



# Transit Implementation Plan (2009 - 2018)

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## INTRODUCTION

LSC has prepared the following Transit Implementation Plan for STAR in order to identify the steps to be taken within the next ten years. Chapter XV includes a time line which illustrates the projects and programs that can be implemented over the planning horizon (next ten years). Also discussed are the implementation steps and financial requirements for the development and installation of the preferred transit service plan.

## ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN

Under the direction of the existing RTA Board, STAR should continue to operate the general public transportation service. STAR has the legal and financial capabilities to assure the stability of public transportation services within the community. If additional funding is developed through coordination and intergovernmental agreements, the preferred transit service plan detailed in Chapter XIV can be implemented.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### Preferred Transit Service Plan

Details on the preferred transit service plan were presented in Chapter XIV. The preferred transit service plan will continue to focus on stable transit-user markets, such as the elderly and disabled. It will be difficult for transit to become a competitor of the automobile in the near future since the automobile continues to play a key role in the area, particularly in developments with low density. The proposed transit service improvements for STAR over the next ten years include the creation of one deviation loop route linked with a regional commuter route at the White Mountain Mall transit facility. The implementation of the preferred transit service plan is broken into four phases. Each subsequent phase will increase the overall level of service. The phases were developed to give STAR the time to coordinate

operations and funding for these new transit services. The following is a breakdown of the four implementation phases.

### **Phase I Implementation (2008 to 2009)**

Phase I will increase the operating cost by \$146,000 over the existing operating cost of \$588,000, for a total operating cost of \$734,000 with inflation. Phase I covers the cost of implementing the loop route service as detailed in Chapter XIV.

### Benefits

- The residents of Rock Springs and Green River will obtain increased connectivity and mobility throughout the area.

### Timing

- The planning for the new transit service should be completed in 2008, and the implementation of the transit service should begin in 2009, depending on funding.
- STAR should apply for additional Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5311 funding.
- STAR should work with Medicaid to use the Medicaid transportation funding as the local match for FTA 5311 funding, according to the new SAFETEA-LU guidelines.
- Intergovernmental agreements should be created between STAR and other governmental entities and agencies throughout Sweetwater County. It is recommended that the intergovernmental agreements last for at least three years in order to give the new transit service a base upon which to develop the other phases of the preferred transit service plan.

### Responsibility

- STAR will be responsible for planning and implementing the preferred transit service plan for the study area.
- STAR should train the drivers on the operations of the new transit service.
- STAR should develop an education program for the new transit service at least three months before the service changes are implemented. This should include public meetings to inform the public about the new transit service and allow for public comments.
- STAR should conduct test runs of the proposed routes and make any necessary changes to the schedules.
- The STAR Board will need to approve any funding grants or intergovernmental agreements for the new transit service.

### Implementation Steps

- STAR should educate the public about the new transit service.
- STAR should apply for the appropriate operating funding for the new transit service.
- STAR should work with the local government entities and agencies in order to secure additional funding.
- STAR should create a logo for the new transit service.
- STAR should print and distribute copies of the new transit service schedules and brochures throughout the service area.
- STAR should advertise the new transit service with the local newspaper, radio, and television stations.
- STAR should continue to collect passenger ridership data and evaluate the new transit service on a monthly basis.
- With assistance from the local communities and the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), STAR should install 55 bus stops along the loop route.
- STAR should develop and construct three new transfer stations—at the White Mountain Mall, at the Plaza Mall, and in Green River.

### **Phase II Implementation (2011)**

Phase II will implement additional revenue-hours on the loop route in Rock Springs and add demand-response weekend service for Rock Springs and Green River. Phase II will increase the total annual operating cost of the transit service to \$839,400.

### Benefits

- The residents of Rock Springs and Green River will obtain increased access and mobility throughout the area.

### Timing

- The expanded service should be implemented in 2011.
- The planning of the new transit service should be completed by the end of 2010, and the implementation of the service should begin in 2011, depending on funding.
- STAR should apply for additional FTA 5311 funding.
- Intergovernmental agreements should be renewed between STAR and other governmental entities and agencies throughout the study area. It is recommended that the intergovernmental agreements last for at least three years in order to give the new transit service a base upon which to develop the other phases of the preferred transit service plan.

### Responsibility

- STAR will be responsible for planning and implementing Phase II.
- STAR should develop an education program for the new transit service at least three months before changes to the service are implemented. This should include public meetings to inform the public about the new transit service and allow for public comments.
- The STAR Board will need to approve any funding grants or intergovernmental agreements for the new transit service.

### Implementation Steps

- STAR should educate the public about the new transit service.
- STAR should apply for the appropriate operating funding for the new transit service.
- STAR should work with the local government entities and agencies in order to secure additional funding.
- STAR should print and distribute copies of the new transit service schedules and brochures throughout the service area.
- STAR should advertise the new transit service with the local newspaper, radio, and television stations.
- STAR should collect passenger ridership data and evaluate the new transit service on a monthly basis.
- STAR should continue to install bus stops along the loop routes.
- STAR should continue to work on the development of the transit transfer stations and the new transit facility.

### **Phase III Implementation (2013)**

Phase III will increase the revenue-hours of the loop route and regional service. The loop route service will increase by eight revenue-hours per day. The regional service will increase by five revenue-hours per day. Phase III is estimated to have a total of 78 revenue-hours per day. The estimated annual operating cost for the Phase III is \$1.17 million with inflation.

### Benefits

- The residents of the Rock Springs and Green River will obtain increased connectivity and mobility throughout the area.

### Timing

- The planning of the new transit service should be completed in 2012, and the implementation of the service should begin in 2013, depending on funding.
- STAR should apply for additional FTA 5311 funding.
- Intergovernmental agreements should be renewed between STAR and other governmental entities and agencies throughout the service area. It is recommended that the intergovernmental agreements last for at least three years in order to give the new transit service a base upon which to develop the other phases of the preferred transit service plan.

### Responsibility

- STAR will be responsible for planning and implementing Phase III.
- STAR should train the drivers on the operations of the new transit service.
- STAR should educate the public on the new transit service at least three months before changes to the service are implemented. This will include public meetings to inform the public about the new transit service and allow for public comments.
- The STAR Board will need to approve any funding grants or intergovernmental agreements for the new transit service.

### Implementation Steps

- STAR should educate the public about the new transit service.
- STAR should apply for the appropriate operating funding for the new transit service.
- STAR should work with the local government entities and agencies in order to secure additional funding.
- STAR should print and distribute copies of the new transit service schedules.
- STAR should advertise the new transit service with the local newspaper, radio, and television stations.
- STAR should continue to collect passenger ridership data and evaluate the new transit service on a monthly basis.

