider consultation for the Intercity Bus Study. The goal of outreach and consultation was to engage service providers, transit and state agency staff, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and associations of government throughout the state of Utah. Doing so helps UDOT and partners better understand rural routes and promote safe, sustainable, and barrier-free intercity bus service throughout the state. Project outreach included two stakeholder committee meetings and a meeting during the Utah Urban Rural Specialized Transit Association (URSTA) 2023 Conference.

Stakeholder Committee Meetings



June 2023 Stakeholder Committee Meeting

The first meeting was a hybrid format (virtual and in-person) and occurred on June 22, 2023. Twenty-eight attendees participated in the meeting and represented a variety of stakeholders, including intercity bus providers, MPOs, UDOT staff, and more. The meeting included a presentation that provided an overview of the project objectives and timeline and introduced the stakeholder committee to the existing relevant data in an interactive map.

Photo Credit: Visit Utah



October 2023 Stakeholder Committee Meeting

The second meeting, a fully virtual meeting, occurred on October 16, 2023. Twenty-two attendees participated in the meeting and represented a variety of stakeholders, including intercity bus providers, representatives of MPOs, and UDOT staff. The meeting included a presentation that provided an overview of the gaps and needs analysis, time for questions and answers, and an open discussion followed the presentation. The following areas were presented and the committee meeting participants agreed to further evaluate opportunities:

- Davis and Morgan Counties connections to Summit County
- Salt Lake County to Washington County
- Wasatch Front to Sevier County and Moab/Four Corners



URSTA Feedback

On September 7, 2023, the project team presented to a small group consisting of private service providers (including Salt Lake Express), URSTA conference attendees, and staff from UTA, FTA and UDOT. The audience participated in the conversation and asked questions about the study process, the gaps and needs assessment, private versus publicly-funded service, tribal transit service, easing connections to neighboring states, and how Greyhound is contracting their service and stops. Participants also raised concerns about the intercity bus network and how it interacts with the national service system.

In addition, stakeholders engaged in a MentiMeter online surveying platform. Stakeholders were asked to respond to the questions listed in **Table 1**. These questions were used as prompts for the participating stakeholders to consider what needs they are currently meeting and to identify where intercity bus service may be able to fill some of the existing service gaps. More details about the October 2023 meeting are shown in Appendix A: Public Involvement Report.

Table 1: Responses to Questions (October 2023)

Question	Response
What additional gaps & needs in communities do you serve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Special events○ Recreation (e.g., ski service)○ Requests to continue service from Vernal to/from Colorado and from Blanding to Arizona○ Consideration that some of these services are not offered door to door but there are individuals who cannot get to the existing stop locations
Connection with the national intercity bus network, and to where?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Additional connecting stops. Salt Lake Express in our community is really a connection to the SLC airport, not much of intercity○ Medical○ National parks service○ Look at flow of people from different cities based on air and auto travel and assess the potential markets for bus and intercity transit service○ Intercity service doesn't stop at the actual transit center in Summit County○ Some short markets could use lower cost and more frequent services; Logan to Box Elder and UTA○ Better technology
What are the total markets today and in the future? How can connections be improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Access to the stop locations is a concern nationally○ Seamless public transit connections between counties○ With all the private providers, some confusion about how to book these trips and services exists.○ We should have some more dialogue about how to best connect the local transit networks. Intercity service customers typically need service not provided by local transit districts: restroom, snacks○ Easier access to transit centers for ICB carriers○ Intuitive○ Affordable○ Simple platform between services

The outreach components of this study confirmed many of the results produced in the demographic and service analyses described in the Existing Conditions section of this study. Stakeholders voiced concerns beyond those of individual cities or counties. Stakeholder comments, questions, and suggestions revolved around maintaining the integrity of the existing intercity bus network and making it more effective and accessible. In addition, stakeholders expressed the desire for increased marketing and promoting connections from rural to urban service centers.

The information received during the stakeholder meetings and an URSTA Conference Work session, a Google form, and the study draft survey, informed the project team's analysis on gaps and needs, performance assessment, and preferred alternatives. Detailed documentation of these events can be reviewed in Appendix A.

3. Existing Conditions

The Existing Conditions Report serves as an inventory of the existing intercity bus and regional services in Utah. This section includes working definitions, existing funding sources and policies related to intercity bus services, provider profiles, and current provider routes and stops. Other sections include information on key destinations, a socioeconomic assessment, and an analysis on historically disadvantaged/underserved populations. In addition, this section summarizes areas with a high Transportation Equity Index (TEI) and identifies where populations most in need of intercity bus services are concentrated, and contains data collected from various sources.

Definitions



Intercity Bus Route: regularly scheduled bus service for the general public, operated with limited stops connecting two or more urban areas and other intercity bus service.



Regional Bus Route: typically connects smaller or more rural destinations with each other. Regional services often connect passengers to government services, medical trips, shopping, social services, and other destinations across a given region.



Interregional Bus Route: operate across rural regions and may connect to an urban area. Interregional services are designed to connect people across longer distances.



Feeder Service: includes transit routes that move passengers from local transportation facilities to intercity bus service, and vice versa. Unlike intercity bus service, feeder service can be on-demand (e.g., call and ride service).

Sources:
<https://www.codot.gov/projects/archived-project-sites/intercityregionalbusnetworkstudy/intercity-and-regional-bus-network-plan.pdf>
<https://www.codot.gov/projects/archived-project-sites/intercityregionalbusnetworkstudy>
<https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/regulations-and-guidance/safety/triennial-reviews/69531/fy18-comprehensive-review-guide-section-20-section-5311-program-requirements.pdf>

Photo Credit: Visit Utah

Existing Funding Sources

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds intercity bus service in Utah through the Section 5311(f) program for capital, planning, and operating of public transportation services for rural areas with populations of less than 50,000 and where communities often rely on public transit to reach their destinations. Section 5311(f) requires each state to spend 15 percent of its annual Section 5311 apportionment on rural intercity bus services, unless the governor has certified that “the intercity bus service needs of the state are being met adequately.” As of 2023, this certification has not been made in Utah.

FTA Circular 9040.1G (49 U.S.C. 5311 – Formula Grants for Other Than Urbanized Areas), Chapter VIII, Intercity Bus, provides guidance on Section 5311(f) eligible activities, funding and certification requirements, and additional details. The Circular also provides guidance for consultation and certification. The consultation process includes:

- 1 Identification of the intercity carriers,
- 2 Provision of implementation measures, and
- 3 A gaps and needs assessment.

This Intercity Bus Study will include all three of these steps. Consultation may also include final certification documentation if the 15 percent required funding for rural intercity bus services is not met.

Sources:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kgt0tuqZv0TwS-07NsON1wyqtgLo-i3R/view?usp=share_link



Transportation Equity Index

The Transportation Equity Index (TEI) is a tool to determine areas where there may be a higher-than-average need for transit service. The TEI aggregates demographic data at the county level to determine where transit need might be highest within a defined area.

Eligible service under FTA Circular 9040.1G includes intercity bus projects that connect to both statewide and national networks of intercity bus that specifically support rural areas. Funding may support both private bus carriers, such as Greyhound, and joint private-public activities, including planning efforts, capital projects, operations, and coordination efforts between small public transportation operations and intercity bus carriers. Section 5311(f) funds may not be used for commuter service but may be used for express routes and feeder services into intercity bus services.

It is also important to note that the “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation” (FAST) Act limits the use of federal transit funds for intercity bus services. The FAST Act excludes “intercity bus transportation” from the federal definition of “public transportation.” Public transit agencies that receive FTA funding cannot operate intercity bus service between urbanized areas; these funds are instead earmarked for private intercity bus operators.

Allocated Funding

The UDOT reports Section 5311 apportionments from FTA for Fiscal Years (FYs) 2020–2024 as shown in **Table 2**. The award amounts for Section 5311 include funds allocated per Section 5311(f) for intercity bus service, but the total award was granted under Section 5311 (Formula Grants for Rural Areas) broadly.

Funds from Section 5307 and Section 5339 were also allocated to Utah, even though those funds are not specifically earmarked for intercity bus services. Cache Valley Transit District and the city of St. George (SunTran) received Section 5307 funds totalling over \$1.5 million each in FYs 2020 and 2021 and more than \$2 million for FYs 2022 and 2023, as shown in **Table 2**. As of May 2023, no funding has been allocated per Section 5307 for FY 2024. Utah received \$1.75 million in Section 5339 funds for FYs 2020 and 2021 and \$3.5 million in FYs 2022, 2023, and 2024.

Table 2: Section 5311, 5307, and 5339 Apportionments

Fiscal Year	Section 5311 *	Section 5307 **	Section 5339 ***
FY 2020	\$6,461,309	\$1,880,828 (Logan) \$1,663,472 (St. George)	\$1,750,000
FY 2021	\$6,461,309	\$1,887,531 (Logan) \$1,663,699 (St. George)	\$1,750,000
FY 2022	\$6,781,348	\$2,080,510 (Logan) \$2,139,376 (St. George)	\$3,500,000
FY 2023	\$7,281,993	\$2,682,807 (Logan) \$2,184,341 (St. George)	\$3,500,000
FY 2024	\$7,684,350 (estimate)	No funding allocated	\$3,500,000 (estimate)

* FTA Total Apportionment to Utah to rural areas with < 50,000
** Amount apportioned to Transit Districts for areas between 50,000 and 199,999
*** FTA Total Apportionment to Utah (includes Small Urban & Rural)



Other Funding Opportunities

Section 5307 funds, Urbanized Area Formula Grants: Local coordinated planning processes defined under Section 5307 eligible activities include activities that consider the intercity bus transportation needs of the targeted population of seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals. Identification of unmet intercity mobility needs of human service agency clients during the local coordinated planning process may help Utah with its intercity bus needs assessment as described in Chapter VIII of FTA Circular 9040.1G. While Section 5307 is limited to urbanized areas, funds can be used to assess intermodal connectivity between urban and rural areas for the targeted populations.

Section 5339 funds, Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program: Joint developments that include intermodal intercity bus facilities represent eligible capital expenses under 49 U.S.C. 5302(3)(G) and Section 5339 eligible activities. Joint development improvements may include intercity bus stations and terminals, including the outfitting of those stations and terminals.

Existing State Policies Related to Intercity Bus Services

In 2023, UDOT developed a Statewide Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan (2023–2050) (Plan) to describe Utah’s geographic and demographic contexts, current planning and outreach initiatives, and potential implementation of projects that meet future needs for rural areas. The Plan describes the state’s response to new challenges to the transportation system in rural areas, including rapid population increases, freight vehicular travel on main interstates that often connect rural communities, and increased tourism to rural areas, particularly National and State Parks, monuments, and ski resorts. While the Plan describes future transit needs, it does not explicitly focus on improvements to intercity bus service. Instead, the Plan focuses on the need to invest in transit statewide and to improve access and connectivity. The Plan solicited all transit providers in the rural space that it addresses. The Plan is structured so that it refers to and supports other entities plans/strategies by linking to them so that their more holistic or specific needs can be represented more accurately and that they remain current/accurate as those strategies or plans are updated. The state seeks to respect the autonomy of local transit providers while working to support them when appropriate.

Utah’s Quality of Life Framework, does not focus explicitly on intercity bus service improvements. However, it does provide a holistic vision for the entirety of Utah’s transportation system, focusing on efforts that promote “good health, better mobility, a strong economy, and connected communities.” **Table 3** outlines Utah’s Quality of Life Framework. Municipal transit providers were included in our stakeholder committee. UTA serves the majority of the communities that have transit service and therefore local planning input came via their participation.

Table 3: Intercity Bus Service and Improvement Goals from Quality of Life Framework

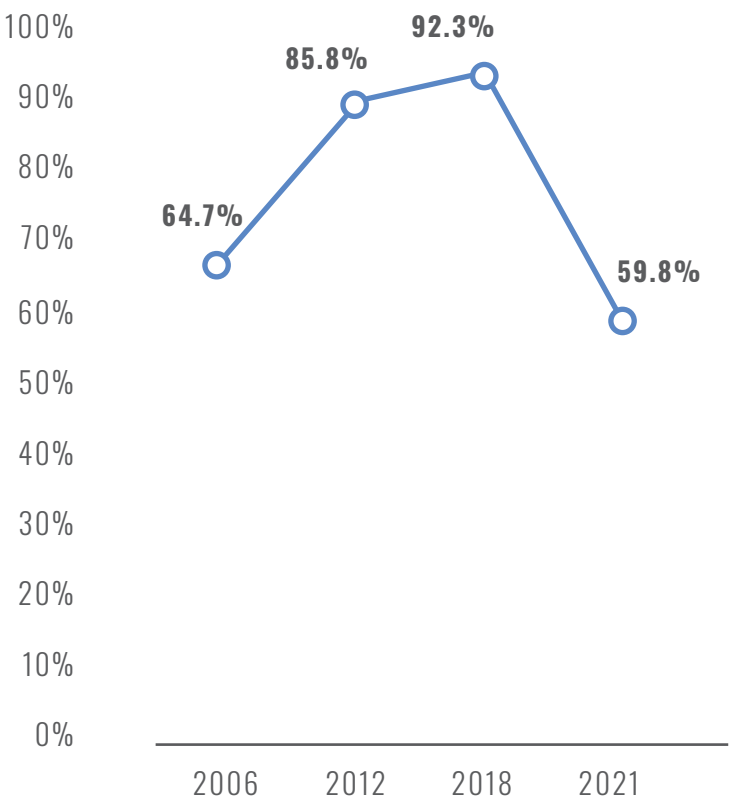
Utah’s Quality of Life Framework	Alignment with Intercity Bus Service
Good Health Encompasses the health of individuals and communities, recognizing the role of active transportation in mental and physical health as well as environmental conditions contributing to health such as air quality and water quality.	Intercity bus service provides an opportunity for rural communities that may lack local health benefits to access medical care. In addition, allowing communities to reduce reliance on automobiles via bus service could reduce the environmental impacts of single-occupancy vehicles
Better Mobility Addresses traditional transportation objectives to reduce delay. It’s thinking that goes beyond just moving cars to moving people. Public transit, walking and biking need to become real options for more Utahns.	Intercity bus service promotes self-reliance for communities that cannot drive. In addition, increased availability of intercity bus service could encourage more individuals to use bus service over automobiles, thus reducing congestion, and move other modes more efficiently.
Strong Economy Recognizes the vital role of transportation in business and commerce. Not just at the intra-state and inter-state levels, but also how transportation can help inter-city and intra-city economies.	Intercity bus service connects rural, occasionally low-income communities, to economic opportunities such as employment.
Connected Communities Points to the intersection of transportation and land use, as well as the need for intermodal connections between walking, biking, transit and vehicle travel.	Intercity bus service connects rural, often isolated communities, other rural areas, urban areas, and the rest of the country.

Bureau of Transportation Statistics Reasonable Access Study

In November 2023, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) released findings related to intercity transportation access for rural areas. The BTS Reasonable Access Study assessed access to transportation-related facilities but, more importantly, conveyed findings specifically related to intercity bus access. At a national level, the study found that approximately 71 percent of all rural Americans nationwide had adequate intercity bus service in 2021, with the remaining 29 percent having little or no service. In comparison, approximately 60 percent of all rural Utahns had intercity bus service in 2021, with the remaining 40 percent having little or no service. This significant lack of access is also stark when compared to the access rural Utahns had in 2006, 2012, and 2018, as shown on **Figure 1**.

In addition, several Utah counties saw decreased access to intercity bus service between 2006 and 2021 due to lack of service providers and the elimination of several intercity bus routes. The BTS study noted a decrease in both percentage of rural residents with access and number of bus facilities across the state.

Figure 1: Percentage of Rural Utahns with Intercity Bus Service



Data: <https://data.bts.gov/Research-and-Statistics/Access-to-Intercity-Air-Bus-and-Rail-Transportation/m2bh-93w3>

Study Highlights: <https://www.bts.gov/data-spotlight/85-rural-residents-have-reasonable-access-intercity-transportation-lack-reasonable>

Study Highlights: by mode, change in state and county-level access, change in facility numbers, and more: <https://data.bts.gov/stories/s/gr9y-9gjq#number-of-facilities-by-year>

Existing Intercity, Interregional, and Regional Bus Services

Six providers offer intercity bus service in Utah:

- Flix Bus
- Greyhound
- Mountain States Express
- Salt Lake Express
- St. George Shuttle
- Tufesa

Greyhound and Salt Lake Express are considered Tier 1 providers, meaning they offer fixed-routes and designated stops, provide a connection to the larger intercity bus network, and offer accompanying parcel service. The remaining providers are considered Tier 2 providers, meaning they offer semi-regular service or provide shuttle services over long distances. While Tier 2 service may serve specific destinations (per 2009 report), they could convert their services to fit a traditional intercity bus model. **Figure 2** shows the current intercity bus routes for Tier 1 and Tier 2 providers in Utah.

Flix Bus

Flix Bus, a Munich, Germany based intercity bus passenger carrier and technology company operates in 38 countries, carried 62M passengers (2019) and serves 2,500 destinations globally. Flix Bus also has 10,000 partner drivers globally. Flix Bus began operating in the North American market in 2019 first operating between Los Angeles and Las Vegas then expanding to the Eastern US.

In 2022, Flix Bus completed its purchase of Greyhound Lines, the largest intercity bus passenger carrier in North America. Greyhound Lines is a fully owned subsidiary of Flix Bus and operates separate intercity passenger bus services.

Flix Bus does not own the buses. Instead, Flix Bus contracts with separate motorcoach operators to operate the scheduled Flix Bus passenger services in select city pairs across North America. In Utah, Flix Bus provides scheduled service between Salt Lake City and Boise. This service is provided by MTR Western, a Seattle-based intercity passenger bus carrier. MTR Western also operates under contract for Flix Bus city pair corridors in California, and the Pacific Northwest. Passengers can purchase tickets on the Flix ticket system which includes Greyhound, Salt Lake Express and Flix partner contracted services throughout North America. This provides a single ticket for passengers who may begin their journeys on Greyhound and complete them on a Flix contractor operated route.



Photo Credit: Salt Lake Express

Greyhound

Greyhound, a Tier 1 intercity bus provider, serves most major corridors in the state, including I-70, I-80, and I-15. Greyhound provides 31 bus stops, with trips between stations ranging from under an hour to more than 10 hours. FlixBus, a company based in Germany, purchased Greyhound in October 2019.

Salt Lake Express

A Tier 1 intercity bus provider, Salt Lake Express offers 39 bus stops in Utah, although the company provides service to only 30 towns and cities. St. George, Salt Lake City, and Logan are major service hubs, having more than one stop. Salt Lake Express serves major corridors in the state and connects to other states in the western and northwestern United States. Salt Lake Express provides intercity bus service along six routes in Utah; each route has several stops.

Mountain States Express

Mountain States Express is a Tier 2 intercity bus provider that offers services between Jackson, Wyoming, and Salt Lake City. Mountain States Express has three stops in Utah—two in Salt Lake City and one in Park City. While no additional stops are offered, this service creates a direct route between two populated and well-visited destinations. The route travels from Salt Lake City to Park City via I-80.

Tufesa

A Tier 2 intercity bus provider, Tufesa offers seven stops in Utah along the I-15 corridor. Salt Lake City represents the northern-most point of service, while St. George represents the southern-most point. Tufesa also connects to other states in the western and northwestern United States. Tufesa provides essential intercity bus service between seven cities/towns in Utah: Beaver, Cedar City, Fillmore, Orem, Payson, Salt Lake City, and St. George. Utahns can travel from these destinations to Phoenix, Arizona, and Las Vegas, Nevada.

St. George Shuttle

St. George Shuttle, a Tier 2 intercity bus provider, offers services along four routes: St. George to Las Vegas, St. George to Salt Lake City, Salt Lake City to Brigham City, and St. George to Zion. St. George Shuttle is the only provider to serve a national park. Each route makes several stops, and trips can take under an hour to more than 5 hours to complete. St. George Shuttle connects to towns/cities served by other providers, providing opportunities for passengers to reach further destinations.

Figure 2: Current Intercity Bus Routes and Stops

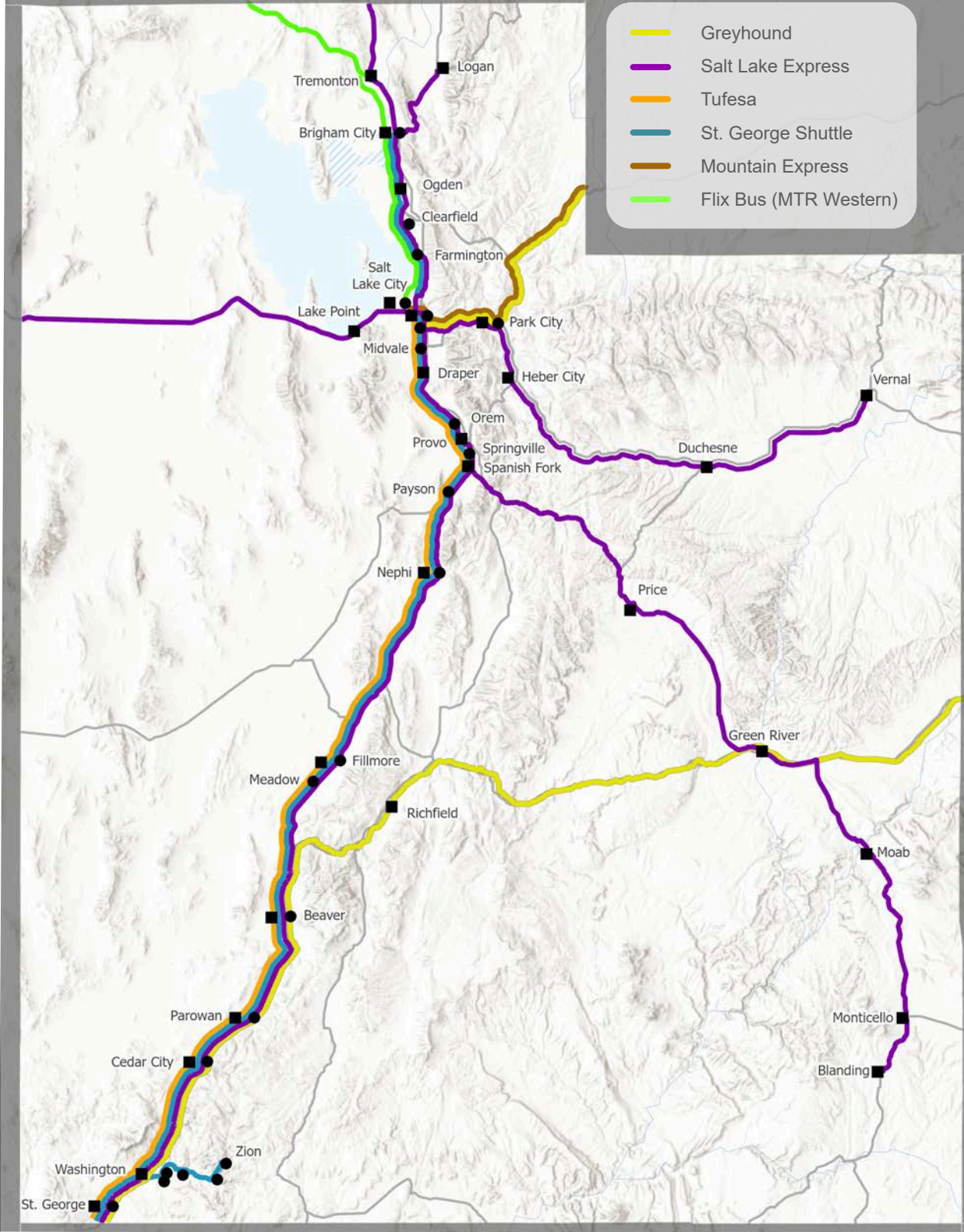
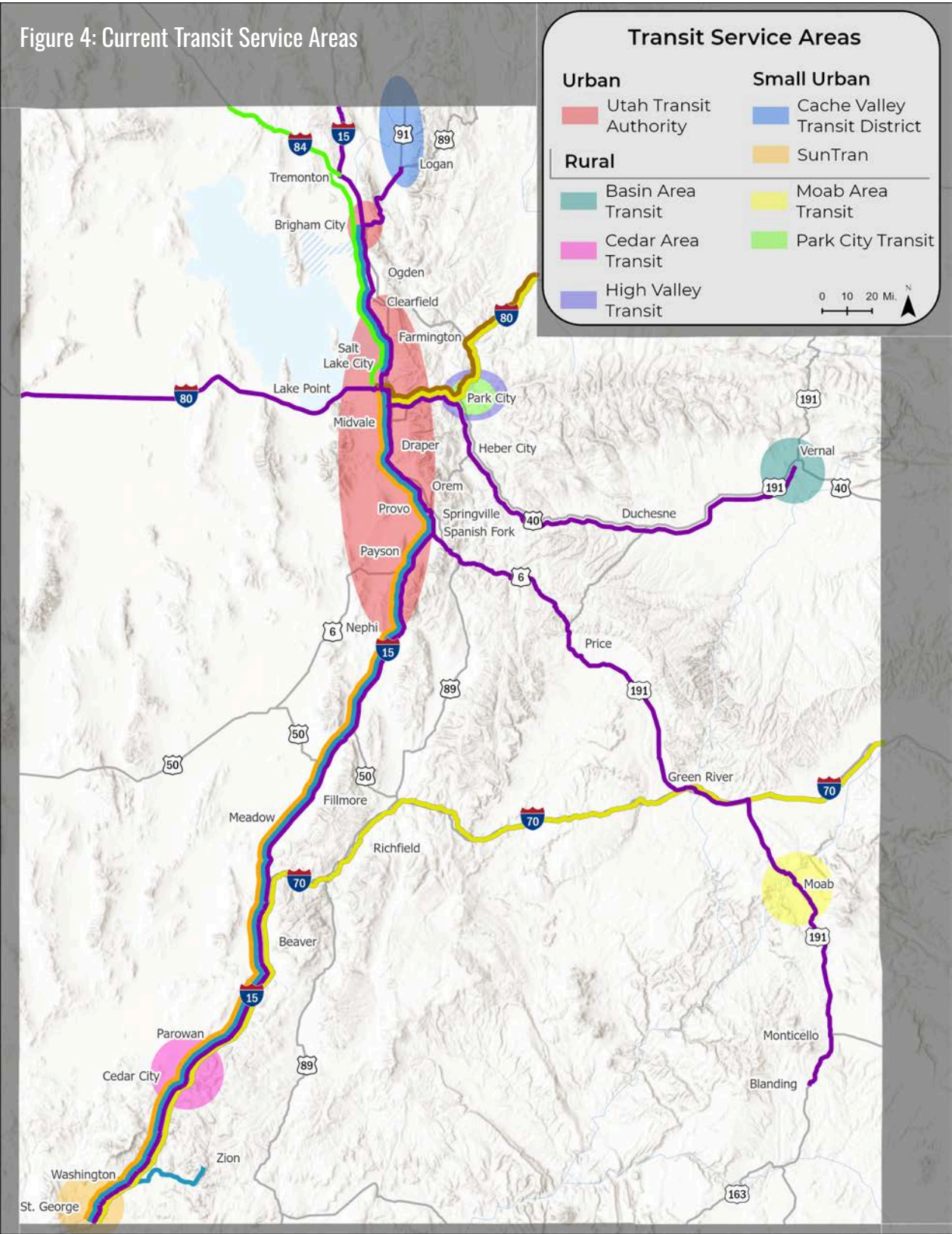
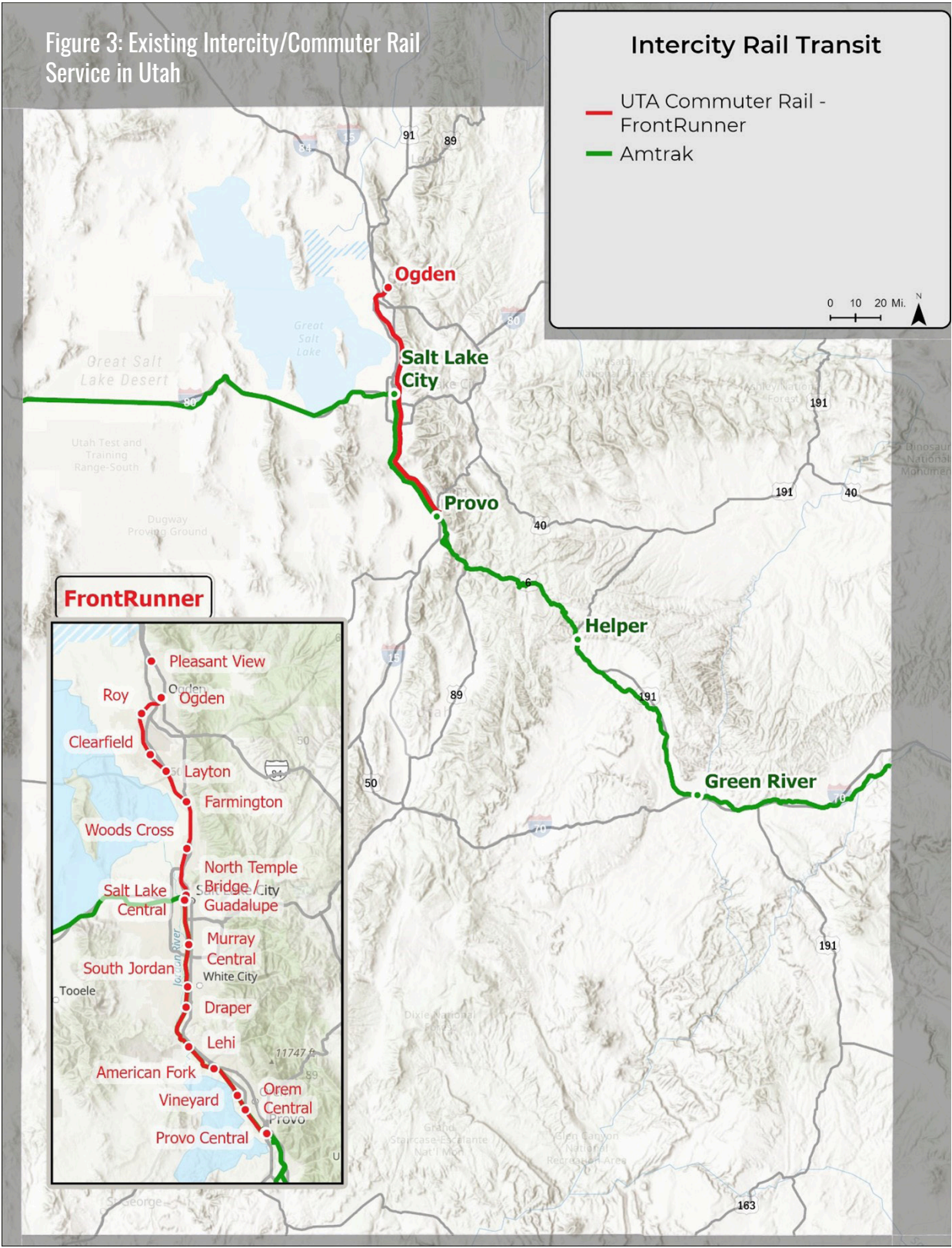


