

South Central 2030 Regional Transit Element

South Central
Regional Planning
Commission

South Central Regional Transit Plan

Draft Report

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CHAPTER I Introduction

The South Central Council of Governments, on behalf of the South Central Regional Planning Commission (RPC), contracted with URS, LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. (LSC), and Ostrander Consulting to prepare the South Central 2030 Regional Transportation Plan. This Final Report represents the Transit Element for Huerfano and Las Animas Counties. Information in this report includes a description of the communities, a review of the existing transportation providers in the study area, issues to be addressed in the study, the transit demand estimates for the study area, and the Long-Range and Short-Range Transit Elements for the Regional Transportation Plan.



PROJECT PURPOSE

This 2030 Transit Element will be incorporated into the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan and will become the transit planning document for the Regional Planning Commission and the transit service providers within the South Central Region. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will use the Transit Element in evaluating and approving grant applications for capital and operating funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as well as other available transit funds. The South Central RPC will use the 2030 Transit Element for allocating available funds and project prioritization.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

Chapter II presents the existing socioeconomic and environmental profile of the South Central Region. This includes available demographic data provided by the release of the 2000 Census and projections for the six-year and twenty-five year planning horizons. Chapter III presents a summary of the existing transportation systems within the region. Information for the providers includes service information, schedules, operating data, and ridership information.



Chapter IV provides an analysis of the demand for transit services in the South Central Region. Chapter V presents transit alternatives for the South Central Region. Chapter VI reviews the evaluation criteria used in the *South Central Regional Transportation Plan*.

Chapter VII presents the Long-Range Transit Element for the Regional Transportation Plan. The Long-Range Transit Element includes an analysis of unmet needs, gaps in the service areas, regional transit needs, a policy plan for South Central Transportation Planning Region (TPR), and a funding plan. This chapter identifies a policy plan for the South Central Region, which identifies policies and strategies for transit service within the region.

Chapter VIII presents the Short-Range Element for the South Central Region over the next six years. This chapter includes the six-year program of prioritized projects for each transit provider within the study area. Details for each project include the agency responsible for implementing each project. This chapter also includes the financially-constrained plan for transit. The constrained plan is based on projected funding for the region and the individual providers.

STUDY APPROACH

This study looks at how transportation services are provided within the two-county study area. This included investigating the different areas and how transportation needs vary across the study area. The needs of remote rural Las Animas County are different from the urban areas of Walsenburg and Trinidad. This study presents both short-range and long-range transit elements. The short-range transit element is the basis for operational plans for each transit provider within the region for 2006-2011. The long-range transit element provides a vision for the quality of life and transportation goals to support that vision. The long-range transit element presents the Preferred Transit Plan and also a 2030 Financially-Constrained Plan.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Initial Kick-Off Meeting – Transit Advisory Committee

An initial “Kick-off Meeting” of the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) and local concerned citizens was held in Trinidad on July 24, 2003. The Transit Advisory Committee met to discuss the 2030 Transportation Plan and how the Transit Element will feed into that plan. The project goals, timeline, and expectations were discussed at the meeting. The LSC Team distributed the South Central Transit Survey to local providers.



The next meeting of the TAC was October 9, 2003 where the first working paper and major transportation issues for the region were discussed.

Public Involvement

Throughout the planning process, public involvement is key to the success of the transit plan for the community. At key points during the process, public meetings were held where citizen participation was openly welcome and appreciated. The public involvement process was coordinated with the Regional Transportation Plan.

CDOT initiated a strong effort to involve the small communities around the State of Colorado in the 2030 planning process. CDOT contracted with the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) to involve all communities under population 5,000 with a “Go to the People” approach. Representatives from CDOT coordinated with the communities to provide a meeting with local staff and elected officials. These meetings focused on future transportation needs for their community and ensured the local needs will be included in the 2030 plan. This additional effort by CDOT involved more local governments and citizens in statewide planning efforts.

The first public meetings were held on August 27, 2003 at two different locations—the Walsenburg Senior Center from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and the Holiday Inn in Trinidad from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. The second public meeting was held on April 1, 2004 in Trinidad at the County Courthouse. Attendance at the public meetings was not very high, and very few comments were received. Additional input was received from the DOLA meetings. Details from these meetings are available in the 2030 Transportation Plan.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

South Central TPR Regional Mission

The following statement is the transportation vision for the 2030 South Central Regional Transportation Plan:

The South Central Transportation Planning Region envisions a multimodal transportation network that supports a stronger and more diversified economy, supports the preservation of the region's environmental and scenic quality of life, provides access to recreational opportunities, and preserves the unique historical, cultural, and small town character of the region.

This transportation vision was used throughout the planning process to guide local residents and the consultant team. All projects and planning support this mission statement for the region.

LOCAL ISSUES



The TAC identified and discussed local transit issues during the kick-off Advisory Committee meeting. These issues were addressed throughout the study and are used to develop transit projects for the next 25 years. Below is a list of some of the items of discussion:

- Senior Center is happy with existing service. Members use the COG service and are pleased. Weekend service would be nice to have for special activities, but they understand the high cost for the service. The taxi service is used for seniors on the weekend.
- The State Nursing Home also uses the COG and is supportive of the service. Weekend and evening service is also a need from the agency. Out-of-town service would also be good addition.
- Future funding will be a challenge with the recent Medicaid budget cuts.
- The COG still has the “Senior Only” image in the community. A marketing program is needed.
- The fare structure for the COG should be reviewed.
- It should be noted that the COG and the Las Animas Rehabilitation Center have seen an increase in wheelchair passengers.
- Child transportation is an issue. Only limited funds are available, but there is a high need. We need to address for the future.
- The COG would like to research smaller and more fuel-efficient vehicles.
- Determine if there a need for transit service from La Veta.

Local issues were identified from a variety of other sources including previous reports, the inventory of existing providers, interviews with transit managers, the Regional Planning Commission (RPC), and discussion with and observation of users. Issues may require short-range or long-range actions. Each of the issues was considered when developing the short-range and long-range plans for the study area.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The 2030 South Central Regional Transportation Plan identifies regional goals and strategies related to transportation. The following are the goals and strategies from that Plan:

Goal 1 ***The highway system provides mobility to the traveling public at an acceptable level of service.***

Strategy A Additional travel lanes will be constructed to alleviate congestion where appropriate and when alternative solutions are either not feasible or not effective.

Strategy B Other highway improvements, including passing lanes, paved shoulders, and improved intersections will be constructed where required to promote improved levels of service and safety.

Goal 2 ***The existing transportation system will be maintained in the most efficient manner possible.***

Strategy A Pavement condition will be maintained in accordance with goals set by the Colorado Transportation Commission.

Strategy B Pavement condition on airport runways and bicycle/pedestrian paths will be maintained at a level that protects the original investment and provides for safe use.

Strategy C Structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridges will be replaced or otherwise maintained to extend useful life.

Strategy D Public transportation vehicles will be maintained and replaced on an effective schedule that allows providers to continue providing safe and efficient service.

Goal 3 ***The transportation system provides safe travel opportunities.***

Strategy A The TPR will support local, regional, statewide, and national initiatives to modify and improve vehicle safety and driver behavior.

Strategy B Locations with historically high crash ratios in relation to vehicle-miles traveled will be evaluated for potential safety improvements.

Strategy C Passing lanes, turn lanes, and adequate shoulders will be constructed where appropriate financially and environmentally in order to maximize infrastructure safety.

Strategy D Rest areas will be provided at appropriate intervals on regionally significant highways.

Strategy E Rail grade crossings will be improved at high volume locations to include appropriate safety equipment or grade separations.

Goal 4 ***The transportation system minimizes impacts to the region’s air, water, scenic view corridors, cultural resources, and wildlife habitat.***

- Strategy A The 2030 transportation plan will be used to identify critical habitat and cultural locations that should be avoided or mitigated during transportation development.

- Strategy B Consideration will be given to scenic views during transportation planning so as to minimize negative impacts to important tourism corridors and quality of life.

- Strategy C Multimodal development such as public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian options will be implemented where feasible so as to offer alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel.

- Strategy D Transportation Enhancement projects that are included in local comprehensive, recreation, or other community plans will be considered consistent with the South Central Regional Transportation Plan and will be eligible for application to CDOT’s Transportation Enhancement Program.

- Strategy E Mitigate the impacts of methane gas shipment and new housing development on the region’s most sensitive environmental and tourist areas and activities.