### **Phase IV Implementation (2016)**

Phase IV includes the implementation of 30-minute headways on the loop route in Rock Springs and a new route linking downtown Rock Springs to the northern section of the city (the north route). Phase IV adds 14 additional revenue-hours to the loop route per day. The expanded service will increase the operating cost by \$63,570, for a total annual operating cost of \$1.45 million with inflation.

### Benefits

- The residents of the STAR service area and Sweetwater County will obtain increased connectivity and mobility throughout the area.

### Timing

- The planning of the new transit service should be completed in 2015, and the implementation of the service should begin in 2016, depending on funding.
- STAR should apply for additional FTA 5307 funding. Based on demographic information, the STAR service area may reach the 50,000 population mark by 2015. At that point, STAR will be eligible for FTA 5307 funding and no longer eligible for FTA 5311 funding.
- STAR should work with Medicaid to use the Medicaid transportation funding as the local match for the FTA 5307 funding, according to the new SAFETEA-LU guidelines.
- Intergovernmental agreements should be renewed between STAR and other governmental entities and agencies throughout the service area. It is recommended that the intergovernmental agreements last for at least three years in order to give the new transit service a base upon which to develop.

### Responsibility

- STAR will be responsible for planning and implementing Phase IV.
- STAR should train the drivers on the operations of the new transit service.
- STAR should develop an education program for the new transit service at least three months before changes to the service are implemented. This should include public meetings to inform the public about the new transit service and allow for public comments.
- The STAR Board will need to approve any funding grants or intergovernmental agreements for the new transit service.

### Implementation Steps

- STAR should apply for the appropriate operating funding for the new transit service.
- STAR should work with the local government entities and agencies in order to secure additional funding.
- STAR should educate the public about the new transit service.
- STAR should print and distribute copies of the new transit service schedules.
- STAR should advertise the new transit service with the local newspaper, radio, and television stations.
- STAR should collect passenger ridership data and evaluate the new transit service on a monthly basis.

## **CAPITAL PLAN**

### **Bus Stops and Shelters**

In order to improve the loop route service, bus stops and shelters should be installed at key locations. The bus stops and shelters will allow the public to easily identify the transit pick-up locations and the routes that serve each location. Bus stops and shelters will reduce the barriers to using the transit system and will increase the public profile of the transit service.

LSC recommends that a bus stop and shelter be placed about every 1,200 to 1,500 feet along the loop route. The bus stops and shelters should be placed at key locations such as the major employment, shopping, and medical destinations. Bus shelters should also be placed at locations where there is an identified high number of riders with no building (shelter) already near the bus stop. LSC estimates a total of 55 bus stops.

Each bus stop should include a sign on a pole. On the pole, there should be a carousel that displays the schedule and route that serves the location. Each bus stop should also have a concrete pad (for the transit users to stand on), bench, and shelter structure. Bus stop diagrams are presented in Appendix I.

The cost is estimated at \$1,200 to \$1,500 for each bus stop and \$10,000 to \$15,000 for each shelter. LSC has estimated that STAR can implement about \$30,000 worth of bus stops and shelters per year for the first three years.

### **New and Replacement Vehicles**

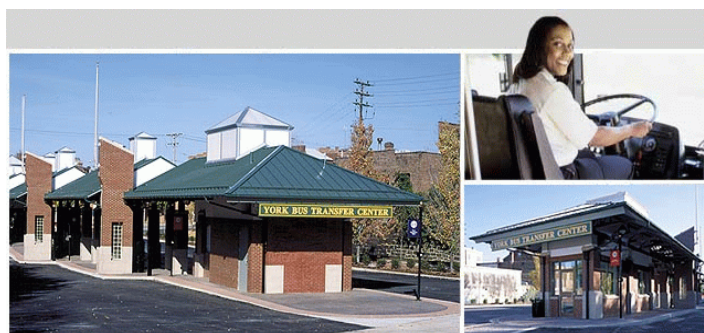
LSC recommends that STAR replace 20 vehicles over the next ten years. STAR will also need to purchase three buses for the new transit service. Therefore, 23 vehicles will need to be purchased over the next ten years. The total vehicle cost is estimated at \$1.9 million with inflation. The total local match funding needed for the replacement and new vehicles will be about \$393,000 over the next ten years, with the remaining portion funded by the FTA and state. Details on the recommendations for vehicle replacement purchases are shown in Table XV-1. The cost of the vehicles are shown in the year of delivery and implementation.

Table XV-1 Vehicle Replacement (10-Year Plan)										
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
New Body-on-Chassis	2							1		
Replacement Body-on-Chassis	2				2	2	4	2	2	2
Replacement Minivans				2					2	
New Minivans										
<i>Source: LSC, 2007.</i>										

## Transit Facilities

A major capital investment will be the development of a new transit facility at the location of the existing transit facility. The new facility will include an administrative office, passenger waiting area, and transfer station. The cost of the transit facility is estimated at \$1.1 million for a small office area (including a dispatch room) and a transfer station. The transit facility will need to be planned and designed in 2008 in order for construction to begin in 2009. The transit facility should be completed by the end of 2011.

In addition to the new transit facility, STAR will need to construct three new transfer stations: at the White Mountain Mall, at the Plaza Mall, and near the rail yard in Green River. The estimated cost of the three new transfer stations is \$50,000 each, for a total of \$150,000 in Phase I. Each transfer station should include a concrete pad, benches, shelter, kiosk, information center, bus pullouts, and outside waiting area.



## Park-and-Ride Lots

LSC has recommended that STAR (in cooperation with WYDOT, county governments, and local communities) implement shared park-and-ride lots for the regional service in the short term. For the long term (25 years), LSC recommends the implementation of formal park-and-ride lots to replace the shared/informal park-and-ride lots. The formal park-and-ride lots should be implemented based on the success of the regional service.

Funding for the formal park-and-ride lots can be obtained from the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program funding. Depending upon the commitment of the state, the local communities may not need to fund the construction of the park-and-ride lots. The local agencies will already be committed to the regional service through intergovernmental agreements that support the transit service operations.

## Administrative and Maintenance

The administrative and maintenance capital includes the purchase of office equipment, hardware, software, dispatching software, radios, and maintenance equipment. LSC has estimated a total administrative and maintenance cost of \$63,000 over the next ten years, with about \$50,400 in federal funding and \$12,600 in local match funding.

