

Zero-Fare Public Transit Review

Coordinated Intermodal Connections Review

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PRESENTATION TO HOUSE TRANSPORTATION



Two Systems: Rural and Urban

5311 Rural - \$575,000 Fare Revenues (Pre-COVID)

- Roughly half of the rural routes were already zero-fare
- 3%-9% farebox recovery (% of operating budget) on most routes

5307 Urban - \$2,200,000 Fare Revenues (Pre-COVID)

- All routes were charging a fare
- A more robust system that allows for more service, hours, coverage
- 20-25% farebox recovery

Reports Addressing Zero-Fare Policies

The 2020 Section 20 report on *Methods to Increase the Use of Public Transit* examined the potential costs and benefits of a fare-free policy.

- Increase in ridership with more trips by existing riders
- System is easier to use
- Reduced investments in farebox associated capital and overheads. Fareboxes, handling cash, etc.

Transit Financing Study to be discussed later this morning.

- p. 5 & 6

Status and FY23 Fare Planning

If fares are reimposed, the continued ridership losses due to COVID will provide less revenue (\$2.2m to less than \$1.5m).

5311 rural program has COVID relief funds to help maintain zero-fare routes through FY23. AOT will review budgets and consider extending zero-fares on an annual basis.

5307 urban program (Green Mountain Transit) is considering reimposing fares in FY23 and is reviewing this with their Board of Commissioners.

VTrans Intermodal Connectivity Study

A statewide review of ferry, train, and bus connections

January 2022

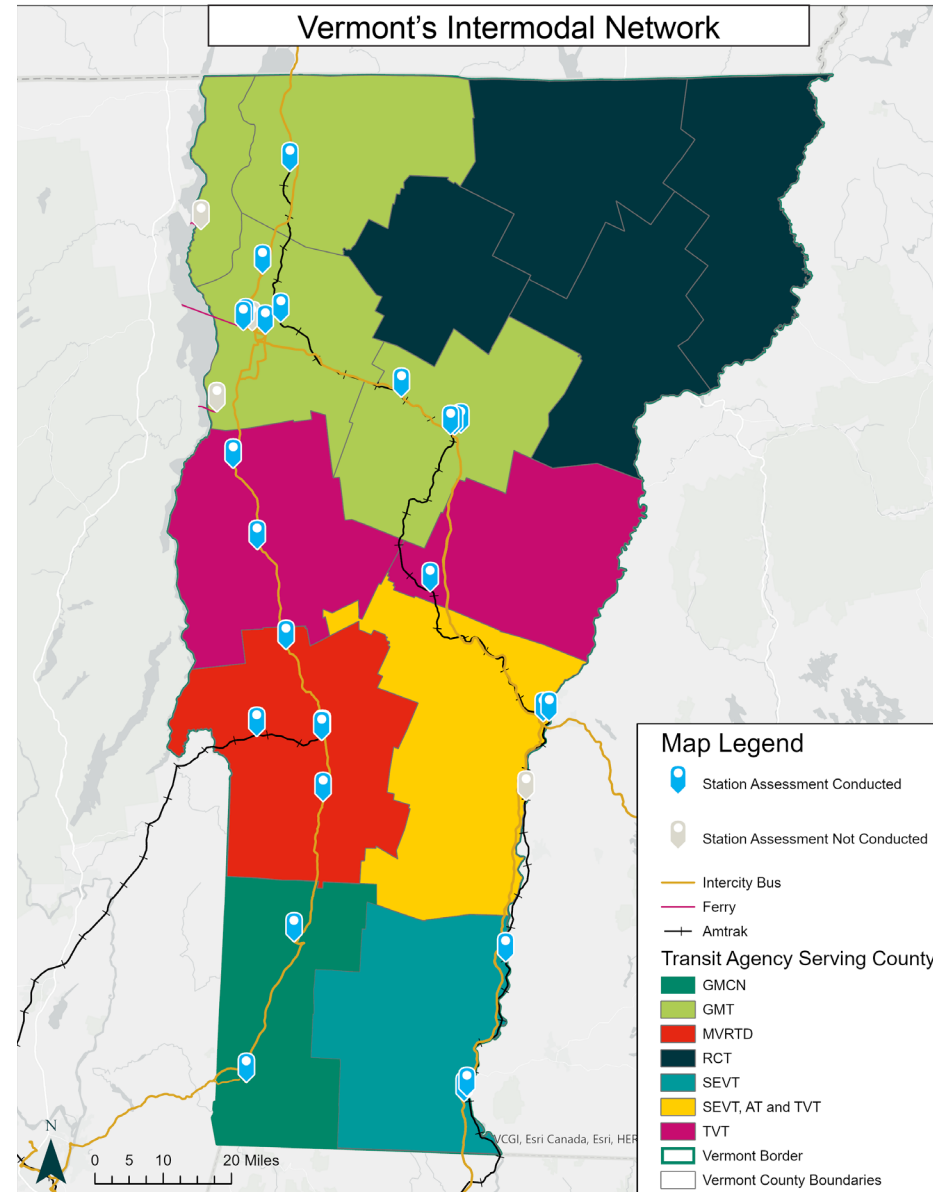
H.433 Sec. 32. COORDINATED INTERMODAL CONNECTIONS REVIEW:

The Agency, in coordination with public transit, passenger rail, and other transportation service providers, shall review and implement coordinate intermodal connections, to the extent practicable, to ensure efficient and accessible intermodal transportation opportunities in Vermont. The Agency shall also work with transportation service providers to support the cross promotion of intermodal connections.

Study Process

Research involved 4 components:

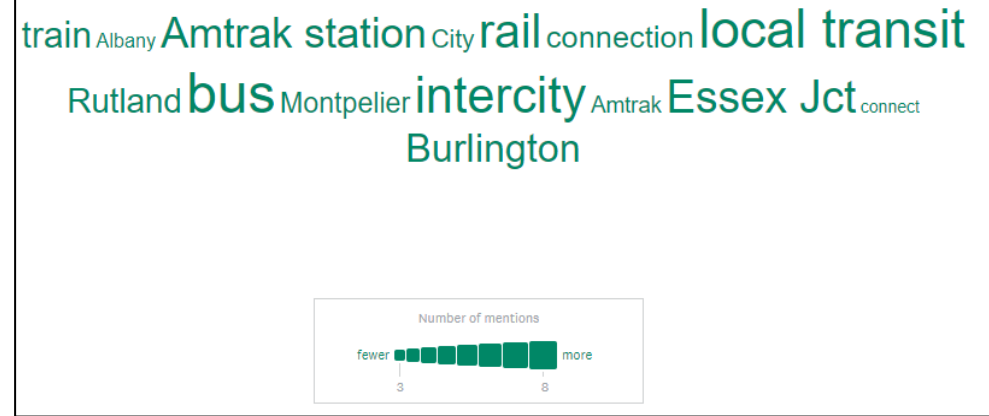
- Review past reports and studies (7)
- Stakeholder engagement
 - Survey (14 responses)
 - Interviews (2 individuals)
- Schedule connection analysis (890)
- Station field assessment (24)



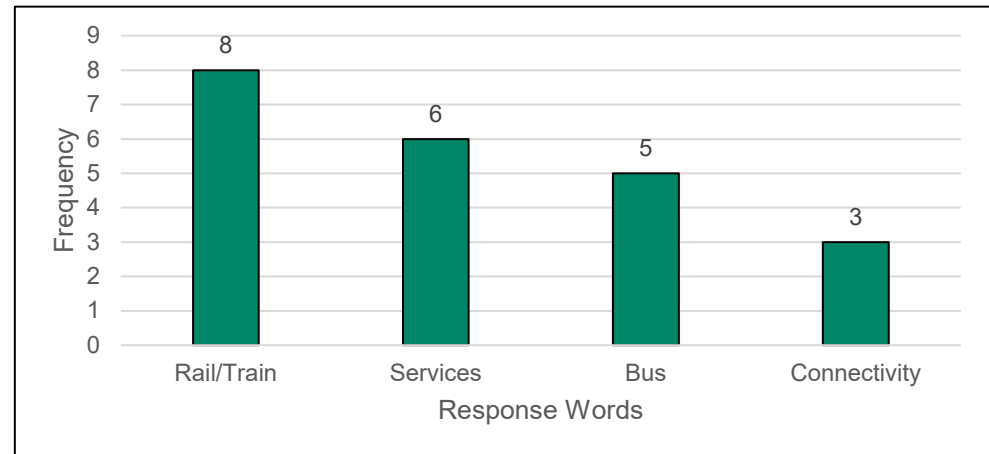
Stakeholder Engagement: Results

- Job concentration and demand
- Albany connection is valuable
- Amtrak on-time performance impacts decisions
- Better local bus service = better long-distance connections
- System knowledge is low
- Intermodal relations can be improved
- Rail and service improvements are a priority

Where in Vermont is it easy to connect between passenger rail/intercity bus and local transit?