- Strategy F Improve the aesthetic appeal of the area by blending transportation projects with the historic nature of the region. This may include specific construction and landscaping standards on major projects or projects that improve the area from an aesthetic standpoint, such as the Riverwalk project or improvements to the Highway of Legends.

Goal 5 ***The transportation system functions as a complete system with effective connectivity both within the region and to the rest of the state.***

- Strategy A The transportation system provides effective through-access to interregional destinations.

- Strategy B The transportation system provides effective access to visitor destinations, including multimodal opportunities.

- Strategy C The transportation system provides enhanced highway signage for key historic, cultural, scenic, and recreation areas.

- Strategy D The 2030 plan coordinates with surrounding regions’ transportation plans, including developing corridor visions for interregional transportation corridors.

Goal 6 ***The transportation system preserves and enhances the region’s overall economic health.***

- Strategy A Access to goods and services is as critical to the region as general mobility and will be enhanced by implementation of the transportation plan.

- Strategy B Since the economic health of the region depends in part on mobility of commercial goods, the plan evaluates and recommends imple-



mentation of improved facilities to enhance commercial goods movement, including truck routes, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), truck/rail intermodal facilities, and aviation cargo facilities.

Strategy C The transportation system provides enhanced tourism facilities such as rest areas, traveler information services, signage, Scenic and Historic Byway enhancements, and linkage to historic and other downtown areas by pedestrian access from parking areas.

Goal 7 The transportation system provides new intermodal access and mobility options for individuals and commerce.

Strategy A The plan seeks to promote the addition of intercity bus service along I-25 that provides access to Front Range metropolitan areas.

Strategy B The plan identifies transportation alternatives for the elderly, low income, and other transit-dependent populations and promotes their development.

Strategy C The plan seeks to improve commercial air connections and terminal facilities.

Strategy D The plan seeks to improve general aviation facilities.

Strategy E The plan seeks to improve additional non-motorized transportation access to recreation areas including development of a continuous bike/pedestrian trail along the Scenic Highway of Legends, and connection of this loop on Highway 12 to Trinidad and Walsenburg.

Goal 8 To provide a safe and efficient airport system that maximizes existing investment and meets inter- and intrastate travel and emergency needs while supporting Colorado's diverse economy.

Strategy A Provide a system of airports that is adequate to meet existing and projected demand.

Strategy B Provide a system of airports that meets future demand levels while considering community and environmental compatibility.

Strategy C Provide a system of airports that supports economic growth and diversification.

Strategy D Provide a system of diverse airports that is convenient to Colorado residents while also supporting critical health, welfare, and emergency services within the state.

Strategy E Provide a system of airports that maximizes the useful life of airport facilities by recognizing historic local, state, and federal investment.

Goal 9 The transportation plan identifies, evaluates, and prioritizes transportation development options that enhance travel and can be implemented through existing or reasonably anticipated funding.

Strategy A The preferred plan recognizes and prioritizes transportation needs that may exceed expected revenues and plans for long-term system improvements should additional funding becoming available at any time in the future.



- Strategy B The plan supports the efficient use of limited financial resources.
- Strategy C The fiscally-constrained plan leverages available state and federal resources with public/private partnerships.
- Strategy D The South Central Regional Transportation Commission supports the provision of state funds for the provision of public transportation services.
- Strategy E The fiscally-constrained plan recognizes that the costs of desired transportation development may exceed reasonably anticipated revenues and therefore, estimated costs of development will be held to those expected revenues.

Goal 10 *The transportation plan develops options that are understood and supported by the traveling public.*

- Strategy A The regional transportation planning process invites full public involvement and input at key points through the use of advisory committees, public meetings, a project website, newsletters, and input opportunities for the general public and interest groups.
- Strategy B The plan upholds, supports, and implements the provisions of CDOT's Environmental Justice initiative which seeks to eliminate disparities in transportation development among ethnic minority, low income, and other disadvantaged populations.
- Strategy C The plan supports improved and sustainable quality of life for the region's diverse population.

These goals and strategies were reviewed by the RPC, the TAC, and all those concerned with public transportation within the region, as well as those areas immediately surrounding the study area. Preliminary goals were refined throughout the planning process to reflect the overall transportation goals of the South Central Transportation Planning Region.

CHAPTER II

Socioeconomic and Environmental Profile

Transportation has always played an important role for Colorado, including the South Central Region. The study area for this 25-Year Transit Element includes Huerfano and Las Animas Counties, covering an area of approximately 6,364 square miles. The two-county region is a rural, sparsely populated area with an economy based primarily on the natural attractions to the region and the associated services and retail trade. There are numerous tourist attractions and recreational opportunities in the area.

The two-county region had a 2000 total population of 23,069, an increase of 17 percent from 1990. Detailed county socio-demographic information will be presented in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan and will not be repeated in this chapter. That report will include information regarding population and employment projections and other data for the region. This chapter for the 2030 Transit Element focuses on the transit-dependent demographic information that specifically relates to public transportation.



STUDY AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

Transit-Dependent Populations

This section provides information on individuals considered by the transportation profession to be dependent upon public transit. In general, these population characteristics preclude these individuals from driving and increase the dependence on friends and relatives for transportation.

The four types of limitations that preclude persons from driving are: (1) physical limitations, (2) financial limitations, (3) legal limitations, and (4) self-imposed limitations. Physical limitations may include everything from permanent disabilities such as frailty due to age, blindness, paralysis, or developmental disabilities to temporary disabilities such as acute illnesses and head injuries. Financial limitations essentially include those persons unable to purchase or rent their own vehicle. Legal limitations refer to such limitations as persons who are too young (generally under age 16) or those persons whose privileges have been revoked (DUI, etc.). The final category of limitation includes those people who choose not to own or drive a vehicle (some or all of the time) for reasons other than those listed in the first three categories.

The census is generally capable of providing information about the first three categories of limitation. The fourth category of limitation is generally recognized as representing an insignificant proportion of transit ridership. Table II-1 presents the regional census statistics including zero-vehicle households, youth population, elderly population, mobility-limited population, and below poverty population. These types of data are important to the various methods of demand estimation as shown in Chapter IV. These are also population groups identified under Title VI and Environmental Justice.

**Table II-1
Transit Dependent Population Characteristics for the South Central Region**

County	Census Tract	Census Block Group	Zero-Vehicle Households		Total Number of Households	Total Number of Youth Aged 0 - 15		Total Number of Elderly 60 & over		Mobility-Limited (16-64) Population		Below-Poverty Population		Total Population (Persons)
			#	%		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Huerfano	9806	1	82	19.1%	430	267	25.9%	257	25.0%	75	7.3%	182	17.7%	1,029
	9806	2	97	25.7%	378	115	7.4%	235	15.2%	29	1.9%	180	11.6%	1,547
	9806	3	69	19.1%	362	222	27.7%	176	21.9%	41	5.1%	183	22.8%	802
	9806	4	39	9.3%	420	203	19.5%	273	26.2%	40	3.8%	199	19.1%	1,043
	9807	1	17	3.1%	553	221	16.5%	450	33.5%	46	3.4%	167	12.4%	1,343
	9807	2	30	6.0%	496	230	21.4%	202	18.8%	37	3.4%	165	15.4%	1,073
	9808	1	10	3.8%	262	83	13.9%	101	16.9%	7	1.2%	126	21.0%	599
	9808	2	7	3.9%	181	71	16.7%	70	16.4%	6	1.4%	45	10.6%	426
TOTALS: Huerfano County			351	11.4%	3,082	1,412	18.0%	1,764	22.4%	281	3.6%	1,247	15.9%	7,862
Las Animas	1	1	65	15.4%	422	196	19.4%	300	29.6%	47	4.6%	282	27.9%	1,012
	1	2	92	13.1%	702	305	18.2%	447	26.7%	99	5.9%	295	17.6%	1,676
	1	3	78	15.5%	503	309	24.6%	296	23.5%	103	8.2%	462	36.8%	1,257
	2	1	27	9.0%	301	140	20.9%	147	22.0%	36	5.4%	164	24.5%	669
	2	2	33	11.3%	292	205	26.0%	108	13.7%	20	2.5%	62	7.9%	789
	2	3	26	6.5%	397	177	18.9%	202	21.6%	40	4.3%	73	7.8%	935
	3	1	29	7.8%	373	136	15.4%	251	28.5%	28	3.2%	101	11.5%	881
	3	2	7	4.0%	173	78	16.3%	113	23.5%	11	2.3%	108	22.5%	480
	3	3	8	5.7%	141	74	21.6%	82	24.0%	6	1.8%	52	15.2%	342
	3	4	7	2.3%	310	207	26.9%	100	13.0%	19	2.5%	47	6.1%	769
	4	1	73	29.2%	250	132	23.2%	148	26.0%	47	8.3%	101	17.8%	569
	4	2	12	4.0%	298	186	23.1%	174	21.6%	19	2.4%	41	5.1%	805
	4	3	51	15.5%	330	239	29.0%	168	20.4%	79	9.6%	162	19.7%	824
	5	1	0	0.0%	11	2	9.5%	4	19.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	21
	5	2	33	7.9%	416	270	22.9%	329	27.9%	67	5.7%	179	15.2%	1,179
	5	3	45	10.8%	417	84	9.7%	292	33.8%	19	2.2%	153	17.7%	863
	6	1	16	6.3%	252	137	20.3%	140	20.7%	52	7.7%	151	22.4%	675
	6	2	3	1.3%	234	141	23.7%	114	19.1%	22	3.7%	29	4.9%	596
	7	1	13	7.0%	185	131	26.8%	96	19.6%	1	0.2%	78	16.0%	489
	7	2	11	7.5%	147	56	16.7%	104	31.0%	9	2.7%	31	9.2%	336
7	3	0	0.0%	19	7	17.5%	15	37.5%	0	0.0%	2	5.0%	40	
TOTALS: Las Animas County			629	10.2%	6,173	3,212	21.1%	3,630	23.9%	724	4.8%	2,573	16.9%	15,207
TOTALS: South Central Region			980	10.6%	9,255	4,624	20.0%	5,394	23.4%	1,005	4.4%	3,820	16.6%	23,069

