Public Service Impact Report

Wind River Transportation Authority

November 1, 2025-October 31, 2026

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Executive Summary

Due to reduced federal transportation assistance, ½% tax rejection, and insufficient local match. Wind River Transportation Authority (WRTA) has been facing significant financial uncertainty. The purpose of this report is to provide the Fremont County Commissioners with a clear assessment of WRTA's financial position, its federal and local funding requirements, and the potential impact of services.

For **Federal Fiscal Year 2026(FFY26)**, Federal grant local match has not been received in its entirety. Outstanding grant reimbursement requirements have created the gap for FFY26 as well as FFY27.

As of November 11, 2026, WRTA current cash assets are $605,340.59.

$189,052.98 in liquid capital. An Accounts Receivable of $386,670.87 from WYDOT FTA grant reimbursements for FFY26, and $29,616.74 from current contracts. These numbers represent our operating cash fund approaching the bottom of the predicted funding gap. Monthly operating expense **average $147,473.28** over the past 12 months and our expected **zero balance date is December 2, 2026,** if no funds are received from WYDOT, or local match authorities.

The Role of Public Transportation in Fremont County

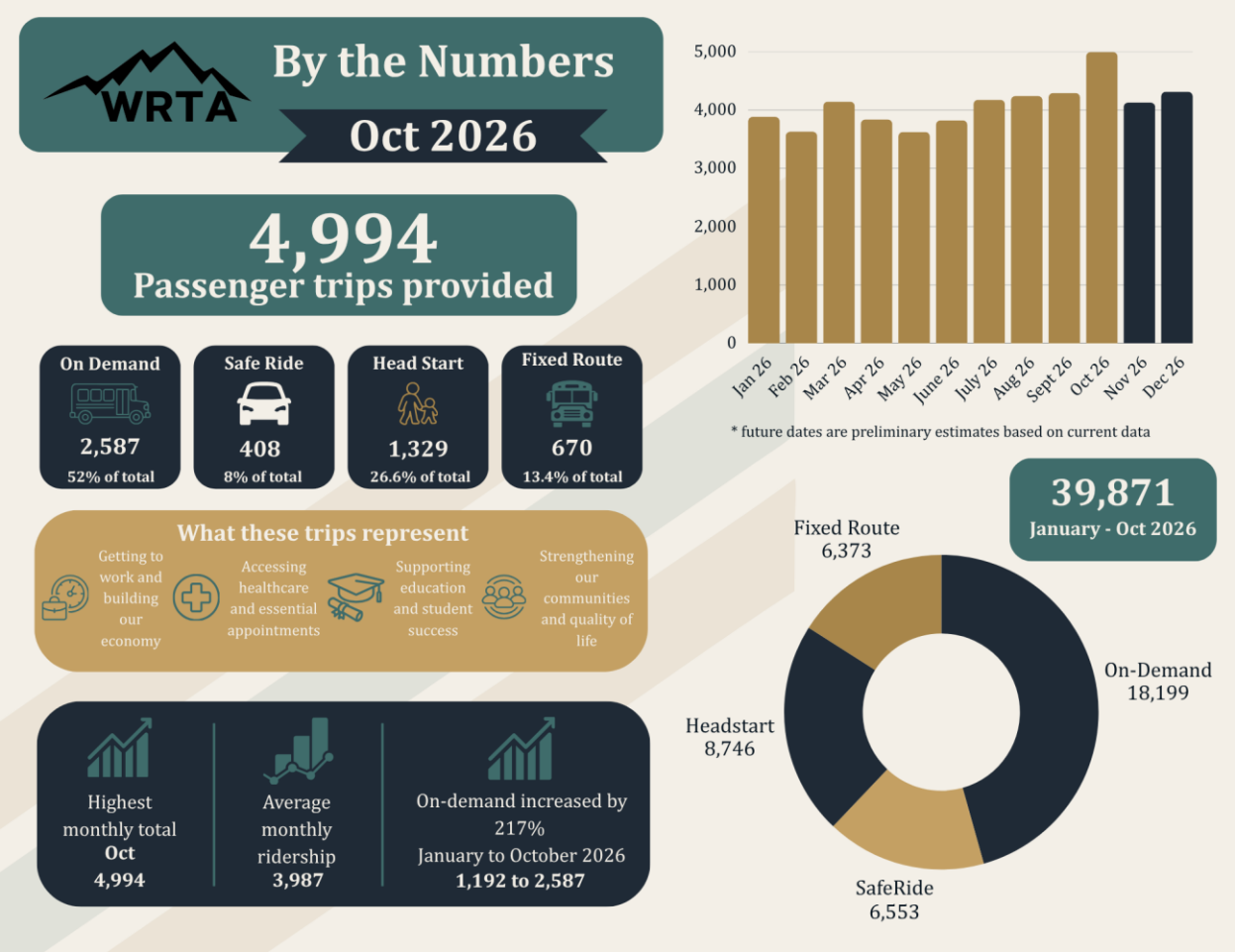


Figure 1

Public Transportation as Essential Infrastructure

The Wind River Transportation Authority (WRTA) provides an important transportation service connecting residents throughout Fremont County and the Wind River Indian Reservation. WRTA provides public transportation in a geographically large, fronter county, where reliable transportation supports access to employment, healthcare, education, goods, services, and other essential community engagement.

WRTA's role extends beyond transporting individual passengers. Its services support workforce participation, access to medical care, independent living, and connections between communities. For residents without reliable personal transportation, public transit is their primary means of reaching essential destinations.

Real-World Implications of Lost Funding

As WRTA continues to see growth in ridership, the loss of WRTA services would represent significant economic impact within Fremont County. Not only would reductions result in potential layoffs of WRTA staff but also the potential impact to riders' wellbeing, wages and access.

A 2026 Ridership survey showed that **82%** of riders **did not have a personal vehicle** available to them that day, **64%** of riders have **household income below $15,000 annually**, and **33%** reported that they **used WRTA as transportation to and from employment**. Other reasons for use of public transportation include but are not limited to access to essential goods and services, meeting with friends or family, transportation to campus, and transportation to medical or other appointments.

The potential economic impact could affect access to local stores, retention of employees, employability and access to other social support services, and missed medical care.

