

Laurel, Montana Transit Development Plan

Final Report

Prepared for:

City of Laurel
115 West 1st Street
Laurel, MT 59044
(406) 628-4796

Prepared by:

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
516 North Tejon Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
(719) 633-2868

LSC #094140

October 27, 2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Title	Page
I	INTRODUCTION	I-1
	Purpose of the Study	I-1
	Report Contents	I-1
	Study Approach	I-2
	Project Team	I-2
	Stakeholders	I-3
	Opportunities for Public Involvement	I-3
	Summary of the Issues	I-4
II	GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	II-1
	Transit Vision	II-1
	Mission Statement	II-2
	Goals and Objectives	II-2
	Goal #1: Develop a Transit Service that Aids in the Community's Economic Development	II-3
	Goal #2: Create Financial Sustainability of the Transit Service	II-3
	Goal #3: Coordinate and Integrate the Transit Service With Human Service Programs	II-4
	Goal #4: Create Cost-Effective and Cost-Efficient Service	II-4
III	DEMOGRAPHICS	III-1
	Community Description	III-1
	Study Area Location	III-1
	Transportation System Overview	III-4
	Highways	III-4
	Railroads	III-4
	Airports	III-4
	City Roadways	III-4
	Major Activity Centers	III-4
	Study Area Demographics	III-7
	2008 Population	III-7
	Transit-Dependent Population Characteristics	III-9
	Low-Income Population	III-11
	Zero-Vehicle Households	III-11
	Elderly Population	III-11
	Mobility-Limited Population	III-11
	Economy	III-16
	Major Employers	III-16
	Industry Sectors	III-16
	Work Transportation Mode	III-17
	Summary	III-18
IV	EXISTING TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS	IV-1
	Introduction	IV-1
	Human Services Transportation Programs	IV-1
	The Crossings	IV-1
	Service Area	IV-1

	Current Operating Costs and Revenue	IV-2
	Fleet and Facility Information	IV-2
	Ridership	IV-2
	Yellowstone County Council on Aging (YCCOA)	IV-2
	Service Area	IV-2
	Current Operating Costs and Revenues	IV-2
	Fleet Information	IV-2
	Ridership	IV-3
	Transit Service Providers in the Region	IV-3
	MET Transit	IV-3
	Service Area	IV-3
	Current Operating Costs and Revenues	IV-3
	Fleet Information	IV-3
	Ridership	IV-3
	Summary	IV-4
V	TRANSIT NEEDS ASSESSMENT	V-1
	Introduction	V-1
	Rural Transit Demand Methodology	V-1
	Non-Program Demand	V-2
	2008 Demand Estimates	V-2
	2015 Demand Estimates	V-3
	2030 Demand Estimates	V-3
	Program Demand	V-7
	Summary of TCRP Methodology	V-7
	Regional Flow Analysis	V-8
	Modal Split Analysis	V-8
	Worker Travel Flow Analysis	V-9
	Greatest Transit Need Analysis	V-11
	Methodology	V-11
	Results	V-15
	Summary	V-17
VI	PEER COMMUNITY ANALYSIS	VI-1
	Introduction	VI-1
	Peer Community Transit Services	VI-2
	Local Peer Statistics	VI-2
	Regional Transit Service Peers	VI-10
	Idaho Falls-Rexburg	VI-10
	Charles Town-Martinsburg	VI-10
	Fountain-Colorado Springs	VI-10
	Ignacio-Durango	VI-10
	Regional Peer Summary	VI-10
	Summary	VI-11
VII	SERVICE OPTIONS	VII-1
	Introduction	VII-1
	Types of Transit Service	VII-1
	Fixed-Route Service	VII-2
	Demand-Response Service	VII-3
	Service Routes	VII-3