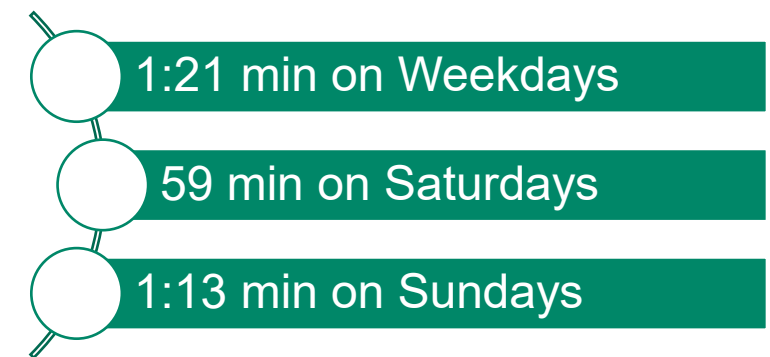
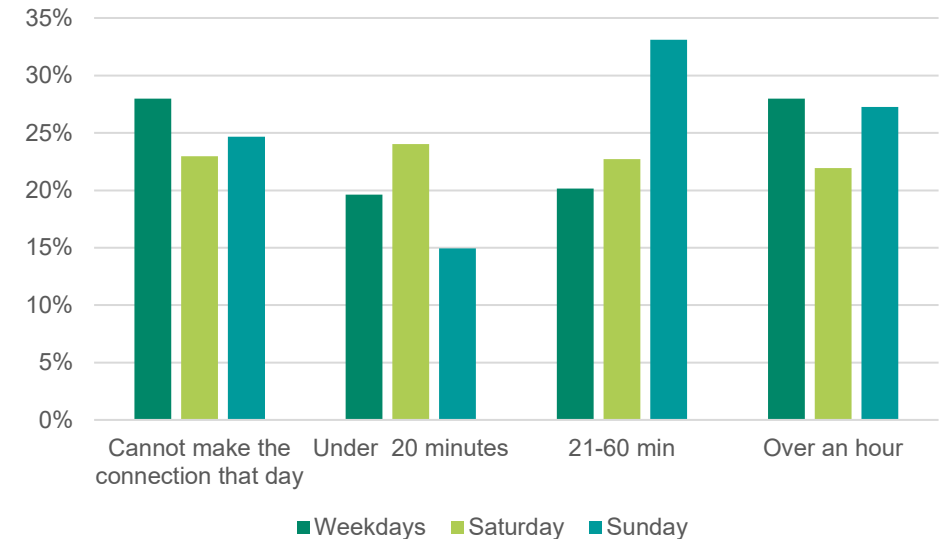
Are some of these challenges more pressing than others? Which connectivity gaps would you like to see prioritized?



Schedule Analysis: Results

- 28 stations/stops, 24 had local service
- 37.5% stations have no local Saturday service, 62.5% on Sunday
- 26% intermodal connections cannot be made
- Commuter bus routes have fewer intermodal connections than local routes
- Vermonter NB and PM VT Translines arrive after most local service has ended for the day
- Intercity and rail rarely serve the same location
- Little difference in wait times between intercity and rail connections

Average Connection Wait Times



Station Assessments

Bennington

215 Pleasant St., 215 Pleasant St, Bennington, VT 05201



Modes Served

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Intercity | VT Translines & Yankee Trails |
| Rail | N/A |
| Ferry | N/A |
| Commuter Bus | SEVT & GMCN |
| Local Bus | GMCN |

07

Local and
Commuter Bus
Routes Service
the Stop

| Signage | Amenities | Wayfinding Information |
|---------|-----------|------------------------|
|---------|-----------|------------------------|

There is no signage for intercity bus service.