Figure 3 maps the intercity passenger rail (Amtrak) and commuter rail (Frontrunner) operating in Utah that form important local connectors for Utah riders of intercity bus services. **Figure 4** illustrates the existing intercity bus service routes and stops provided by Greyhound, Salt Lake Express, Mountain States Express, St. George Shuttle, and Tufesa. Service provided by Salt Lake Express is indicated by purple lines (routes) and purple circles (stops). Service provided by Greyhound is indicated by yellow lines (routes) and yellow circles (stops). Routes provided by St. George Shuttle, Mountain States Express and Tufesa overlap some of these routes.







Key Destinations

Intercity bus service is essential for connecting communities to key destinations to which people need to go, such as community services, health care facilities, educational institutions, and places they want to go, such as parks, monuments, and ski resorts. **Table 4** lists destination types that have been inventoried to understand travel patterns and the existing intercity bus network. Maps are available for key destinations in Appendix A.



Photo Credit: High Valley Transit

Table 4: Destinations Analyzed

Destination Type	Description
Community Services 	Community services are essential resources that provide various services.
Health Care Facilities 	Health care facilities provide vital services that ensure community health and wellbeing across Utah.
Parks & Monuments 	Utah is home to several monuments and national/state parks. Often in rural areas, these key destinations are important to residents and visitors alike. The dataset analyzed includes five national parks within Utah (Arches, Bryce Canyon, Canyonlands, Capitol Reef, and Zion), 44 state parks and 16 national monuments.
Recreation Sites 	Many of the national and state parks include multiple recreation facilities and access for camping, fishing, hiking, boating, natural history and off-highway vehicle use.
Utah Colleges & Universities 	Colleges and universities are key destinations in Utah as they provide higher education for residents and out-of-state students alike and are major employers throughout the state. The dataset analyzed includes state universities and state and private colleges and community colleges. Appendix A includes a complete map of colleges and universities.
Utah Ski Resorts 	Utah is home to several world-class ski resorts, which draw visitors from within and outside of the state every year.
Tribal Lands 	Utah is home to eight Tribal nations spread across several counties. Often in rural areas, Tribal community members may rely on intercity bus service to reach essential services and other key activity centers across the state.
Military Bases & Facilities 	Dugway Proving Ground Army Base is the nation's leading test center for Chemical and Biological Defense. Hill Air Force Base is the Air Force's second largest base by population and is home to over 50 mission partners that employ more than 27,000 personnel. Both facilities house and/or employ a large number of military personnel and their families.
Correctional Facilities 	Central Utah Correctional Facility houses around 1,800 inmates and employs approximately 500 staff. Utah State Correctional Facility houses 2,575 inmates. Both facilities allow for visitation. Utah also has 32 other county/city jails across the state.

Socioeconomic Assessment

The need for any type of transit service, including intercity bus service, depends on the size and distribution of an area’s population and on the composition of that population. This section evaluates socioeconomic characteristics using 2021 American Community Survey data at the county level. While evaluation of density at the county level may not necessarily reveal individual cities or larger towns that have a significant population size or job count, given the amount of rural communities within Utah, data analyzed at the county level show where intercity bus service may be needed statewide.

Population Classifications

Table 5 shows the statistics of the top ten most densely populated counties in Utah as designated by the U.S. Census. In addition, counties listed in **Table 5** are classified as urban, small urban, or rural.

Urban counties represent those areas with 200,000 or more people. Based on this definition, Salt Lake County, Utah County, Davis County, and Weber County are considered urban.

Small urban counties represent those areas with fewer than 200,000 people but more than 50,000 people. Based on this definition, Washington County and Cache County are considered small urban.

Rural counties represent those areas with fewer than 50,000 people. All remaining counties fall into the rural category.



Photo Credit: Visit Salt Lake

Table 5: Population Centers

Classification	County	Population Density (per sq. mile)	Population Count	Household Density (per sq. mile)	Household Count
Urban	Salt Lake County	1580.71	1,173,331	538.32	399,584
Urban	Davis County	1200.99	358,831	367.83	109,899
Urban	Weber County	450.27	259,390	152.41	87,802
Urban	Utah County	323.57	648,265	89.54	179,387
Small Urban	Cache County	113.07	131,703	34.65	40,362
Small Urban	Washington County	72.76	176,533	25.30	399,584
Rural	Wasatch County	28.95	34,028	9.05	109,899
Rural	Summit County	22.52	42,156	7.20	87,802
Rural	Morgan County	19.96	12,162	5.75	179,387
Rural	Sanpete County	17.90	28,458	5.42	40,362

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Table 6: Small Urban Population Centers

County	City	Population Count
Washington County	St. George	102,519
Cache County	Logan	54,680
Washington County	Washington	32,709
Washington County	Hurricane	23,077
Cache County	Smithfield	14,425
Cache County	North Logan	11,616
Cache County	Hyrum	10,594
Washington County	Ivins	10,012
Cache County	Providence	8,995
Washington County	Santa Clara	8,123

Table 7: Rural Population Centers

County	City	Population Count
Iron County	Cedar City	38,692
Tooele County	Tooele	38,588
Box Elder County	Brigham City	19,963
Wasatch County	Heber City	17,865
Tooele County	Grantsville	14,417
Box Elder County	Tremonton	11,840
Uintah County	Vernal	10,432
Tooele County	Stansbury Park	9,839
Summit County	Summit Park	8,406
Summit County	Park City	8,374
Carbon County	Price	8,262

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Population Centers

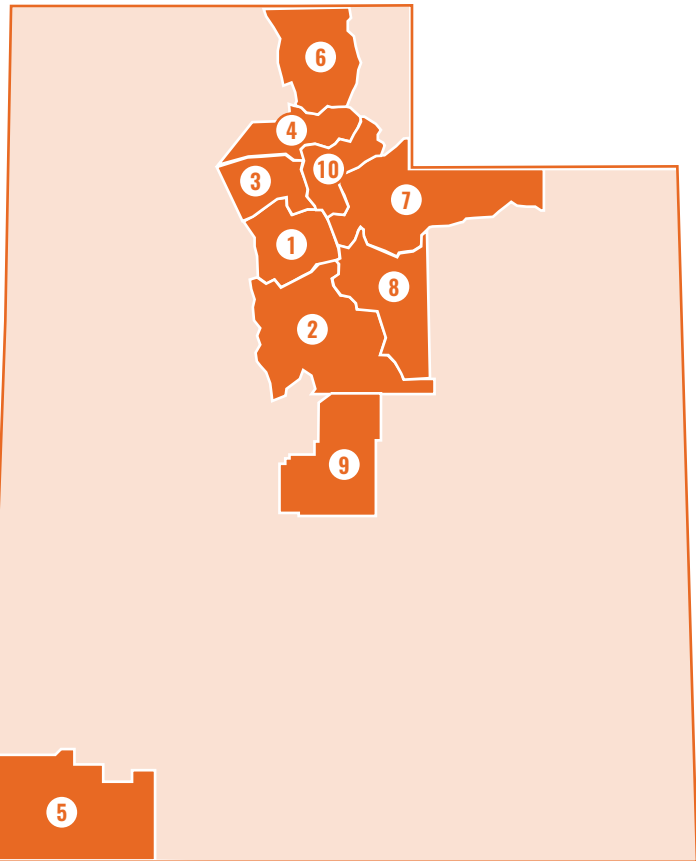
Population centers—areas where the majority of people in Utah live—are important to consider when determining intercity bus routes and stops. Salt Lake, Davis, Weber, Utah, Cache, and Washington Counties have the highest population, household densities, and counts of all counties in the state. These counties are all in the northern half of the state, except for Washington County, which is located in the southwestern-most corner of Utah and contains several growing cities. **Tables 6 and 7** provide population counts for small urban and rural population centers.

It is also important to consider where Utahns live outside these densely populated, more metropolitan counties. Wasatch, Summit, Morgan, and Sanpete Counties are also relatively dense counties population-wise and are overall more rural in nature. Given that the nature of this study is to ensure that rural areas are also served by intercity bus, the project team considered these additional counties in the analysis.



Counties with the Highest Population Density

- 1. Salt Lake County - 1,173,331
- 2. Utah County - 648,265
- 3. Davis County - 358,831
- 4. Weber County - 259,390
- 5. Washington County - 176,533
- 6. Cache County - 131,703
- 7. Summit County - 42,156
- 8. Wasatch County - 34,028
- 9. Sanpete County - 28,458
- 10. Morgan County - 12,162



Employment Centers

Employment centers—those areas where a majority of people in Utah work—are equally important to consider when determining intercity bus routes and stops, as employment drives trips as people move to and from work and home. Salt Lake, Davis, Weber, Utah, Cache, and Washington Counties have the highest worker densities and counts of all counties in the state. Major cities in these counties have several places of employment, and thus attract workers from across the state.

Understanding where Utahns work outside denser, metropolitan counties is also important. Wasatch, Summit, Morgan, and Iron Counties have a relatively high number of workers per square mile, but they are not considered employment centers. However, given that the nature of this study is to ensure that rural areas are also served by intercity bus, the project team considered these additional counties in the analysis.

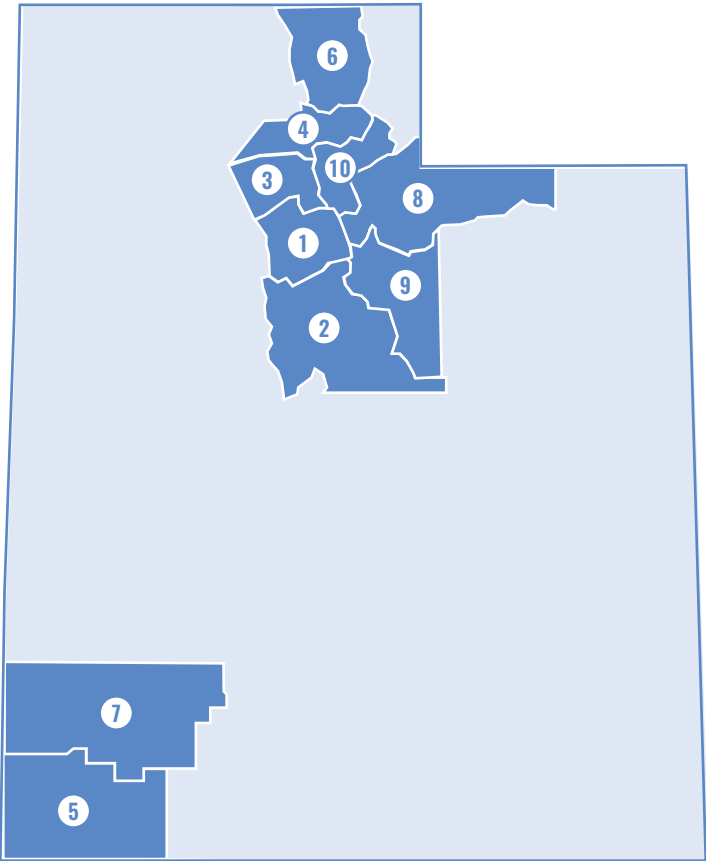
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

**It should be noted that Morgan County has a higher worker density because it is a smaller county*



Counties with the Highest Employment Density

- 1. Salt Lake County - 608,792
- 2. Utah County - 304,214
- 3. Davis County - 174,395
- 4. Weber County - 128,256
- 5. Washington County - 73,845
- 6. Cache County - 63,627
- 7. Iron County - 24,744
- 8. Summit County - 22,760
- 9. Wasatch County - 16,816
- 10. Morgan County - 5,144*



Rapidly Growing Regions

Several counties have experienced rapid population, household, and employment growth over the last few decades. Utah has experienced the third largest population growth out of states in the U.S. since 1980, and this trend of growth is likely to continue into the future. The graph to the right shows the counties that have experienced the largest population increase by percent from 1980 to 2020.

Of the counties experiencing the most growth by percent between 1980 and 2020, three out of the five are considered “rural” counties (Summit County, Wasatch County, and Iron County) and one is considered “small urban” (Washington County). In addition, three out of the five counties experiencing the most growth by percent within the last 10 years are also considered “rural” counties (Wasatch County, Morgan County, and Tooele County) and one is considered “small urban” (Washington County). This indicates that these counties are growing regions that may be catching up to their urban counterparts in terms of transportation and transit infrastructure. Therefore, intercity bus service may be limited in these counties, leaving room for improvement in these areas.

Counties with the Highest Population Growth (1980-2020)



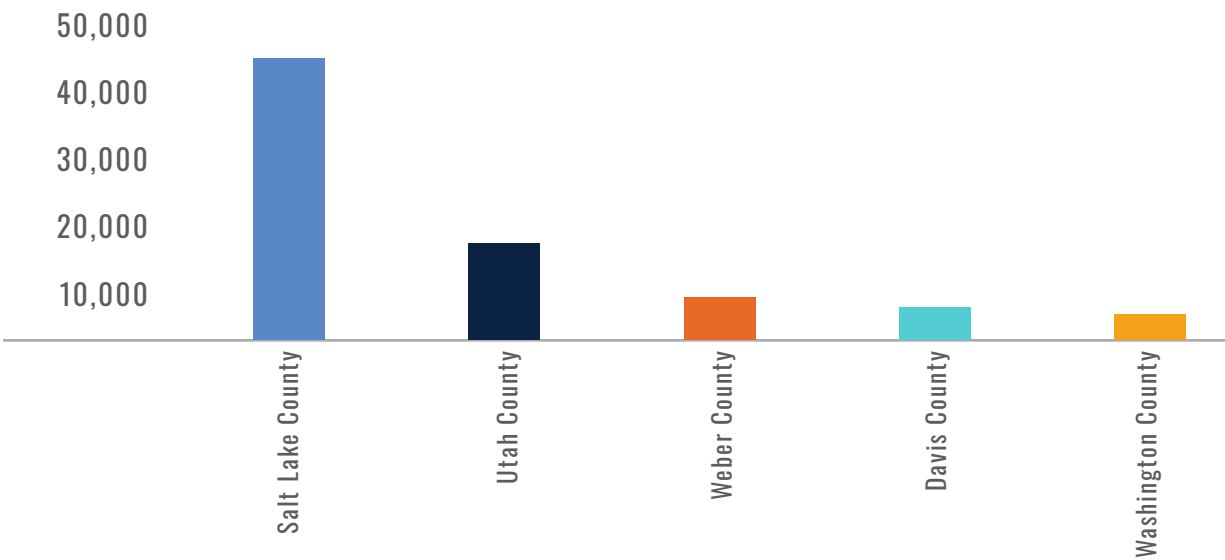
Historically Disadvantaged Populations

Evaluating socioeconomic data for historically disadvantaged populations helps to understand where those who may have a higher-than-average need for transportation service are located across Utah. All socioeconomic data are analyzed by counts (households or population as noted), percent county population or households by total state population or households, and density (households or population per square mile). This section identifies the top five counties by count, percentage, and density for each demographic group. While each analysis type (count, percent, and density) represents a different framework in which to analyze these data, listing the top five counties by each methodology for a given demographic group provides important insights into where increased access to intercity bus service may be beneficial. The following data is sourced from the American Community Survey 5-Year Average (2017-2021).

Populations with Low-Income

Low-income populations are important to consider when planning for intercity bus service; because they may not be able to afford a vehicle, and typically rely on lower-cost modes such as transit, biking, walking, and relying on friends and family.

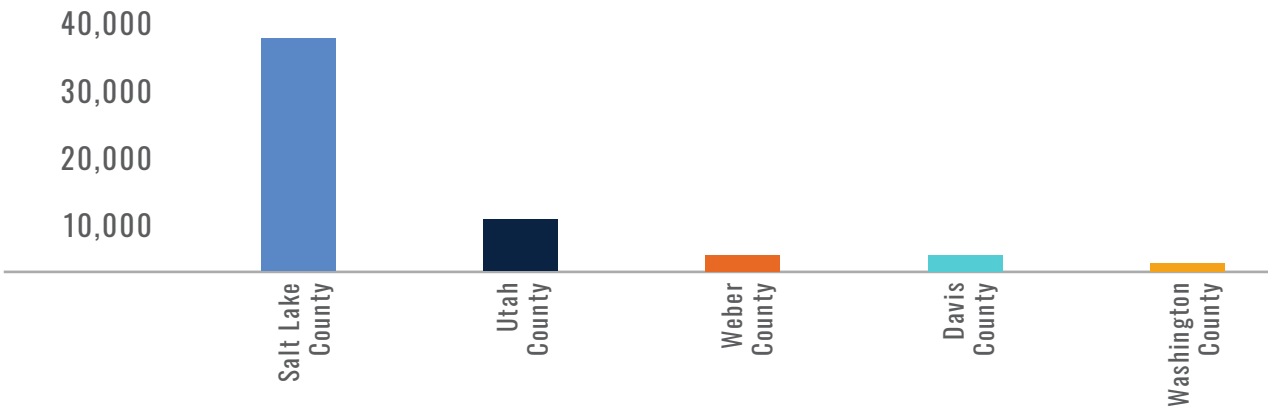
Counties with the Highest Number of Low-Income Households



Populations with Limited English Proficiency

It is essential that Utahns who speak little to no English are considered in intercity bus service improvements as there is often a correlation with other vulnerable population data. Intercity bus providers, in coordination with UDOT and local transit providers, should regularly engage LEP communities to ensure equal access to information and services.

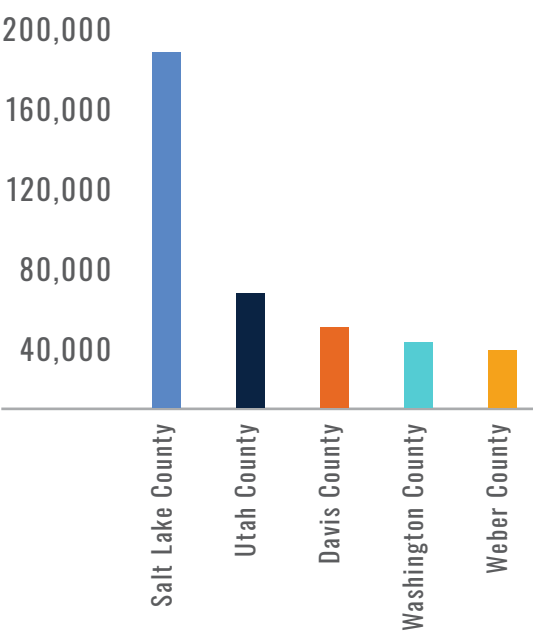
Counties with the Highest Number of People with Limited English Proficiency



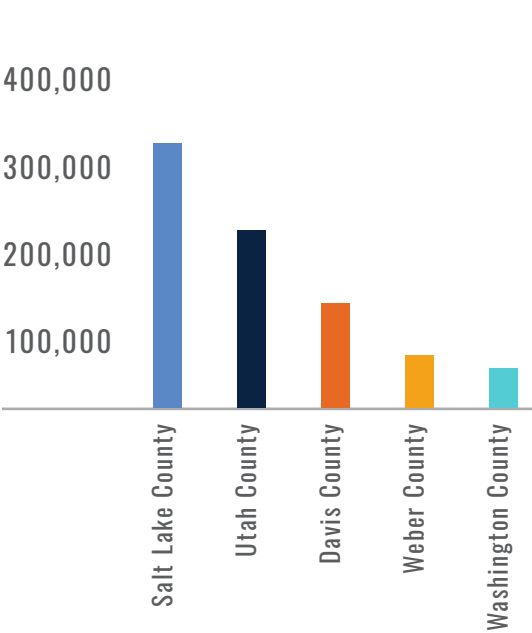
Older Adults and Youth

Older adults and younger residents may benefit from intercity bus service, as these two age segments of the population may not be able to drive a car. For older adults, intercity bus service creates a greater sense of independence. While many older adults would likely prefer the freedom to drive their own vehicle, the ability to do so may become limited over time, limiting access to destinations, services, and the rest of the state. Therefore, intercity bus services provide the opportunity to access facilities older adults may need, including health care and community resources on their own, without having to rely on being driven by friends and family. In addition, the provision of intercity bus service and the ability to access it via public transportation may influence where this population decides to age in place.