Flexible Routes	VII-4
Route Deviation	VII-4
Checkpoint Service	VII-4
Regional and Commuter Service	VII-5
Vanpool Service	VII-5
Coordination Strategies	VII-5
Levels of Coordination	VII-6
Resource Management	VII-7
Common Coordination Strategies	VII-7
Joint Procurement	VII-7
Shared Vehicle Storage and Maintenance Facilities	VII-8
Joint Grant Applications	VII-8
Joint Training Programs	VII-8
Sharing Expertise	VII-8
Coordinating Council	VII-8
Joint Planning and Decision Making	VII-9
Coalitions	VII-9
Vehicle Sharing	VII-9
Contracts for Service	VII-9
Provide Vehicles	VII-10
One-Call Center	VII-10
Centralized Functions (Reservations, Scheduling, Dispatching)	VII-10
Transportation Broker	VII-10
Consolidated Transportation Program	VII-10
Transit Service Alternatives	VII-10
Maintain Status Quo	VII-11
Services	VII-11
Advantages	VII-11
Disadvantages	VII-12
Option 1 - Demand-Response Service	VII-12
Services	VII-12
Capital	VII-12
Advantages	VII-15
Disadvantages	VII-15
Model Evaluation and Summary	VII-15
Option 2 - Flex-Route Service	VII-16
Services	VII-16
Capital	VII-16
Advantages	VII-16
Disadvantages	VII-19
Model Evaluation and Summary	VII-19
Option 3 - Regional Service	VII-19
Services	VII-19
Capital	VII-20
Advantages	VII-20
Disadvantages	VII-23
Summary	VII-23
Option 4 - Coordination Strategies	VII-23
Coordinating Council	VII-25
Joint Grant Applications	VII-25
Vehicle Sharing	VII-26
Contracts for Service	VII-26

	One-Call Center and Transportation Broker	VII-26
	Disadvantages	VII-27
	Summary	VII-27
VIII	VEHICLE TYPES	VIII-1
	Introduction	VIII-1
	Vehicle Characteristics	VIII-1
	Vehicle Overview	VIII-1
	Standard Van	VIII-2
	Modified Van	VIII-3
	Body-on-Chassis	VIII-4
	Impact of Using Smaller Vehicles	VIII-6
	Vehicle Selection	VIII-8
	Service Type	VIII-8
	Service Demand	VIII-8
	Passenger Needs	VIII-8
	Costs	VIII-9
	Maintenance and Storage Requiements	VIII-9
	Operating Environment	VIII-10
	Other Factors	VIII-10
	Uniformity of Fleet	VIII-10
	Driver Needs	VIII-11
	Summary	VIII-11
IX	ORGANIZATIONAL ALTERNATIVES	IX-1
	Introduction	IX-1
	Organizational Structures	IX-1
	Criteria	IX-2
	Alternatives	IX-2
	City Government Department	IX-2
	Urban Transportation District	IX-3
	Transportation Improvement Authority	IX-3
	Intergovernmental Transit Agency	IX-3
	Summary	IX-4
X	PREFERRED TRANSIT SERVICE PLAN	X-1
	Introduction	X-1
	Preferred Transit Service Plan	X-1
	Phase I (2010-2011)	X-1
	Service	X-1
	Capital	X-4
	Summary	X-5
	Phase II (2012-2013)	X-5
	Service	X-5
	Capital	X-8
	Summary	X-8
	Phase III (2014-2015)	X-9
	Service	X-9
	Capital	X-9
	Summary	X-11
	Capital Costs	X-11