Source: 2000 US Census of Population and Housing, STF3.



Youth Population

The total population of youth aged 0 to 15 years for the study area was 4,624 persons in 2000, representing 20 percent of the total population.

Elderly Population

Elderly persons (age 60 or older) represent 23 percent of the total population of the study area. Figure II-1 illustrates the percentage of elderly persons within each census block group across the region. Generally, the areas with the highest density are in the larger communities in the South Central Region. These areas of high elderly concentration are important areas for senior service programs. A general trend across the United States is that the elderly population has been increasing as a proportion of the total population.

Mobility-Limited Population

The mobility-limited population, as a whole, represents approximately four percent of the study area. Figure II-2 shows the percentage of the mobility-limited population in the study area.

Low-Income Population

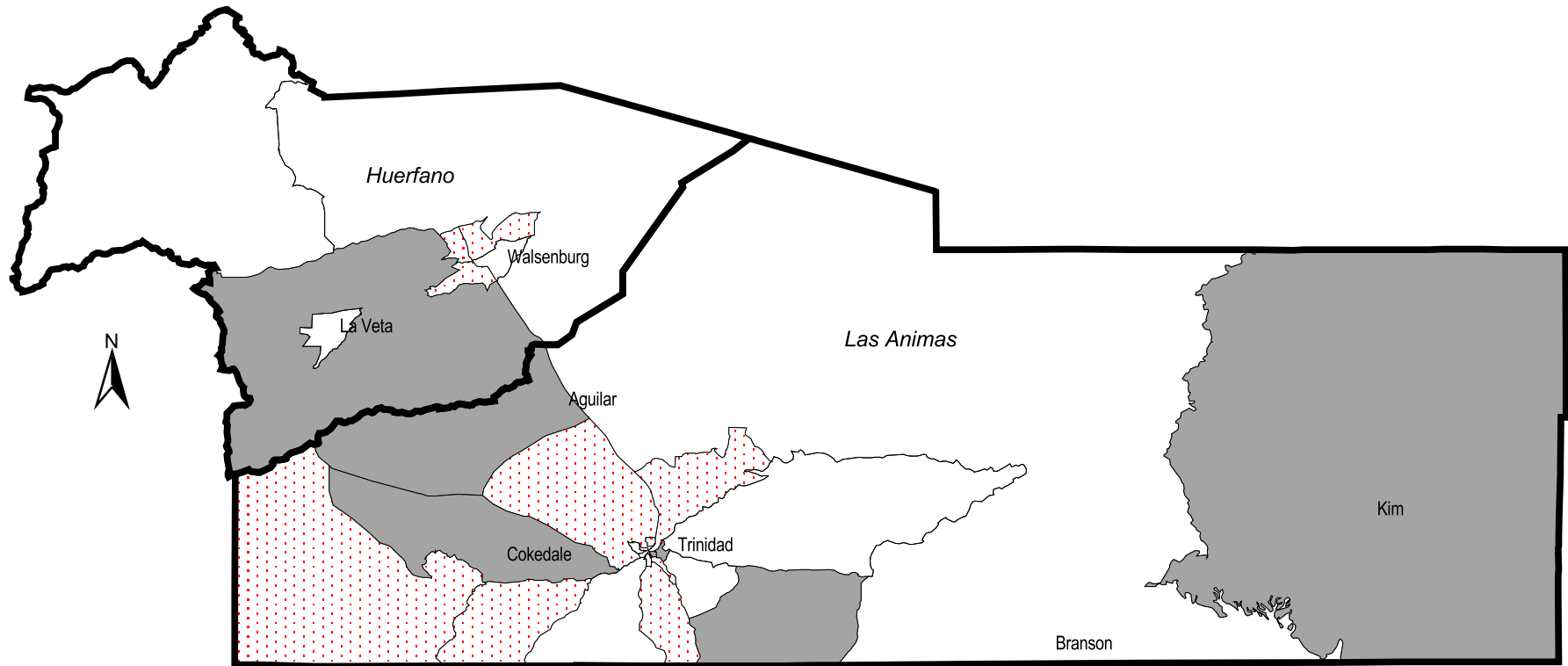
Low-income persons tend to depend on transit to a greater extent than persons with a high level of disposable income. Based on the 2000 US Census, the South Central Region had 17 percent (3,820) of the population ranked below poverty level. Figure II-3 presents the percentage of below-poverty persons within the study area.

Zero-Vehicle Households

The final census information related to the “transit-dependent” is the distribution of households without their own vehicle. That distribution is shown for the study area in Figure II-4. The census indicates that 980 South Central households did not have a vehicle in 2000, representing about 11 percent of the total households.



**Figure II-1
Percent of Elderly Population
by Census Block Group**



- Counties
- Percent of Elderly Population**
- 0 - 19% elderly
- 20 - 26% elderly
- 27% or more elderly



Source: Census 2000.