## FUNDING PLAN

The following section presents the proposed financial plan for the next six years. Table XV-2 presents the expenditures and revenues for STAR over the years 2009 through 2018, with the assumption of an annual five percent inflation rate.



LSC recommends that STAR continue to apply for federal and state grant funding in order to support public transportation services in Sweetwater County. Federal funding is expected to remain relatively stable over the next few years. STAR should also continue to work toward establishing new revenue sources. Additional funds may be generated by pursuing grants from agencies and foundations, other than WYDOT or FTA.

**Table XV-2  
Transit Plan, 2009-2018 (assumed 5% inflation)**

	Phase I		Phase II		Phase III			Phase IV			Total
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
<b>EXPENSES</b>											
<b>OPERATING</b>											
Loop / Route Service	\$168,281	\$176,695	\$245,165	\$257,423	\$336,042	\$352,845	\$370,487	\$617,345	\$648,212	\$680,623	\$3,853,118
Demand-Response / Checkpoint Services	\$337,346	\$354,214	\$313,851	\$329,544	\$442,059	\$464,162	\$487,370	\$382,033	\$401,135	\$421,192	\$3,932,904
Demand-Response Weekend Service			\$29,606	\$31,086	\$32,641	\$34,273	\$35,986	\$37,786	\$39,675	\$41,659	\$282,712
Regional Service	\$108,157	\$113,565	\$119,244	\$125,206	\$214,539	\$225,266	\$236,529	\$248,355	\$260,773	\$273,812	\$1,925,445
Contract Service (CDC)	\$110,250	\$115,763	\$121,551	\$127,628	\$134,010	\$140,710	\$147,746	\$155,133	\$162,889	\$171,034	\$1,386,713
Marketing Program	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$11,025	\$11,576	\$12,155	\$12,763	\$13,401	\$14,071	\$115,991
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$734,035</b>	<b>\$770,737</b>	<b>\$839,416</b>	<b>\$881,387</b>	<b>\$1,170,315</b>	<b>\$1,228,831</b>	<b>\$1,290,272</b>	<b>\$1,453,415</b>	<b>\$1,526,085</b>	<b>\$1,602,390</b>	<b>\$11,496,883</b>
<b>CAPITAL</b>											
Transit Buses (Minivans)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$89,340	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$114,023	\$0	\$203,362
Transit Buses (Body-on-Chassis)	\$286,650	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$174,212	\$182,923	\$384,138	\$302,509	\$211,756	\$222,344	\$1,764,533
Transit Stop Improvements (55 stops over 4 years)	\$28,000	\$29,400	\$30,870	\$32,414	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$120,684
Transit Maintenance Building and Office	\$368,000	\$366,000	\$366,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,100,000
Transit Transfer Station	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$150,000
Office / Administration / Maintenance Eq./Radios	\$5,000	\$5,250	\$5,513	\$5,788	\$6,078	\$6,381	\$6,700	\$7,036	\$7,387	\$7,757	\$62,889
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$762,650</b>	<b>\$475,650</b>	<b>\$402,383</b>	<b>\$127,541</b>	<b>\$180,290</b>	<b>\$189,304</b>	<b>\$390,839</b>	<b>\$309,545</b>	<b>\$333,166</b>	<b>\$230,101</b>	<b>\$3,401,469</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,496,685</b>	<b>\$1,246,387</b>	<b>\$1,241,799</b>	<b>\$1,008,929</b>	<b>\$1,350,605</b>	<b>\$1,418,135</b>	<b>\$1,681,111</b>	<b>\$1,762,959</b>	<b>\$1,859,252</b>	<b>\$1,832,490</b>	<b>\$14,898,351</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>											
<b>Operation</b>											
FTA 5311 Operational	\$352,517	\$370,618	\$405,208	\$425,944	\$570,145	\$599,127	\$629,559	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$3,353,118
FTA 5307 Operational	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$710,826	\$746,842	\$784,659	\$2,242,327
Other Grants (Medicaid)	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$190,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$371,517</b>	<b>\$389,618</b>	<b>\$424,208</b>	<b>\$444,944</b>	<b>\$589,145</b>	<b>\$618,127</b>	<b>\$648,559</b>	<b>\$729,826</b>	<b>\$765,842</b>	<b>\$803,659</b>	<b>\$5,785,446</b>
<b>Capital</b>											
FTA 5311 Capital	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FTA 5307 Capital								\$123,818	\$133,266	\$92,040	\$349,125
State Lands and Investment Grant	\$610,120	\$380,520	\$321,906	\$102,033	\$144,232	\$151,444	\$312,671	\$123,818	\$133,266	\$92,040	\$2,372,050
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$610,120</b>	<b>\$380,520</b>	<b>\$321,906</b>	<b>\$102,033</b>	<b>\$144,232</b>	<b>\$151,444</b>	<b>\$312,671</b>	<b>\$247,636</b>	<b>\$266,533</b>	<b>\$184,081</b>	<b>\$2,721,175</b>
<b>Local Revenues</b>											
Operational (Local Match)	\$127,546	\$139,549	\$165,775	\$179,689	\$309,382	\$330,476	\$352,625	\$422,236	\$448,973	\$477,047	\$2,953,298
Contract Services (Local Match)	\$210,250	\$215,763	\$221,551	\$227,628	\$234,010	\$240,710	\$247,746	\$255,133	\$262,889	\$271,034	\$2,386,713
Capital (Local Match)	\$152,530	\$95,130	\$80,477	\$25,508	\$36,058	\$37,861	\$78,168	\$61,909	\$66,633	\$46,020	\$680,294
Advertising	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$30,000
Fares	\$21,721	\$22,807	\$24,882	\$26,127	\$34,779	\$36,518	\$38,344	\$43,220	\$45,381	\$47,650	\$341,427
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$515,047</b>	<b>\$476,248</b>	<b>\$495,685</b>	<b>\$461,952</b>	<b>\$617,228</b>	<b>\$648,564</b>	<b>\$719,881</b>	<b>\$785,498</b>	<b>\$826,876</b>	<b>\$844,750</b>	<b>\$6,391,731</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$1,496,685</b>	<b>\$1,246,387</b>	<b>\$1,241,799</b>	<b>\$1,008,929</b>	<b>\$1,350,605</b>	<b>\$1,418,135</b>	<b>\$1,681,111</b>	<b>\$1,762,959</b>	<b>\$1,859,252</b>	<b>\$1,832,490</b>	<b>\$14,898,351</b>

Source: LSC, 2007.