There is a local bus building with a waiting room for local service that intercity users can use. The building was closed at the time of observation, but it is possible there is intercity information.

There is wayfinding service for cars.

Local/Commuter Bus Connections

| <p>The main office for GMCT is located on site and it is very clear where busses pick individuals up. There is a parking lot nearby as well.</p> | Bus Stop Amenities | |
|--|---|--|
| | Bus stop sign | ✓ |
| | Information on bus routes servicing stop | ✓ |
| | Schedule Information | ✓ |
| | Contact info (website, email, phone number or app) on how to get schedule info | ✓ |
| | Fare information | ✓ |
| Other: electric car charging stations | | ✓ |
| Intermodal connections and wait times between local/commuter bus | | |
| <p>Weekday Average wait time: 1:37 Less than 20 minute wait: 14 (13%) 21-60 minute wait: 26 (23%) 1-6 hour wait: 41 (37%) Trips with no connections: 31 (28%)</p> | <p>Saturdays Average wait time: 1:33 Less than 20 minute wait: 3 (13%) 21-60 minute wait: 6 (25%) 1-6 hour wait: 5 (21%) Trips with no connections: 10 (42%)</p> | <p>Sundays There is no Sunday commuter/local service.</p> |

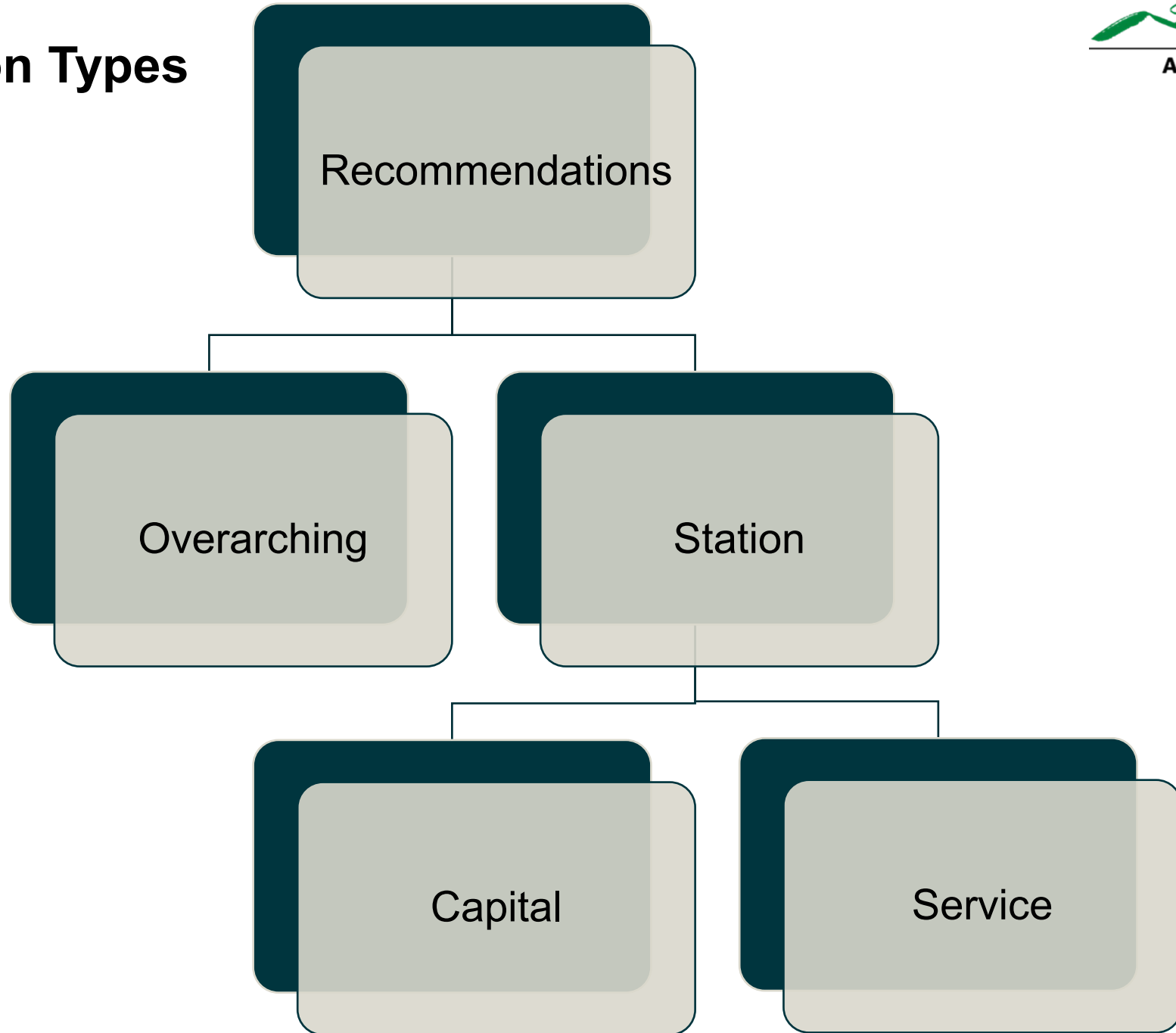
Areas of concern/opportunities for improvement