Figure II-2
Percent of Mobility-Limited Population
by Census Block Group

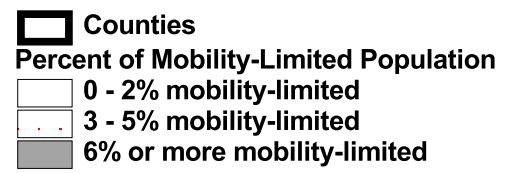
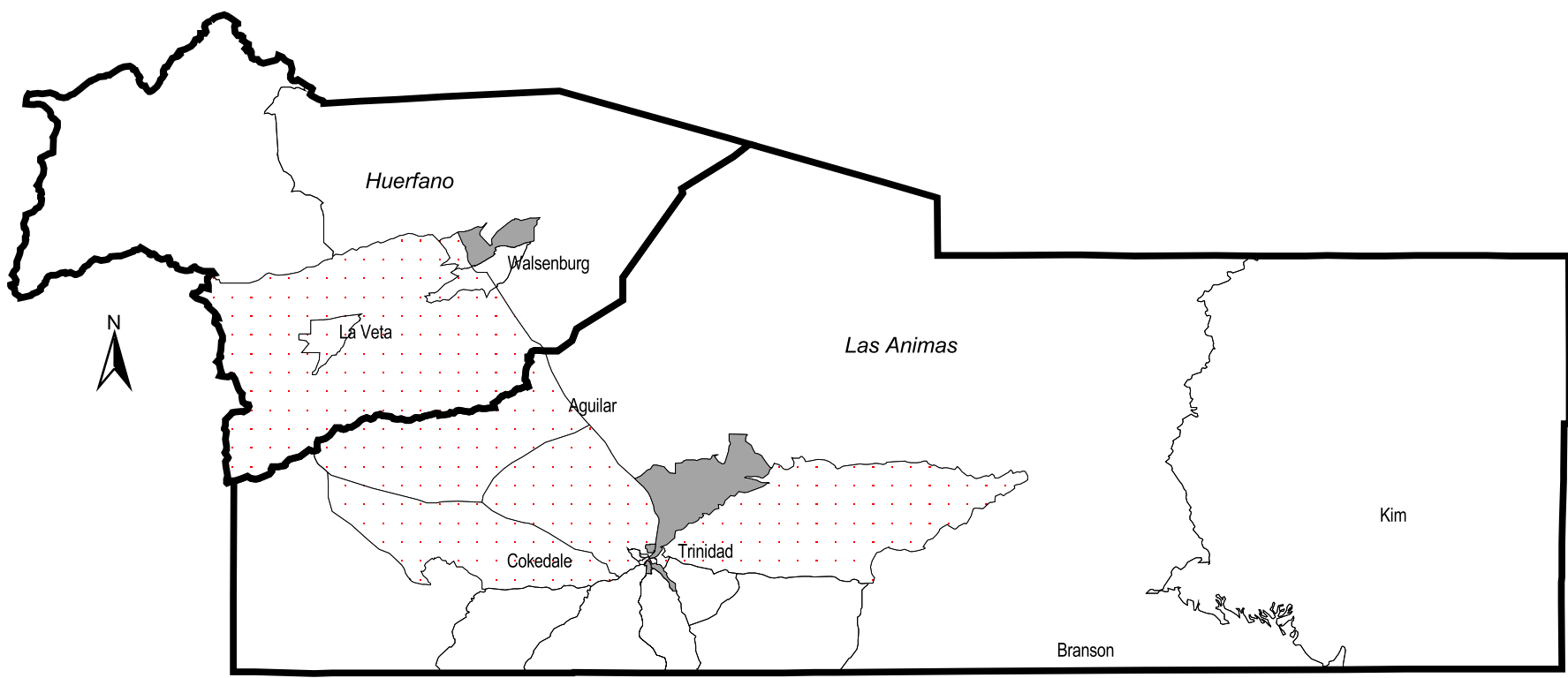
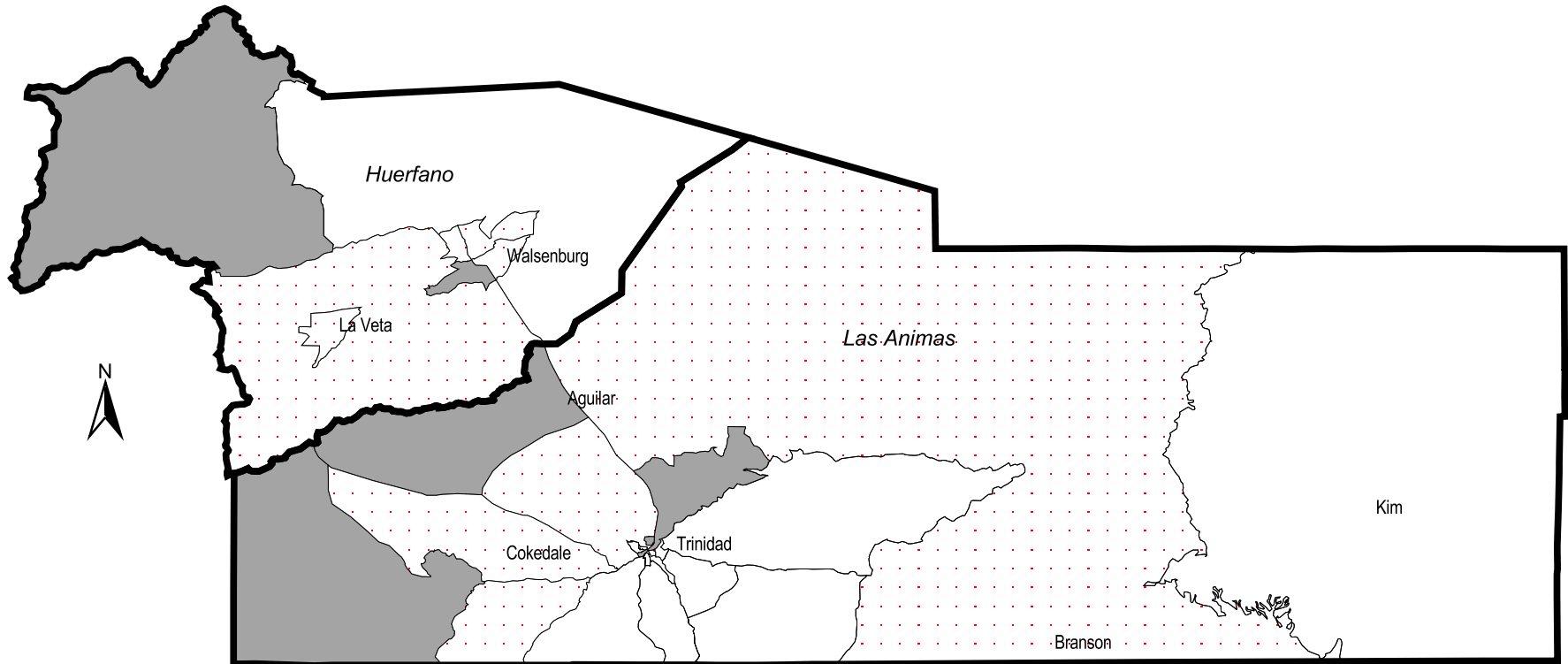


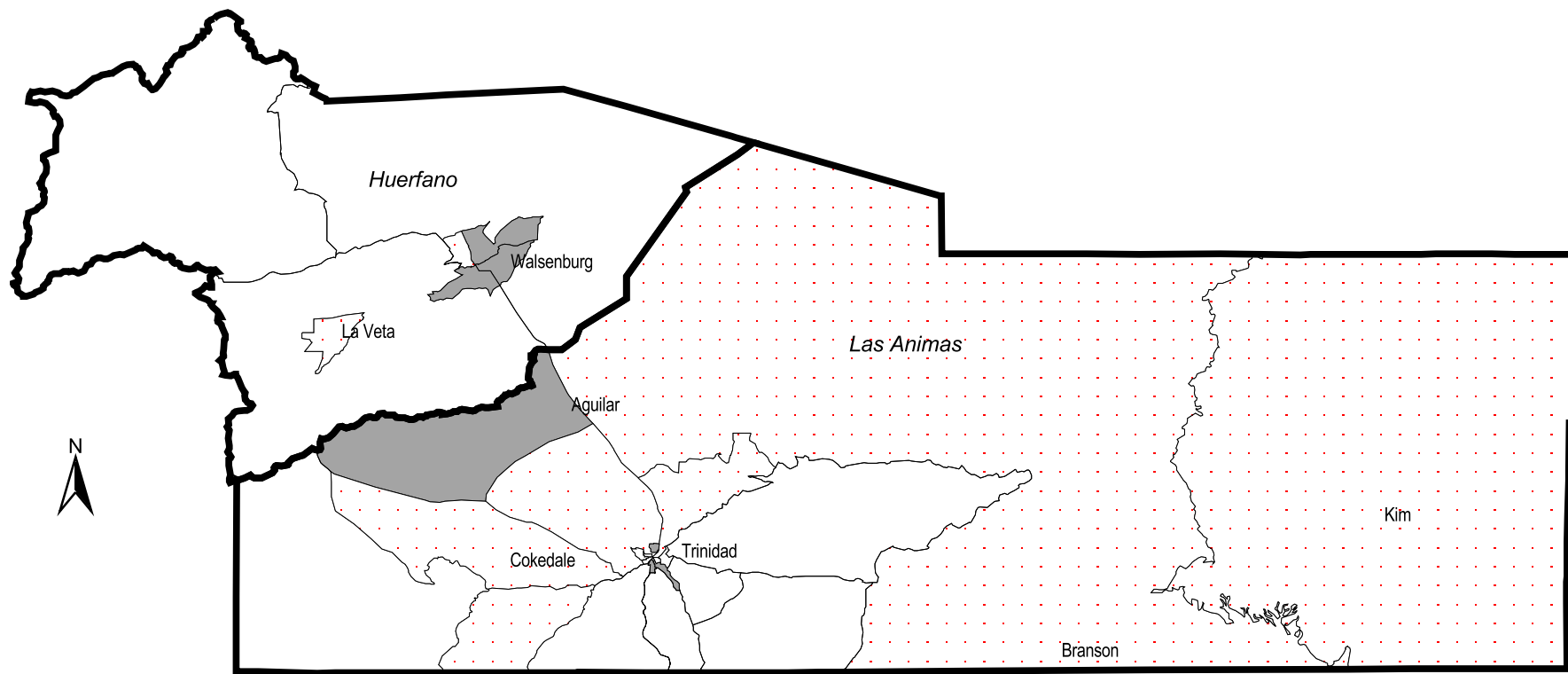


Figure II-3
Percent of Below Poverty Population
by Census Block Group



- Counties
- Percent of Below Poverty Population**
- 0 - 10% below poverty
- 11 - 19% below poverty
- 20% or more below poverty