Counties with the Highest Number of Older Adults



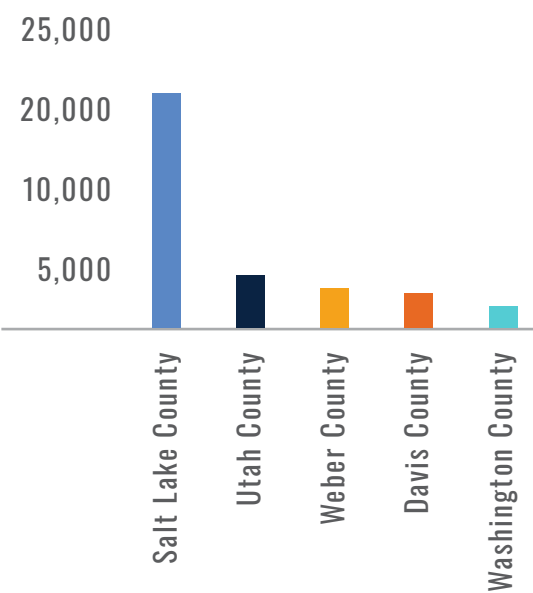
Counties with the Highest Number of Young People



Zero Vehicle Households

When identifying intercity bus service improvements, residents with limited or no access to a vehicle are considered as they rely on others or on other transportation modes for longer distance or regional trips. These households may rely on transit service to visit family, access education, shopping, social services, or recreation. Providing intercity bus service also grants this segment of the population increased independence to move freely and can positively influence quality of life and create a more equitable community.

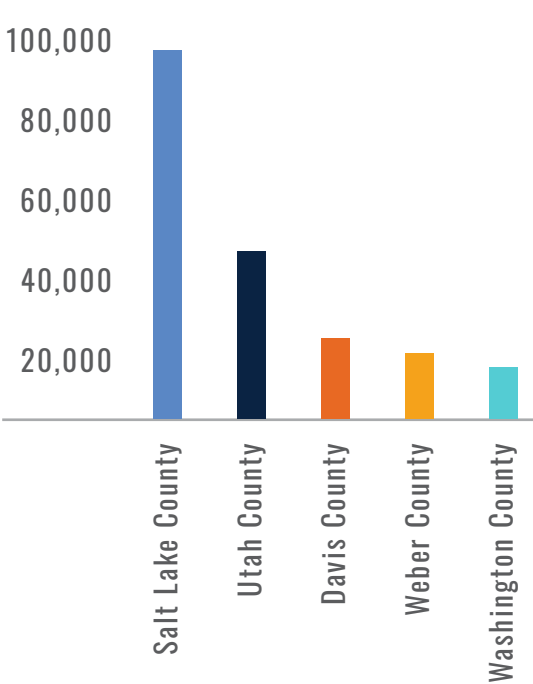
Counties with the Highest Number of Zero-Vehicle Households



People with Disabilities

People with disabilities who are unable to drive may rely on intercity bus service for regional trips and trips across the state in order to access essential amenities, such as health care services. Like other historically disadvantaged populations, providing intercity bus service also grants this segment of the population increased independence to move more freely, cheaply, and quickly. This can positively influence quality of life and create a more equitable community.

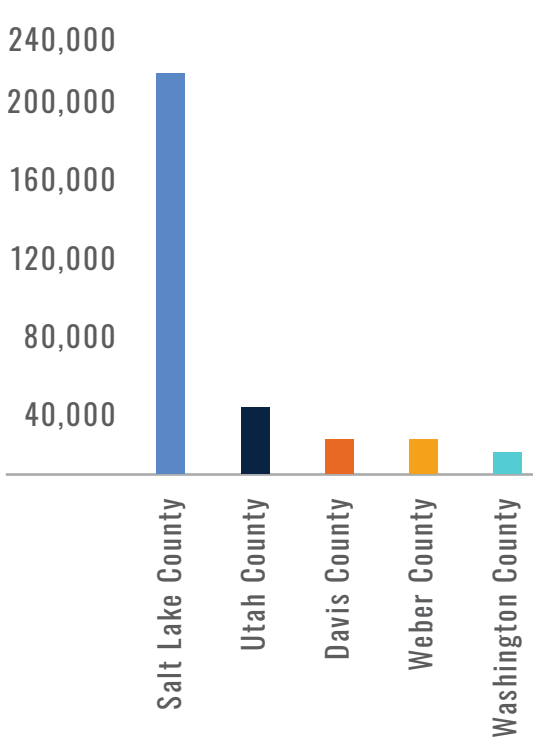
Counties with the Highest Number of People with Disabilities



Communities of Color

Communities of Color, including people who identify as Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, or Alaska Native, have historically been underserved in communities throughout the United States. Intercity bus service can provide convenient and affordable access among jobs, medical services, education, and recreational activities for all users. Access results in opportunities that often positively influence quality of life and create a more equitable community.

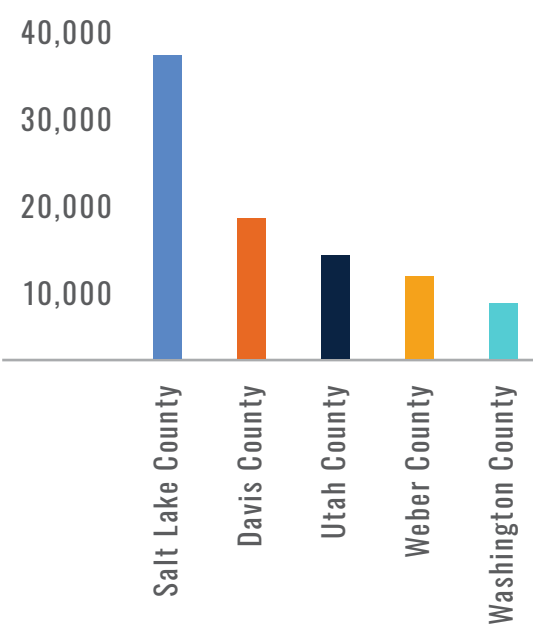
Counties with the Highest Number of Households of Color



Veterans

Intercity bus service can provide safe, convenient, and affordable long-distance transportation for veterans who may not be able to drive for various reasons. Intercity bus service can provide transportation for veterans to essential services. These include medical care or Veterans Affairs (VA) facilities, and the service can connect them to employment and family across the state. In addition, intercity bus connections to Hill Air Force Base in Ogden, Utah, and Dugway Proving Ground in Gunnison, Utah, may be important destinations for veterans, active military personnel, and their families.

Counties with the Highest Number of Veterans



4. Gaps and Needs Assessment

Introduction

The Gaps and Needs Assessment answers the basic questions related to transportation needs of, “Where are people trying to go?” and “What services and amenities are people trying to access?” These needs are compared against existing intercity bus service, including routes and stops, to determine if the current system is meeting the demand and to identify gaps that need to be addressed. This gap and needs assessment will help identify potential service alternatives, including extensions and expansions, to be analyzed for final recommendations.

The future need for intercity bus service depends on the size and distribution of the population and how the composition of that population will change over time. This assessment examines the extent to which the State of Utah has potential needs for intercity bus service. The Existing Conditions Report identifies areas of high relative need based on population and employment density, and the percentage of potentially transit dependent populations. It also identifies places that are likely to be intercity

bus destinations, such as military bases, correctional facilities, educational institutions, and medical centers. By overlaying the existing bus network with existing and potential origin areas of high need and potential destinations, the analysis reveals key intercity connections and gaps.

Intercity bus service is a regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that is operated with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity. Intercity bus service often provides the only long-distance service that connects particularly rural and isolated communities to essential services, jobs, education, key activity centers, and destinations across the state.

Photo Credit: Utah.com

This assessment evaluates socioeconomic characteristics using 2019 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data. County pairs (travel between two specific counties) were evaluated using LEHD data based on an analysis of projected growth in the long term to determine the potential for people traveling between popular trip origins and destinations. Given the projected population and employment increases in several counties, the demand for traveling between these counties is expected to grow even more. LEHD data is also used to determine major corridors that may support intercity bus service. Existing service can be analyzed further to ensure that there is adequate service to meet the projected demand and to identify corridors without service as potential candidates for future service expansion.

Future intercity service analysis considers:

-  **New Key Destinations**
-  **New Housing Centers**
-  **New Job Centers**
-  **Transit Propensity Analysis**

This data and socioeconomic analysis informs this study’s recommendations by suggesting new routes or additional service to existing routes that could connect to these markets, especially if they are found to be underserved.

Identification of Gaps and Needs

Existing intercity bus service is provided by Salt Lake Express, St. George Shuttle, Mountain States Express, and Greyhound, as described in the Existing Conditions Report.

Activity Centers

Destinations and facilities where service is desired but may or may not be served currently are identified below. For the purposes of this study, destinations are considered Activity Centers if they meet transit propensity criteria, which may include:

- A community of more than 10,000 residents.
- Areas noted for projected large increases in employment and/or population over the next 20 years.
- Destinations that have the ability to attract transit riders every day, not just occasional special events. Including: large educational and correctional facilities, regional health facilities, and resorts.
- Military installations, recreational areas, and national/state parks

Community Services and Health Facilities

Community services and health care facilities appear to be well served by public transportation across Utah as they are generally located in cities and towns near population centers with existing transit service.

- In most areas (particularly along the Wasatch Front), major community services are on an existing transit line or within a local transit service area.

- A few child services facilities in the counties south of Utah County are unserved by intercity bus service and are in low growth areas.
- Services in the Rush/Skull Valleys, southwest of Salt Lake City could be better served.
- Human services along US-89 from Provo south to Arizona-Utah state border are underserved.
- Most major health care facilities (such as regional hospitals) appear to be proximate to existing intercity bus stops or are within a local transit service area.
- A few services south and east of Salt Lake City are unserved but are mostly in areas with small populations.
- Intermountain Health (IH) and Association of Utah Community Health are two major medical systems in Utah. Both are well served, except for facilities in east/southeast areas of the state.
- Most of Utah's Behavioral Health Network facilities appear to be proximate to existing services (within 10 miles), as most are close in distance to existing stops. Of 19 facilities, 5 are greater than 10 miles away from a stop. There are some rural locations without existing transit service. In particular, health centers in Wayne and San Juan counties are without access to transit service.

State/National Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Ski Resorts

Most recreational areas, state/national parks and ski resorts are either too remote for service or well served by existing intercity bus, transit routes or private services. In addition, towns that are proximate to ski resorts and recreational areas may be too sparsely populated for an intercity provider to be able to provide service. Because ski resorts and recreational areas can be highly seasonal destinations, year-round intercity bus service may not be appropriate.

- The Castle Valley area, near Arches National Park (south of Price following SR-10 to I-70), may benefit from additional service, but populations along that route are expected to be relatively low or no growth.
- The Kamas Valley area (east of Park City) might benefit from additional services. The valley provides relatively easy access for jobs and recreation, allowing people easy access to Park City without living in Park City.
- High Valley Transit (HVT) currently serves as a crucial connector between Salt Lake City, Park City, Heber City, and the Kamas Valley. The expansion of this service may be able to fill this gap more effectively than a potentially new intercity bus service, given that transit already exists in this region.

- Most major national and state parks have good existing service. Bryce Canyon and Capitol Reef national parks could use more service if the goal is to provide service to all of the major parks in Utah.

Educational Institutions

Snow College appears to be the only higher educational institute with little or no service. However, the college has a smaller student population than other many other higher education schools in Utah with about 3,500 students. The nearest intercity bus stop is in Nephi (34.8 miles away).

Military Facilities

Most military bases and installations are well served by existing public transit.

- Dugway Proving Ground Army Base and Utah Test and Training Range may benefit from additional service. However, given the remote nature of these facilities, the extension of service may not be feasible.
- Camp Williams in Utah County is not directly served by transit.

Correctional Facilities

Utah State Correctional Facility is currently well served by intercity service. Central Utah Correctional Facility in Gunnison would benefit from additional service as it is approximately 33 miles away from the nearest intercity bus stop

Tribal Entities

About half of Tribal entities in Utah are served by intercity bus service. It is worth noting that not every member of a given Tribal entity may have the same access to service. Tribal lands vary in size and therefore some community members may need to travel greater distances to access a bus stop. Access to intercity bus services as described below was determined by measuring the distance between the nearest stop and a Tribal entity's headquarters.

- The San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, White Mesa Community, and two of the five Bands of Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah have existing intercity bus access.
- The remaining Tribal entities, the Confederated Tribes of Goshute, Skull Valley Band of Goshute, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Utah's Navajo community and three of the five Bands of Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, are between 12 and 155 miles from the nearest stop.

Transit Propensity Analysis

A transit propensity analysis assesses the concentration of various population groups to help determine where transit is most needed in the state. The relative transit propensity for the state can be derived by using seven specific socioeconomic datasets. This data is derived from the 2020 census.

The seven socioeconomic datasets used in this study's transit propensity analysis are:

- Population with low income
- Population with limited English proficiency
- Older adults (over 60 years old)
- Younger residents (under 18 years old)
- Zero-vehicle households
- Minority populations
- People with disabilities

Figure 5 through **Figure 11** show the percent of each dataset by county, with a darker color depicting a higher percentage relative to the other counties. **Figure 12** combines and aggregates all seven individual variables to illustrate areas of the state with the highest concentration of historically disadvantaged populations that are more likely to require access to public transportation services. Three particular areas should be examined further for intercity transit feasibility:

- 1 Southeast Utah in southern San Juan County, south of Blanding
- 2 Eastern Utah, especially between Green River and Moab
- 3 Southwest Utah in the area between Parowan and Cedar City

Because the latter two areas have current service, transit propensity should be analyzed for existing ridership capacity to determine the need for any additional service in addition to the potential for serving population areas located off existing routes. The area south of Blanding should be examined for an extension of service.



Photo Credit: Visit Utah

Figure 5: Percent of Households with Zero Vehicles (2020 Census)

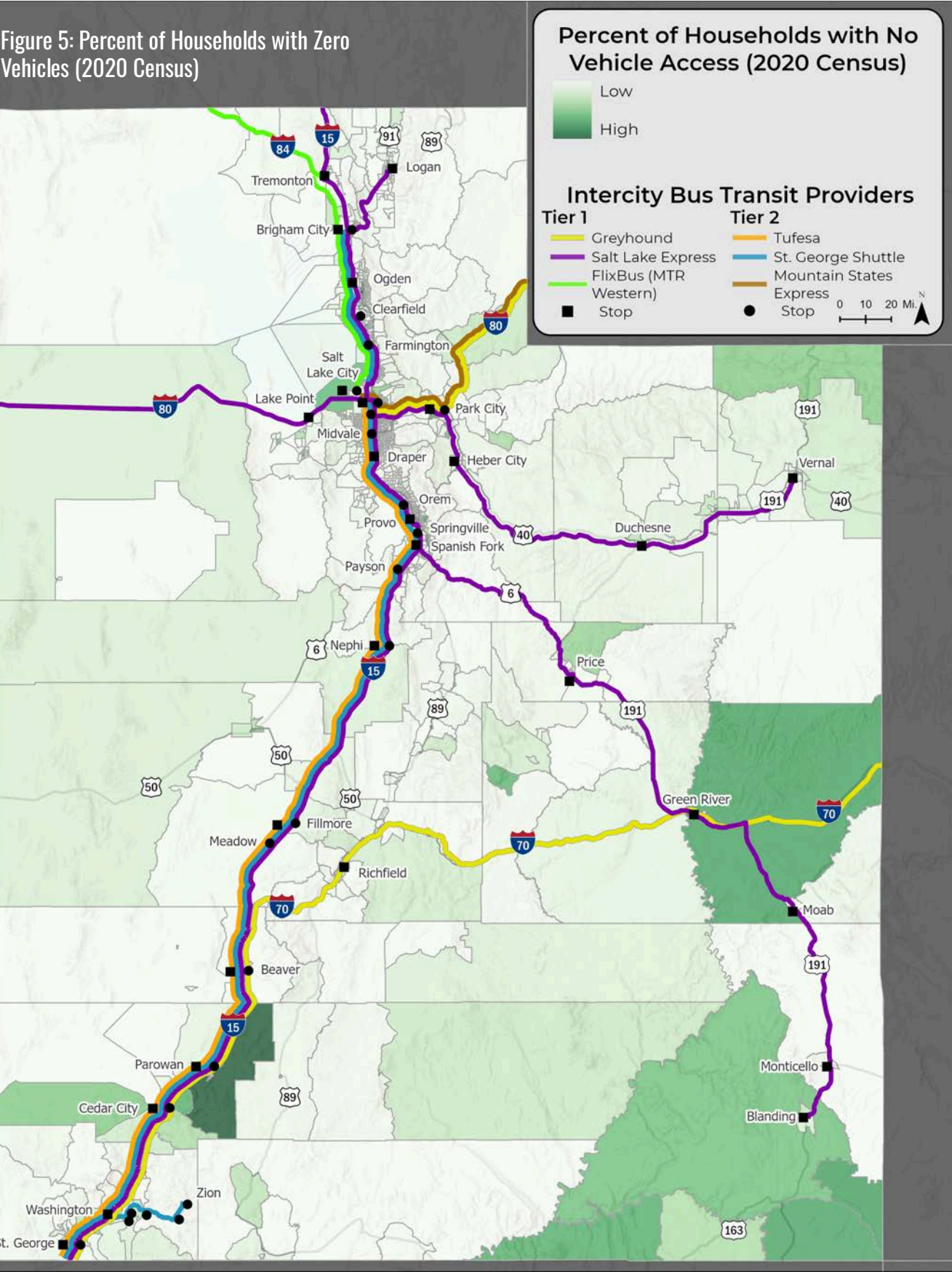


Figure 6: Percent of Minority Population (2020 Census)

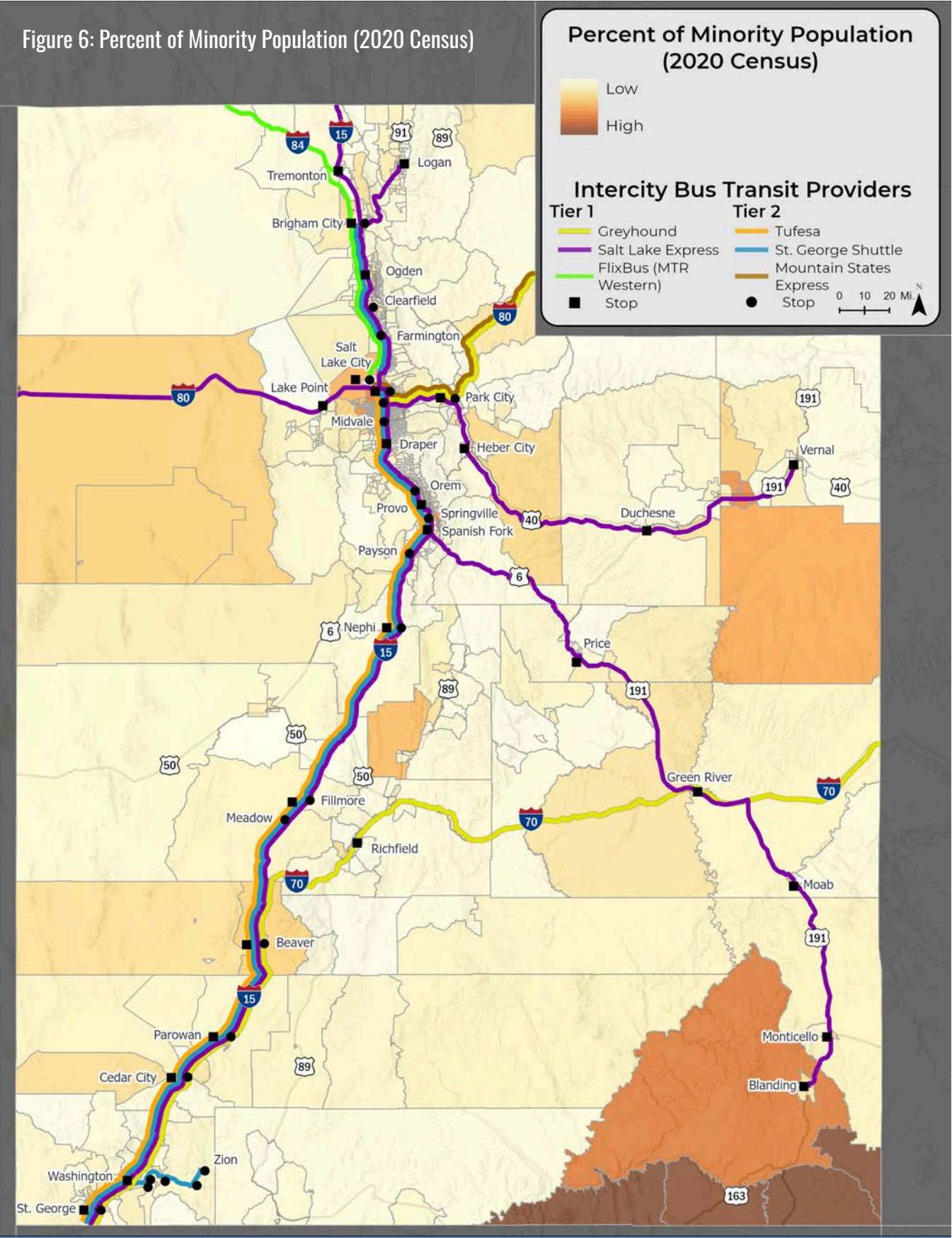


Figure 7: Percent of Population with a Disability (2020 Census)