Contracts for service with Head Start, Prairie Hills Transit (Veteran Transit), CWC, Wyoming Services for Independent Living (WSIL), Riverton Senior Center, and the City of Riverton, requires continued funding from 5311 and 5339 federal grants to maintain service. These contracts are dependent on availability of drivers and vehicles, and should WRTA be unable to provide services, these providers would be directly impacted.

Existing Cost Mitigation Strategies

WRTA has already implemented a **budgetary reduction of 10% to FY 27**, service reductions during the last quarter of FY 26 forming yellow and blue lines, FFY26 **Capital project delay** to FFY27, **hiring freeze of full-time positions**, and benefits allocation between staff and WRTA reducing fringe rate from 54% to 49%.

WRTA has renewed all available funding contracts, advertising contracts, continues to seek grant opportunities, and diversification of revenue sources allowable by the FTA

regulations. Local match contributions from municipalities and other community partners are being sought as well. Cost sharing with FCAG and Project Independence ensures we maintain service to low, and fixed income riders and relieves some of the operational burden.

The route changes have extended into FY 27 and include the creation of two separate routes with partial coverage rather than larger continuous routes throughout Fremont County. The routes were determined based on ridership and current staffing/vehicle availability. This service reduction has already resulted in significant impact to riders who have time and budget restrictions and no other transportation options.

WRTA's hiring freeze of full-time positions, only offering employment on a part-time basis, ensures sustainability of services during the gap.

Financial Snapshot

WRTA's FY 27 budget projection is $2,139,756.34 in revenue from all sources including grants, fare revenue, donations, interest, capital projects, and municipal support. This includes the FTA obligated **Local Match ($493,694.00)**. FY 27 anticipated expenditures are $2,246,517.20, resulting in a shortfall of $106,760.86. Due to this deficit the Budget is undergoing an adjustment per our FCAG meeting in October 2026.

The Operating grant (5311) and Capital projects grant (5339) make up 63% of WRTA's income. Local match for 5311 is broken down into Operating, Administration, and Maintenance with a 43.44%, 20%, and 20% requirement for each area respectively. 5339 has 15% and 20% local match for revenue vehicles and other capital projects respectively.

WRTA's Contingency plans are **bank loans** to provide the remaining local match requirement for both FFYs, which places an undue burden on taxpayer dollars. Second, is reductions to operations until such time as more funding becomes available in April 2027. **Reducing hours** for part-time workers, reducing frequency of rides, and reduce operational hours. A reduction in part-time work results in workforce attrition and attrition results in larger burden on budgetary requirements for replacements.