Figure II-4
Percent of 0-vehicle Households
by Census Block Group



Counties

Percent of 0-vehicle Households

- 0 - 4% 0-veh.hhs
- 5 - 13% 0-veh. hhs
- 14% or more 0-veh. hhs

hhs = households

CHAPTER III

Existing Transportation Services

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the existing transportation providers within the South Central Council of Government study area. The chapter discusses current transportation services available in the Huerfano/Las Animas area and the communities of Trinidad and Walsenburg. This chapter also provides information about the services that are currently being operated by public, private, and nonprofit transportation providers.

TRANSPORTATION PROVIDER SURVEY

A Transportation Provider Survey, shown in Appendix A, was sent to all providers that were identified in the area. Transportation providers that returned this survey include:

- South Central Council of Governments
- Harry B. Sayre Senior Center
- Rocky Mountain SER Southern Colorado Head Start

Other transportation services were identified but unable to complete the survey or did not feel they were an appropriate transportation provider. Based on phone interviews and other contacts, general comments and information have been developed for these providers listed below:

- Trinidad State Nursing Home
- Corazon Square
- Walsenburg Senior Center
- Department of Human Services
- City of Trinidad Trolley
- Your Ride Transportation Service
- Trinidad Ambulance District
- Walsenburg Taxi Service
- Intercity Bus Service

TRANSPORTATION INVENTORY

South Central Council of Governments

The South Central Council of Governments (SCCOG) serves as the lead agency for general public transportation services in the study area. The agency provides door-to-door demand-responsive and subscription transportation services to senior citizens, people with disabilities, and the general public. The service area includes Las Animas and Huerfano Counties. However, the service is primarily concentrated in the communities of Trinidad and Walsenburg.



Service is provided five days a week, Monday through Friday. Service hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with peak demand between the hours of 8:00 to 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., and again between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. Fares are \$2.00 for the general public under 60 years of age. Fares



for disabled riders under 60 years of age are \$1.00. No fares are charged for senior citizens, but donations are encouraged.

SCCOG provided approximately 36,200 passenger-trips in 2002. These trips were split evenly with 17,915 contracted and 18,321 non-contracted trips. Approximately 9,150 trips (25 percent) were provided to elderly persons, age 60 or higher. Trips for the general public, non-elderly were approximately 9,171 (25 percent), and approximately 17,915 annual trips (49 percent) were provided to disabled residents.

One part-time and seven full-time employees are involved in providing transit. This includes four full-time and one part-time driver. Drivers are not required to have a Commercial Driver’s License (CDL).



SCCOG has a total of eight vehicles ranging in age from 1990 to 2002. They are generally reported to be in good condition. There is an average of four vehicles in service daily. The current fleet is shown in Table III-1.

Make	Model	Year	Replacement Year	Seating	W/C Tiedowns	Condition
Ford	Bus	1990	2005	15	1	Poor
Ford	Van	1995	2003	12	0	Fair
Ford	Goshen	1997	2005	10	1	Good
Ford	Van	1998	2004	12	0	Fair
Ford	Bus	1999	2008	17	1	Good
Ford	Van	1999	2229	10	1	Good
Ford	Eldorado	2001	2010	17	1	Good
Ford	Van	2002	2011	10	1	Excellent

The operating budget for fiscal year 2002 was \$162,315. 36,216 trips were provided. Table III-2 provides performance measures for SCCOG.

2002	
Vehicle-Miles	73,750
Vehicle-Hours	9,495
One-way Trips	36,216
Operating Costs	\$162,315
Cost per Hour	\$17.10
Pass. per Hour	3.8
Cost per Trip	\$4.48

Future needs and cost estimates for the SCCOG include the following:

Short-Term: 1 to 6 Years

- New brochures, television/radio/newspaper advertisement, and website development \$ 10,000
- 2 mid-size buses @ \$50,000 each \$100,000

Long-Term: 7 to 20 Years

- Expand service into more rural areas for elderly population \$100,000
- Dispatch software \$ 35,000
- Facility expansion \$250,000

Many of the SCCOG services have been provided under contract with Medicaid. The 2003 Colorado State Legislature, faced with an unprecedented budget deficit, cut state payment for Medicaid clients by 68 percent. This drastic reduction in funding was effective July 2003 and presents serious funding issues for SCCOG and many other rural transit services.

Harry R. Sayre Senior Center

The Harry R. Sayre Senior Center, located in Trinidad, is a private, nonprofit agency providing general services to seniors age 60 and older.

Currently, the only vehicle available to the Center is a 1994, 15-passenger van. Transportation for field trips and emergency trips to doctors are provided by volunteer drivers and/or the staff of the Senior Center. Private vehicles are frequently used. The Senior Center refers many of their members to the COG transit service.

Future needs for the Center include obtaining a newer vehicle that would allow them to provide more transportation. The Center would like to expand services for field trips, shopping, overnight trips to Denver, emergency trips, and pick-up at the local intercity bus station.

Rocky Mountain SER – Southern Colorado Head Start

This preschool program operates in both Las Animas and Huerfano Counties. Fixed-route service is provided based on the educational schedule of the Head Start program. Service in Las Animas County is provided within approximately five miles of Trinidad REI School District boundaries. Huerfano County service is provided to Head Start children living in Walsenburg or approximately five miles outside the city limits.

The school year is generally four days per week, 40 weeks per year. Peak hours are from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m., 2:00 to 3:00 p.m., and 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The program has one full-time and four part-time drivers. One staff person also serves half-time as the Transportation Coordinator and Driver. The program has five vehicles in service on an average day, with six vehicles on a peak day. No information was provided regarding the fleet.

No ridership numbers were available. The program budget for 2002 was \$89,014.

Future needs and cost estimates for the Head Start include the following:

Short-Term: 1 to 6 Years

- Replacement of three buses @ \$55,000 each \$165,000
- Retrofit seat belts and chest straps to meet federal guidelines \$ 22,000
- Increase driver wages

In terms of driver wages, it is difficult for this program to attract part-time drivers as they are paying lower wages than the local school districts.

Long-Term: 7 to 20 Years

- Replace buses
- Continue to find qualified drivers with CDL permits

OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Information in the following section is taken from phone and on-site interviews and from previous studies. The LSC Team contacted each of the following agencies to complete the transit survey, with limited data received to date.

Trinidad State Nursing Home

The Trinidad State Nursing Home is a public convalescent nursing facility providing residential health care to elderly and disabled residents of the community. The facility, accommodating approximately 140 residents, is operated by the Colorado Department of Human Services. In addition, an Adult Day Service is provided for approximately six active and two drop-in clients.



Transportation for doctors trips, shopping, and other activities is provided in three cars and one wheelchair van. All vehicles are owned and licensed by the State of Colorado. Staff members drive these vehicles as part of other responsibilities. The nursing home also uses the COG transit service for clients. It would be convenient for the nursing home if the COG could expand service into the evening and on weekends.

Corazon Square

Corazon Square is a senior housing facility open to seniors and persons with disabilities. There are approximately 52 residents of this complex located in Trinidad. Limited transportation is provided by the COG transit service. With the reduction in Medicaid funding as of July 2003, there are significant problems getting residents to necessary medical appointments.

Walsenburg Senior Center

Located on Russell Avenue in Walsenburg, this Senior Center is open five days a week and offers site-based meals, as well as other activities. One vehicle is available to provide transportation. One driver works from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. No ridership or budget information was provided.

City of Trinidad Trolley

The City of Trinidad offers a 28-passenger rubber tire trolley as part of the City's Master Plan to attract tourism. The Trolley leaves the Colorado Welcome Center hourly and makes a loop to many of the local attractions such as Kit Carson Park, Ava Maria Shrine, and the Opera House. The driver is well versed on the local sites and provides a running commentary.