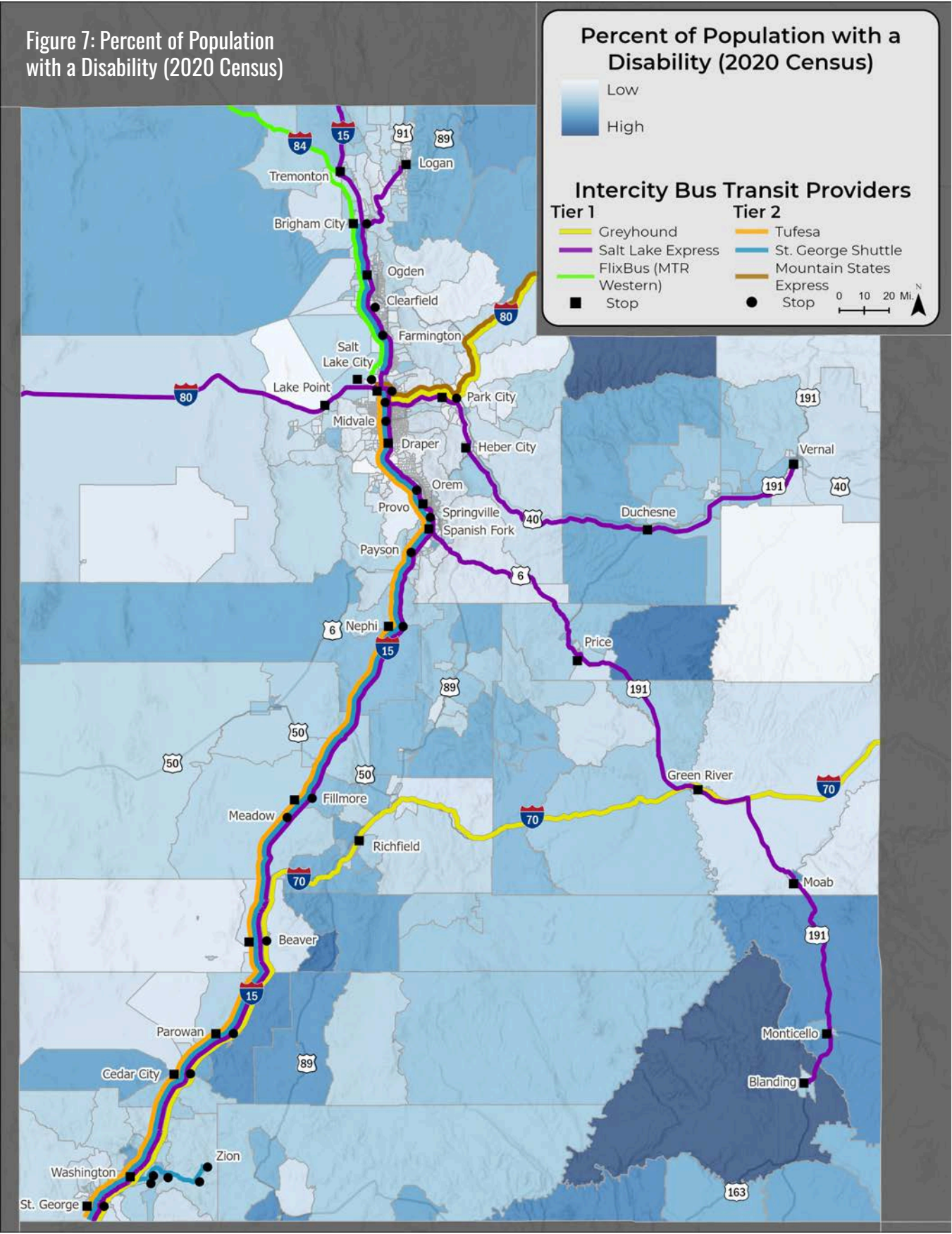


Figure 8: Percent of Population in Poverty

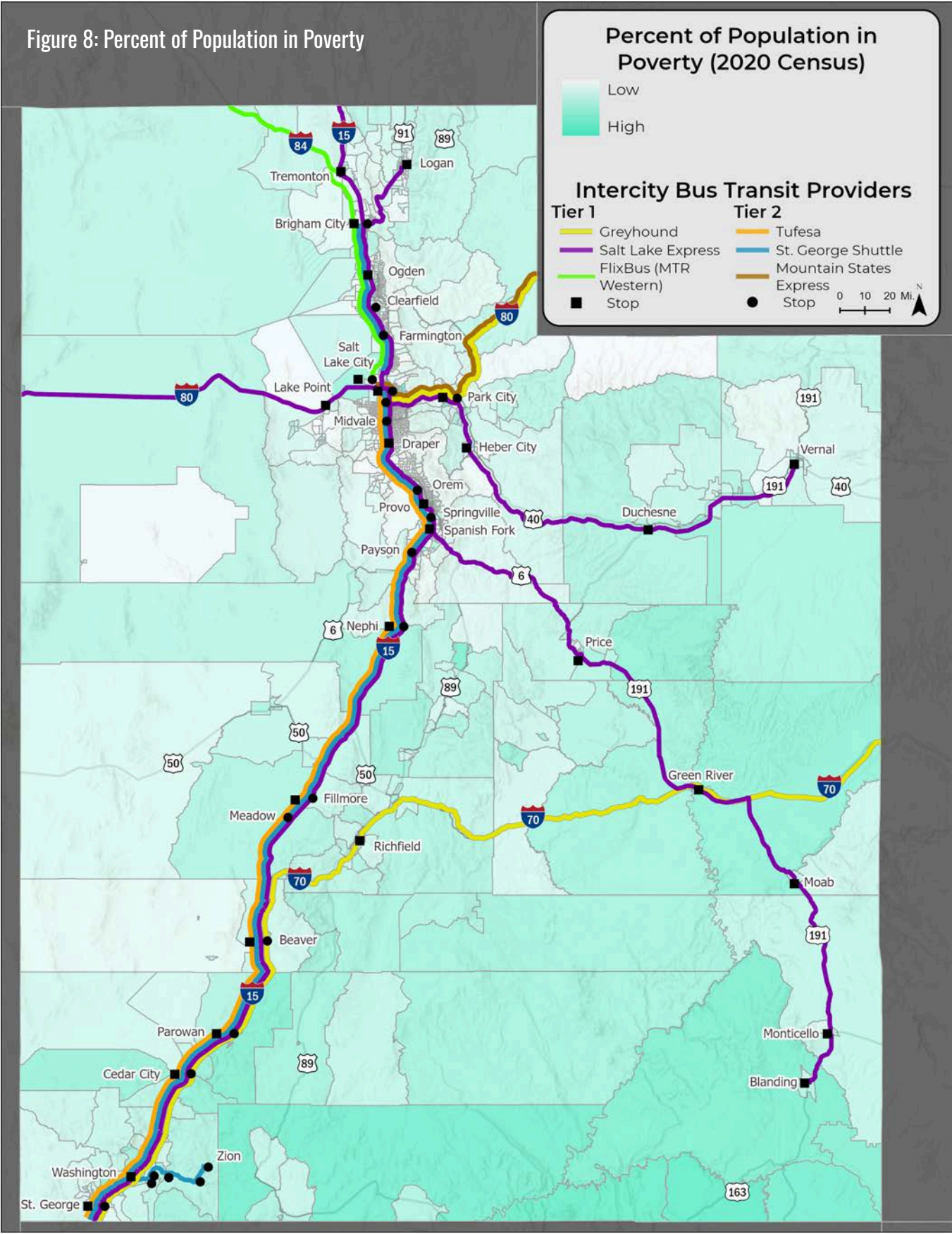


Figure 9: Percent of Limited English Proficiency

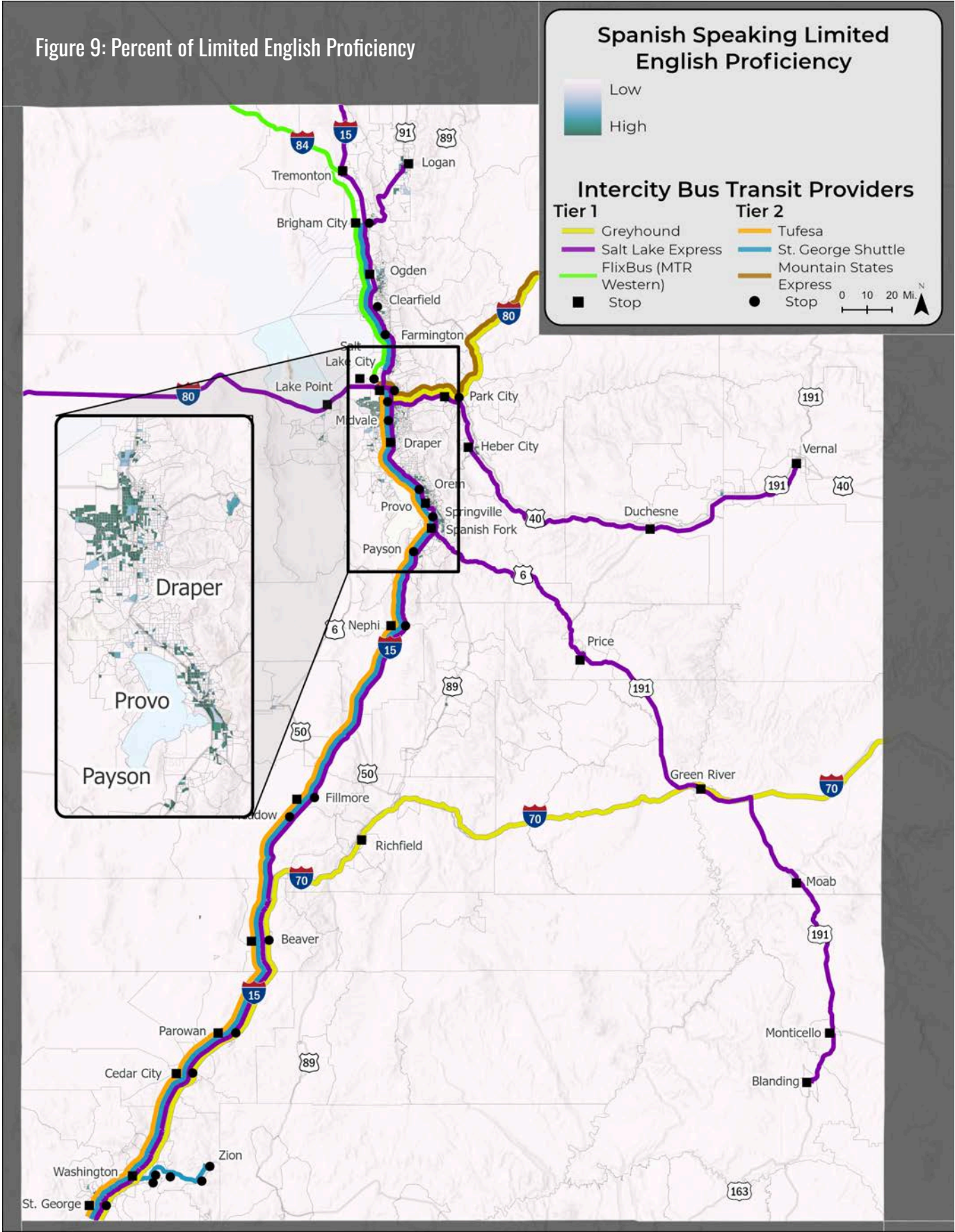


Figure 10: Percent of Older Adults

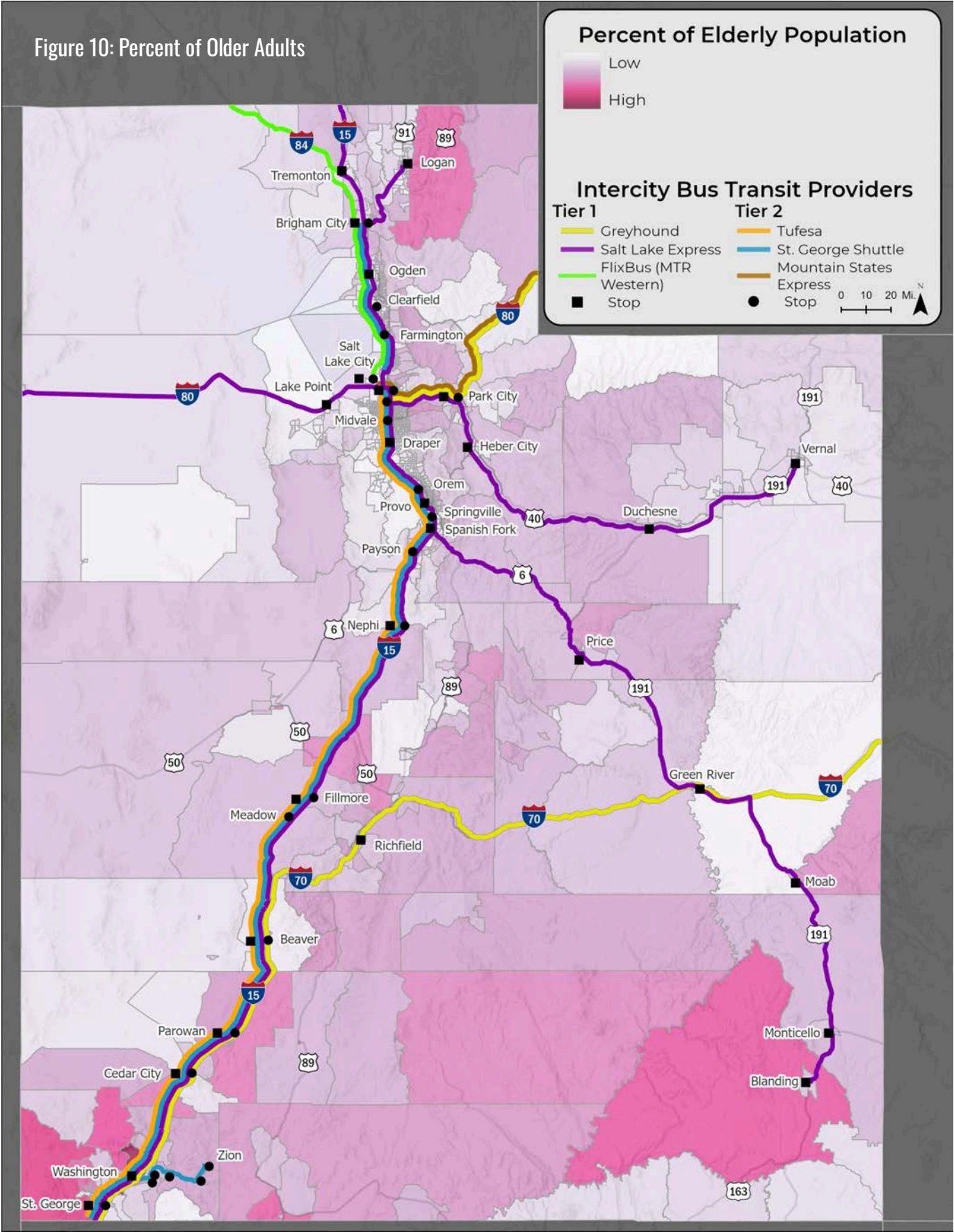
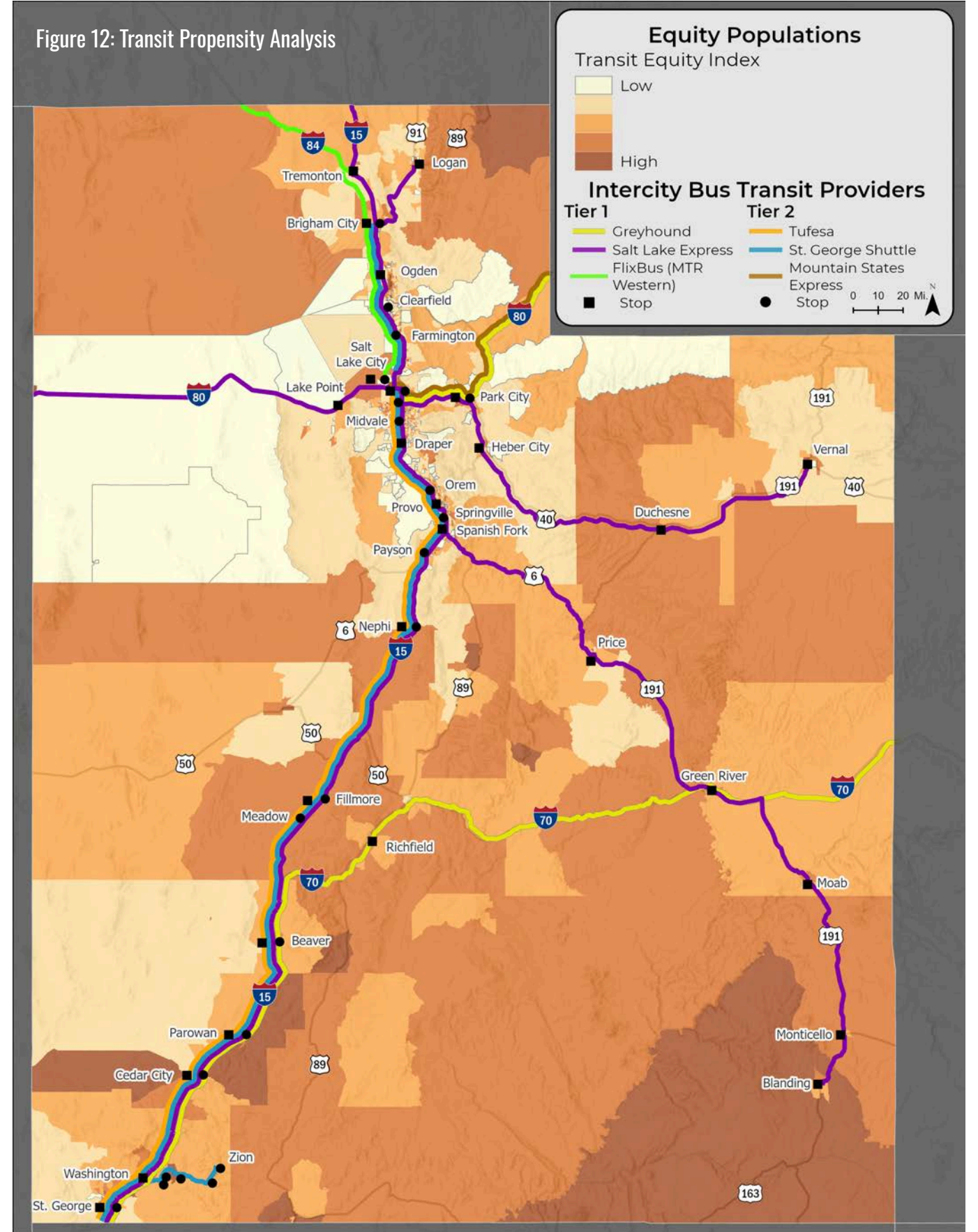


Figure 12: Transit Propensity Analysis



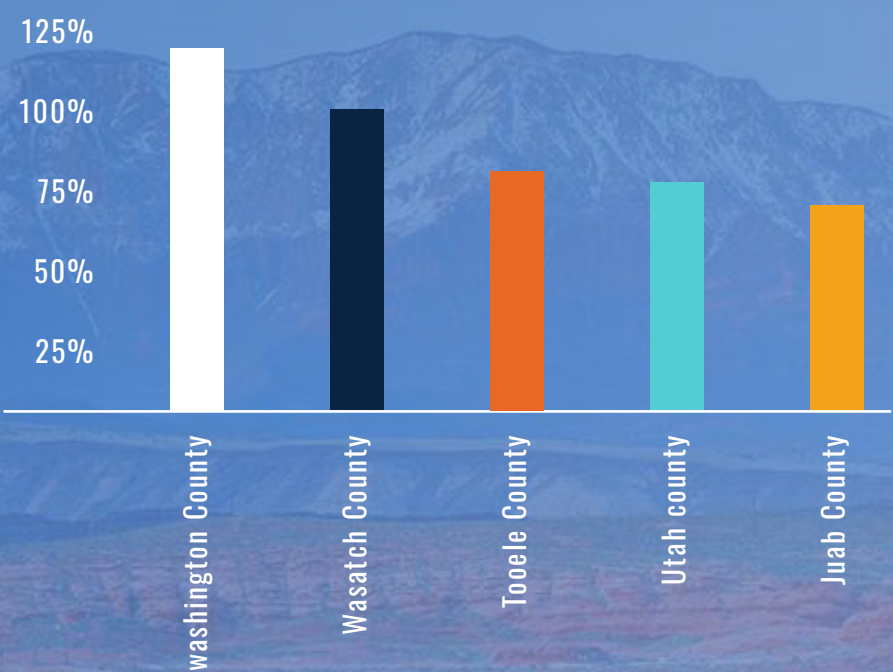
Travel Demand Analysis

Transit demand is analyzed based on population projections and looking at employment and residential density. The chart to the right shows the top five counties in Utah projected to have the largest population increases by percent between 2020 and 2050. Washington County is expected to grow the most during this time with a 123 percent population increase. The chart on the right shows the five counties in Utah projected to have the largest population increases by total population number between 2020 and 2050.

Figure 13 shows the projected population growth by county from 2023 to 2050 with the counties growing the most shaded in darker shades. The existing intercity bus routes are overlaid to show where service could be improved based on population growth.

The transit demand analysis also examined population centers that are currently “transit deserts”; that is, cities or communities without existing transit service. The infographic to the right shows the best examples of transit deserts in Utah based on recent population growth. All the examples are along the Wasatch Front and represent opportunities for extending local transit and not intercity bus.

Top Five Counties with Largest Anticipated Population Increase by Percent (2020-2050)



Top Five Counties with Largest Anticipated Population Increase by Count (2020-2050)

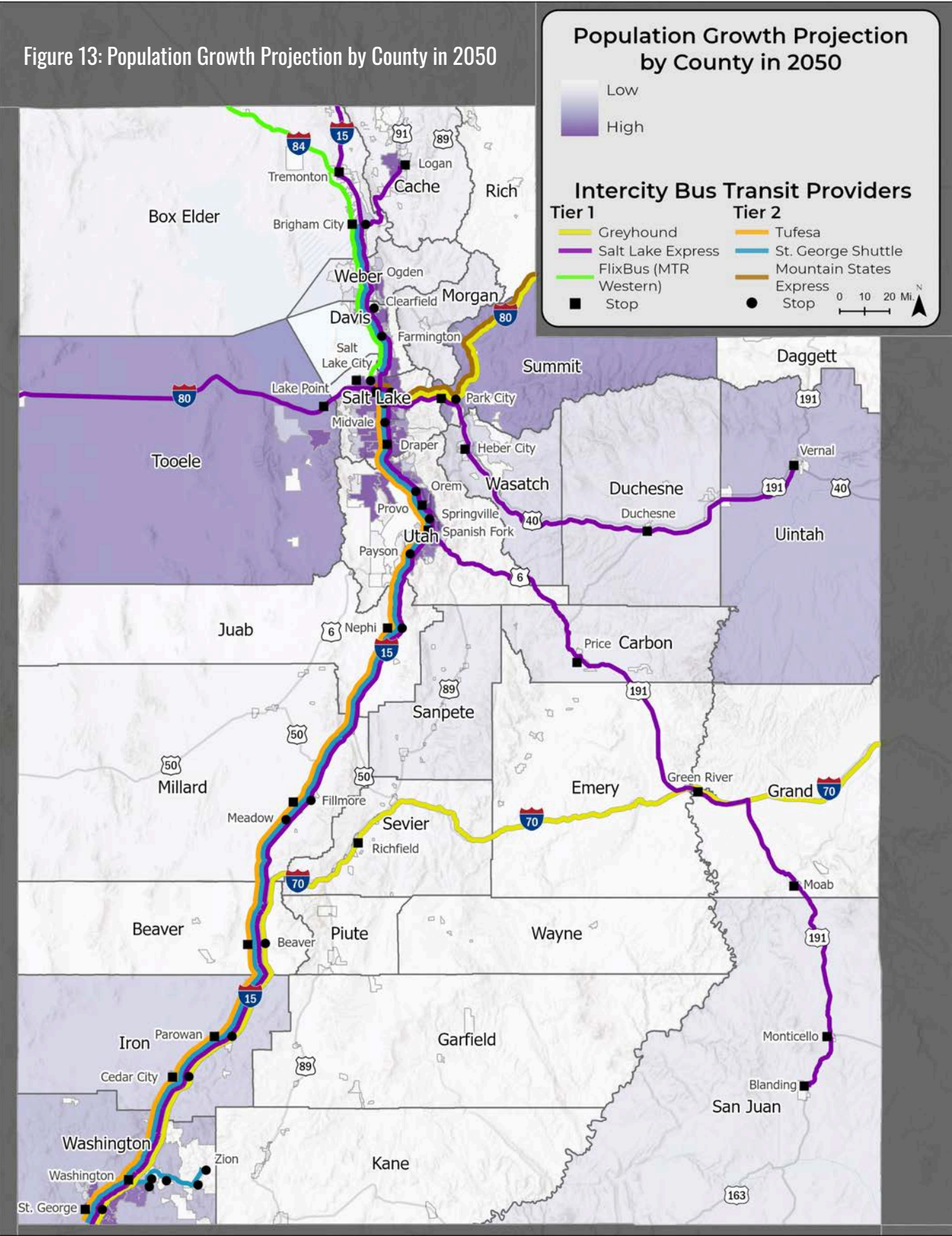


Source: <https://gardner.utah.edu/demographics/population-projections/>

Top Five Cities with Largest Anticipated Population Growth (2010-2020)



Figure 13: Population Growth Projection by County in 2050



LEHD data from all counties in Utah were assessed to determine where intercity bus needs may be greatest. The commute trips to and from Davis County, Salt Lake County, Utah County, and Weber County are in the Salt Lake City urban area and are covered by local transit service. Specific counties should be focused on for examining intercity bus service for a variety of reasons; about a dozen counties will experience a combination of high population growth and/or high employment growth. For example, Wasatch County, Summit County, Morgan County, and Iron County, all considered rural counties, have the highest workers per square mile of the rural counties statewide. In addition, Sanpete County has relatively high population density compared to other rural counties, and Tooele County experienced high population growth between 2010 and 2020. Additional rural counties such as Box Elder County, Duchesne County and Uintah County are considered in this analysis. Urban (Davis County, Weber County and Utah County) and small urban counties (Washington County and Cache County) are considered major employment counties and are proximate to other rural-designated counties.

Urban counties appear to have several thousand workers commuting to their counties daily for employment. Weber County has a daily flux of over 20,000 people from Davis County who commute for work. Nearly the same volume of workers travel the other direction from Davis County into Weber County. Utah County also experiences a high influx of workers daily from Cache County, Davis County, and Weber County, as well as from some other rural counties such as Iron, Sanpete County, Summit County, Tooele County, Wasatch County, and Washington County. Cache County experiences high volumes of commuters compared to the other three urban counties. Therefore, it is

Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data is used to inform work trip origins and destinations. Several urban and rural counties in Utah will experience significant population and employment growth over the next few decades. It is important to understand existing commuter travel patterns between counties that will experience large population and employment growth to account for future needs associated with public transit.

important that intercity bus service is available as an option between these four urban counties, as well as between Utah County and the rural counties that surround it.

Some rural counties experience a relatively high influx of daily workers. Over 2,000 Washington County residents commute to Iron County for work; over 3,500 Iron County residents, along with 1,400 commuters from Utah County, make the trip to Washington County. In addition, Summit County sees an influx of nearly 4,000 workers from Wasatch County, 2,000 from Utah County, and nearly 1,000 from Davis County.

Travel is also strong among Cache County, Davis County, Weber County, and Box Elder County, with between 1,500 and 2,000 workers moving between these urban/small urban counties and Box Elder County daily. In addition, over 1,000 workers travel from Uintah County into Duchesne County; nearly the same number make the trip in the opposite direction.

Morgan County separates both Weber County and Davis County from Summit County. There is no service between Weber County, Davis County,

Summit County and Morgan County, and linked by SR-94. Morgan County, which is estimated to grow to about 10,000 residents from less than 5,000 between now and 2050, is a good candidate for service. Over 1,000 workers commute from Utah County into Tooele County daily. Finally, over 1,500 workers commute from Utah County into Wasatch County. These statistics indicate that workers tend to work in counties that are close to their county of residence. This is true of the worker exchange between Iron/Washington counties, Cache/Weber/Davis counties, Utah/Tooele counties, Utah/Wasatch counties, Summit/Wasatch counties, and others. Therefore, considering future intercity bus service on routes and stops between counties where existing commuter flows already exist is appropriate.

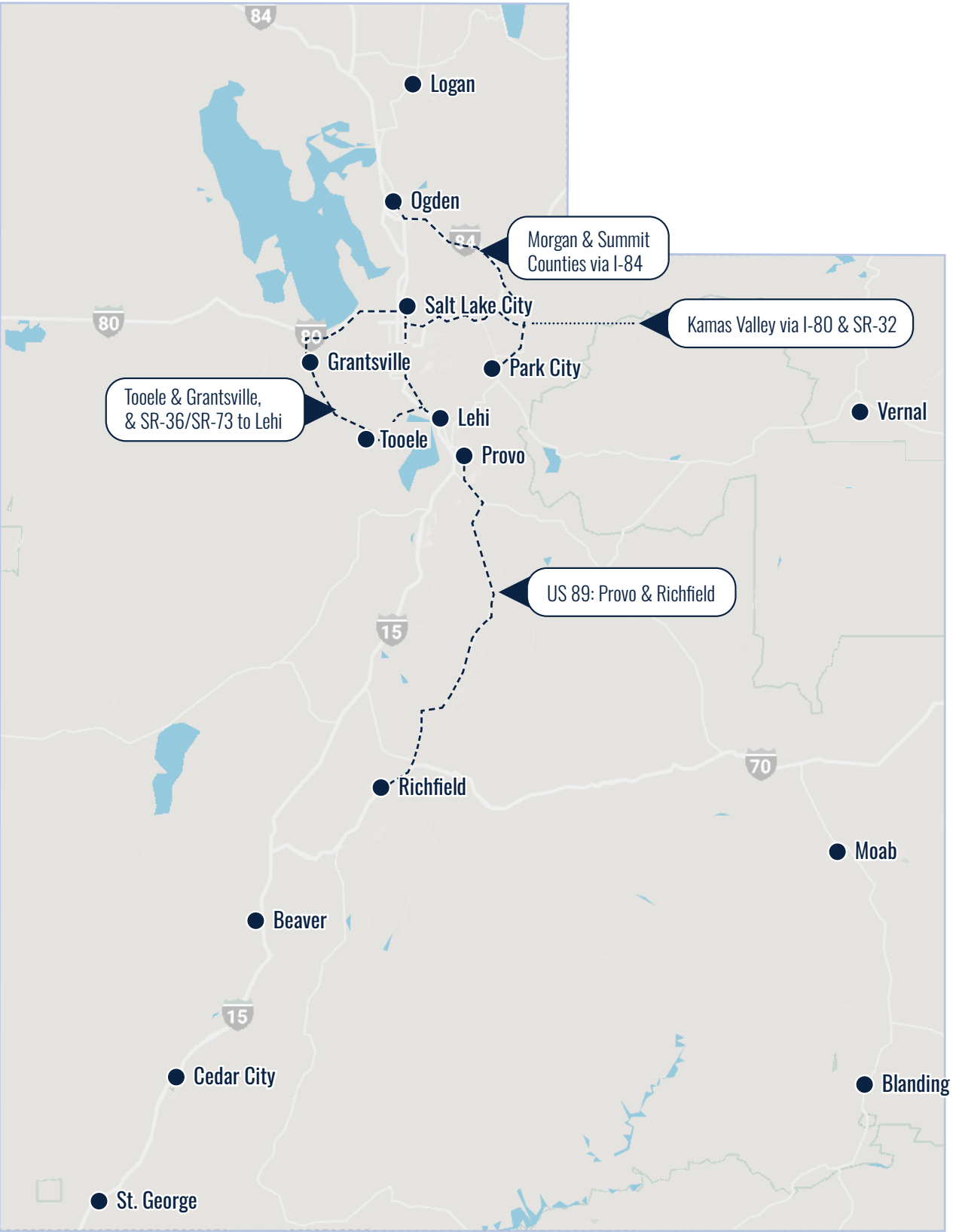
Recommendations

Based on the Gaps and Needs Assessment outlined in the previous sections, with the Transit Propensity and Transit Demand Analysis, key travel corridors in Utah were identified for additional analysis to determine their viability for supporting intercity bus service (**Figure 14**). The suggested new intercity bus corridors and the corridors that need increased service as candidates for implementation are discussed in the Prioritization of Future Service section.