With our current cash on hand **December 2, 2026** will be the zero balance date if FFY 26 reimbursements and local matches are not received. At that date we will issue a need for a loan to our bank as well as seek other capital to get us to April 2027.

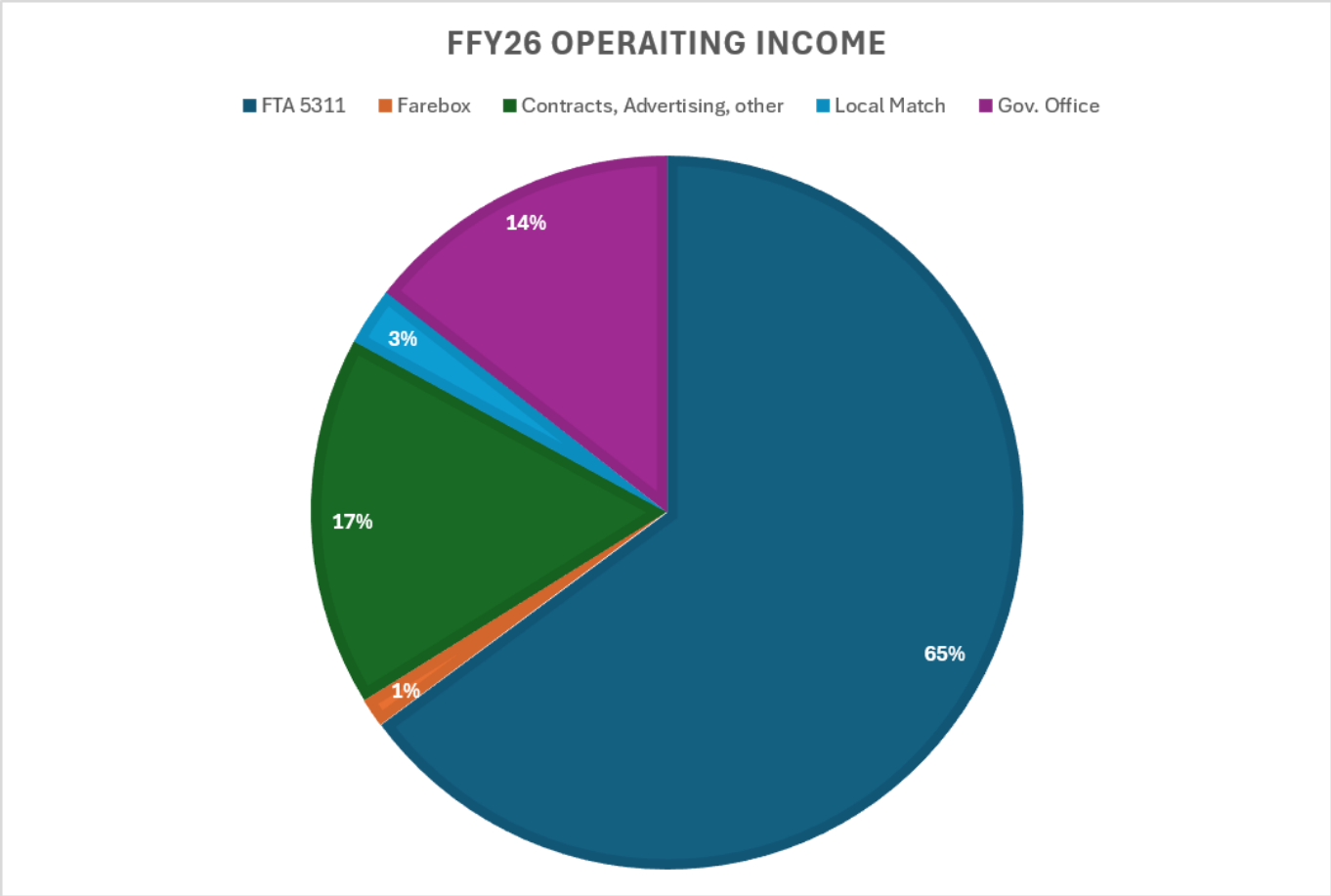


Figure 2

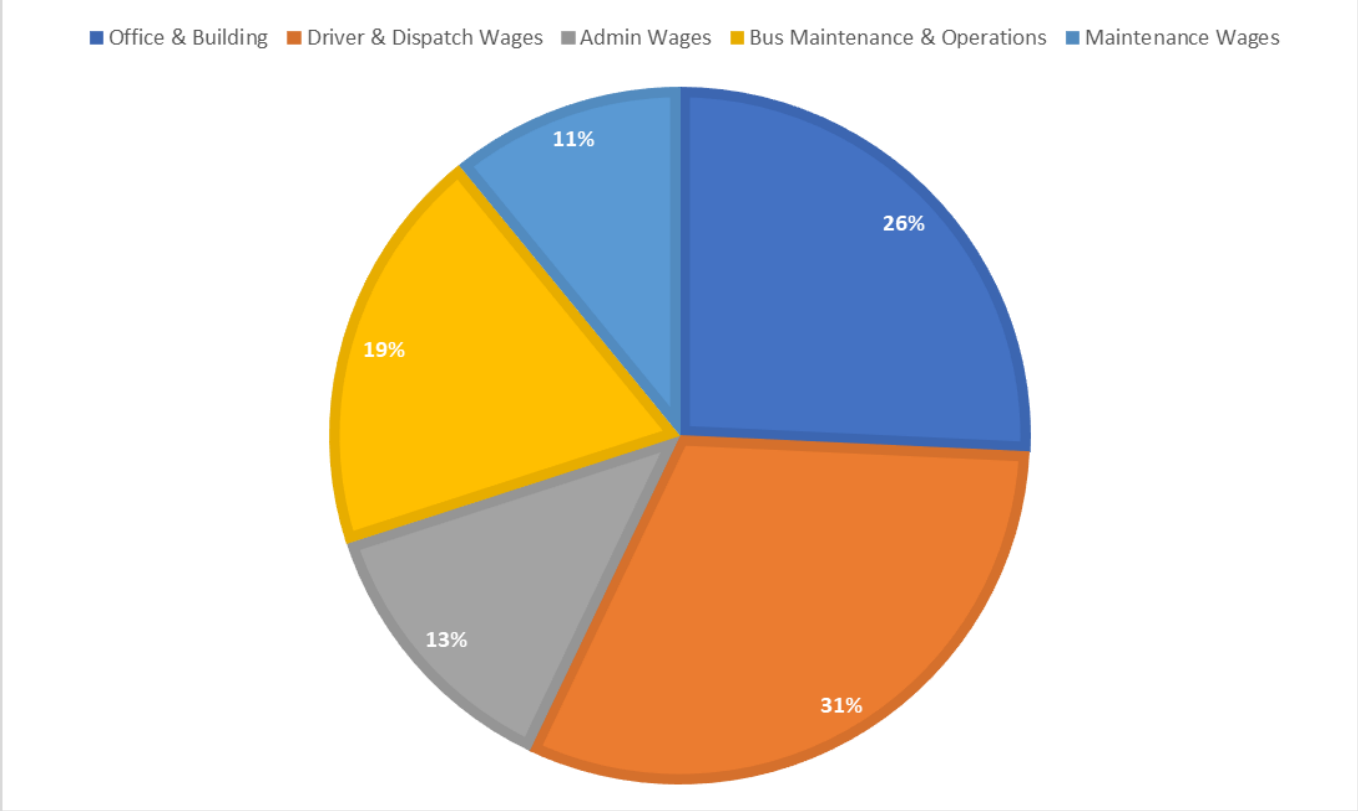

Office & Building
Driver & Dispatch Wages
Admin Wages
Bus Maintenance & Operations
Maintenance Wages
11%
26%
19%
13%
31%

Figure 3

FY 27 Fremont County Commissioners Funding

As WRTA faces shortage of local match funds WRTA asks the Fremont **County Commissioners to provide $107,188** to fulfill the local match requirement proportionate to the county use of public transit for FFY27. The ridership outside of any municipality is 41% of the total riders in Fremont County. WRTA is also providing 37% match to the local match fund through contract revenues and other income.

This funding impacts 4,000 rides per month, including community members with disabilities, those living in poverty, veterans, and children participating in Head Start.

Lander, Hudson, and Riverton have provided partial funding toward the local match requirement based on usage in their municipal area.

FFY26	**$439,025.00**	**FFY27**	**$493,694.00**
Lander	-	Lander	$78,362.22
Hudson	$2,790	Hudson	$3,429
Riverton	$42,000	Riverton	$25,000
Fremont County	-	Fremont County	
Governor's Office	$244,448.50 Matching Funds	-	-
Balance	(149,786.50)		(386,902.78)