While the service was originally scheduled from Memorial Day to Labor Day, there is an effort to continue to provide the service until November 2003. There is no fee for the trolley tour. No ridership or budget information was available.

Your Ride Transportation Service

Your Ride Taxi Service—based out of Trinidad—is a for-profit taxi service, which operates under Public Utilities Commission authority as a Call and Demand/Taxi service. Taxi service is provided in seven-passenger minivans.

Over the past years, there has been significant contention with the previous Yellow Cab operator. The PUC Enforcement Division reports that numerous violations have been cited against Yellow Cab for operating in conflict with the Your Ride Taxi Service authority. Your Ride Taxi Service is also having the same budget crisis as other transportation providers since the Medicaid funding cuts in July 2003.

Walsenburg Taxi Service

Walsenburg Taxi has been providing service for six years in the Walsenburg area. Service is available seven days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Sunday to Thursday with service extended until midnight on Friday and Saturday.

A one-way trip within the city limits is \$5.00. Trips outside the city limits are \$3.00 plus \$1.25 per mile. All service is provided in a four-door sedan.

Provider Summary

Table III-3 presents a summary of the transportation providers. As shown in the table, limited data were received from the providers.

Description	Provider				
	SCCOG M-F; 8a - 5p	Head Start M-Th; Sch Yr	Trinidad Trolley Summer	Harry Sayre Sr. Ctr M - F	Trinidad St Nursing Hm As needed
Vehicle-Miles	73,750	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Vehicle-Hours	9,495	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
One-way Trips	36,216	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Operating Costs	\$162,315	\$89,014	\$15,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
Cost per Hour	\$17.09	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Passengers per Hour	3.8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Cost per Trip	\$4.48	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

2002 FY data.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES

Intercity Bus

TNM&O—the Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma—is a subsidiary of Greyhound Lines that provides service in several southwest states. In Colorado, the TNM&O primarily operates on the I-25 corridor with most service terminating in Denver, but some continuing north to Wyoming. In addition, TNM&O provides service on Highway 160 between Walsenburg and Alamosa. Currently, 11 buses serve this corridor daily. Based on schedules posted on the Internet, a summary of the schedules departing from Trinidad is shown in Table III-4.

Destination	Departures/Day	Full Fare
Denver	5	\$35.00
Santa Fe	3	\$42.50
Lamar	3	\$42.50
Alamosa	1	\$42.50

The majority of these departures also serve the bus station located at the Walsenburg Video Bookstore and Bus Line. There are numerous options for obtaining a lower fare, including a senior discount.

Amtrak

Passenger service is provided by Amtrak (the Southwest Chief), which runs one westbound train and one eastbound train out of Trinidad. The westbound train travels to Raton, New Mexico and the eastbound train travels to La Junta. The final destinations for the Southwest Chief are Chicago, Illinois and Los Angeles, California. Amtrak travels on the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe rail line, which was formerly the Santa Fe Railway (AT&SF). The Trinidad station, which was previously the Santa Fe Railroad Station, is unstaffed with an enclosed waiting area. The westbound train arrives in Trinidad at approximately 9:40 a.m. The eastbound train arrives in Trinidad at approximately 6:40 p.m. The Amtrak schedules may change slightly on a seasonal basis.



Rail Freight Service

Mainline railroad service includes the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) main north/south line which runs through the heart of the Trinidad Development Park, with one spur in place and others available on a demand basis. The main east/west line from Kansas City to Los Angeles comes into Trinidad from the northeast and exits south via Raton Pass to Albuquerque. Rail freight service is available daily, as well as piggyback ramp service. The Union Pacific rail lines traveling through Walsenburg to Alamosa (San Luis Valley lines) were recently sold to RailAmerica.

CHAPTER IV Transportation Needs Assessment

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an analysis of the demand for transit services in the South Central Region based upon standard estimation techniques and comments from residents. The transit demand identified in this chapter was used throughout the study process. Different methods are used to estimate the maximum transit trip demand in the South Central Region:



- Rural Transit Demand Methodology
- Transit Needs and Benefits Study
- Ridership Trends

Feedback from residents within the community also plays a critical role in the regional planning process. Public meetings throughout the region allow citizens to express their ideas and provide suggestions to the planning document.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Community input at public meetings provides an opportunity for residents to express transit needs for their area. These needs from the first public meeting were recorded by the URS Team and were used in the development of transit alternatives. A goal of the Preferred Plan is to meet as many of the needs as possible, provided funding is available. Detailed public meeting comments are shown in the Regional Transportation Plan.

Public Meetings

Two public meetings were scheduled during the initial stage of the project. One meeting was held at the Walsenburg Senior Center from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon. The other meeting was held at the Holiday Inn in Trinidad from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.—both on August 27, 2003. Attendance at the public meetings was not very high, and very few comments were received. The second public meeting was held on April 1, 2004 in Trinidad. The Preferred Plan for the South Central Region was available for the community.

DOLA Meetings

CDOT initiated a strong effort to involve the small communities around the State of Colorado in the 2030 planning process. CDOT contracted with the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) to involve all communities with a population under 5,000 with a “Go to the People” approach. Representatives from CDOT coordinated with the communities to provide meetings with local community staff and elected officials. These meetings focused on future transportation needs for their community and ensured that their needs will be included in the 2030 plan. This additional effort by CDOT involves more local governments and citizens in statewide planning efforts.

Meetings were held in the following locations.

- La Veta – September 10, 2003
- Starkville – September 4, 2003
- Cokedale – September 10, 2003
- Branson – September 9, 2003
- Kim – September 11, 2003
- Walsenburg – September 16, 2003

Specific comments from the DOLA meetings related to public transportation are summarized below. All comments were reviewed and considered as the Long-Range and Short-Range plans were developed for the South Central Region.

- *Starkville residents would benefit from transit access.*
- *Rural transit services are needed for elderly and disabled in Cokedale.*
- *Cokedale – regional transit service.*
- *Rural transit services are needed in Kim.*

RURAL TRANSIT DEMAND METHODOLOGY

An important source of information and the most recent research regarding demand for transit services in *rural areas* and for persons who are elderly or disabled is the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Project A-3: Rural Transit Demand Estimation Techniques. This study, completed by SG Associates, Inc. and LSC, represents the first substantial research into demand for transit service in rural areas and small communities since the early 1980s.

The TCRP Methodology is based on *permanent* population. Thus, the methodology provides a good look at transit demand for the South Central Region. Knowing this information, the LSC Team presents the transit demand for 2002 and for year 2030, based on population projections from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

TCRP Methodology Background

The TCRP study documents present a series of formulas relating the number of participants in various types of programs in 185 transit agencies across the country. The TCRP analytical technique uses a logit model approach to the estimation of transit demand, similar to that commonly used in urban transportation models. This model incorporates an exponential equation, which relates the quantity of service and the demographics of the area.

This analysis procedure considers transit demand in two major categories:

- “*program demand*” which is generated by transit ridership to and from specific social service programs, and
- “*non-program demand*” generated by other mobility needs of elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and the general public, including youth. Examples of non-program trips may include shopping, employment, and medical trips.

Non-Program Demand

As with any other product or service, the demand for transit services is a function of the level of supply provided. To use the TCRP methodology in identifying a feasible maximum demand, it is

necessary to assume a high supply level, as measured in vehicle-miles per square mile per year. The high supply level is the upper-bound “density” of similar rural services provided in this country. This assessment of demand for the rural areas, therefore, could be considered to be the maximum potential ridership if a high level of rural service were made available throughout the South Central Region.

For the South Central Region, a reasonable maximum level of service would be to serve every portion of the region with four round-trips (eight one-way trips) daily, Monday through Friday. This equates to approximately 2,400 vehicle-miles of transit service per square mile per year. This is at the upper range of observed rural systems.

Applying this feasible maximum service density to the permanent population of each county yields the 2002 estimated transit demand for the general population including youth, as well as the elderly and mobility-limited populations, as shown in Table IV-1. The 2002 potential demand for the entire South Central Region for elderly transit service is 37,150 annual trips; disabled demand is 5,190 annual trips; and general public demand is 19,520 annual trips. The potential demand for each county is also shown in the table. The South Central Region estimated total transit demand for 2002, using the TCRP method, at 61,860 annual trips. This amount would be desired by the elderly, mobility-limited, and general public if a very high level of transit service could be provided. The demand would be concentrated in the larger communities.