Local Transit Connections to Intercity Service

For intercity bus service to effectively serve all Utahns, especially communities in more remote and rural areas, connections to local transit are essential. With Cache County in particular, the State of Utah could benefit from working with existing transit providers to increase local transit service connections to existing intercity services. In addition, the State should consider implementing a requirement that local transit must be provided when considering future intercity transit routes and stops.

Figure 14: Corridors Identified for New or Enhanced Service



Areas for Additional Analysis



Regional Salt Lake City Improvements

Although the Wasatch Front region (including Ogden and Provo) has excellent transit service, a new intermodal transit center would improve connectivity and make transfers to and from Salt Lake City better.



Service Extensions - Vernal, Blanding and Connections to Arizona and Colorado

Salt Lake Express has received requests for service between Salt Lake City, Vernal, and Colorado. Connections further west and south between Blanding and Colorado and into Arizona have also been noted as connections for further analysis.



Salt Lake City to St. George via I-15 or US-89

Analysis of ridership demand and service availability between Salt Lake City and St. George is recommended. This analysis could determine if additional service should be planned and if there is sufficient service to Washington County destinations.



South of Blanding in South San Juan County

The transit propensity analysis identified the area south of Blanding into south/southeast San Juan County as one that could benefit from transit service.



Cache Valley Transit, Cache County

Cache Valley Transit frequently receives requests for connections between UTA's FrontRunner and downtown Salt Lake City. While Salt Lake Express provides direct connections to the Salt Lake City airport, it does not extend to FrontRunner stops.

5. Performance Assessment

Introduction

This section evaluates the current intercity bus routes in Utah based on coverage, schedule convenience, and performance. The analysis is used to define a recommended set of service standards to evaluate future state-supported intercity transit service. The analysis informs the merit of new and existing intercity transit service and determine if certain routes need to be adjusted. These adjustments depend on low or high ridership and other key performance data.

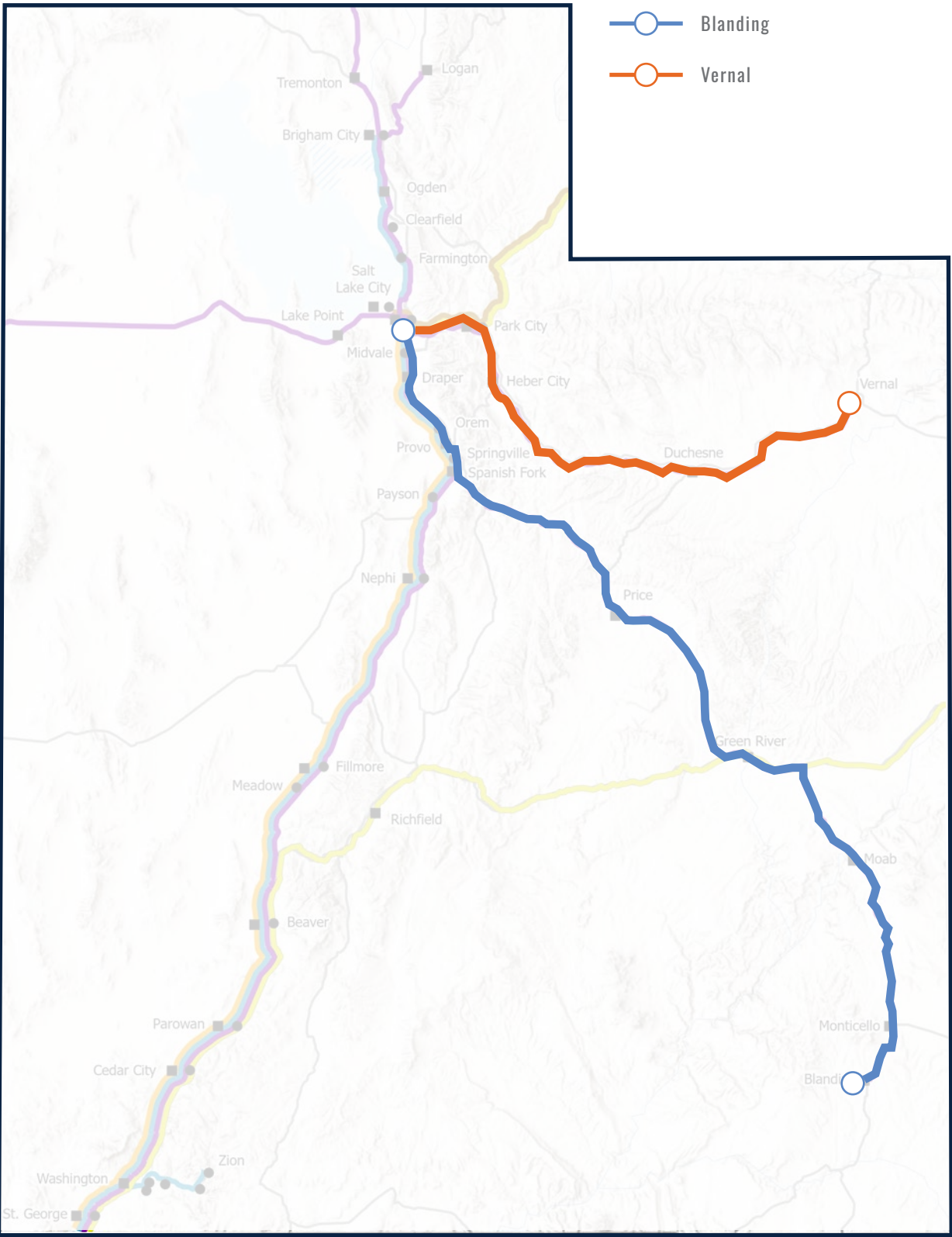
This analysis uses data from the Existing Conditions and Gaps and Needs sections to evaluate intercity bus service coverage, assess opportunities for sameday round-trip service to the nearest large population center, and summarizes ridership, costs, and revenue by route. Together, these data points to calculate key performance indicators.

The ridership and cost data analyzed come from the two currently state-supported Salt Lake Express routes: one that runs between Salt Lake City and Blanding and one that runs between Salt Lake City and Vernal, as illustrated in Figure 15. This data is readily available from the FTA (as the routes are subsidized with 5311(f) funding) and is used to develop performance standards that can be applied to existing and new state-supported intercity bus services.

Existing Service Performance

Five providers offer intercity bus services in Utah: Greyhound, Salt Lake Express, Mountain States Express, Tufesa, and St. George Shuttle. The Existing Conditions section details the specific service offered by these providers, including current frequency, travel time, and fare. Salt Lake Express and Greyhound offer fixed-routes, designated stops, and a meaningful connection to a larger intercity bus network.

Figure 15: Existing Salt Lake Express Blanding and Vernal Routes



Same-Day Round-Trip

The usefulness of intercity transit service can be gauged by the ability to allow a same-day round-trip from rural areas or smaller cities to the nearest large city, with sufficient time window to allow for medical appointments, shopping, and other related trips, this window is generally about four hours (based on similar standards used in other statewide intercity bus studies). The same-day round-trip might best be described as a regional trip, as a typical definition of an intercity trip is one that includes an overnight stay (Section 5311(f) requirements include the ability to carry luggage on vehicles). However, intercity bus services are generally scheduled over long routes serving many cities. It is difficult to schedule buses to offer same-day round-trip services while connecting major cities over a long distance unless there is enough demand to support regular frequencies.

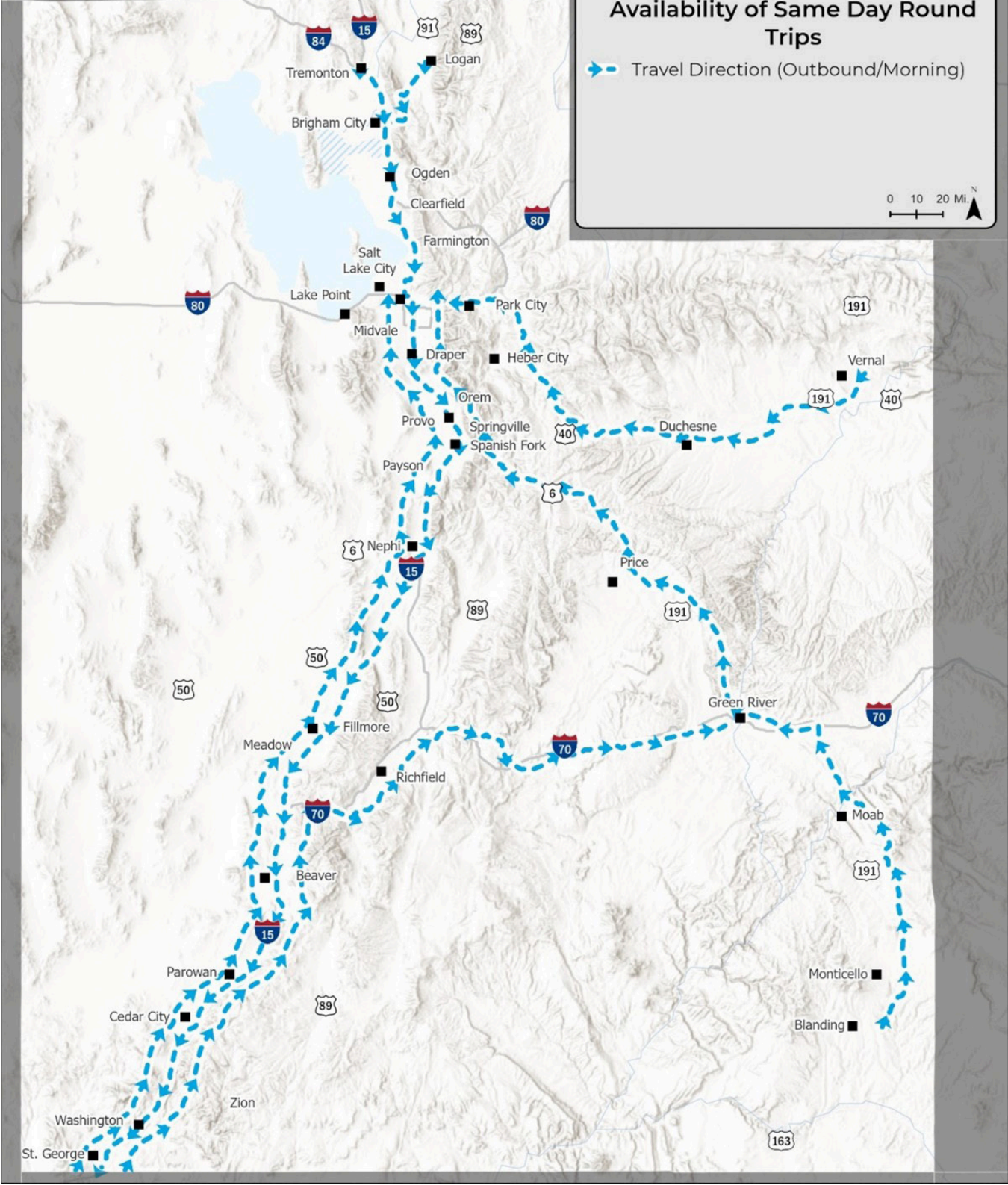
Figure 16 presents a map of Utah intercity bus routes that allow for a same-day round-trip, and **Table 8** presents the details of these opportunities. Some of these options offer more trip times, particularly between St. George and Salt Lake City, and between Logan and Salt Lake City. Greyhound and Salt Lake Express are the only providers that offer same-day round-trip options in Utah.

Overall, there are many possible same-day round-trip options in Utah, most are focused on being able to travel to and from the Wasatch Front in the same day with enough time to complete medical appointments, shopping, etc. The Salt Lake Express schedule in particular is designed to support same-day trips.

Table 8: Same-Day Round-Trips Possible in Utah

Origin	Destination	Service Provider	Outbound Departure Time	Outbound Arrival Time	Inbound Departure Time	Inbound Arrival Time	Time to Complete Activities at Destination	Total Travel Time
St. George	Green River	Greyhound	5:10 AM	10:15 AM	7:25 PM	10:40 PM	9:10	19:30
Blanding	Salt Lake City	Salt Lake Express	3:30 AM	9:50 AM	7:25 PM	10:45 PM	6:35	19:15
Vernal	Salt Lake City	Salt Lake Express	3:00 AM	6:50 AM	5:10 PM	9:00 PM	10:20	18:00
Tremonton	Salt Lake City	Salt Lake Express	4:55 AM	7:00 AM	3:30 PM	7:25 PM	8:30	14:30
Logan	Salt Lake City	Salt Lake Express	7:55 AM	10:10 AM	5:30 PM	7:50 PM	7:20	11:55
St. George	Salt Lake City	Salt Lake Express	4:00 AM	10:05 AM	3:30 PM	10:00 PM	5:25	18:00
Salt Lake City	St. George	St. George Shuttle	6:30 AM	11:15 AM	3:40 PM	8:50 PM	4:25	14:20

Figure 16: Availability of Same Day Round Trips



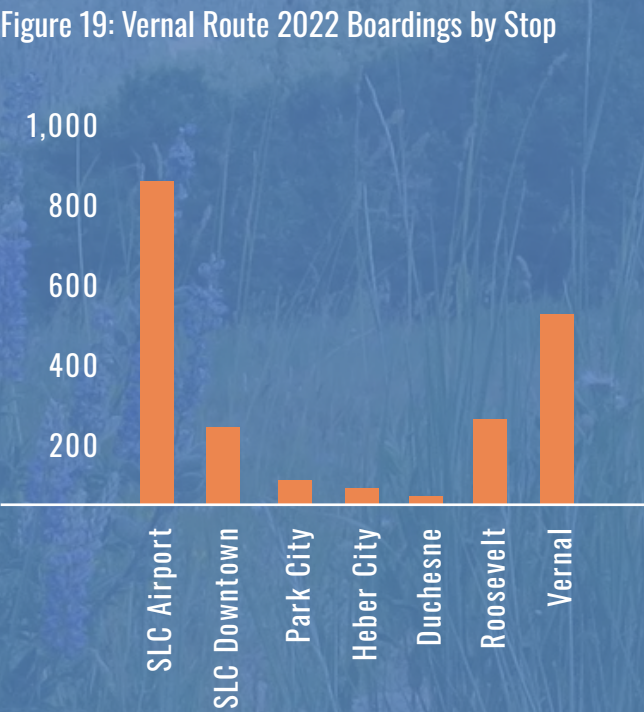
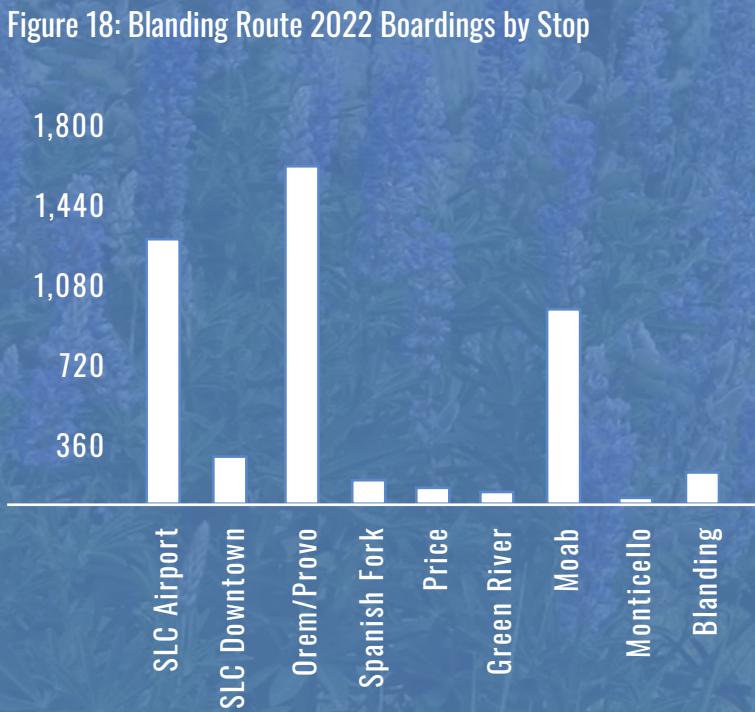
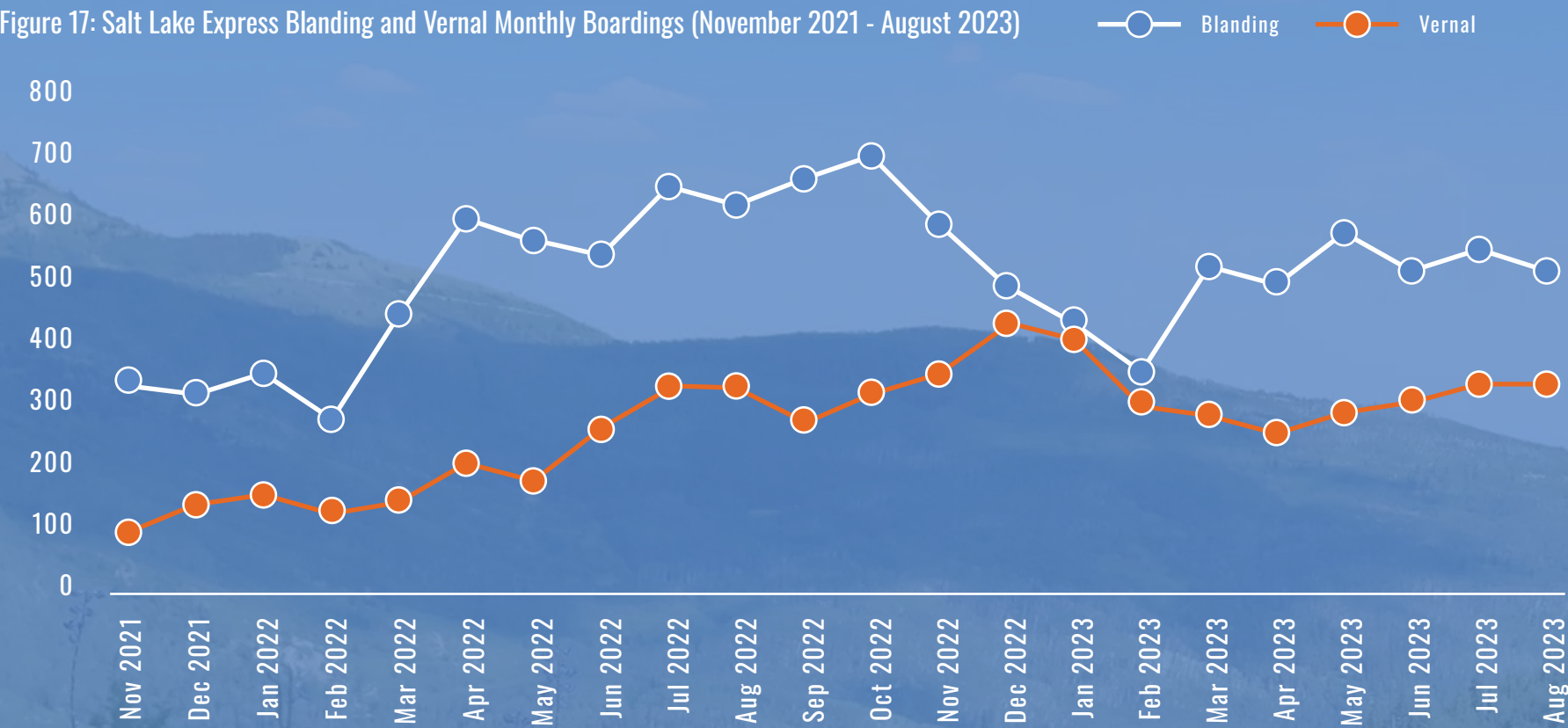
Ridership Analysis

UDOT collects ridership data from service provider invoices for routes partially supported by 5311(f) funding, which has recently (in the past two years) included the Blanding and Vernal routes of the Salt Lake Express. This study focuses on recent ridership as transit passenger trends have changed since the COVID-19 pandemic and are notably different when compared to ridership during and prior to 2020. In general, transit ridership has been steadily recovering in the years following the pandemic, and 2022–2023 ridership figures give a reliable indication of how transit service is performing and can be used as a base to guide future decisions.

Figure 17 shows monthly ridership by route over the last two years, from November 2021 through August 2023, for the Blanding and Vernal routes of the Salt Lake Express.

Overall, the Salt Lake Express Blanding route has more passengers than does the Vernal route, although the degree of the higher ridership varies by month. The Blanding route is nearly twice the distance and amount of travel time. Additionally, the Blanding route provides two daily round-trips (except for November 2022 through February 2023, when it operated one daily round-trip), while the Vernal route provides one daily round-trip. The drop in ridership from November 2022 to February 2023 is attributed to the temporary service reduction.

Figure 18 and **Figure 19** show ridership by stop for 2022 for the Blanding and Vernal routes, respectively. These charts show total annual boardings (where passengers get on the bus) for 2022. The highest ridership stop is the Salt Lake City airport stop, when combining the Blanding and Vernal routes, with 2,082 passengers boarding in 2022. Orem/Provo is the second-highest ridership stop with 1,716 passengers boarding in 2022. Most passengers for each route board and alight (where passengers get off the bus) at the first and last stops, while Orem/Provo and Moab are popular origins and destinations on the Blanding route.



Operations Analysis

Operating data for the Salt Lake Express Blanding and Vernal routes is available for the entire year of 2022. Data include miles and hours operated for each route by month and the total cost for services and farebox revenue. The total operating costs include administration, marketing, capital, and driver labor expenses.

Operating Cost Data

Table 9 summarizes operating data, including total passenger boardings, miles operated, hours operated, total cost to operate the service, total farebox revenue received, and net operating cost.

Table 9: Summary of 2022 Salt Lake Express Blanding and Vernal Routes Operating Data

Route	Boardings	Revenue Miles	Revenue Hours	Operating Cost	Farebox Revenue	Net Operating Cost
Blanding	6,373	432,370	7,861	\$1,272,669.50	\$266,366.61	\$1,006,302.89
Vernal	2,899	267,910	4,872	\$1,096,402.20	\$116,684.15	\$979,718.05
Total	9,272	700,280	12,733	\$2,369,071.70	\$383,050.76	\$1,986,020.94

UDOT awarded a total of \$1,945,047.99 to Salt Lake Express for the operation of the Blanding and Vernal routes as part of the 5311(f) FTA reimbursement in 2022. This award covers about 82 percent of the total operating cost for 2022, which is just slightly under the net operating cost (total operating cost minus the farebox revenue).

Table 10 shows the performance metrics for Salt Lake Express Blanding and Vernal routes. These figures can be used to plan future service as total costs are estimated. It is also helpful to compare each route by different metrics. Overall, the Blanding route performs higher than the Vernal route.

Table 10: Salt Lake Express 2022 Blanding and Vernal Routes Performance

Route	Net Operating Cost	Cost/ Mile	Revenue/ Mile	Subsi- dy/Mile	Cost/ Rider	Revenue/ Rider	Subsidy/ Rider	Boardings/ Mile	Boardings/ Hour	Farebox Recovery Percent
Blanding	\$1,006,302.89	\$2.94	\$0.62	\$2.33	\$199.70	\$41.80	\$157.90	0.0147	0.8107	26.47%
Vernal	\$979,718.05	\$4.09	\$0.44	\$3.66	\$378.20	\$40.25	\$337.95	0.0108	0.5950	11.91%
Total	\$1,986,020.94	\$3.38	\$0.55	\$2.84	\$255.51	\$41.31	\$214.20	0.0132	0.7282	19.29%

Operating data metrics used in **Table 10** and what each metric measures are summarized as follows:

- **Cost per Mile** represents the total operating cost divided by the miles operated, showing the average cost over a mile of route.
- **Revenue per Mile** represents the total farebox revenue divided by the miles operated, showing what could be expected for revenue over a mile of route.
- **Subsidy per Mile** represents the net operating cost or subsidy (costs after farebox revenue) divided by the total operating miles. This shows how much it would cost to provide service per mile after revenues.
- **Cost per Rider** represents the total cost divided by the total number of passenger boardings, showing the actual cost of service for each passenger.
- **Revenue per Rider** represents the total farebox revenue divided by the total number of passenger boardings, showing the expected payment for an average passenger.
- **Subsidy per Rider** represents the net operating cost or subsidy (costs after farebox revenue) divided by the total number of passenger boardings. This shows how much it would cost to provide service per passenger after revenues.
- **Boardings per Mile** is the number of passengers over the mile length of the entire corridor. For rural and intercity routes, this number is usually under a passenger per mile.
- **Boardings per Hour** represents the total number of passenger boardings divided by the total operating hours. This shows how many passengers are getting on the bus in an hour.
- **Farebox Recovery Percent** shows the percentage of revenues to total cost and is a gauge of how productive the service is.