- Install intercity bus signage include stop location, schedule, fare, and contact information.]
- Install real-time arrival and departure screens.
- Extend evening local service hours on Saturdays to allow for a connection with VT Transit Lines.
- Extend evening local service hours on Weekdays to allow for connection with Yankee Trails.
- Improve midday and early afternoon connections between intercity and local bus connections such as the weekday Emerald Line and weekend Orange Line.
- Provide Sunday local and commuter bus service.



Figure 1. Sample Display Sign (Source: E Ink)

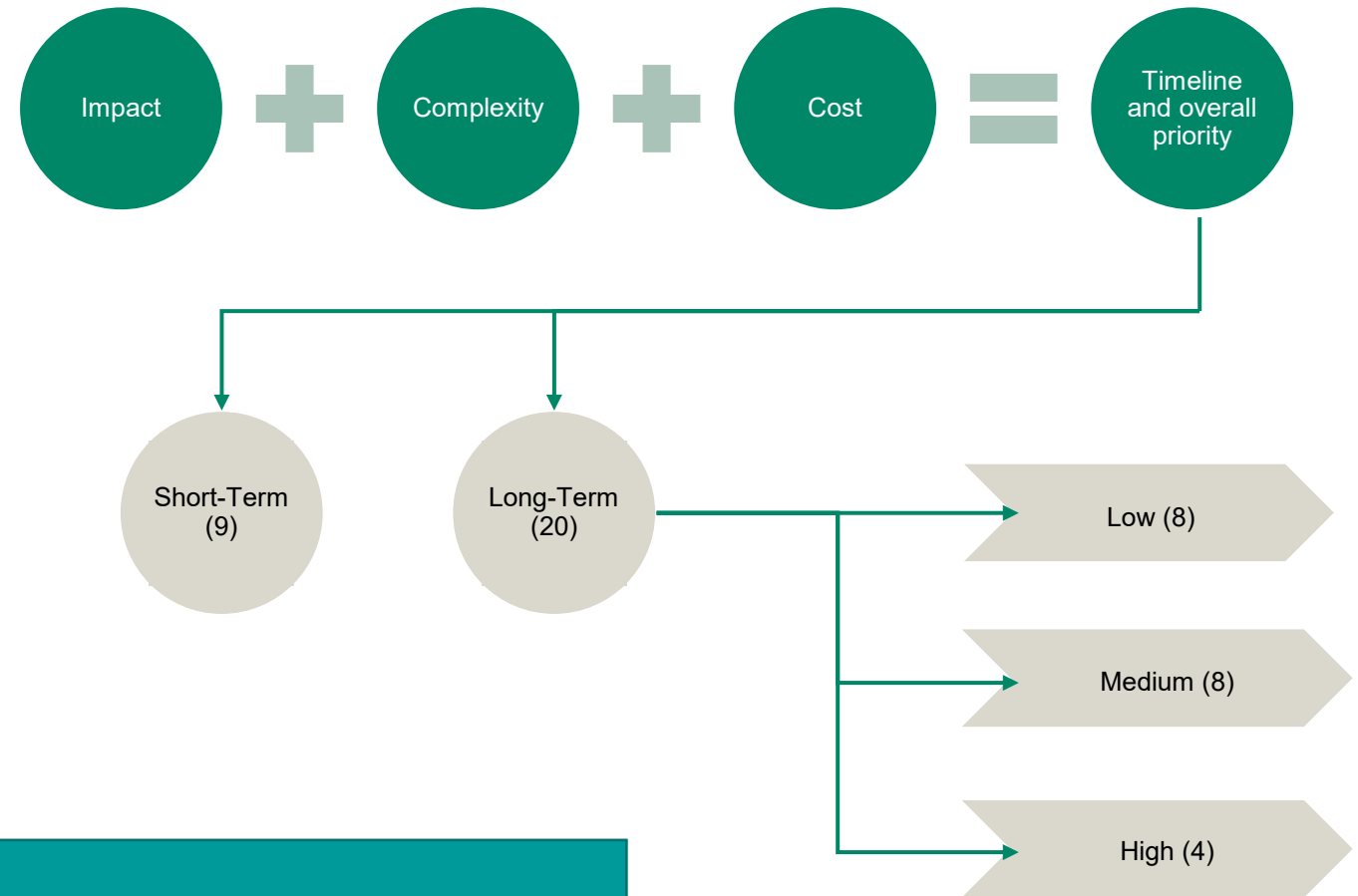
Recommendation Types



Prioritization










Process for prioritization

- Establish consideration criteria:
 - Impact
 - Complexity
 - Cost
- Establish timeline and overall priority







29 Recommendations

Short-Term Recommendations

| Symbol | Recommendation | Type | Applicable Stops/Stations |
|---|--|-------------|---------------------------|
|  | Replace/update existing signage at stations/stops | Capital | 11 (39.3%) |
|  | Provide train schedule information that is visible from outside the station waiting area | Capital | 5 (17.9%) |
|  | Provide local bus schedule or contact information at local stop or station platform | Capital | 14 (50.0%) |
|  | Provide intercity bus schedule information | Capital | 9 (32.1%) |
|  | Begin local weekday service up to 2 hours earlier to improve connections | Service | 11 (39.3%) |
|  | Extend local weekday service up to 2 hours later to allow for additional connections | Service | 18 (64.3%) |