In the short term, LSC recommends that STAR apply for FTA 5311, 5307, TANF, Medicaid, CDC, local, and senior center funding. Under the new SAFETEA-LU rules, both TANF and Medicaid funding can be used as the local match transit operational funding for Phases I through IV.

Federal funding is available for 50 percent of the operating costs for general public transportation services less farebox return. The remaining operating costs should be divided among the local government entities and local agencies depending on the intergovernmental agreements and contract services. The Transit Implementation Plan anticipates \$734,000 in operational costs in fiscal year 2009 and \$770,740 in fiscal year 2010, with an increase in each of the following years based on implementation of the additional phases.

### **Benefits**

- Local funding displays a level of commitment on the part of the local governments and citizens.
- Local match funding is needed to help secure the matching federal funds.
- The funding helps to provide a service needed by the local citizens.

### **Timing**

- STAR should immediately begin the process of obtaining funds from the local government entities and agencies within the service area of the preferred plan.
- The local communities' budgetary offices should be prepared to incorporate local transit funding when the transit budget is presented for the fiscal year 2009 budget cycle.

### **Responsibilities**

- The STAR management will be responsible for presenting the initial funding information to the local agencies and governmental bodies, and for building support for local transit funding.
- The STAR management and Board will be responsible for developing the transit budget and presenting the budget to the local governments.
- The STAR Board should assist in presentations to the local agencies and governments.
- The STAR management and Board should assist in educating the public on the benefits of the new transit service in order to obtain political support for development of the intergovernmental agreements.



## **Implementation Steps**

- STAR should meet with local agencies and government officials to present the need for local transit funding.
- The STAR management should prepare the detailed transit operating budget for approval by the STAR Board.
- The STAR management should present the approved transit budget to local agencies and local governments.
- Local governments will need to agree to provide funding for the transit service in an intergovernmental agreement for one to three years in duration (preferably three years).
- A grassroots group should be created and should meet every month. The grassroots group should develop public education programs regarding the benefits of supporting the intergovernmental agreements and the level of local commitment to transit service.

## **Local and Regional Funding**

In the short term, LSC also recommends the area communities and Sweetwater County contribute revenue to cover the local match costs for the general public transportation services. Federal funding is available for 50 percent of the operating costs for general public service. The remaining 50 percent of the operating costs should be divided among the cities, counties, and private organizations of the STAR service area. The 2009 to 2010 Transit Plan anticipates \$734,000 in fiscal year 2009, with an increase in each of the following years. Additional funds will allow STAR to provide increased transit service to residents.

The communities in the region can each contribute to the annual funding of the new transit service by developing an intergovernmental agreement between the local governmental body and the STAR Board. The level of contribution can be based on a formula that equitably shares the cost of transit service among the communities. The local shares based on the revenue-hours of transit service in each community are presented in Table XV-3. Note that the total cost of the regional service has been allocated to Sweetwater County at this time. Based on Table XV-3, each community will pay a fair share of the operational and capital costs of the STAR service. The fair share is based on the level of service that each community receives in each of the four phases. The table also breaks out the local share by operation and capital.

<b>Table XV-3 Local Match Allocation Share</b>				
<b>Operations</b>	<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Phase II</b>	<b>Phase III</b>	<b>Phase IV</b>
Rock Springs	\$81,060	\$109,123	\$194,233	\$291,180
Green River	\$23,569	\$28,225	\$49,727	\$48,664
Sweetwater County	\$22,918	\$28,225	\$65,421	\$82,392
<b>Cost</b>	<b>\$127,546</b>	<b>\$165,573</b>	<b>\$309,382</b>	<b>\$422,236</b>
<b>Capital Facilities</b>	<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Phase II</b>	<b>Phase III</b>	<b>Phase IV</b>
Rock Springs	\$56,308	\$46,521	\$ -	\$ -
Green River	\$16,372	\$13,526	\$ -	\$ -
Sweetwater County	\$15,920	\$13,153	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Bus Stops</b>	<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Phase II</b>	<b>Phase III</b>	<b>Phase IV</b>
Rock Springs	\$5,600	\$6,174	\$ -	\$ -
Green River	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Sweetwater County	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Vehicles</b>	<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Phase II</b>	<b>Phase III</b>	<b>Phase IV</b>
Rock Springs	\$36,435	\$ -	\$22,144	\$38,451
Green River	\$10,594	\$ -	\$6,438	\$11,180
Sweetwater County	\$10,301	\$ -	\$6,260	\$10,871
<b>Other</b>	<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Phase II</b>	<b>Phase III</b>	<b>Phase IV</b>
Rock Springs	\$636	\$701	\$772	\$894
Green River	\$185	\$204	\$225	\$260
Sweetwater County	\$180	\$198	\$218	\$253
<i>Source: LSC, 2007.</i>				

## MARKETING PLAN

This section outlines several effective preliminary marketing strategies that can be used by the STAR. These strategies represent “best practices” from across the nation. They are taken from the *Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP), Report 50: A Handbook of Proven Marketing Strategies for Public Transit*, sponsored by the FTA and the Transportation Research Board. The TCRP Report 50 discusses national examples of effective marketing campaigns along with program results and a time line for implementation.

Marketing in the broadest context should be viewed as a management philosophy focused on identifying and satisfying customers’ wants and needs. The basic premise of successful marketing is providing the right product (or service), offering it at the right price, and adequately promoting or communicating the existence

and appropriateness of the product or service to potential customers. Unfortunately, for too many people the word “marketing” is associated only with advertising and promotional efforts that accompany “selling” the product or service to a customer. Instead, such promotional efforts are only a part of an overall marketing process. Without a properly designed and developed product or service offered at the right price, the expenditure of promotional funds is often ill-advised. The following sections outline some of these strategies appropriate for investigation by STAR. The LSC Team has included conceptual logos for STAR and branding for the new route service in Appendix J.

### **What constitutes an effective strategy?**

One of the first questions to ask when designing a marketing strategy or plan is, “What is an effective marketing strategy?” While there may not be one correct answer to this question, it can at least lead to a discussion on effective strategies.

An effective marketing strategy should at a minimum:

1. Become a strategy under the transit agency’s goals and objectives for service;
2. Be clearly and concisely presented and able to be implemented in the sense that something is produced or attained through the strategy;
3. Be able to be measured by some performance measure or data element;
4. Cost-effective in the sense that there is a benefit from the strategy and it is not implemented just for the sake of having a marketing campaign, one which may not even work;
5. Be flexible in respect to service changes and market segment changes, but be focused enough to convey a message about specific information; and finally,
6. Accurately represent the transit service as a whole.