Figure 20 shows the passengers per mile, and **Figure 21** shows the passengers per hour for Salt Lake Express Blanding and Vernal routes in 2022. These routes are similar to each other, with the Blanding service having slightly more passengers per mile and hour in each month than the Vernal service. Each service trends higher throughout the year, carrying more passengers at the end of the year than at the beginning of the year, especially for the Blanding route after its second round-trip is discontinued. Note that the Vernal route productivity increases even with the same daily service throughout the year.

Figure 20: 2022 Salt Lake Express Blanding and Vernal Routes Passengers Per Mile

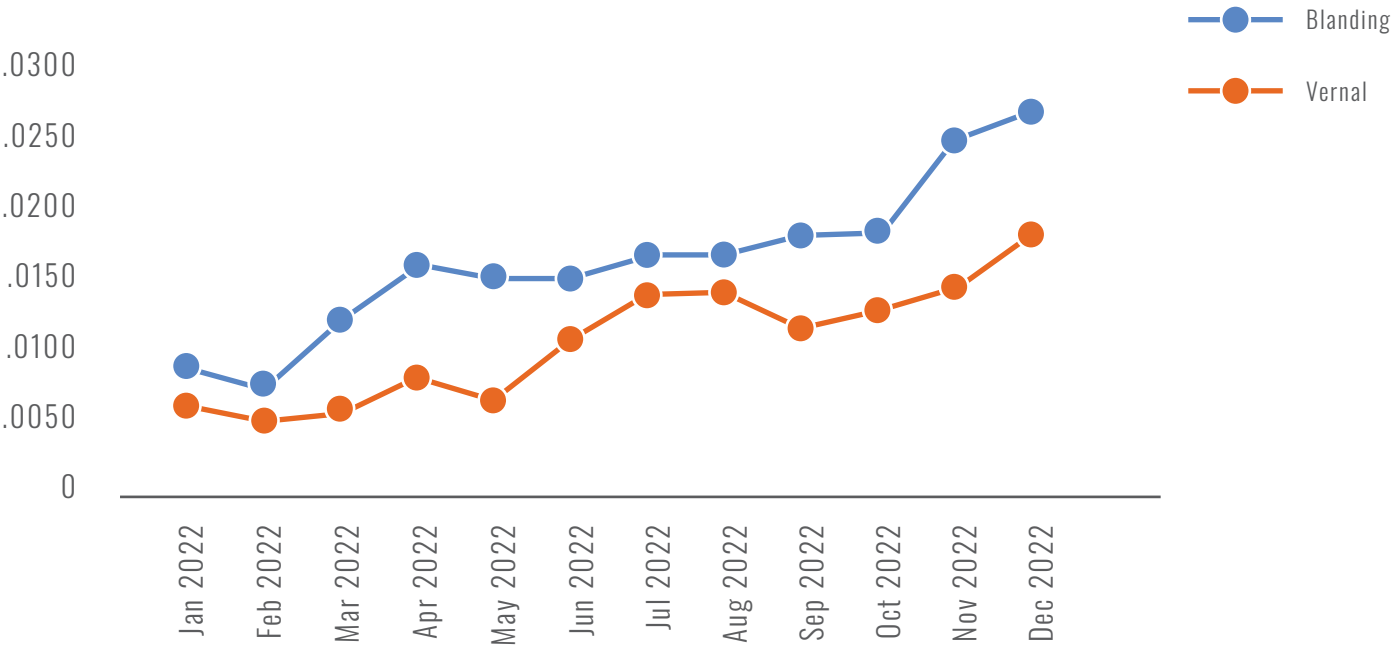


Figure 21: 2022 Salt Lake Express Blanding and Vernal Routes Passengers Per Hour

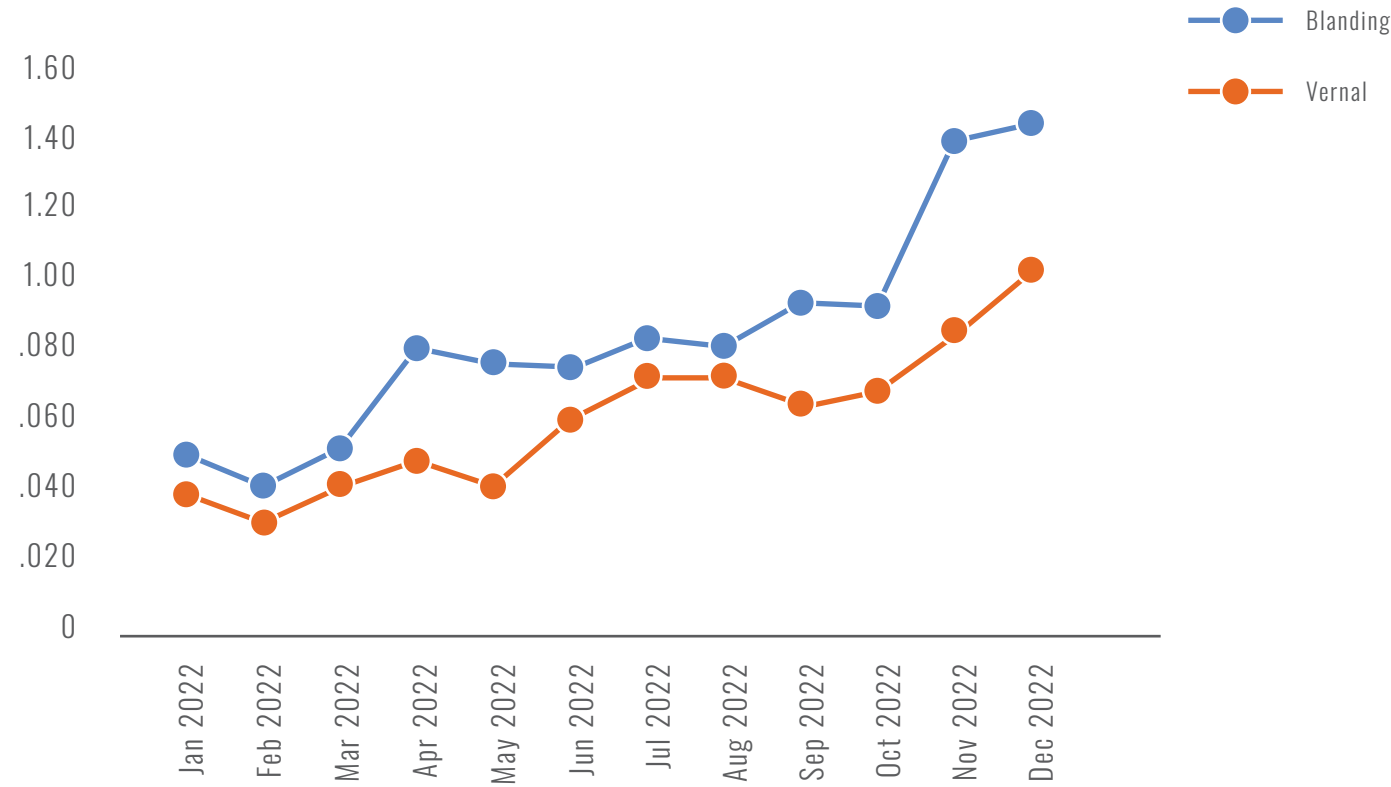
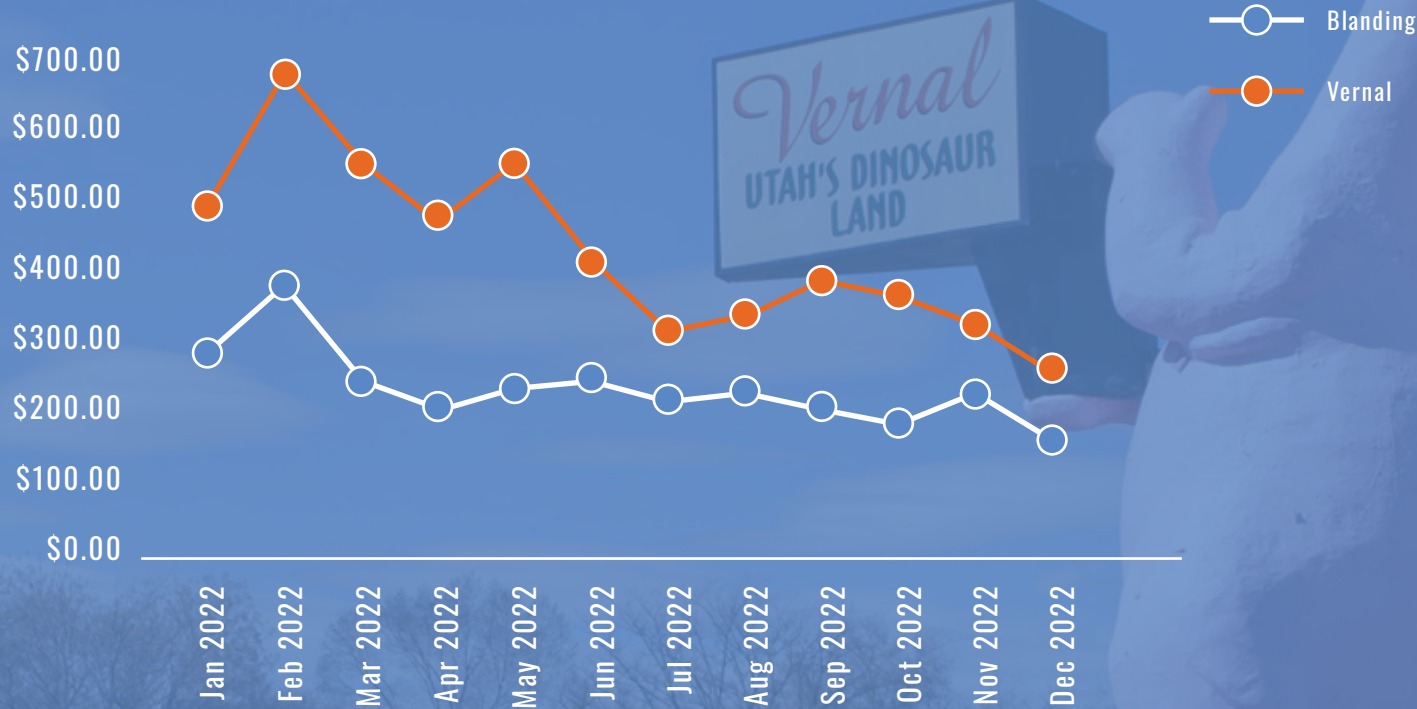


Figure 22 shows the cost per passenger and, similar to passengers per mile and passengers per hour, increases in efficiency throughout the year. In this case, the cost per passenger decreases over time. The Blanding route is still more productive in this metric, costing an average of \$142 per passenger in December, with the Vernal route costing an average of \$240 per passenger in December.

Figure 22: 2022 Salt Lake Express Blanding and Vernal Routes Cost Per Passenger



Performance Standards

Route Performance

UDOT has limited data on intercity bus route ridership, revenue, and operating costs, except for routes partially funded by 5311(f), which is currently the Salt Lake Express Blanding and Vernal routes. In terms of performance and cost-effectiveness, the Blanding and Vernal routes have productivity and cost recovery that are fairly typical of rural transit, including intercity bus service, when compared nationally. This is based on an analysis of recent (past three years) statewide intercity bus studies in Ohio, Washington, and Virginia.

The Blanding route has higher ridership, costs, revenues, and farebox recovery than the Vernal route. This may be because the Blanding route, while running a longer distance, serves two major passenger origin/destination stops with Moab and Orem/Provo.

Performance Standards

Based on the current performance of the Utah intercity bus routes analyzed, proposed standards for route performance may include:

- Minimum farebox recovery of 10 percent
- Maximum subsidy per passenger of \$250
- Minimum average boardings of 0.5 (one half) passengers per hour of service

These service standards are based on an analysis of the 2022 Blanding and Vernal route service performance, using the Vernal route as a lower threshold, combined with an analysis of service standards recommended in recent (past three years) statewide intercity bus studies in Ohio, Washington, and Virginia.

If UDOT adopted these performance standards for intercity bus service, the current routes would all be considered acceptable. However, the Vernal route would be close to the thresholds and is over the subsidy per passenger maximum (although it met this standard by the end of 2022). A decline in ridership or an increase in costs could potentially bring the Vernal route into conflict with meeting performance standards beyond the subsidy per passenger. This raises the question of whether a change in the current service would make sense, such as finding a way to make the operations more efficient and encouraging more local transit connections to increase ridership.



Photo Credit: Greyhound/Flix

6. Prioritization of Future Service

Introduction

Previous sections of this Intercity Bus Study provided an overview of the current intercity bus network serving Utah. While service frequencies may be limited on some routes, the State of Utah’s intercity bus network, overall, provides extensive geographic coverage across the state, including on major interstates (Interstate 15, Interstate 80, and Interstate 70) connecting to the states of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, and Wyoming. The existing intercity services also provide important connections between urbanized areas, such as Salt Lake City, Ogden, and Provo/Orem, and small urban/rural destinations such as St. George, Logan, Vernal, Cedar City, Park City, Moab, Tooele, Brigham City, Heber City and more.

To prioritize future service and recommendations and priorities for Utah, the project team identified and evaluated potential intercity service expansions. This was done with consideration for regional and local services, to create a vision for how the network could evolve to close mobility gaps and address future needs across Utah. Because 5311(f) funding must support FTA’s intercity bus objectives, such as connecting rural areas to urbanized areas and/or providing connections to other intercity bus services, the project team categorized future service recommendations into those that are clearly eligible for 5311(f) funding and those that

are more regional in nature and may require clarification from FTA on eligibility.

After developing conceptual routes and/or improvements for intercity bus service in the Performance Assessment section of this study, an analysis was completed to identify how each of these routes and/or expansions would service activity centers, transit disadvantaged populations, and opportunity for capturing ridership.

The route alternatives analysis assessed two types of alternatives:

- Options that address performance concerns with the current intercity service
- Options that address service expansion to address unmet needs



FTA Intercity Bus Objectives

- Support the connection between nonurbanized areas and larger regional or national system of intercity bus service.
- Support services to meet the intercity travel needs of residents in nonurbanized areas.
- Support the infrastructure of the intercity bus network through planning and marketing assistance and capital investment in facilities.

The route alternatives include conceptual service design in terms of routing, stops, and frequency. The project team compared the conceptual routes to the existing intercity bus service key performance indicators from the Performance Assessment to understand potential route productivity and efficiency, as described in the Tier 2 analysis. Recommendations support development of the transit network over the next five years based on both existing 5311(f) funding constraints and potential new funding sources to expand state-supported intercity bus service.

Current Service Opportunities

The Performance Assessment looked at the performance of existing intercity bus services and resulted in three primary improvement opportunities for Utah’s existing intercity bus network:

- **Vernal Route:** The Salt Lake Express Vernal route does not provide the same efficiency of service as the existing Blanding route, indicating an opportunity for service and performance improvements.
- **Salt Lake City–St. George Corridor:** Service between Salt Lake City and St. George, is a highly utilized route serving an area projected to grow in both population and employment over the next 20 years. Additional data and evaluation are needed to ensure service capacity can meet future demand by operators along this corridor (e.g. Salt Lake Express, St. George Shuttle, Tufesa).

- **Connections Between Intercity, Regional, and Local Transit:** In general, there is an opportunity to improve connections of intercity bus service with local and regional services. By improving connectivity between transit routes and systems, riders will have improved access to major activity centers, social services, recreation, employment, etc.

Previous State-Supported Service

From August 2014 to June 2017, UDOT supported two routes to areas of the state that lacked intercity bus options after previous service had been reduced. Assessing these routes provided valuable information and lessons learned for future state-supported service expansion and potential growth. The two previous state-supported routes were:

- Salt Lake City to Blanding (Highway 191 corridor, current service provided by Salt Lake Express)
- Salt Lake City to Richfield (Highway 89 corridor, no existing service)

Additional details on both routes can be found in the Previous State-Supported Service section of the Prioritize Future Service report.

Alternatives 1A and 1B in the Expansion Alternatives section describe proposed alternatives that would reinstate this service, with modifications. Considerations for reinstating service include:

- Providing same-day round-trip service to Salt Lake City with a morning departure from Richfield and an afternoon departure from Salt Lake City.
- Adding one-seat ride service to the Salt Lake City International Airport.
- Operating a faster schedule with fewer stops, with a focus on stops at Provo, Ephraim, Gunnison, and Salina.
- Extending the route to Beaver to provide a service connection to St. George.
- Potentially interlining service with the Vernal route to increase efficiency and provide a similar route length to that of the Blanding route.
- Considering the long-term goal of providing two trips per day to increase options and ridership.

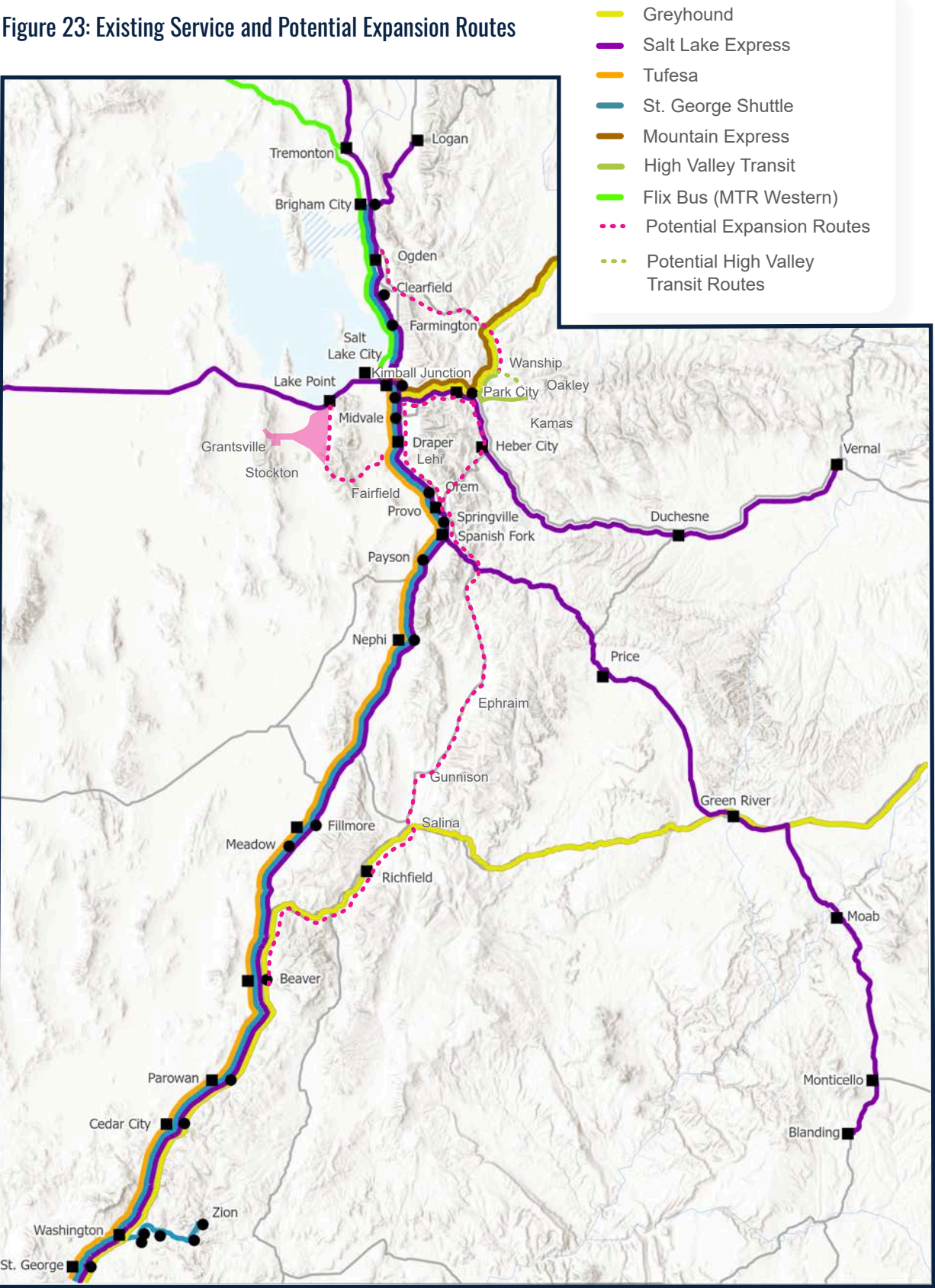
Expansion Alternatives

Figure 23 shows the existing intercity bus network in Utah, with service opportunities to cover service gaps and unmet needs. The potential service expansion areas were identified based on the Gaps and Needs Assessment section of this study, which highlighted specific corridors and areas to evaluate for future transit service and connectivity. Some corridors have existing service, while other corridors have unmet needs and are forecasted to grow both in terms of population and employment. Some alternatives are more regional in nature and require coordination with FTA to confirm 5311(f) funding eligibility.

Corridors that emerged as potential intercity bus growth areas based on the Gaps and Needs Assessment included:

- **US 89 South of Salt Lake City** to Richfield or Beaver
- **Wasatch Back Connections** in Kimball Junction, Wanship, Heber City and Provo
- **East of Ogden** to Mountain Green, Morgan, and Wanship
- **South of Lake Point** to Tooele, Grantsville, Stockton, and Fairfield

Figure 23: Existing Service and Potential Expansion Routes



Intercity Bus Alternatives - 5311 Funding Eligible

Photo Credit: Visit Utah

1

ALTERNATIVE 1: US 89 SOUTH OF SALT LAKE CITY

Alternatives 1A and 1B are based on reinstating service previously funded by UDOT, with adjustments, to improve route productivity and efficiency of the service. The service could be operated by an existing private operator, such as Salt Lake Express, and reimbursed by UDOT, or it could be run by a new state-sponsored service provider. Given that this route would connect rural areas to urbanized areas and would provide connections to other intercity bus service, the route would be eligible for 5311(f) funding.

1A

SALT LAKE CITY TO RICHFIELD

Alternative 1A would involve a new intercity route from Salt Lake City to Richfield along US 89. Cities served would include Provo/Orem, Ephraim, Gunnison, and Salina. Alternative 1A could also include a deviation to the Saratoga Springs/Eagle Mountain area as population grows in the area. **Figure 24** shows a map of this route without the deviation.

1B

SALT LAKE CITY TO BEAVER VIA RICHFIELD

Alternative 1B would involve a new intercity route from Salt Lake City to Beaver along US 89 connecting to the existing service to St. George. Cities served would include Provo/Orem, Ephraim, Gunnison, Salina, and Richfield. Alternative 1B could also include a deviation to the Saratoga Springs/Eagle Mountain area as population grows in the area. **Figure 25** shows a map of this route without the deviation.