Transit demand estimates for 2030, using the TCRP methodology, are provided in Table IV-2. Total demand for 2030 is estimated to be 97,650 one-way, annual passenger-trips for the South Central Region.



<p align="center">Table IV-1 2002 Estimated Public Transit Demand using the TCRP Method South Central Region</p>										
County	Census Tract	Census Block Group	Estimated Annual Passenger-Trip Demand					Estimated Daily Transit Demand		Daily Demand Density (Trips per Sq. Mile per Day)
			Elderly	Mobility Limited	Elderly + Mobility Limited	General Public	TOTAL	#	%	
Huerfano	9806	1	1,770	390	2,160	930	3,090	12	15.5%	1
	9806	2	1,620	150	1,770	920	2,690	11	13.5%	1
	9806	3	1,210	210	1,420	940	2,360	9	11.8%	1
	9806	4	1,870	200	2,070	1,010	3,080	12	15.4%	2
	9807	1	3,100	240	3,340	850	4,190	16	21.0%	0
	9807	2	1,390	190	1,580	840	2,420	9	12.1%	1
	9808	1	690	40	730	640	1,370	5	6.9%	0
	9808	2	480	30	510	230	740	3	3.7%	0
Subtotal Huerfano County			12,130	1,450	13,580	6,360	19,940	78		5
Las Animas	1	1	2,060	240	2,300	1,440	3,740	15	8.9%	0
	1	2	3,080	510	3,590	1,510	5,100	20	12.2%	0
	1	3	2,050	530	2,580	2,380	4,960	19	11.8%	29
	2	1	970	180	1,150	810	1,960	8	4.7%	22
	2	2	740	100	840	320	1,160	5	2.8%	5
	2	3	1,520	220	1,740	410	2,150	8	5.1%	36
	3	1	1,730	140	1,870	520	2,390	9	5.7%	0
	3	2	780	60	840	550	1,390	5	3.3%	0
	3	3	560	30	590	270	860	3	2.1%	0
	3	4	690	100	790	240	1,030	4	2.5%	0
	4	1	1,010	240	1,250	510	1,760	7	4.2%	4
	4	2	1,200	100	1,300	210	1,510	6	3.6%	0
	4	3	1,140	400	1,540	820	2,360	9	5.6%	17
	5	1	30	0	30	0	30	0	0.1%	0
	5	2	2,290	350	2,640	920	3,560	14	8.5%	11
	5	3	1,950	100	2,050	760	2,810	11	6.7%	37
	6	1	960	270	1,230	770	2,000	8	4.8%	0
	6	2	780	110	890	150	1,040	4	2.5%	0
7	1	660	10	670	400	1,070	4	2.6%	0	
7	2	720	50	770	160	930	4	2.2%	0	
7	3	100	0	100	10	110	0	0.3%	0	
Subtotal Las Animas County			25,020	3,740	28,760	13,160	41,920	164		162
South Central Region Transit Demand Total			37,150	5,190	42,340	19,520	61,860	243		168

Source: Based on 2000 Census Data; LSC, 2003.

**Table IV-2
2030 Estimated Public Transit Demand using the TCRP Method
South Central Region**

	Census Tract	Census Block Group	Estimated Annual Passenger-Trip Demand					Estimated Daily Transit Demand		Daily Demand Density (Trips per Sq. Mile per Day)
			Elderly	Mobility Limited	Elderly + Mobility Limited	General Public	TOTAL	#	%	
Huerfano	9806	1	2,700	590	3,290	1,430	4,720	19	15.3%	1.1
	9806	2	2,460	230	2,690	1,420	4,110	16	13.3%	1.6
	9806	3	1,920	340	2,260	1,500	3,760	15	12.2%	1.5
	9806	4	2,780	310	3,090	1,520	4,610	18	14.9%	3.1
	9807	1	4,900	380	5,280	1,370	6,650	26	21.5%	0.1
	9807	2	2,200	300	2,500	1,350	3,850	15	12.5%	1.0
	9808	1	1,030	50	1,080	970	2,050	8	6.6%	0.0
	9808	2	710	50	760	350	1,110	4	3.6%	0.0
	Subtotal Huerfano County			18,700	2,250	20,950	9,910	30,860	121	
Las Animas	1	1	3,270	390	3,660	2,310	5,970	23	8.9%	0.1
	1	2	4,870	810	5,680	2,410	8,090	32	12.1%	0.2
	1	3	3,250	850	4,100	3,810	7,910	31	11.8%	46.8
	2	1	1,540	290	1,830	1,290	3,120	12	4.7%	35.5
	2	2	1,170	160	1,330	510	1,840	7	2.8%	7.5
	2	3	2,410	350	2,760	650	3,410	13	5.1%	57.4
	3	1	2,730	230	2,960	830	3,790	15	5.7%	0.1
	3	2	1,230	90	1,320	880	2,200	9	3.3%	0.0
	3	3	950	50	1,000	450	1,450	6	2.2%	0.1
	3	4	1,090	160	1,250	380	1,630	6	2.4%	0.1
	4	1	1,610	390	2,000	820	2,820	11	4.2%	6.8
	4	2	1,890	160	2,050	340	2,390	9	3.6%	0.3
	4	3	1,810	640	2,450	1,310	3,760	15	5.6%	27.0
	5	1	40	0	40	0	40	0	0.1%	0.0
	5	2	3,620	550	4,170	1,480	5,650	22	8.5%	17.3
	5	3	3,090	150	3,240	1,220	4,460	17	6.7%	58.5
	6	1	1,520	430	1,950	1,240	3,190	13	4.8%	0.2
	6	2	1,240	180	1,420	240	1,660	7	2.5%	0.0
	7	1	1,050	10	1,060	640	1,700	7	2.5%	0.0
	7	2	1,200	80	1,280	270	1,550	6	2.3%	0.0
7	3	160	0	160	20	180	1	0.3%	0.0	
Subtotal Las Animas County			39,740	5,970	45,710	21,100	66,810	262		
South Central Region Transit Demand Total			58,440	8,220	66,660	31,010	97,670	383		
<i>Source: Based on 2000 Census and Dept. of Local Affairs Population Projections.</i>										

Program Trip Demand

The methodology for forecasting demand for program-related trips involves two factors.

- Determining the number of participants in each program.
- Applying a trip rate per participant using TCRP demand methodology.

The program demand data for the South Central Region was taken from reports released by Head Start and Mental Health Services for fiscal year 2002. The participant numbers were reported by individual agencies and are also available through the Region 8 Head Start office and the Colorado Department of Human Services. The existing program demand estimates are approximately 320,773 annual trips for the South Central Region, which has increased approximately 4,700 trips from 1999. These data are shown in Table IV-3.

Table IV-3 2002 Annual Program Trip Need Estimates					
County	Participants		Need Estimate		Total Program - Trip Need
	Head Start	Mental Health Services	Head Start	Mental Health Services	
Chaffee	58	246	15,254	85,362	100,616
Custer	184	495	48,392	171,765	220,157
TOTAL					320,773
<i>Source: Region 8 Head Start, 2003; CO Department of Human Services, 2002 data.</i>					

Summary of TCRP Methodology

Combining the program estimates and non-program estimates—the total current transit demand for the South Central Region, using the TCRP Methodology, is approximately 382,633 annual trips.

TRANSIT NEEDS AND BENEFITS STUDY (TNBS)

The Colorado Department of Transportation completed a Transit Needs and Benefits Study (TNBS) for the entire state in 1999. An update of the existing transit need was performed in 2000 using 1999 data, which replaced the 1996 data from the original study. Transit need estimates were developed for the entire state, for each region, and on a county-by-county basis.



The unmet need estimates in the TNBS incorporated needs related to households without transportation, seniors, persons with disabilities, and resorts. Program trips for the South Central Region are those transportation needs associated with specific programs for mental health services (such as Head Start, Development Services programs, Senior Nutrition, or Sheltered Workshop programs) reported by the Colorado Department of Human Services.

The LSC Team updated the TNBS transit need estimates using the recently released 2000 census data. Table IV-4 provides a summary of the needs using the 1996, 1999, and 2000 data. One notation for the needs table is that the Census 2000 collected disability information differently than in previous years. The numbers reported for 2000 were much higher than those reported in the 1990 Census. The LSC Team believes the increase is due to the revised questioning procedure for the 2000 census.