|  | Improve and add additional communications that promote the Transit App | Overarching | N/A |
|  | Provide connecting transit (routes) information on provider websites | Overarching | N/A |
|  | Biannual meetings amongst stakeholders to foster collaboration | Overarching | N/A |

Long-Term Recommendations: High Priority



| Symbol | Recommendation | Type | Applicable Stops/Stations |
|---|---|-------------|---------------------------|
|  | Install new signage where signage currently doesn't exist | Capital | 16 (57.1%) |
|  | Utilize service extensions as an opportunity to promote transit connections | Overarching | N/A |
|  | Improve weekday connections at intermodal facilities | Service | 5 (17.9%) |
|  | Improve weekend connections at intermodal facilities | Service | 5 (17.9%) |

Long-Term Recommendations: Medium Priority



| Symbol | Recommendation | Type | Applicable Stops/Stations |
|--------|---|-------------|---------------------------|
| | Seating at local bus stop | Capital | 11 (39.3%) |
| | Install pedestrian wayfinding between station and local bus stop | Capital | 13 (46.4%) |
| | Build new indoor or sheltered waiting area at station | Capital | 5 (17.9%) |
| | Install additional highway signage | Overarching | N/A |
| | Coordinate Amtrak and intercity bus routes to operate in a manner that reduces redundancy | Overarching | N/A |
| | Reduce redundancy in schedules | Service | 10 (35.7%) |
| | Implement or increase midday weekday local service | Service | 18 (64.3%) |
| | Expand local weekend service hours by up to 2 hours to foster additional connections | Service | 10 (35.7%) |