Figure 24: Alternative 1A - Salt Lake City and Richfield

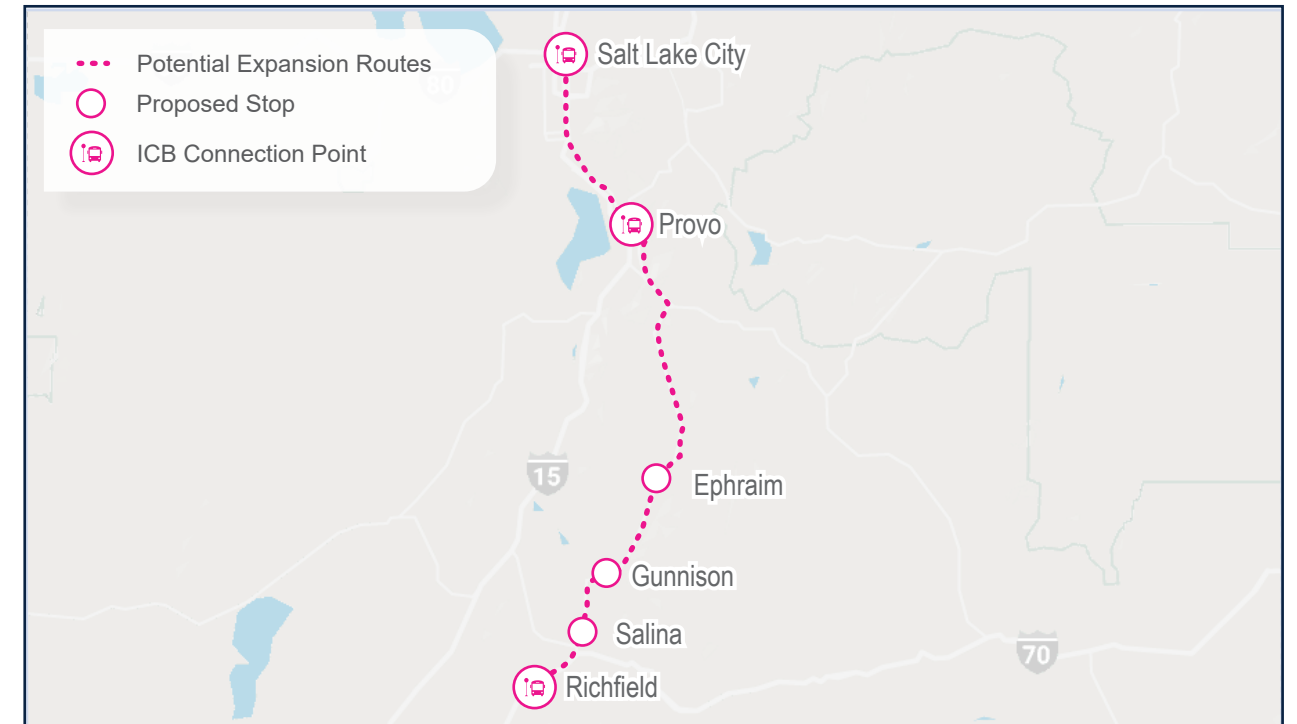
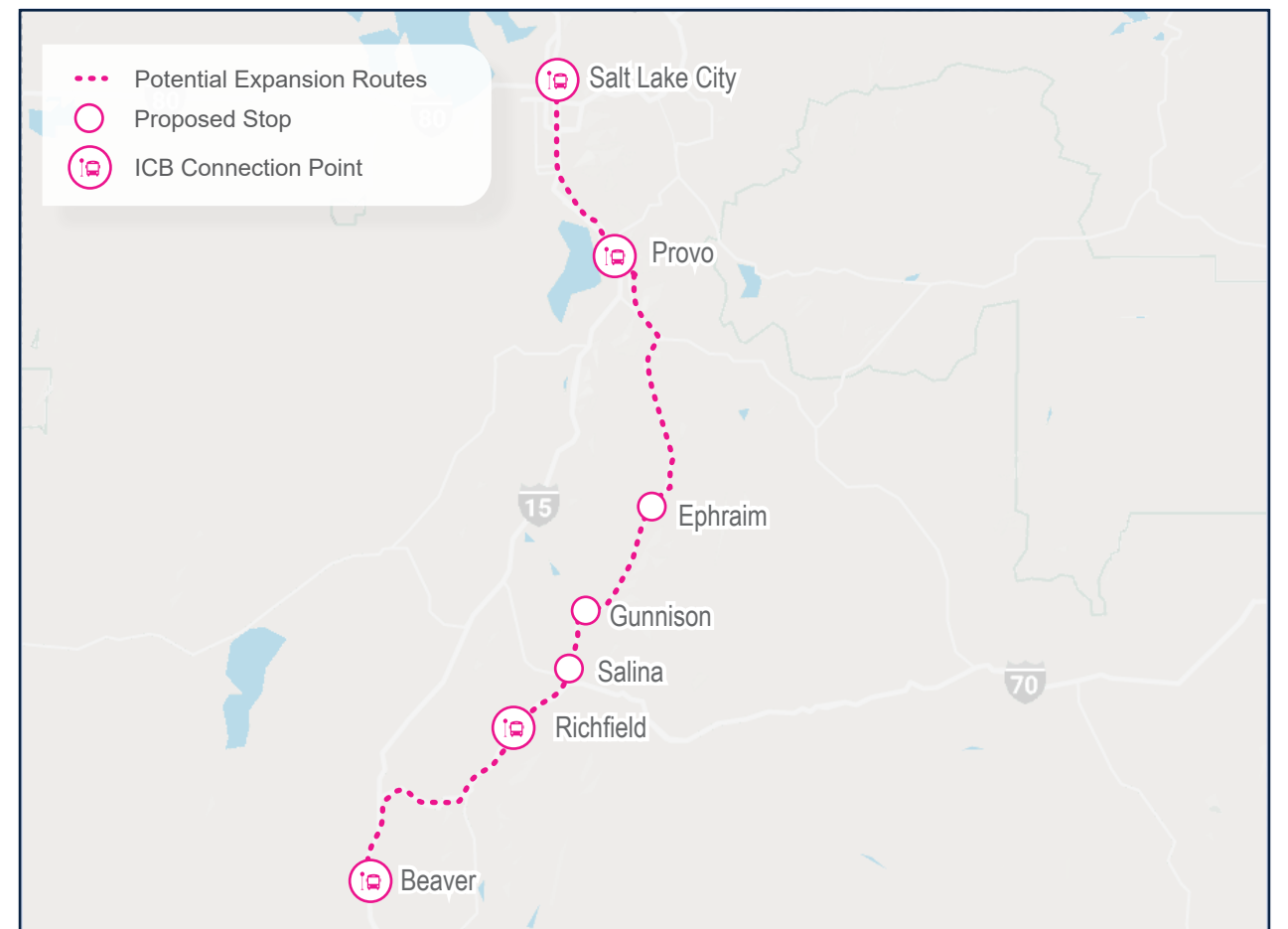


Figure 25: Alternative 1B: Salt Lake City and Beaver via Richfield



Regional Transit Service Alternatives – Potentially 5311(f) Funding Eligible

Alternatives 2-4 represent services that would provide several benefits, including connecting to the intercity bus network, improving local and regional connections, serving currently known unmet needs, and supporting future population and employment growth. These alternatives would require clarification from FTA regarding eligibility for Section 5311(f) funding. While each alternative would align with FTA intercity bus service goals of providing connections to existing intercity bus service, providing connections to multiple urban areas, and serving multiple transit agency service areas, overlapping service with existing local and regional providers would be anticipated. Intercity funding for these corridors would provide and/or increase service frequency and connectivity by providing additional service on corridors with high demand while providing connectivity to the intercity network.

2 ALTERNATIVE 2: WASATCH BACK CONNECTIONS

Alternative 2 focuses primarily on how existing transit and intercity bus providers can fill gaps in the Wasatch Back network, which includes to the east, south and within Park City. Currently, four transit providers operate in and around the Wasatch Back, including: Mountain States Express, Greyhound, Salt Lake Express, and High Valley Transit (HVT). Notably, all four providers stop in Kimball Junction.

- Mountain States Express and Greyhound connect from Salt Lake City to Kimball Junction before heading north to Wyoming and beyond.
- Salt Lake Express connects from Salt Lake City to Vernal and provides a stop in Kimball Junction and Heber City before heading east.
- HVT serves the Park City, Heber City, and Kamas Valley areas with coverage most extensive around Park City. HVT also provides a route that connects Park City and Salt Lake City.

Despite this existing coverage, the following service gaps remain:

- The 102 Gateway/Kamas Valley Commuter route provided by HVT has limited frequency. The 102 only runs during commuting hours (5:30 am - 7:57 am and 3:30 pm - 5:57 pm). There is no service during off-peak hours limiting mobility and access, which may particularly impact historically disadvantaged populations in the community.

- Greyhound and Mountain States Express pass through Wanship but do not stop, which limits access to intercity bus services.
- No transit service currently connects Provo/Orem and Heber City. To make this connection via transit, riders originating in Provo/Orem must travel north to Salt Lake City, east to Kimball Junction, and then south through Park City to Heber City. Passengers traveling from Heber City to Provo/Orem must travel this route in reverse. This circuitous route is not convenient and greatly increases travel times for passengers. It is likely that only those that are dependent on transit would utilize transit as the trip could take two to three hours during peak periods and with the intermediary stops and transfers required.

A number of sub-alternatives for providing increased access and connectivity to transit were developed for Alternative 2 to address identified gaps and needs. While these alternatives would require transfers between service providers, improved access and amenities at stops and future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service between Park City and Kimball Junction will help improve connectivity and accessibility in the Wasatch Back.

2A EXPAND EXISTING SERVICE INTO THE KAMAS VALLEY

Alternative 2A would involve coordination with HVT to expand service beyond Kamas and Francis to Oakley and Wanship, then west to Kimball Junction. This would complete a HVT “loop” in the area. In addition, service could be operated bi-directionally, which would provide communities in Oakley and Wanship the opportunity to head west to connect with other intercity bus services, or head south to connect with the rest of the Kamas Valley.

Coordination with HVT would be required if this alternative is viewed as a viable option for improving connections and expanding regional access. Coordination would also be required with FTA to determine if this service could be funded with 5311(f). This expansion of HVT service is shown in **Figure 26**.

2B SALT LAKE CITY TO PROVO VIA HEBER CITY

Alternative 2B would build on existing intercity bus services from Heber City to Provo via US-189, which would involve both increasing Salt Lake Express’s Salt Lake City to St. George service and rerouting some of those additional buses to go through Kimball Junction and Heber City en route to Provo. This alternative would also provide additional connections to Provo for riders on the Vernal route, which stops in Heber City. **Figure 26** illustrates this route and HVT service.

2B SALT LAKE CITY TO PROVO VIA HEBER CITY (Continued)

For riders traveling from Heber City to Provo, the option to cut across the Wasatch Mountains via US-189 is competitive in terms of travel time. **Table 11** lists the travel times and miles traveled between a number of segments served by existing Salt Lake Express routes and the Alternative 2B route. Every segment except Salt Lake City to Provo is more competitive by both time and miles traveled by utilizing US-189, which could increase attractiveness of transit and expand mobility options for passengers.

In addition, this new connection would increase frequencies of buses leaving/arriving in Salt Lake City, Kimball Junction, and Heber City with coordinated service planning, thus providing opportunities for increased connectivity and convenient transfers between providers and/or routes.

Table 11: Comparative Travel Time and Miles Traveled between Alternative 2B and Existing Salt Lake Express Route between Heber City and Provo

Route	Origin	Destination	Time*	Miles
Existing Service	Heber City	Provo	1 hour 40 min to 2 hours	91 mi
Alternative 2B	Heber City	Provo	30 to 60 min	28 mi
Existing Service	Park City	Provo	1 hour 5 min to 2 hours 50 min	68 mi
Alternative 2B	Park City	Provo	50 min to 1 hour 30 min	45 mi
Existing Service	Kimball Junction	Provo	55 min to 1 hour 40 min	61 mi
Alternative 2B	Kimball Junction	Provo	55 min to 1 hour 25 min	52 mi
Existing Service	Salt Lake City	Provo	40 min to 1 hour 40 min	45 mi
Alternative 2B	Salt Lake City	Provo	1 hour 20 min to 1 hour 55 minutes	74 mi
Existing Service	Vernal	Provo	2 hours 20 min to 3 hours 30 min **	154 mi
Alternative 2B	Vernal	Provo	3 hours 30 min to 5 hours 20 min	217 mi

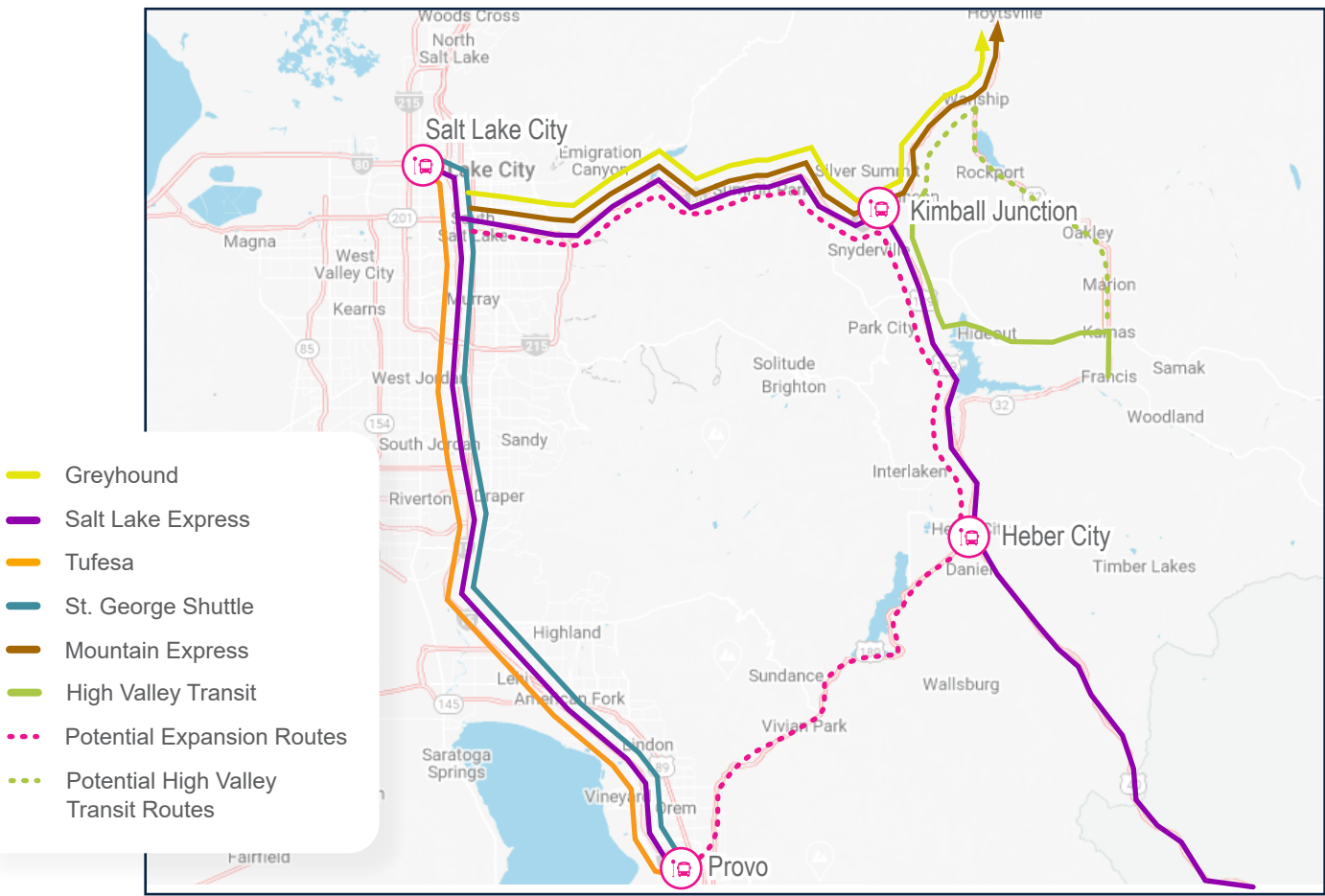
A Complete Wasatch Back Network

Both Alternatives 2A and 2B should be considered to create a more complete network within Park City, Heber City, the Kamas Valley and beyond. Expanded transit service, as proposed by 2A, would create more convenient and accessible trips between the Kamas Valley and Provo. This is particularly important as LEHD data indicates that there are strong commute patterns between Summit County and Utah County.

* Connects in Heber City. Does not account for transfer time.

** Estimated travel time based on car speeds. Does not account for bus speeds or route stops.

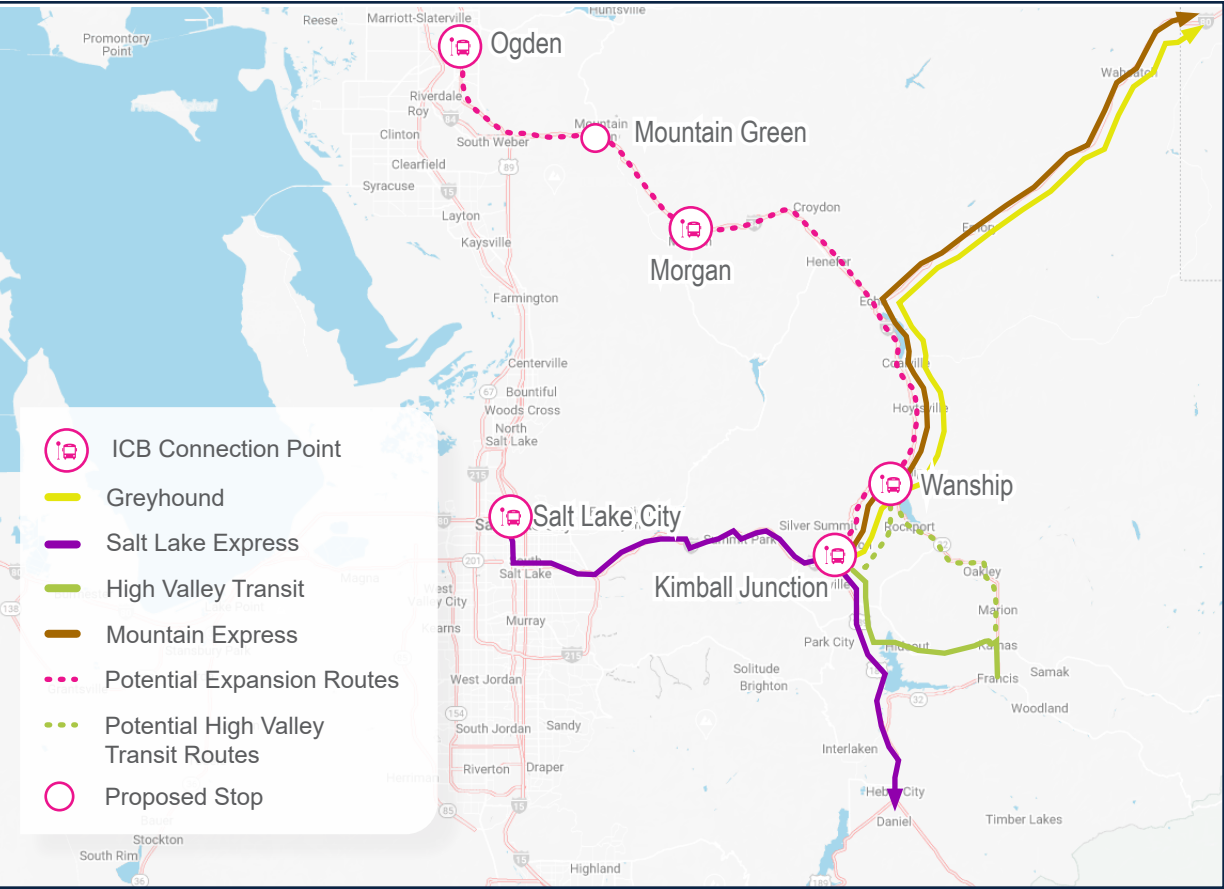
Figure 26: Alternative 2B - Salt Lake City to Provo via Heber City



3 ALTERNATIVE 3: OGDEN TO HEBER CITY

Alternative 3 would create a new route from Ogden to Heber City via Mountain Green, Morgan, Wanship, and Kimball Junction. Several stops along this route would provide meaningful connections between services and service providers. Potential stops include Ogden, Morgan, and Kimball Junction. For Ogden and Kimball Junction, Alternative 3 proposes additional upgrades to an existing site, or an alternative stop location for more seamless travel between modes. For Morgan, Alternative 3 notes that any stop should be coordinated with any future transit service in the area. As with Alternative 2, UDOT and its intercity bus provider partners would need to seek clarification from FTA regarding this alternative’s Section 5311(f) eligibility. Any station planning or capital upgrades that take place as a part of Alternative 3 may qualify for additional federal funds (e.g., 5339(b) Bus and Bus Facilities). **Figure 27** shows a map of the service proposed in Alternative 3.

Figure 27: Alternative 3 - Ogden to Heber City



4 ALTERNATIVE 4: SALT LAKE CITY TO LEHI VIA TOOEELE, WITH UTA EXTENSION TO GRANTSVILLE

As with the other previously described alternatives, UDOT and its intercity bus provider partners would need to seek clarification from FTA regarding Alternative 4’s Section 5311(f) eligibility. While Alternative 4 would meet the needs of currently unserved rural areas outside the existing transit agency service boundary, they may overlap with future local public transit services.

The proposed route would travel from Salt Lake City to Lehi/Saratoga Springs via Tooele, Grantsville, Stockton, and Fairfield. Riders could then travel between Lehi/Saratoga Springs and Salt Lake Express via UTA, Salt Lake Express, Tufesa or St. George Express. Four stops are identified, including Salt Lake City, Lehi, Lake Point, and Tooele. **Figure 28** illustrates this new route, and where it connects into existing transit service.

For Salt Lake City, Alternative 4 proposes that all providers utilize the Salt Lake Intermodal hub as their stop, particularly if no access to local, regional, or on-demand services exist. For Lake Point, Alternative 4 suggests reconsidering stop location in relation to UTA’s routes. For Tooele and Lehi, Alternative 4 discusses why a designated stop may be needed for those destinations in the future. Any station planning or infrastructure improvements completed as a part of Alternative 4 may qualify for additional federal funds through 5311(f) or through competitive grants such as 5339(b).

Alternative 4 also proposes an extension of transit service into Grantsville to provide additional connections into that area, which is growing rapidly alongside Tooele. Currently, Grantsville is served only by UTA On-Demand service. However, future service needs should be considered to determine if fixed-route service is not only viable, but necessary to ensure connectivity and mobility for residents in the area. **Figure 29** illustrates each of the potential stop locations outlined in **Table 12** for Stop Improvements and Location Considerations.

Figure 28: Alternative 4 - Salt Lake City to Lehi via Tooele

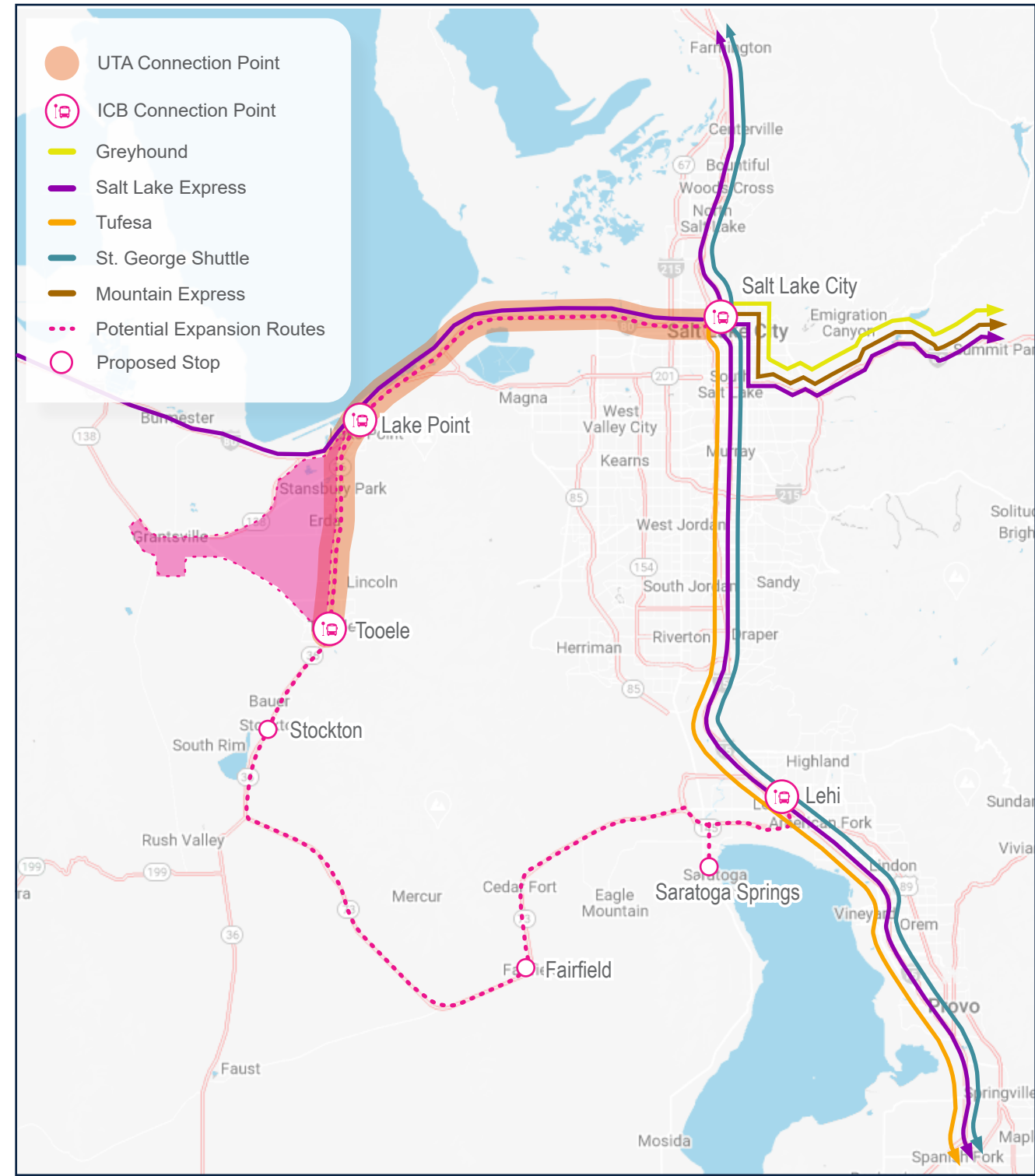


Table 12: Stop Improvements and Location Considerations

Number	Alternative(s)	Stop Description
1	1A, 1B, 2B, 3, 4	<p>SALT LAKE CITY STOP</p> <p>Utah’s intercity bus providers all stop in Salt Lake City, but not at the same location. This creates challenges for passengers who need to connect into other intercity bus or local or regional transit services. Mountain States Express and Greyhound both connect into the Salt Lake City Intermodal hub. Salt Lake Express stops slightly west of the Salt Lake City Intermodal hub, but transit can be conveniently taken between these two connection points. St. George Shuttle’s Salt Lake City stop is in Midvale, although transit access between the Intermodal hub and the stop is relatively seamless via the Trax Blue Line. However, the stop is at a gas station, which may have limited access to restrooms and/or seating for the public.</p> <p>Tufesa stops in West Jordan, a stop that is more difficult to access via transit. In addition, riders board from a strip mall parking lot, which lacks basic amenities such as a restroom or seating. In addition, given that Tufesa’s service to Salt Lake City operates at night, riders may be less comfortable waiting for the bus at this location. Overall, the Salt Lake City Intermodal hub may be a viable candidate for an improved stop for Tufesa because of its amenities, existing intercity bus bays, and connections to both bus and rail transit services.</p>
2	2B, 3	<p>WANSHIP STOP</p> <p>Currently, both Greyhound and Mountain States Express pass through Wanship, but neither of the two services stop, which limits overall mobility and access to intercity bus services. In addition, there is no local transit service in Wanship. Whether an intercity bus stop should be implemented in Wanship depends on whether Alternative 2A is deployed. If there is an opportunity for HVT to expand service in the area to “complete the loop”, an intercity bus stop may seem duplicative given the current and near-term populations and overall lack of local destinations. However, if the “loop” is not implemented, a stop should be considered to improve access. A stop in Wanship by either Greyhound or Mountain States Express would give the community the opportunity to head west to Kimball Junction to connect to other intercity and local/regional transit services and increase overall mobility for Wanship residents.</p>

Table 12: Stop Improvements and Location Considerations (Continued)

Stop Number	Alternative(s)	Stop Description
3	2B, 3	KIMBALL JUNCTION STOP The stop in Kimball Junction provides riders with meaningful connections to Park City, the Kamas Valley, and beyond: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Greyhound and Mountain States Express travel from Kimball Junction north towards Wyoming● Salt Lake Express travels from Kimball Junction west to Vernal● HVT provides transit services between Park City and Kimball Junction; BRT planning for this corridor is underway and could improve speed and reliability in the future
		Currently, Salt Lake Express and Greyhound pick passengers up from a Chevron gas station in Kimball Junction off of I-80, while Mountain States Express picks passengers up from a Holiday Inn Express a few hundred feet away from the Chevron. While the Holiday Inn Express and Chevron provide restrooms, these may be for patrons of those businesses only. In addition, Chevron likely has few options for riders to sit. Overall, both businesses lack public amenities that would make long wait times between transfers comfortable (e.g., shelters, trash cans, etc.). HVT currently provides a connection into Park City via the Kimball Junction Transit Center, which is about half a mile away from the existing Greyhound, Mountain States Express and Salt Lake Express stops at Chevron and the Holiday Inn Express. The Kimball Junction Transit Center provides restrooms and seating and is next door to one of Summit County’s libraries. Travelers who need to connect between the intercity bus services and HVT must cross SR 224. The Kimball Junction Transit Center could be considered as a hub for all four providers because of its amenities and connections to other service providers.