Although there are many other definitions of what a marketing strategy should consist of, it should be something that is a comprehensive part of the agency’s overall goal of providing safe and efficient transit service. Marketing strategies should not be forgotten or discarded, even if there are no funding dollars available to support a comprehensive marketing strategy. Many strategies only take some initiative, foresight, and dedication to make and implement the strategy. The strategies should support the goals and objectives in a clear and concise way.

## How do you measure the success?

It can be very easy to measure the success of a transit agency's performance. Many times it comes down to two points—operating effectiveness and operating efficiency. Measures of operating effectiveness can be tested with performance factors such as passenger-trips per mile, passenger-trips per hour, and passenger-trips per capita. Measures of efficiency can be tested using the following measures: cost per passenger-trip, cost per hour, cost per mile, and cost per capita. LSC recommends that STAR continue to collect and analyze key performance measures in order to make adjustments to existing and new services.



Measures of marketing success can be measured using performance measures such as the ones discussed above, as well as through measures from passenger perceptions. Many times, the true measure of marketing success is an increase in ridership. Other such measures of success include revenue generation; farebox recovery; and ongoing passenger perception surveys from onboard surveys, telephone surveys, focus groups, or mailings conducted on a regular basis. Such performance measures will be very important in terms of the new loop route service.

## Preliminary Marketing Steps

One of the primary steps in determining how to tailor a marketing program to your agency is to determine how STAR is perceived. One of the best ways to determine public perceptions is to ask questions of users, non-users, and your agency as a whole. STAR should review its answers to the following questions:

- Do you have a marketing team of business leaders, customers, key representatives, government officials, etc. who meet regularly to discuss marketing efforts, or service efforts?
- Do you talk to your customers on a regular basis?
- Do have an open submission policy or openly accept new service ideas from persons outside your direct organization?
- Do you regularly survey passengers to determine if their needs are being met?
- Do you regularly meet with drivers to discuss how to better improve the overall service to patrons?

- Do drivers discuss feedback they get from customers with each other or with supervisors and key leadership?
- If you asked customers what they will change about the system, do you have any idea what they will say?
- If you asked customers how they heard about the service for the first time, do you think they can tell you?
- If you sampled the general community population, will they be able to tell you anything about STAR service (such as how much it costs, where it goes, and how to use it)?
- Will local businesses, clubs, organizations, etc. donate to your organization?
- How will customers rank service on a scale of 1 to 10? Will you be surprised by their responses?

These are the key questions that need to be addressed as STAR continues to improve and market itself as the main public transportation provider in the region. Many agencies are shocked when they evaluate themselves in regard to the above questions. Marketing often is a key to raising the perceptions about a service.

## **Effective Strategies**

### National Examples

The following presents marketing examples from across the country, along with the strategy's effectiveness at meeting the respective agency's goals. The strategies are not categorized or presented in any particular order. They are presented as a basis for discussion and to present how others campaign for transit ridership.

### **Transit Brochure Distribution – Rural Transit**

Rural Transit in Bloomington, Indiana informs customers and potential riders of services through brochure distribution. The brochures are easy to read and informative. They are distributed to businesses and agencies along the rural transit routes. The implementation time for this program was one year with the objective of increasing awareness of the Rural Transit services. The agency reported the successes of the program were an increased public awareness of transit services in the area, increased working relationships with local businesses and agencies, and increased ridership.

### **RRTA Senior Game – Red Rose Transit Authority**

Red Rose Transit Authority (RRTA) in Lancaster, Pennsylvania conducted a six-week-long frequent rider promotion for senior citizens age 65 and over. The RRTA Senior Game cards were distributed by operators and punched each time a senior used the system. A card was entered into drawings for prizes after four rides. Weekly drawings were held with small prizes awarded. The agency advertised with a mailing to the local senior citizen groups, ads in senior citizen publications, and interior bus ads. The objective of the “game” is to get new seniors to try the bus system, as well as to reward current patrons. Implementation time is two to three weeks per year. Ridership for the RRTA was noted as increasing, and feedback from seniors was very positive.

### **Flyer Distribution - Blacksburg Transit**

Blacksburg Transit in Blacksburg, Virginia posts single-page flyers throughout the Virginia Tech college campus promoting its paratransit service. The flyers are placed in and around major buildings. The objective is to increase awareness of the agency’s paratransit service on campus. Within two months after the strategy was implemented, calls to the agency for information and applications for service increased by 350 percent.

### **Connecting the Worker to the Workplace - Triangle Transit Authority**

The Triangle Transit Authority (TTA) in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina held job fairs that focused on the importance of public transit options for the workplace. The objective of the job fairs was to bring employers and potential employees together for mutual benefit. Education of both segments was another objective. While this project took considerable funding and time spent organizing the job fair, the TTA sees this strategy as a huge success and is now asked to make presentations to different groups on welfare-to-work issues and is represented on several area agency boards for work-related transportation issues.

### **Get On Board – Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority**

The Erie Metropolitan Transit Authority (EMTA) in Erie, Pennsylvania conducts a transit awareness program called “Get On Board.” EMTA holds awareness assemblies in each of the local elementary schools. Coloring books and other materials

are distributed to the children and education lessons are given to teachers. The main objective is to educate schoolchildren on the value and use of the transit system. EMTA spends money primarily on copying and stickers. Free advertising is garnered on a local radio station with other prizes donated from local advertisers on the station. In the first year of implementation, 10 of 14 schools were involved, and working relationships with sponsors continues to grow.

### Other Approaches

Recent research has cataloged marketing efforts that have helped transit systems around the country increase their public exposure and their ridership, and some of these successful initiatives may be useful for STAR. Many systems have found print advertising (e.g., newspapers, flyers, and direct mail) to be the most effective use of advertising dollars. Examples of successful marketing strategies include:

- *Volunteers to assist potential riders* - Under this program, a volunteer is used to explain the workings of the transit system to the potential patron and to accompany the person on a round-trip ride. Such programs have resulted in a newfound independence for residents, particularly the elderly and disabled, who are now able to travel throughout the community without relying on friends and family to provide them with mobility.
- *Publish transit schedules and service hours in the newspaper* - Publication of the transit schedule and basic information about the transit system in the local newspaper twice per year will be a cost-effective way to ensure that the residents of the communities are familiar with the transit service. The newspaper may agree to print the schedule as a public service. Alternatively, some systems have covered the cost of such an initiative through a reciprocal agreement to carry advertising for the newspaper on the buses.
- *Direct mail program* - If new areas or services are added to the transit system, it may be advantageous to institute a direct mail campaign to households in the new areas. Such a campaign will ensure that residents of the neighborhoods know about the service. It will be useful to include coupons in the mailing to encourage residents to make their first transit trip.
- *Shopping center underwriting* - Some transit systems have developed arrangements with shopping centers that provide coupons for riders. These coupons will provide an incentive for riders and will be beneficial to the transit system and the shopping center.