XI	TRANSIT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (2010-2015)	XI-1
	Introduction	XI-1
	Organizational Plan	XI-1
	Management Plan	XI-1
	Implementation Plan	XI-2
	Implementation Steps for Phase I	XI-2
	Responsibility	XI-2
	Benefits	XI-3
	Timing	XI-3
	Implementation Steps for Phase II	XI-3
	Responsibility	XI-4
	Benefits	XI-4
	Timing	XI-4
	Implementation Steps for Phase III	XI-4
	Responsibility	XI-5
	Benefits	XI-5
	Timing	XI-5
	Service Monitoring	XI-6
	System Performance Measurement	XI-6
	Comment Cards and Boxes	XI-7
	Rider Survey	XI-7
	Capital Plan	XI-7
	Vehicle Purchase	XI-7
	Administrative and Maintenance Capital	XI-7
	Funding Plan	XI-8
	Benefits	XI-10
	Timing	XI-10
	Responsibilities	XI-10
	Implementation Steps	XI-10
	Local and Regional Funding	XI-11
	Implementation Time Line	XI-11

APPENDIX A: TCRP Trip Rates

APPENDIX B: Transit Model

APPENDIX C: Coordination Plan

LIST OF TABULATIONS

Table	Title	Page
III-1	2008 Population Demographics	III-10
III-2	Major Employers in Laurel, Montana	III-16
III-3	Employment by Sector - Laurel	III-17
III-4	Mode of Transportation	III-18
III-5	County-to-County Worker Flow Patterns in Laurel	III-18
IV-1	Summary of Laurel Area Providers	IV-4
V-1	2008 Estimated Non-Program Transit Demand using the TCRP Method ..	V-4
V-2	2015 Estimated Public Transit Demand using the TCRP Method	V-5
V-3	2030 Estimated Public Transit Demand using the TCRP Method	V-6
V-4	Community of Laurel	V-7
V-5	2008 Transit Demand Summary, TCRP Methodology	V-8
V-6	2008 Greatest Transit Need Scores by Census Block Group	V-13
V-7	Greatest Transit Need	V-15
VI-1	Peer Community Analysis, Performance Measures	VI-3
VI-2	Peer Regional Systems Analysis - Performance Measures	VI-11
VII-1	Option 1 Level of Service - Cost Estimates	VII-14
VII-2	Option 2 Level of Service - Cost Estimates	VII-18
VII-3	Option 3 Level of Service - Cost Estimates	VII-22
VII-4	Option 4 Level of Service - Cost Estimates	VII-24
VII-5	Draft Service Alternatives Capital - Cost Estimates	VII-29
VII-6	Service Options - Cost Estimates	VII-30
VIII-1	Vehicle Type Comparison	VIII-7
VIII-2	Vehicle Information	VIII-13
IX-1	Organizational Alternatives Comparison Matrix	IX-4
X-1	Level of Service - Phase One (2010-2011)	X-3
X-2	Phase I Regional Route to Downtown Billings Draft Schedule	X-4
X-3	Level of Service - Phase Two (2012-2013)	X-7
X-4	Phase II Regional Route Service Draft Schedule	X-8
X-5	Level of Service - Phase Three (2014)	X-10
X-6	Phase III Regional Route Service Draft Schedule	X-11
XI-1	Vehicle Replacement (6-Year Plan)	XI-7
XI-2	Transit Plan, 2010-2015	XI-9

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Title	Page
III-1	Study Area	III-2
III-2	US Census Block Groups	III-3
III-3	Activity Centers	III-6
III-4	Population Density	III-8
III-5	Density of Low-Income Persons	III-12
III-6	Density of Zero-Vehicle Households	III-13
III-7	Density of Elderly Persons	III-14
III-8	Density of Mobility Limited Persons	III-15
V-1	Workers in Billings from Laurel	V-10
V-2	Greatest Transit Needs	V-16
VI-1	Annual Passenger-Trips	VI-5
VI-2	Passengers Per Hour	VI-7
VI-3	Cost Per Passenger	VI-9
VII-1	Option 1 -Demand-Response	VII-13
VII-2	Option 2 - Flex-Route	VII-17
VII-3	Option 3 - Regional Routes	VII-21
VIII-1	Vehicle Types	VIII-2
X-1	Phase I	X-2
X-2	Phase II	X-6
XI-1	Short-Term Plan Time Line	XI-12