

THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF TRANSIT IN YAVAPAI COUNTY- TRANSLATING BENEFITS AND LESSONS
FOR OTHER URBANIZING COMMUNITIES

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This presentation summarizes efforts to identify and estimate the economic benefits of transit in central Yavapai County, Arizona, a largely rural county in north-central Arizona with a population of 200,000 residents, half of which are in a small urbanized area. In this report, we summarize how improved mobility and access to transportation could enhance educational, employment, and health outcomes for different groups. First, we describe the community and its needs in an introductory section. The second section provides a background and literature review of economic frameworks and findings of other studies. The next section is divided into sections discussing the pathways by which mobility improves the employment, educational, health and other outcomes of this particular community, drawing on local, regional and national datasets to define estimates for this county. We conclude with recommendations for understanding the value of transit services to this region in order to make informed community-based decisions about transit investment. We also offer general recommendations that could be applied to communities with similar constraints and constituencies to estimate the value of transit.

The research effort being presented stems from a larger mobility management study that involved coordinating services across multiple existing transportation providers, including private, public and non-profit transit and human services agencies that operate across rural and urban boundaries. The challenges involved with coordinating rural and urban transit funds and the various needs of customers traveling long distances, as is common in rural areas, had to be considered in estimating the benefits. Thus, financial strategies for funding services that cross urban and rural boundaries were taken into consideration.