



# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

---

The Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), on behalf of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe (NCT), contracted with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. to prepare a five-year transit service plan as a Technical Assistance Project. The plan focuses on public transportation issues and the transit needs, alternatives, and programs for NCT members, as well as the communities within the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

This final report presents the preferred transit service alternative and implementation plan. This report contains a description of the preferred transit service alternative including the level of service, route descriptions, draft route schedules, service plan, capital plan, financial plan, management plan, dispatching methods, and an implementation timeline for each of the major elements of the preferred plan.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to analyze and recommend strategies for the implementation of public transit service to meet the needs of local residents. To determine the needs for public transportation services, the existing conditions were evaluated including current transportation services, community demographics, and potential transit destinations. A number of transit service options were developed and evaluated. These options were presented to the community and a preferred system plan was selected. This preferred system plan was then refined and developed in detail to provide an implementation plan to start the new service.

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

Chapter II presents the existing community conditions and a transportation system overview for the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. A summary of community demographics and economics is also provided.



Chapter III presents an overview of the existing transit service that several of the tribal programs operate.

A discussion of the possible funding and organization structures options for the Northern Cheyenne Reservation is presented in Chapter IV.

Chapter V presents the transit needs assessment for the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

Chapter VI presents the “peer communities” analysis that the LSC team conducted in order to determine the operational structures and costs of other Native American Reservations and communities in Montana which are operating public transit services.

Chapter VII presents the mission, goals, and objectives for the implementation and operations of transit service on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation.

Chapter VIII reviews the different types of transit services that the NCT could implement. This information was used in the determination and analysis of the transit service alternatives presented later in the report.

Chapter IX reviews the types of transit vehicles that the NCT could purchase for the transit system. The type, size, cost, seating capacity, and general description of the different types of vehicles are discussed.

Chapter X presents and evaluates the various transit service alternatives.

Chapter XI presents the preferred transit service alternative including the route descriptions, route schedules, operational costs, and capital needs.

Chapter XII discusses the implementation plan which reviews the steps needed to install the preferred transit service alternative. Chapter XII then reviews the implementation of the capital plan and the management requirements needed to achieve the service and capital plans. Also included are a six-year financial statement and a timeline of the planning, implementation, and feedback schedules for the major elements of the preferred transit service alternative.

## **STUDY APPROACH**

As in many regions, the NCT is taking a closer look at public transit service and is seeking to find the most effective means of providing public transit service on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. Currently, there is no formal public transportation service provided by NCT or the other transit providers detailed in this report, which each provide limited transportation services to meet the needs of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation residents.

A key element in the plan was to clearly evaluate the unmet needs of the tribe members, local residents, and businesses. The current effort focuses on the feasibility of providing public transit 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 Tribal Council, key stakeholders, Montana Department of Transportation, human service agencies, and Northern Cheyenne Reservation residents.

### **Project Team**

An initial “kick-off meeting” was held in Lame Deer, Montana on October 6, 2005. The meeting was attended by the Tribal Council members and the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) members including TERO, Montana Department of Transportation, Dull Knife College, Tribal Housing, residents, and other local agencies within the study area which have transportation concerns for the community. The project team met to discuss the project goals, priorities, and timeline

## *Introduction*

for completion of the final study. The project team also discussed which local stakeholders would be critical in completing the transit study for the area.

A second TAC meeting was held on November 30, 2005 after the public open house. The purpose of the TAC meeting was to discuss Technical Memorandum #1 and provide feedback and comments to LSC. The next TAC meeting was held on January 10, 2006. The purpose of the meeting was to review the transit service alternatives presented in Technical Memorandum #2.

At the February 21, 2006 TAC meeting, the project team reviewed and made adjustments to the preferred transit service alternative. The TAC members also reviewed the implementation plan presented in Technical Memorandum #3. The results of these adjustments are presented in Chapters XI and XII of this report.