While each of the listed marketing strategies may or may not be effective, they can all be modified in some way to fit STAR's needs. The goal of marketing is to increase awareness, support, and ultimately, ridership for the system. A key element of these marketing strategies is that the new loop route service will need additional marketing strategies. This means a branding of the new transit service that is different from the existing service. It has been suggested that STAR use Desert Wind Transit (DWT) for the branding of the new loop route service.

### Marketing to Business

Marketing techniques to reach businesses should receive its own attention. An excellent resource is the *TCRP Report 51: A Guidebook for Marketing Transit Services to Business*, sponsored by the FTA and the Transportation Research Board. Much of what is documented in this section is taken from the TCRP Report 51, as well as LSC's varied experience across the country. The TCRP Report 51 states a very important point worth mentioning right away: "No matter who makes up the target market, understanding what the customer wants is the first step toward meeting those needs." This statement translates into every aspect of a transit system, not just the marketing program.

Local businesses are often unaware that general public transit service even exists. In many cases, local businesses do not know about tax benefits and other incentives available through the use of employee transportation. Awareness could be provided through a brief summary of those benefits to the employers by a spokesman for STAR. It is then up to STAR to respond to those business needs, such as getting employees to and from work. For example, subscription employee routes can provide a needed service to businesses. This can be in the form of vanpools, buspools, fixed-route intercity service, etc.



Once a service is proposed to be offered, support for that service must come in terms of commitment and participation. This is not only financial support, but may require the business participating to promote the service to employees. Effective programs across the country have employed such innovative ideas as public-

private profit sharing, where revenues are shared with the business after operating costs have been recouped.

How do you begin such a daunting task? There are many ways to approach a business to determine if a market exists and what form of transportation is appropriate for that business:

- Direct Mailings – inform businesses of existing service and benefits.
- Site-Based Sales – informal visits with employers and employees to determine needs and possible solutions.
- Chamber of Commerce – an excellent means to communicate with businesses in the community. STAR may wish to join the Chamber and have senior management get involved in Chamber activities.
- Telemarketing – businesses can be contacted during business hours and be “pitched” information.
- Word of Mouth – it is possible that an existing employee uses transit and can spread the benefits of transportation to fellow employees and employers.
- Decision Makers – obviously having the ear of local decision-makers and business leaders is an effective way to promote the service.

There are a variety of ways to market transit to businesses in a community. The first thing you have to do, or be willing to do, is offer a convenient, cost-effective service. Cost, convenience, and reliability are the important things to remember in any transit system and must be the priority of the transit agency. If this is concentrated on, marketing will come much more easily.

### **STAR Preliminary Transit Marketing Strategies**



The best marketing that can be done is to provide services that the people want. Enhancing service is an element of marketing because it provides a desirable service to those who will use it. In order to provide good service, it is essential to have information which may be used by management for evaluation of the service and continuous improvement of that service. STAR must maintain a customer orientation in every part of the plan. Promotional activities have been identified that can enhance the overall implementation and marketing efforts. The following represent realistic efforts that can be done under a limited budget.

### Human Interest Stories

STAR should work with the local newspaper to provide periodic human interest stories. Human interest stories can be used to reinforce the benefits of transit service for the community. Examples of good stories will be individuals who are able to work or attend school because of the availability of public transportation. Another example is someone with a disability who is able to make a contribution in the community because of public transportation or who is able to obtain medical treatment because of the coordinated efforts between STAR and the social service agencies.



STAR should also make use of news advisories for any significant event or accomplishment of any employee. The most cost-effective way to reach large groups of the general population is via the news media. A system should be developed to disseminate news advisories to the media announcing new schedules, fares, services, community involvement activities, outstanding employees, safety record, major management changes, awards, etc. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the media should not be overwhelmed with too much information that is not meaningful and that might otherwise dilute the attention paid to more important communications. STAR should use the media in the beginning to talk about the new transit service changes.

### Vehicle Logo Design/Bus Wrap

A vehicle logo should be designed that is both distinctive and attractive. The logo should convey the message that this is a transit bus or a transit stop. It should be colorful, easy to read, and reproducible. Additionally, bus wraps offer an attractive alternative to paint schemes. Many times the bus wrap cost can be offset by advertising a local business or college. Additionally, a “Design a Bus Wrap” contest can be sponsored throughout the region. A high school student in Tempe, Arizona won the 2004 Valley Metro “Design a Bus Wrap” contest.



STAR should contact a local business or agency that may be willing to pay for the bus wrap. Bus wraps have a wide range of prices depending on the design, amount of the vehicle to wrap, geographical location, and type of vehicle. Vendors have stated that a three-year wrap for a body-on-chassis vehicle can run between \$7,000 and \$15,000. Many smaller agencies are just not financially capable of having this done to vehicles. However, there may be a local business or other agency that may be willing to cover the cost of design, materials, and installation.



### Passenger Information

One main element of passenger information appropriate for STAR is a new brochure and flyer program. Passenger brochures should describe the services and include detailed information on the transit system without providing irrelevant information. The brochures should include service hours, destinations/service area, telephone numbers, fare information, etc. The brochure should also describe how to request a pick-up and drop-off. The brochure should be attractive, informative and bilingual (English and Spanish) if there is a large Hispanic population in the community.

Another element of passenger information should include posters and signs. Posters and signs should be prepared which may be displayed in businesses, at places of employment, hospitals, and community bulletin boards.

### Local Advertisement

Local advertising in media is a very effective means of advertising and promoting transit services. Local television time is usually cost-prohibitive for most agencies. Radio, newspaper, Internet and others usually provide a cost-effective means of communicating with the public. Often a local paper or radio station will donate advertising costs for the agency. Local advertisement also means working with local businesses and agencies to advertise on the buses, at bus stops, etc. Many times this can be a revenue generating initiative.

### Guidelines for Preparing Radio and Newspaper Stories or Releases

It is important to remember that local people read local papers. Several written communication strategies may be used to “sell” the transit system. The following communication strategies should be considered if they are not already being used: yellow pages, directories, classified ads, newspapers, event flyers, referral flyers, and promotional flyers. Following are brief guidelines for preparing news advertisements or releases.

