



# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

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The Regional Transportation Planning Office (RTPO), on behalf of Grand Valley Transit (GVT), contracted with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. to complete an Operational Analysis with a focus on route restructuring and scheduling. The primary focus of this project was to collect and evaluate boarding data, review origin-destination information and operational characteristics, and to propose new route structures and schedules. This Final Report presents a thorough analysis of available data and preliminary route structure alternatives as well as the final routes adopted by the Grand Valley Regional Transportation Committee (GVRTC).

### **PLANNING PROCESS AND INITIAL ROUTE CHANGES**

The process for restructuring the Grand Valley routes is based upon a wealth of background information. This includes prior studies the RTPO has conducted, recent data collection on passenger activity, meetings with a Citizens Advisory Committee and Steering Committee, and public open houses and comment period. The goal was to develop effective and efficient route structures that serve the greatest number of users and have the greatest end benefit for the area. Based on the current operating environment, public comments, drivers' comments, feedback from representatives of the GVRTC, and various prior planning studies, initial route structures were developed and refined. Route structures were provided for review and comment during a comment period. Changes initially included both minor modifications to routes to improve running times as well as major route changes in certain areas. These were further refined throughout the process and final routes were presented to the GVRTC on September 24, 2007 and to the public in September and October 2007. Based upon further comment, final routes were adopted October 22, 2007 by the GVRTC and went into service beginning January 2008.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT**

Chapter II presents a systems profile of GVT services. This includes mainly the fixed-route services provided in the Grand Valley planning area. The analysis focuses on current route and stop activity, cost allocation, and performance. This information was used extensively to determine the best alternatives to meet passenger demand with current financial resources.

Chapter III provides a detailed review of current policies and procedures to meet federal guidelines. Chapter IV provides a review of transit demand in the area, including the development of a fixed-route transit demand model used to evaluate route structures. Chapter V presents a discussion of issues and ideas discussed by the local Steering Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee as well as the initial route recommendations. Chapter VI provides a discussion of public comment based upon routes and proposed changes. Chapter VII presents the final adopted route structure and discussion of local impacts. Chapter VIII provides additional considerations. Chapters IX and X provide an analysis of counts and passenger surveys since the adopted changes.

## **CURRENT ISSUES**

The reason behind this current planning effort was to re-evaluate the current route structures. There have been several factors which have led to restructuring of the current routes, the largest factor being the relocation of the old 12<sup>th</sup> and Orchard transfer station to the new location in downtown. Routes were restructured when GVT abandoned the transfer station at the college. Since the move to the 7<sup>th</sup> and South transfer station, and looking ahead to the future move to 5<sup>th</sup> and South once the new transfer station is constructed, a more thorough look at route structures is warranted. As mentioned, the main focus was to investigate both available information on the current routes and suggest more effective solutions to meet growing demands. Ridership has declined some since the routes were changed in the last several months. There are areas that receive an overabundant level of service and duplications of fixed-route service areas occurs. Routes have not changed significantly in the last five years. Serving the additional commercial and residential developments in the area begins to become challenging given the distances

required to travel and increasing congestion. In the next 20 years, this congestion is likely to lead to persons choosing transit over the personal automobile.

Additional issues include:

- Loop route ineffectiveness.
- Transfers should be changed back to 15 minutes past the hour.
- More circulation is needed in Fruita.
- More express service is needed between transfer stations.
- Fixed routes may not be the answer in some areas.
- Grand Mesa Middle School should be served with one route.
- The Peach Tree area needs more service.
- Route 3 should be kept on Orchard Avenue.
- There needs to be a look at express or trippers.
- A shopper route may be needed.
- Interlining needs to be addressed.
- Avoid all at-grade railroad crossings.
- Eliminate the “scenic tours” or long routes.
- Headways need to be shortened during various times.
- Route 7 is an essential route for college students.
- There are accessibility issues with current stops.
- There are pockets needing service (low-income, mobility-limited, etc.).
- There is a current budget constraint to any improvements.
- Saturday times should be the same as Monday-Friday.
- Clifton is an extremely “long” route.