

# **Rural Coordination-When Does Consolidation Make More Sense?**

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# Agenda

1. Coordination Overview
2. Rural Transportation Issues
3. Analysis (Montana Example)
4. Conclusions & Recommendations

# What is Coordination?

“The harmonious functioning of parts for (the) most effective results”

- Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (Tenth Edition)

# What is Coordination?

A process through which representatives of different agencies and client groups work together to achieve any one or all of the following goals:

- More cost effective service delivery
- Increased capacity to serve unmet needs
- Improved quality of service
- Services which are more easily understood and accessed by riders

❖ Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility

# Levels of Coordination

Communication	“Informally” working together, providing basic information
Collaboration	Joint use agreements, formalization of the process of working toward the benefit of all participants
Consolidation	Joining or merging of resources for the benefit of all participants

# Rural Transportation Issues

- Longer Distances
- Lower Population Densities
- Limited Services in Small Communities
  - Services, goods, employment, etc.
- Few Transportation Options

**NY**

**MD**

**VT**

**MT**

**CT**

**NH**

**RI**

**MA**

**ME**

**NJ**

**DE**

# MT vs. VT

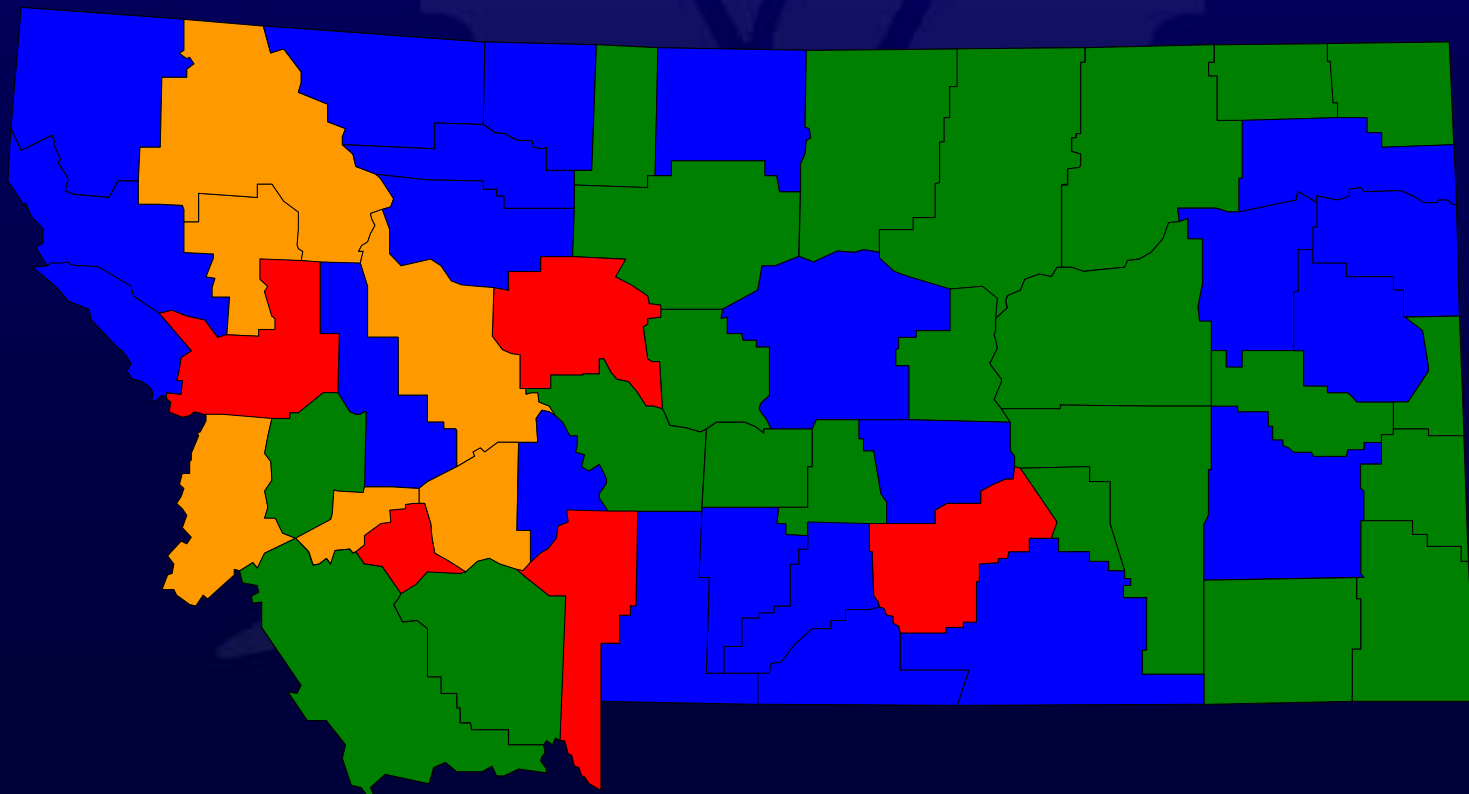
	Montana	Vermont
Population (09 estimate)	974,989	621,760
Land area (sq. mi.)	145,552.43	9,249.56
Avg. Population Density	6.2	65.8
# of Counties	56	14
Highest County Density	49.1 (Yellowstone)	271.9 (Chittenden)
Lowest County Density	0.3 (Garfield & Petroleum)	9.7 (Essex & Franklin)