- Determine the goal: Why are we releasing this news story? Does it help to promote service? Does it reach our markets effectively? What market are we trying to reach with the advertisement or story? Determination of the overall goal of a news release or advertisement may help to assess if it is worth the cost to place the advertisement versus what the return may be. Overall, will anything be gained from the release or advertisement?
- What is needed? A determination of the objectives is necessary to assess how much is needed to convey the message. It is unlikely that one or two lines of text will suffice for releasing information in local papers about service changes or improvements. Having several “eyes” read and critique the piece will help to know if the message is being conveyed as intended.
- When writing a release, follow this simple strategy: don’t forget about the primary goals, don’t go overboard, don’t use empty useless statements, or don’t forget to be accurate.

### Public Relations and Service Announcements

Public relations and service announcements are activities by which STAR can be “sold” without having to incur paid advertisement costs. Public relations are vitally important to any company, but especially to transit systems because of the system’s dependence upon the public to sustain it financially. The fact that the transit system must provide dependable, convenient, and timely service to the public is fundamental. Without this element of efficiency, no amount of public relations, advertising, or other marketing strategies will be effective. STAR should

develop service announcements describing the new transit service changes. This is a cost-effective way of spreading the word over the airwaves.

## **MONITORING PROGRAM**

Monitoring of service should begin immediately. Data collection is essential to evaluate the service performance and to determine if changes should be made in the service delivery. While STAR currently collects some of this information, detailed information such as passenger boardings and alightings by bus stop will greatly enhance the amount



*MDTs in use*

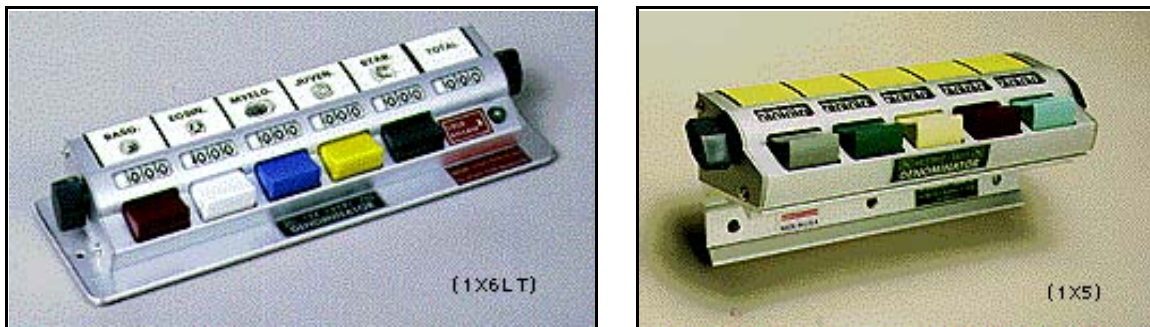
of analysis which can be performed for future service changes. Passenger boardings should be recorded daily by route, fare category, and by trip. There is a trade-off between data collection efforts and the value of information. It is just as easy to collect too much data as it is to collect insufficient data.

One goal all transit agencies should strive for is the implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems, such as mobile data terminals (MDTs). Mobile data terminals include features such as recording each passenger by fare category as they board. This capability should be programmed into the software as it is implemented. Mobile data terminals also allow both data and voice communication between operator and dispatcher. It is similar to having an alphanumeric pager on the dashboard. Several successful agencies across the country implementing MDTs include Central Ohio Transit Authority, Colorado Springs Mountain Metropolitan Transit, Tri-Met - Oregon, Milwaukee County Transit System, Ann Arbor Transportation Authority, and Montgomery County Transportation Authority.

Passenger boarding data can also be collected using tally boards on the buses. Two sample counters are shown in Figure XV-1. Sufficient buttons are required to record passengers in each fare category. A driver's log sheet should then be used to record the passenger counts at the end of each trip. The drivers do not need to calculate the number of passengers for that trip, but record the running total by fare category. As data are entered, the calculation of passengers on each trip can be made. An effective approach is to prepare the driver's log sheet for each

of the driver's runs. This will provide preprinted route and trip information, and the driver will need only to record the date and the passenger count data.

Figure XV-1  
Manual Passenger Boarding Counters



Twice each year, a full boarding and alighting count should be completed. If passenger boardings are counted using the MDTs and integrated with Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), the data can be recorded automatically. If it must be done manually, this is a more intense effort and will require the use of additional personnel. Passenger counts are recorded for passengers boarding and alighting by stop for a full day. This information records the passenger activity at individual stops and is useful in determining if stops are appropriately placed and what amenities should be provided. If a stop has little or no activity, it will not warrant a bench or shelter, and may not even be appropriate as a designated stop. Data collection forms should be prepared for each route showing the stops and providing space to record the passenger counts. An example used for an existing system is shown on the following page. Similar sheets should be prepared in advance for the boarding and alighting data collection.

### Provide Comment Cards and Boxes

LSC recommends that STAR provide comment cards and comment boxes on each transit vehicle so that passengers have an opportunity to provide input regarding the transit system.

## Fare Structure

LSC recommends a new fare structure which will aid in the development of the transit service. The fare schedule is based on advantages and disadvantages to the riders. Since the new transit service in Rock Springs is a deviated loop route, each deviation can impact the route's running time and level of service. In order to limit the number of deviations and encourage individuals to use the nearest bus stops, LSC recommends different fares for general fares and deviation fares. Table XV-4 presents the recommended fare structure for the new transit service.