Table 12: Stop Improvements and Location Considerations (Continued)

Stop Number	Alternative(s)	Stop Description
4	4	OGDEN STOP On the northern end of the Alternative 3 route, Salt Lake Express and St. George Shuttle connect into Ogden, which provides connection opportunities for riders to Mountain Green, Morgan, Wanship and beyond without having to head east to Salt Lake City before traveling north to Ogden. This also provides riders traveling between Ogden and the Park City/Heber City area an alternative route via I-84 and I-80; this route is comparable in terms of both route miles and travel time to the Ogden to Heber City via Salt Lake City (I-15 to I-80) route. The St. George Shuttle and Salt Lake Express stops in Ogden are relatively far apart (approximately 9 miles), making transfers between providers challenging. No Utah Transit Authority (UTA) routes travel directly between these two stops. Designating one stop for both providers would increase access and connectivity between these two providers and UTA, which in turn may increase ridership. The Ogden Intermodal Transit Station may be a viable candidate for an improved stop because of its existing intercity bus bays and connections to both bus and rail transit opportunities. In addition, Ogden is an important connection point for additional intercity bus services that are outside of the purview of this Study. FlixBus provides service that connects Salt Lake City to Boise, Idaho via Ogden, routes that continue on to destinations such as Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington. Ogden is also a connection point for Salt Lake Express riders traveling from Salt Lake City to Rexburg, Idaho and beyond. Therefore, providing an intercity bus stop that is furnished with key amenities and that fosters transit connections for both local and long-distance riders is essential.
		MORGAN STOP Currently, there is no intercity bus service or local/regional transit service in Morgan. However, if transit service were to connect into Morgan in the future, riders would have improved connectivity to the Wasatch Front (if transit service could be provided by UTA) or the Wasatch Back (if transit service could be provided by HVT).

Table 12: Stop Improvements and Location Considerations (Continued)

Stop Number	Alternative(s)	Stop Description
6	4	LAKE POINT STOP Currently, only Salt Lake Express runs service to Lake Point. However, residents in Tooele and Grantsville can access this stop via two UTA bus routes (451 and F453). Connections to the Salt Lake Express stop, which is located at a Flying J gas station, are relatively seamless. This stop provides a key connection between Lake Point, Tooele, Grantsville and the intercity bus network. Any future intercity bus service changes, as well as the proposed fixed transit route into Grantsville, should connect seamlessly into UTA’s network.
7	4	TOOELE STOP No intercity bus providers service Tooele directly, rather Salt Lake Express provides a stop in Lake Point and UTA provides connections between that stop and Tooele/Grantsville. While this connection point appears effective, Salt Lake Express could consider implementing a stop in Tooele itself (or relocating the one in Lake Point to Tooele) as population growth continues. Tooele and Grantsville are growing rapidly, which may warrant a designated intercity stop. However, Tooele represents a geographic entry point into the communities to the south, such as Stockton, South Rim, and Rush Valley that are otherwise hard to access by other routes. A Tooele stop would provide access, connection, and mobility opportunities for not only Lehi residents but communities to the west.
8	4	LEHI STOP Currently, no intercity bus providers stop in Lehi. While riders can access Lehi through stops in Orem, Provo, or Draper, a stop in Lehi, with a potential diversion to Saratoga Springs, may be viable. On one hand, Lehi and the surrounding communities, including Saratoga Springs and Eagle Mountain, are growing rapidly, which may warrant a designated intercity stop. On the other hand, Lehi represents a geographic entry point into the communities to the west, such as Fairfield, places that are otherwise challenging to access by other routes and require either traveling around Utah Lake or driving north to Salt Lake City then west to Lake Point. A Lehi stop would improve access, connection, and mobility opportunities for not only Lehi residents but also communities to the west.

Figure 29: Stop Improvements and Location Considerations



Tier 1 Screening

The project team conducted two phases of screening to evaluate proposed route alternatives. Tier 1 screening evaluated the proposed intercity bus corridors in terms of the ability to operate the service and whether the corridor serves enough people to warrant additional service. Tier 1 screening assessed each alternative based on the following criteria:



Population

- Would the proposed service meet the needs of growing populations?
- Can the service provide convenient access to transit for work trips for Transit Equity Index (TEI) populations?



Operational Effectiveness

- Can intercity bus providers realistically integrate the service into their current routes or services?
- Can the alternative easily integrate into existing intercity or regional service?
- Will providers need to find and finance additional buses, drivers, etc. to operate the additional service?



Potential Demand

- Does the proposed service provide trips to and from employment centers, human services, medical centers, and shopping?

Each alternative was assigned a score based on the screening criteria using the following scale:

- Green: Alternative meets the criteria
- Yellow: Alternative meets the criteria moderately or partially
- Red: Alternative fails to meet criteria



Photo Credit: Salt Lake Express

Tier 1 Screening Results

The score for each criterion for each alternative was determined through a comparative analysis between mapped alternative routes and existing conditions maps and data. For Tier 1 screening, a red rating for any of the three criteria was considered a fatal flaw and the alternative was removed from additional consideration. **Table 13** shows the results of each alternative against the three criteria.

Table 13: Tier 1 Screening

Criterion	1A	1B	2A	2B	3	4
Population						
Ability to Operate						
Potential Demand						
Result	Advance	Advance	Eliminate	Advance	Eliminate	Advance

1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (US 89 SOUTH OF SALT LAKE CITY)

Both Alternatives 1A and 1B passed Tier 1 screening. The alternatives along US 89 would serve a growing area and had intercity bus service in the past. Based on historical service models, there is an opportunity to build on lessons learned and provide a different approach from past service provision, including increased marketing and making operational adjustments to meet the Performance Assessment service standards.

2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (WASATCH BACK CONNECTIONS)

Alternative 2A (Expand Existing Service) is not a likely candidate for intercity bus service expansion/funding, and therefore is eliminated as an alternative. The proposed “loop” in Alternative 2A is worth considering for implementation by HVT. In addition, because Alternative 2A only addresses HVT’s current service gap, rather than the Kamas Valley/Park City as a whole, it fails the Population criteria.

Alternative 2B passed the Tier 1 screening because it would serve growing populations, several key destinations (notably employment centers in Provo) and could be integrated into existing service provided by Salt Lake Express. Alternative 2B only moderately fulfilled the Ability to Operate criteria because Salt Lake Express would need to increase the frequency of their Salt Lake City to St. George route while simultaneously re-routing some of those trips, which may require additional funding to support additional drivers and buses.

3 ALTERNATIVE 3 (OGDEN TO HEBER CITY)

Alternative 3 (Ogden to Heber City) did not pass the Tier 1 analysis because it only moderately or partially met the three criteria. In terms of population, while Ogden and Park City/Kimball Junction are population centers, every stop along the route is not. In addition, the stops between Ogden and Kimball Junction lack key destinations such as employment centers, medical facilities, human services, shopping, etc. From an operational effectiveness perspective, providers may not have enough buses or drivers to serve a route that would struggle to maintain a strong ridership base.

4 ALTERNATIVE 4 (SALT LAKE CITY TO LEHI VIA TOOEELE)

Alternative 4 (Salt Lake City to Lehi via Tooele) passed the Tier 1 screening as it would serve new markets and screened well for Operational Effectiveness. However, potential demand would not be as high as with other alternatives. The proposed transit connection in Grantsville and the improved connections in Lake Point and Salt Lake City may help increase ridership.

Tier 2 Screening

For Tier 2 screening, the project team evaluated the alternatives that advanced from the Tier 1 screening to identify potential concerns and to complete a high-level assessment of route performance including total travel time, potential ridership, and operating costs. The Tier 2 evaluation criteria are summarized below.



Total Travel Time

- Will the alternative provide service in a timely manner and is there potential for the service to be competitive with auto travel?
- Are the stops located proximate to the communities (towns, cities, and rural areas) served to make the service easy to use?



Potential Ridership

- Does the route have the potential to attract ridership?
- If so, what are the anticipated ridership levels?



Operating Costs

- Is the operating cost in alignment with existing state-supported intercity bus services?



Potential Farebox Recovery

- Is there potential for farebox recovery?



Transit Service Connectivity

- Does the alternative provide multimodal transportation connections, such as to local and regional transit service and active transportation uses?
- Do the stops along the corridor have local transit service to increase accessibility to local communities for passengers?

Tier 2 Screening Results

Each alternative was screened against each criterion using several methods. Potential ridership and farebox recovery scores were determined based on the population within approximately 5 miles of the corridor. Operating costs were deduced from the cost per mile and resulting anticipated costs. Total travel time was informed by both typical travel times between stops in a car and past and present intercity bus timetables and service frequencies. Transit service connectivity was assessed by cross-comparing alternatives with existing transit service areas. Scores are illustrated with the same green-yellow-red scheme that was used for Tier 1 screening. **Table 14** shows the results of how each alternative scored against each of the four criteria.

Table 14: Tier 2 Screening

Criterion	1A	1B	2B	4
Travel Time				
Ridership				
Operating Cost				
Farebox recovery				
Transit Connections				
Result	Eliminate	Advance	Advance	Eliminate

1 ALTERNATIVE 1 (US 89 SOUTH OF SALT LAKE CITY)

Alternative 1A (Salt Lake City to Richfield) failed the ridership criteria of the Tier 2 analysis. It would not connect as well to other intercity and transit services at the southern terminus. While this alternative would be lower cost to operate compared to Alternative 1B, it would likely be less productive due to the potential of lower ridership.

Alternative 1B (Salt Lake City to Beaver via Richfield) would perform better than Alternative 1A due to its connection to Beaver. While this connection increases the corridor length, it would be essential to increase productivity over previously offered service on this corridor. In the communities that currently do not have transit service, local connections would need to be added for this route to perform well.

2 ALTERNATIVE 2 (WASATCH BACK CONNECTIONS)

Alternatives 2B (Salt Lake City to Provo via Heber City and Kamas) is a competitive route in terms of travel time, potential for ridership, farebox recovery, and transit connections. Riders have multiple opportunities to connect to HVT, Greyhound, Tufesa, Mountain States Express, St. George Shuttle, UTA, and additional Salt Lake Express routes, such as their service to Vernal and St. George. In addition, operating cost is relatively low compared to the other alternatives, making implementation more feasible.

4 ALTERNATIVE 4 (SALT LAKE CITY TO LEHI VIA TOOEELE)

Alternative 4B (Salt Lake City to Lehi via Tooele) received a low rating due to lower ridership and the competition with existing intercity and regional transit service. It would be a slower route with low farebox recovery potential based on current conditions. Future consideration of this alternative should focus on regional transit expansions in the future.

Final Evaluation of Proposed Expansion Alternatives

Following the series of evaluations that incorporate various screening criteria, two alternatives rose to the top as priorities for advancing and expanding Utah’s intercity bus network and improving overall connectivity to local and regional transit service. The final recommendations for new service, in order of priority, are described below. **Table 15** shows how each of these alternatives support intercity goals and minimize gaps in transit service across the state.

1B

US 89 SOUTH OF SALT LAKE CITY
(ALTERNATIVE 1B – SALT LAKE CITY TO BEAVER VIA RICHFIELD)

This route is located in a current “transit desert” (an area that has no existing transit service) and would serve a corridor with strong future growth potential. It represents a relatively easy corridor for implementing transit service with competitive travel time, although generating sufficient ridership may be a challenge. UDOT should considered lessons learned with previous service to make the new route a success: create a connection to the St. George corridor at Beaver, schedule trips for same-day round trips to Salt Lake City and interline with another intercity bus service like the Vernal route.

2B

WASATCH BACK CONNECTIONS
(ALTERNATIVE 2B – SALT LAKE CITY TO PROVO VIA HEBER CITY)

Alternative 2B estimates high ridership potential in a growing area with a need for enhanced mobility options and would serve growing population areas, several key destinations, and provides multiple connection opportunities to other transit providers. Alternative 2B would also eliminate an existing intercity bus service gap between Provo and Heber City/the Wasatch Back with a route that is competitive in terms of travel time and vehicle miles travelled. Service could be implemented in a manner that allows for easy connections between other services, such as the Salt Lake Express Vernal route and HVT service into Park City. The primary obstacle would be increasing Salt Lake Express frequencies, which may require additional drivers and buses, thus increasing overall operating costs for the provider.

Table 15: Summary of Needs Met by Each Alternative

Route	Alt #	Connections to Existing ICB Stops	New Rural Stops	Population Centers Served	Employment Centers Served	Growing Areas Served	Transit Propensity Areas Served	Connections to Current Transit Service
Salt Lake City to Beaver via Richfield	1B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Salt Lake City (SLE, T, MSE, SGS, G)Provo/Orem (SLE, T, SGS)Richfield (G)Beaver	Ephraim, Gunnison, and Salina	Salt Lake County, Utah County, Sanpete County	Salt Lake County, Utah County	Salt Lake County, Utah County	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Zero Vehicles (SLC)Minority (SLC, Gunnison, Salina)Poverty (Richfield, Gunnison, Salina)LEP (Provo)Older Adults (Poverty (Richfield, Gunnison, Salina)Youth (Provo/Orem)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">UTA (SLC, Provo/Orem)
Salt Lake City to Provo via Heber City	2B	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Salt Lake City (SLE, T, MSE, SGS, G)Park City via Kimball Junction (SLE, MSE)Heber City (SLE)Provo/Orem (SGS, SLE, T)	The Kamas Valley, including Francis, Oakley and Kamas *	Summit County, Utah County, Salt Lake County	Summit County, Utah County, Salt Lake County	Summit County, Utah County, Salt Lake County	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Zero Vehicles (SLC)Minority (SLC)LEP (Provo)Youth (Provo)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HVT (Park City, Kamas, SLC)UTA (SLC, Provo)Park City Transit (Park City)

Key: SLE – Salt Lake Express T – Tufesa MSE – Mountain States Express SGS – St. George Shuttle G – Greyhound SLC – Salt Lake City
* If implemented with 2A

Funding

A combination of existing and future funding will be required to support the expansion of intercity bus service in Utah. 5311(f) funding may potentially be used, but this would require redirecting funds from existing services. Alternatively, funding could be redirected from 5311 rural transit funding to support intercity bus service, which could impact current 5311 subrecipients.

Existing Funding

For 2024, an estimated \$7,684,350 is available for statewide rural transit, with \$1,152,653 (15 percent) apportioned to operating intercity bus services (currently the Vernal and Blanding routes, operated by Salt Lake Express) and the remainder supporting 5311 rural transit providers. The 2024 intercity 5311(f) funding increased compared to 2023 numbers, but only by approximately \$60,000 as 2023 5311(f) funding for intercity bus service was \$1,092,299.

Future Funding

Currently, UDOT uses the entirety of its 15 percent of 5311(f) funding to support two routes: the Vernal route and the Blanding route. Because of this, no additional 5311(f) funds are available to support improvements to existing service or to provide new intercity bus service, unless 5311(f) funding is allocated away from the routes currently funded. The state could invest more than the required 15 percent of its Section 5311 funding on intercity bus service. This would take 5311 funds away from other rural transit providers across the state.

Successful transit service also depends on the availability of facilities and infrastructure to improve intermodal connections and to enhance the user experience. 5311(f) funding can be used to invest in capital facilities. This could include new or improved bus stops and transfer facilities. Additional funding sources are available to support capital investments to support intercity bus service, which includes FTA Section 5339(b) Grants for Buses & Bus Facilities and 5339(c) Low or No Emission Vehicle Program.

Another option would be for the state to identify additional funding sources to support intercity bus service beyond the current 15 percent funding available through 5311(f). This would require determination of where the funds could be generated from and/or if a general fund allocation would be appropriate. Any additional state funding would require working with the state legislature and approval of this funding in the annual budget.

Key Takeaways

The project team recommends that UDOT focus on the following four priorities for the future of intercity bus in the state of Utah:

- Continue operating existing intercity bus service and coordinate with service providers to improve efficiency for lower-performing routes. Options include decreasing deadhead times and mileage, interlining the route with other services, and adjusting the route and stops for higher ridership and faster service.

- Monitor ridership along popular routes such as the Salt Lake City-St. George corridor to evaluate capacity and match future service with demand as population in the area grows. While this corridor does not currently receive 5311(f) funding, it is part of the statewide intercity system and should be checked occasionally to determine if transit passenger needs are being met.
- Coordinate among private intercity bus providers and local transit agencies to increase connections at intercity bus stops.
- Develop new intercity bus service for areas that currently do not have transit service and are seen as growth corridors or areas.

Recommendations for future intercity bus service, in order of priority, include:

- **US 89 South of Salt Lake City:**
This corridor will experience future growth if population forecasts are realized and currently lacks transit service. This corridor would have the potential to use 5311(f) or new funding sources.
- **Wasatch Back Connections:**
This route is recommended given its high ridership potential, projected population growth in the area, and the overall need for better transit connections and mobility options. Additional discussion with FTA is needed for this route to determine eligibility of 5311(f) funding and to understand funding coordination opportunities using 5311 and 5311(f) funding to improve service frequencies and coverage with HVT.



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Recommendations and Implementation Strategies

Transit services provide crucial connections and transportation options for people to access jobs, human services, shopping, recreation, and other critical services. However, with limited funding available, developing key actions to advance service in the state of Utah is important. This section provides a summary of key recommendations and potential action steps to advance intercity bus service in the state of Utah. **Table 16** outlines short and longer term potential implementation strategies.

Service Recommendations Summary

Based on the identified gaps and needs and the evaluation of current and potential service, the following focus areas emerged to advance intercity bus in the State of Utah:

- Continue funding Salt Lake Express’s Vernal and Blanding routes if they continue to stay above the thresholds established in the Performance Assessment. Consider alternative routes for 5311(f) funding if these routes decline in performance and/or additional funding to expand intercity service to new routes. Coordinate with service providers to improve efficiency for lower-performing routes. Options include decreasing deadhead times and mileage, interlining the route(s) with other services, and adjusting route(s) and stops to attract ridership and provide faster service.

- Monitor ridership along popular routes such as the Salt Lake City-St. George corridor to evaluate capacity and match future service with demand as population in the area grows. While this corridor does not currently receive 5311(f) funding, it is part of the statewide intercity system and should be reviewed occasionally to determine if transit passenger needs are being met.
- This evaluation will require UDOT to continue coordination between providers in this corridor (Salt Lake Express, Tufesa, and St. George Shuttle). Because these providers do not receive 5311(f) funding for this route, they are not required to share ridership data with UDOT. Rider surveys on existing provider services may ease data collection needs for UDOT and also provide insight into rider experience for both the providers and UDOT.
- Coordinate among private intercity bus providers and local transit agencies to increase connections at intercity bus stops. UDOT should consider both proximity to transit and first-last mile amenities when coordinating new stops with providers. More details are provided in **Connectivity Opportunities** in the following section.

Final recommendations for future intercity bus service, in order of priority, include:

- **US 89 South of Salt Lake City:**
Implementation of this route would serve a corridor with future growth potential currently lacking transit. This corridor would have the potential to use 5311(f) or new funding sources.
- **Wasatch Back Connections:**
Implementation of this route would be beneficial due to high ridership potential, growing area, and the need for better transit connections. Additional discussion with FTA is needed for this route to determine eligibility of 5311(f) funding and to understand funding coordination opportunities using 5311 and 5311(f) funding to improve service frequencies and coverage with HVT.

Connectivity Opportunities

To increase connections between private intercity bus service and local public transit, communication across all agencies is critical. The primary goal is for multiple service providers to share stops or transit facilities, thereby making transfers easier while providing the opportunity to implement timed transfers.

Intercity and local/regional transit providers working together to provide timed connections and communicate with each other for future schedule and service adjustments will result in better connections.

Future standards for state-supported services should require that a local or a regional transit connection be available for an intercity stop to be added to a route. Doing so will help boost ridership at stops because these routes will be better supported through increased community access. Meeting service standards will also increase overall coverage as the local and regional transit services will serve as an extension of the intercity bus service.



Implementation Strategies

Table 16: Implementation Strategies

Planning Horizon		Year 1	Years 2-3	Years 4-5
STRATEGY AREA 1: TRANSIT SERVICE				
1.1	Coordinate with Salt Lake Express to determine viability of transitioning 5311(f) funding from the Blanding and Vernal routes to support service expansion as recommended above.	✓		
1.2	Coordinate with Salt Lake Express, St. George Shuttle, and/or Tufesa to determine viability of service expansion along US 89 to provide service from Salt Lake City to Beaver (with stops in between as noted in Alternative 1B).	✓		
1.3A	Meet with FTA to determine viability of using 5311(f) funding to support service expansion to the Wasatch Back in coordination with HVT.	✓		
1.3B	Coordinate with Salt Lake Express and/or Mountain States Express to determine viability of providing an intercity bus stop in Wanship.	✓		
1.4	Based on outcomes above, develop funding strategy to redirect funding to support service expansion. This could be additional state funding or coordination of funding sources with private and/or public providers.		✓	
1.5	Fund and implement new service on US 89 South of Salt Lake City and within the Wasatch Back as funding becomes available.			✓
1.6	Utilize the performance standards (developed in the Performance Assessment) to evaluate intercity bus service on an annual basis. If service is not meeting performance standards, consider service modifications and/or reallocation of 5311(f) funding.	✓	✓	✓

Planning Horizon		Year 1	Years 2-3	Years 4-5
STRATEGY AREA 2: COORDINATION				
2.1	Conduct annual meetings with intercity bus providers that provide service on routes not funded with 5311(f). As available, review ridership and financial data to better assess performance and coordinate with providers to see how UDOT could support coordination of services to improve efficiency. Discuss ridership and demand for service with intercity bus providers. Discuss opportunities to ensure capacity can meet future demand.	✓	✓	✓
2.2	Consider implementation of rider surveys on all services currently operating in the state of Utah. Coordinate with providers (both 5311(f) funded) to determine the feasibility of such a survey, the contents of that survey, and timelines for implementation.	✓	✓	
2.3	Utilize data and findings from rider surveys to assess ridership, determine if routes are reaching maximum capacity, and identify improvements as needed.		✓	✓
2.4A	Utilize data and findings, including identification of gaps and needs, from Intercity Bus Study to inform Statewide Transit Plan. This includes the need for new service South of Blanding in San Juan County that could feed into the intercity bus network.	✓	✓	✓
2.4B	Utilize data and findings, including identification of gaps and needs, from rider surveys to inform Statewide Transit Plan and future funding needs.		✓	✓
2.5	Convene local and regional transit service providers with intercity providers to identify opportunities for improved connections between local/regional and intercity bus services. This includes stop locations, timed transfers, and coordination of future schedule changes. This may also include first-last mile opportunities when feasible.	✓	✓	✓

Planning Horizon		Year 1	Years 2-3	Years 4-5
STRATEGY AREA 2: COORDINATION (CONTINUED)				
2.6	Convene intercity providers to identify opportunities for improved traveler information and joint marketing campaigns to increase ease of use of transit.		✓	
2.7	Convene intercity providers to determine opportunities for improved ticketing and fare payment (e.g., Mobility-as-a-Service [MaaS]). Identify next steps and implement as feasible.			✓
STRATEGY AREA 3: FUNDING				
3.1	Determine the feasibility of allocating additional 5311(f) funds to intercity bus services.	✓	✓	
3.2	Convene meetings with a broad group of UDOT staff to identify opportunities for new state funding to support intercity bus service. Depending on outcomes, meet with legislative affairs staff to determine viability of requesting new funding from the legislature to fund intercity bus service and/or rural transit service.	✓	✓	
3.3	Partner with local transit agencies to identify bus stops/transfer centers that support both intercity and regional/local service. Support transit agencies in development of 5339(b) Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities in partnership with local and regional agencies to fund capital bus stop improvement projects.		✓	✓

Planning Horizon		Year 1	Years 2-3	Years 4-5
STRATEGY AREA 4: INFRASTRUCTURE				
4.1	Existing Stops: Plan and fund stop improvements and/or stop locations to better connect services and provide improved passenger amenities. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salt Lake City• Kimball Junction• Ogden• Lake Point	✓	✓	✓
4.2	New Stops: If intercity bus routes are implemented in areas where service does not currently exist, then plan and fund the following stops: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Morgan• Lehi• Wanship• Tooele	✓	✓	✓
4.3	Stop Infrastructure: Ensure that all intercity bus stops have the appropriate amenities to ensure that transfers are safe, comfortable and convenient. Amenities should include seating, restrooms, trash receptacles and shelter at a minimum. Lighting and wayfinding information is also encouraged.	✓	✓	✓
4.4	Determine if federal funds, such as 5339(b) funds can be utilized to add, improve, or change the location of intercity bus stops to create better connections between intercity bus and transit services.	✓	✓	✓

