


CHAPTER I

Introduction

Transportation considerations play a key role in the quality of life provided by any community. Access to social services and medical services, employment opportunities, educational resources, and basic necessities are topics of universal concern, as they have a strong impact on the economy, ease of movement, and quality of life for the residents of an area. In addition to providing mobility to residents without easy access to a private automobile, transit services can provide a wide range of economic development and environmental benefits.

The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA),  on behalf of Cedar City, Utah and the Cedar City Chamber of Commerce, contracted with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. to provide Technical Assistance in preparing a transit technical assistance plan. The project focused on transit needs within Cedar City and Iron County, Utah, and how to effectively provide transit services to meet those needs.

The overall study afforded the leaders and transportation providers of the area an opportunity to take an in-depth look at the transit system currently in place, identify the optimal manner in which transit can meet the public's needs within this dynamic area, and carefully identify where transit resources should be devoted over the plan period.

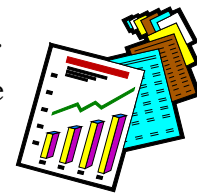
Cedar City has recognized the need for public transportation in Cedar City and greater Iron County. The report focuses on transportation for the general public, elderly, disabled, and tourists. Currently, general public and specialized transportation services are provided by CATS.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to analyze and recommend appropriate transportation strategies for Cedar City, Utah. This Final Report describes the existing conditions in the city and county related to transportation services, discusses service and other alternatives for meeting needs into the future, identifies the locally-preferred set of alternatives, and presents an implementation plan for expanded service.

REPORT CONTENTS

Chapter II presents the CATS Goals and Objectives for service. These Goals and Objectives have been reviewed and adopted by the Advisory Committee.



Chapter III presents the existing community conditions and includes a transportation system overview. A summary of community demographics and economics is also provided. A discussion of Cedar City transportation providers, particularly CATS, is presented in Chapter IV. Information includes a description of services, ridership, fleet characteristics, and finances. Chapter V presents a brief peer comparison with other small systems across the United States. Chapter VI presents the transit needs assessment for the study area.

Chapter VII presents a detailed review of the public involvement program during the course of this technical assistance effort. Throughout the planning process, public involvement is key to the success of the transportation plan for the community. At critical points during the process, public meetings were announced and held where citizen participation was openly welcome and appreciated.

Public open houses were scheduled following submittal of the second interim report. The open houses offered members of the community an opportunity to provide public input regarding transportation issues which should be addressed as part of the Plan. Community residents were asked to comment on future transportation service in Cedar City. The public was given the opportunity to state

which services and other alternatives they think are necessary to address the identified issues and meet the established goals.

Chapter VIII presents transit service alternatives for the Cedar City area as well as the surrounding areas. Chapter IX introduces the capital needs and alternatives for Cedar City and Iron County. General recommendations on vehicle size and type are presented in this chapter. Chapter X presents the potential financial and institutional alternatives, along with their advantages and disadvantages. Additional funding sources are identified, some of which are based upon the experiences of similar agencies in other states.

Transit-friendly land use planning concepts are presented in Chapter XI. The concepts are related to general transportation issues within Cedar City and greater Iron County, as well as transit-specific issues. Many of the concepts improve auto safety and traffic flows, while at the same time improving transit efficiency and effectiveness. These concepts should be reviewed carefully by the Cedar City Planning Department.

Chapter XII presents the Cedar Area Service Plan. This chapter presents a detailed outline of services to be provided in the next 10 years and the implementation plan for the Cedar Area. This implementation plan lays out the foundation for future service enhancements and changes for the area.

STUDY APPROACH

As in many regions, Cedar City is taking a closer look at public transportation services and seeking to find the most effective means of providing these services. A key element in the plan was to clearly evaluate the unmet needs of local residents and businesses. The current effort focused on the feasibility of providing expanded public transportation services to meet the community's needs. One important step toward providing an integrated community-wide transportation system is involving key players such as the Cedar City Transportation Committee, Cedar City, Iron County, human service agencies, the local school district, and area residents.

Project Team

An initial “Kick-off Meeting” was held in Cedar City on July 8, 2004 with the Cedar City Transportation Committee. This project team met to discuss project goals, priorities, and a time line for completion of the final study. This team discussed local stakeholders who would be critical in completing the transit study for the area.



A second Transportation Committee meeting was held October 6, 2004. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Technical Memorandum #1 and provide feedback and comments to the LSC Team. Additional meetings were held in January and the final meeting was held in March.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES

During the July “Kick-off Meeting,” the LSC Team briefed the Transportation Committee on the study process to be undertaken over the six-month period. Key stakeholders involved with transportation services were identified. Major issues and concerns regarding public transportation were discussed. Following are summaries of the major issues:



- Year-round intercity transportation service.
- Brian Head and summer tourism service.
- Reverse commute in Parowan and Brian Head.
- Transportation to work for lower income employees.
- Access to medical services from Enoch.
- Shifting students from autos to buses.
- Service for seasonal workers.
- Service for the Paiute Reservation.
- Private sector participation is key.
- How much funding will be needed to meet the future demand?
- What type or types of service would be appropriate to meet the identified needs?
- What are the vehicle and capital equipment requirements to provide the recommended service?

- What are the potential sources of revenue to sustain the proposed service?
- What is the most effective method of involving the public throughout the study?

TRANSPORTATION VISION

In developing a comprehensive transportation plan for the study area, it is necessary to recognize the goals and objectives of public transportation as they determine the direction to be taken in the Plan. The goals and objectives, along with corresponding performance standards, provide the specific direction for implementation. Goals were updated throughout the planning process; however, during various conversations with key members of the community, the most critical goal of the process was to provide realistic service and funding options for the proposed service. The goal for community leaders is to provide transportation services to those members of the community who need such services and to meet the basic needs of the residents' transportation needs. Specific service goals and objectives are discussed in more detail in Chapter II. Community leaders and residents have had input into defining and refining service goals and objectives as the plan progressed. The following represent the Transit Goals from the *Cedar City Transit Feasibility Study, 2000*:

- Transit service should be provided primarily within Cedar City, where there are evident needs.
- Future planning should attempt to minimize costs associated with new service.
- The service should be targeted at jobs, education, recreations, shopping, and health care facilities.
- Transit service should be responsive to needs of individuals, and levels of service should correspond to each entity's individual support.
- Transit service planning should maximize the use of federal transit funding and other outside funding assistance.
- Transit service should be reliable, should enhance the image of the region as a growing tourist-based economy, and should address the full diversity of individual needs.
- Transit service should be used to mitigate traffic congestion and to improve the overall quality of life.

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- Transit service should maximize the opportunity for persons with disabilities to be employed and active in the community.

Cedar City Transit Feasibility Study Recommendations

In 2000, the consulting firms of Fehr & Peers and LSC (formerly Leigh, Scott & Cleary, Inc.) completed the Cedar City Transit Feasibility Study. The focus of this study was to determine the demand for transit, design a system to meet this demand, and develop financial resources to operate the service. This study recommended the start of four routes:

- Route 1 – University South
- Route 2 – University North
- Route 3 – Highway 56
- Route 4 – Brian Head

However, transit service to Brian Head was deemed unfeasible as well as the Highway 56 option. One route was started, a combination of the recommended Route 1 and Route 2. The study also found little support for local funding for a public transit system.