Long-Term Recommendations: Low Priority



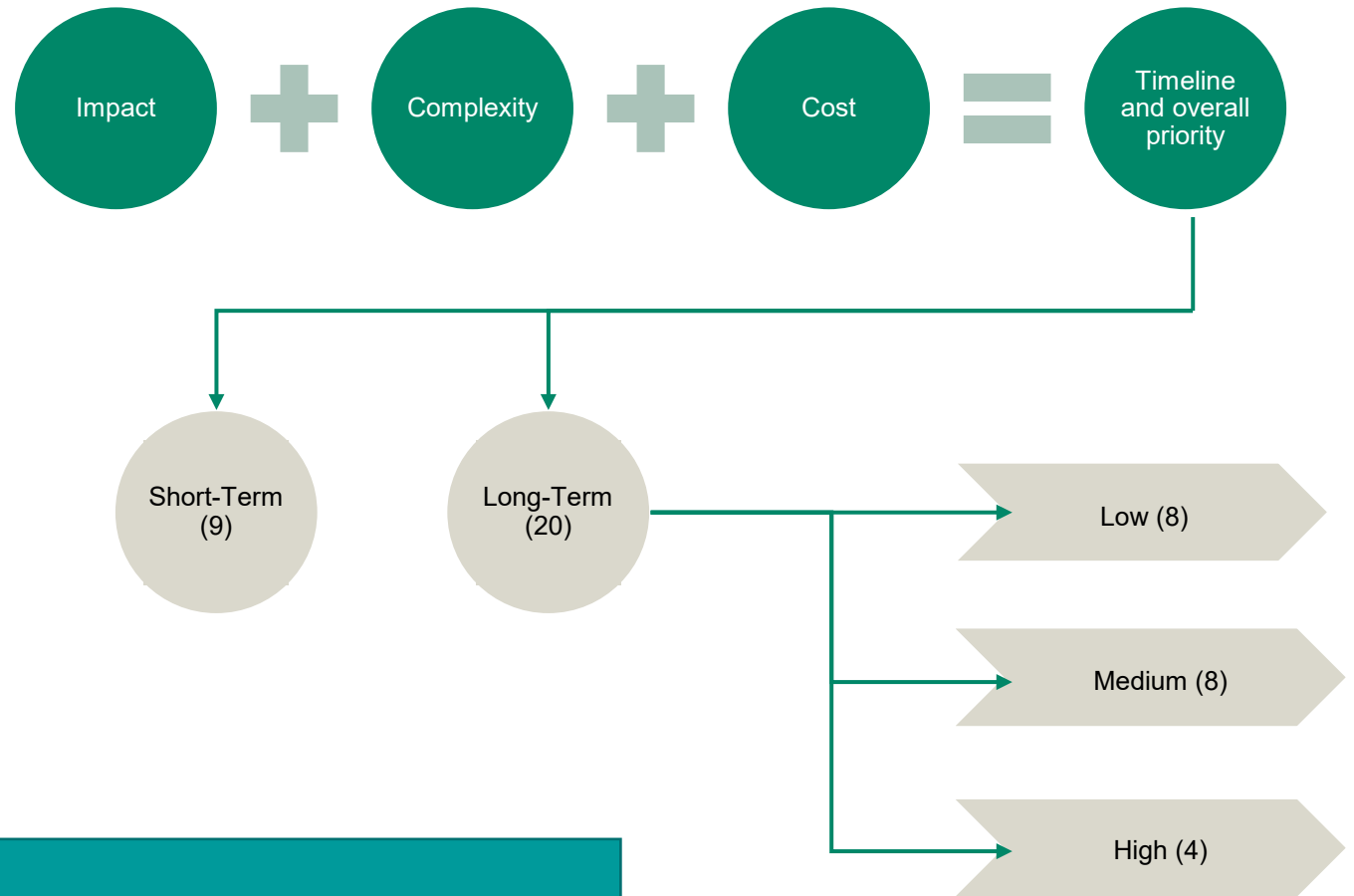
| Symbol | Recommendation | Type | Applicable Stops/Stations |
|--------|---|-------------|---------------------------|
| | Install real-time arrival and departure screens (at major hubs that currently do not) with multi-modal info | Capital | 5 (17.9%) |
| | Improve built environment connecting modes | Capital | 3 (10.7%) |
| | Expand Amtrak/Intercity station hours | Service | 11 (39.3%) |
| | Plan for new local service if it doesn't exist | Service | 6 (21.4%) |
| | Implement new local Saturday service | Service | 9 (32.1%) |
| | Implement new local Sunday service | Service | 18 (64.3%) |
| | Improve on-time performance for Amtrak and Intercity. | Overarching | N/A |
| | Coordinate passes/ticketing to allow for a single ticket on multiple modes. | Overarching | N/A |

Next Steps

Review Prioritized Recommendations with Operators

Establish timeline and overall priority

Implementation of short- and long-term recommendations



29 Recommendations

Questions

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