<b>Table XV-4</b>	
<b>STAR Transit Fares</b>	
General Loop Route Fare	\$1 per ride
Deviation (ADA eligible) Fare	\$2 per ride
Deviation (non-ADA eligible) Fare	\$3 per ride
Demand-Response Service	\$2 per ride
Zone Fare	\$2 per zone
Seniors (over 60 years of age)	Free
Children (under 2 years of age)	Free
Transfers on Loop Routes	Free
<i>Source: STAR and LSC 2007</i>	

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm

# Breckenridge Route

# of carryover passengers: \_\_\_\_\_

ID	Bus Stop	ON	OFF	W/CH ON	W/CH OFF
34	Frisco Station				
46	Summit Boulevard @ School Road				
89	Main St @ 6th				
94	Granite Street				
50	Ophir Mountain Village				
21	County Commons				
95	Hwy 9 @ Farmer's Korner				
74	Hwy 9 @ Tiger Run				
97	Hwy 9 @ Vienna Townhomes				
13	Hwy 9 @ Breckenridge Rec. Ctr				
18	Park Ave. @ City Market				
6	Park Ave. @ 4 O'Clock Road				
110	Breckenridge Station				
110	Breckenridge Station				
108	Park Ave. @ River Mountain Lodge				
18	Park Ave. @ City Market				
98	Hwy 9 @ Breck Inn				
97	Hwy 9 @ Vienna Townhomes				
74	Hwy 9 @ Tiger Run				
95	Hwy 9 @ Farmer's Korner				
50	Ophir Mountain Village				
21	County Commons				
109	Summit Co Comm. Ctr				
94	Granite Street				
89	Main St @ 6th				
46	Summit Boulevard @ School Road				
34	Frisco Station				

**EXTRAS**


## **IMPLEMENTATION TIME LINE**

Figure XV-2 presents a time line for implementation of the preferred transit service plan. LSC has also included the planning phase for each recommended project and program in order to aid in development. The planning phase is conducted the year before implementation. LSC recommends that STAR evaluate each project or program after implementation. For each phase of the implementation plan, LSC has included the planning and coordination of intergovernmental agreements and public education.

Phase I should be planned in 2008, with implementation in 2009. Included in the Phase I timeframe is the start of the new loop route service, regional service, purchase and replacement of vehicles, installation of bus stops and shelters, and development of two new transfer stations and the new transit facility.

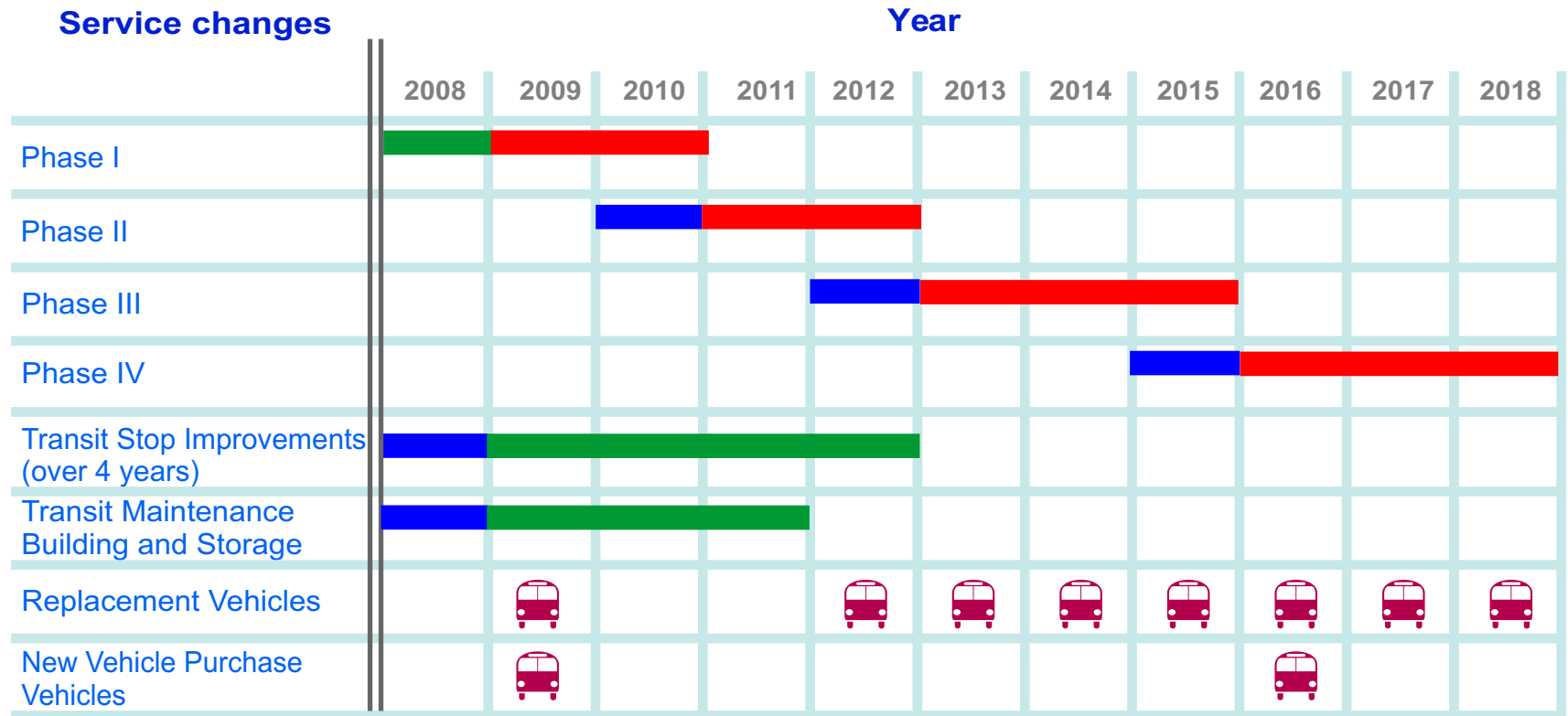
Phase II should be planned in 2010 at the latest, with implementation in 2011. Phase II includes the expanded loop route service and weekend service; purchase of replacement vehicles; and installation of bus stops, shelters, and one transfer station.

Phase III should be planned in 2012 at the latest, with implementation in 2013. Phase III includes the service expansion and purchase of replacement vehicles.

Phase IV should be planned in 2015, with implementation in 2016 (depending on funding). Phase IV includes the start of the north route, loop route service expansion, and purchase of new and replacement vehicles.

The time line is designed to implement the preferred transit service plan over the next ten years. This timeframe allows those agencies and government bodies that are dedicating funding to the transit system the time to shift their funding.

# Figure XV-2 Short-Term Plan Timeline



- LEGEND**
- Planning Phase / Intergovernmental Agreements
  - Implementation/Construction Year
  - Full Year of Operations
  - Purchase Vehicles



## **RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL PLANS AND STUDIES**

The LSC team has developed a short list of additional studies and plans that STAR will need to conduct over the next few years.

- Transit Facility Site Study - for the new transit barn, offices, and transfer stations.
- Park-and-Ride Lot Development and Implementation Plan - to develop the location of future park-and-ride lot locations.
- Onboard Survey and Analysis - to analyze the new loop route service and identify possible adjustments to the transit service.
- Transit Development Plan 2012-2018 - to update this planning document in five years.
- Regional Transit Authority Funding Study - to study the possibility of creating a funding tax for STAR.