Montana could hold 15.7 Vermonts, but would have only 10% of that population

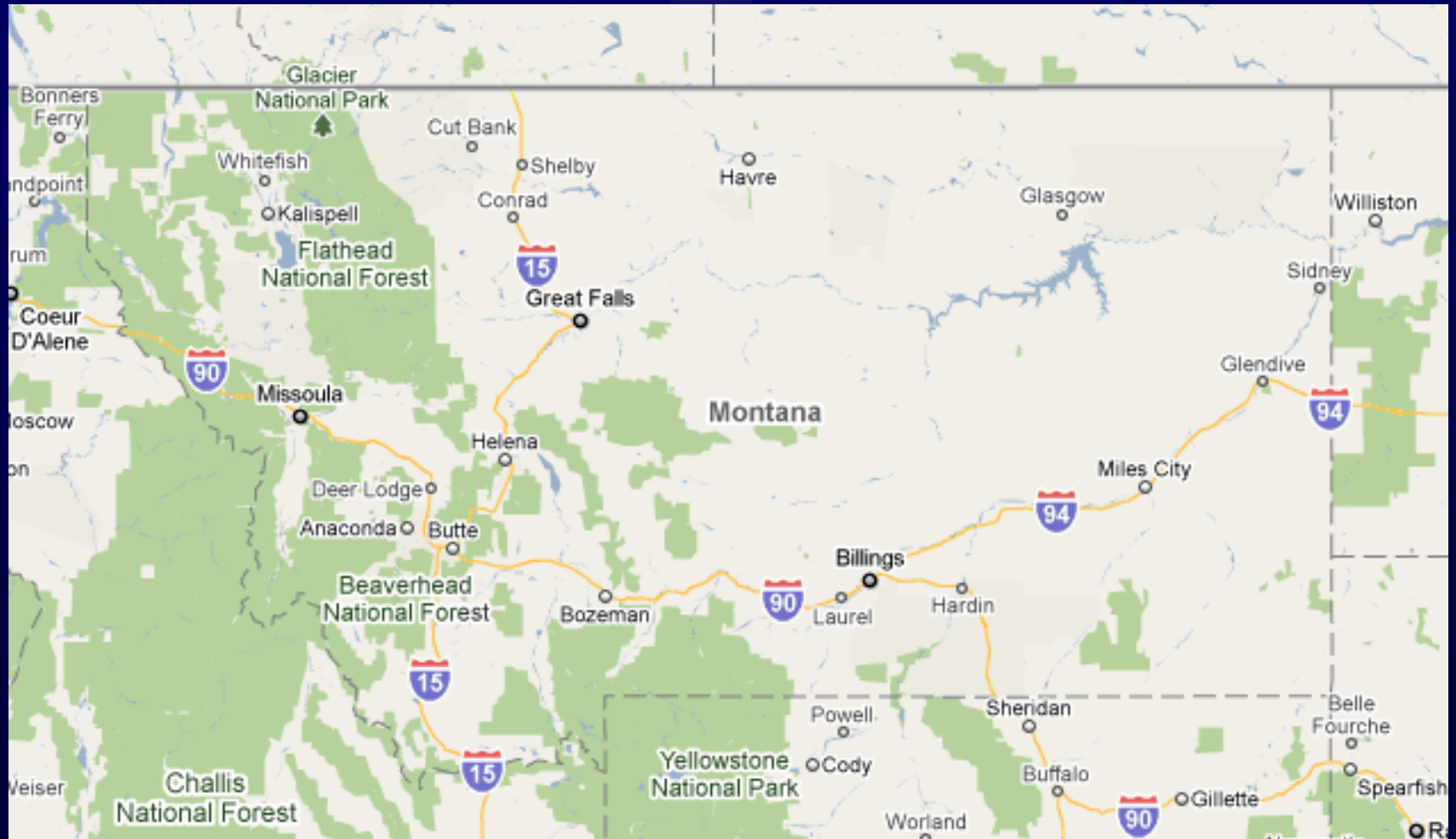


# Population Density

# of people per square mile



# Analysis Area



# Hi Line



Malta to Havre =	85 miles	Phillips County = 3,944 people, 0.9 sq mi
Havre to Chester =	60 miles	Blaine County = 6,485 people, 1.7 sq mi
Chester to Shelby =	44 miles	Hill County = 16,632 people, 5.8 sq mi
Shelby to Kalispell =	150 miles	Liberty County = 1,748 people, 1.5 sq mi
Malta to Kalispell =	339 miles	Toole County = 5,151 people, 2.8 sq mi
Havre to Great Falls =	113 miles	Glacier County = 13,550 people, 4.4 sq mi

# Transit Systems

- Phillip County Transit Authority
  - 7 vehicles, 5 contracts (demand response)
- North Central Montana Transit
  - 9 vehicles, 2 contracts (fixed route)
- Liberty County
  - 4 vehicles, no contracts (demand response)
- Toole County Transit/Northern Transit Interlocal
  - 4 vehicles, local/regional service (flex route)



# Analysis

	Rides	Miles	Cost/Ride	Cost/Mile	Admin	Admin as % of Budget
Liberty County	13,492	26,770	\$7.95	\$4.01	\$32,665	30.4%
NCMT	16,255	146,982	\$18.89	\$1.80	\$44,256	15.5%
Phillips County	45,569	64,204	\$5.01	\$3.01	\$51,683	24.5%
Toole County	2,555	22,076	\$17.49	\$1.97	\$4,731	10.7%
NTI	3,657	69,133	\$30.06	\$1.57	\$14,949	13.7%
Totals	81,528	329,165	\$9.78	\$2.18	\$148,284	19.6%
Skyline	106,484	246,805	\$7.11	\$3.07	\$128,994	17.0%
Streamline/GALAVAN	298,975	519,052	\$3.84	\$2.21	\$199,136	17.3%

FY 10 figures, source: Montana Department of Transportation

# Considerations

- Distances
- Direction of Travel
- Number of entities involved
- Politics
- Needs of the public/riders!



# Conclusions

- Rural areas often lead to small transit systems
- Often need to get smaller systems started, and then discuss coordination and consolidation
- State can play a role, but often defers to local decisions
- Regional systems can be difficult to implement politically

# Recommendations

- Analyze performance of small systems
- Look at ratio of administration costs to entire budget
- Ask the question, “Will consolidation allow more money to be spent on service?” If so, move ahead, given political realities.



# Questions and Discussion