Table IV-4			
TNBS Updated Transit Need Estimates – SC Region			
Transit Category	1996	1999	2002
Rural General Public	602,940	688,324	626,990
Disabled	2,710	3,240	5,185
Program Trips	316,094	316,094	320,773
Urban Area	n/a	n/a	n/a
Resort Area	n/a	n/a	n/a
Annual Need	921,744	1,007,658	952,948
<i>Annual Trips Provided</i>	50,000	67,259	79,050
Need Met (%)	5%	7%	8%
Unmet Need (%)	95%	93%	92%
<i>Source: LSC, 2003.</i>			

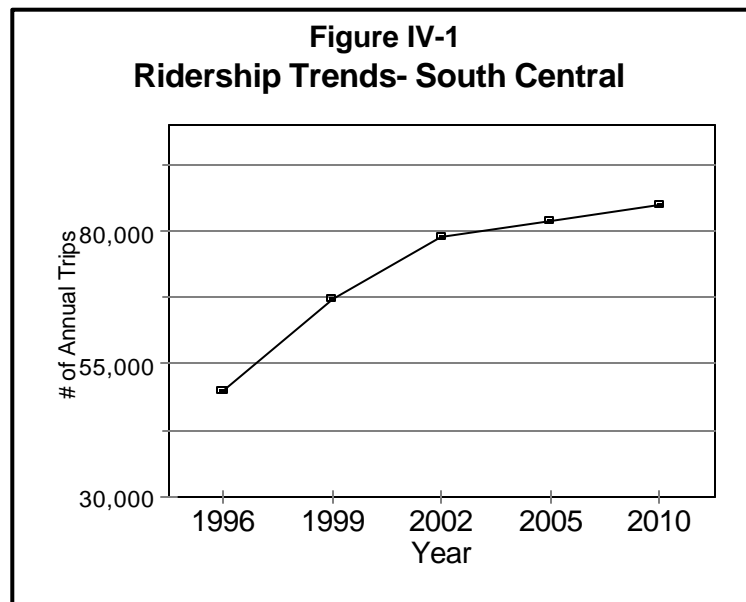
Unmet Needs

The updated annual transit need estimates for the South Central Region were 626,990 trips for the general public including youth and seniors, 5,185 trips for persons with disabilities, and 320,773 program trips. The total transit need in 2002 for the South Central Region is estimated at 952,948 annual trips. The table indicates that approximately 8 percent of the existing transit need is being met with 92 percent of the transit need for the region unmet. The unmet need in the future will likely remain stable until service is expanded to outlying areas and more frequent service is offered.

The TNBS approach used a combination of methodologies and aggregated the need for the South Central Region. However, the approach used factors based on statewide characteristics and is not specific to this region. The TNBS level of need should be used as a guideline to the level of need and as a comparison for the other methodologies.

RIDERSHIP TRENDS

Another approach to looking at short-term transit demand is to evaluate recent trends in ridership. This approach is valid in areas where there are existing transit services such as in the South Central Region. Annual ridership data were presented in Chapter III for the transit providers. Figure IV-1 shows the past ridership trends and ridership projections based on recent trends for the South Central Region—includes all public and private providers such as taxi service, Head Start, public transit, etc. This section is based on existing ridership and is projected to year 2010. The ridership trends and projections *do not* estimate the transit need within the study area.



As can be seen in this graph, the transit ridership is expected to increase slightly over the next few years. Demand will also be affected by the increases or decreases in population for the study area. Transit ridership for year 2005 is estimated at approximately 83,000 and for 2010 is estimated at 85,000 annual trips for the South Central Region.

TRANSIT DEMAND SUMMARY

Various transit demand estimation techniques were used to determine overall transit need and future transit need. The various methods for estimating current demand are summarized in the previous pages. This chapter presents a brief summary of the unmet need based on data from previous studies and the previous chapters of this report.

CHAPTER V

Transit Alternatives

This chapter presents transit alternatives for the South Central Region. As the world constantly changes, so does transportation—different vehicles, new roads, and more traffic—to mention just a few. Byproducts of these changes have been the dominance of the automobile and deteriorating air quality in many regions. The South Central Region vision, values, and goals—discussed earlier in this report—specifically addressed similar issues, such as a regional transportation system, growth management, and economic development.

The projects presented in this chapter are future transit alternatives that depend on available funding for implementation. The Final Report for this study includes a Preferred Plan and a Fiscally-Constrained Plan, as required by the Colorado Department of Transportation. The projects identified within this chapter will increase the efficient movement of people around the region. In addition, the projects strengthen the regional efforts to reduce single-occupant vehicle travel and efficient use of existing transportation facilities, such as through the use of advanced transportation technologies.

A detailed assessment of the existing transit system was completed in Chapter III. Capital and operating costs for projects in this chapter are based on data reported from local transit agencies in that chapter. This chapter has the transit projects organized by agency and by region, for those transit projects not specific to any one area. The first section of this chapter identifies transit projects that will maintain the existing level of service, more commonly known as Status Quo.

STATUS QUO - MAINTAIN EXISTING LEVEL OF TRANSIT SERVICE

A good starting point and a very realistic place to start with the transit service alternatives is the Status Quo analysis. This analysis assumes that the South Central Region continues general public transportation as it is today. Thus, the COG would remain the primary provider and continue to provide general public transit service. Table V-1 provides the 25-year capital and operating costs to maintain this level of service. The 25-year operating cost for the South Central Region is \$4,980,513, with capital costs for the next 25 years totaling \$1,500,000. To retain the same level of service as today, the region will spend \$6,480,513 on public transportation in the next 25 years.

Table V-1 Capital and Operating Costs			
Region	Project Description	Investment Category	2030 Plan Cost
SC TPR	Bus purchase - capital (existing service)	System Quality	\$1,500,000
SC TPR	Transit operating funds (existing service)	System Quality	\$4,980,513

The largest single factor expected to impact transit services in the South Central Region is the fluctuation of Medicaid funding and the increasing number of program clients in the region. As presented in Chapter II, population is expected to increase in the region, which will directly affect the demand for



transit service in the region. As the nation's economy and security remain unstable, the tourism market will fluctuate, as will the sales tax revenues in the region.

Public transit services in the South Central Region do not begin to scratch the surface of transit need in the region. SCCOG must provide good, efficient and economically feasible service for local residents. Agencies are stretching budgets and maximizing the use of all services.

COORDINATION OPTIONS

Coordination of the various transit services provided in the South Central Region provide opportunities to maximize the efficiency of management and administration, and result in having the appropriate number of vehicles, increase vehicle utility, and provide more production services overall. Currently SCCOG has several existing coordination efforts. These include the Walsenburg Senior Center, the Trinidad State Nursing Home, and the Harry Sayre Senior Center in Trinidad. It is highly recommended these coordination efforts continue.

TRANSIT OPTIONS

The following text provides specific projects within the South Central Region that may be introduced in the short term or may be funded in the next decade. This section of the chapter presents options for local transit agencies.

Purchase Dispatch Software for SCCOG

SCCOG should begin to research software options for their service. Currently, trips are grouped, but as the requests continue to increase, the software will help with grouping trips. The average software price is approximately \$35,000.

Increase SCCOG Service to Rural Areas

The residents of rural Huerfano and Las Animas Counties requested transit service. They were not looking at service every day, but would like the option once a week. This one-day per week transit service would cost approximately \$15,000 per year.

CHAPTER VI

Evaluation Criteria and Project Ranking

The transit projects within this report will far exceed expected transit revenues over the next 25 years. Therefore, it is pertinent for the region to prioritize the transit projects. CDOT also prefers some consistency among the regions in the prioritization process, including transit.

SOUTH CENTRAL CORRIDOR PRIORITIZATION

The *South Central Regional Transportation Plan* developed a vision, strategies, and goals that were supported by evaluation criteria. The Regional Planning Commission approved these guidelines based on the CDOT *Colorado Regional Transportation Planning Guidebook*. Development of the adopted project prioritization process followed a three-step process.

Project Prioritization Criteria

The first step in the process was to develop the evaluation criteria. The following criteria were selected for the region. Although not all of the criteria apply directly to transit, these criteria have been used as transit projects may compete for funding with projects in other modes.



- \$ Congestion
- \$ Safety
- \$ Ability to Implement
- \$ Community Acceptance
- \$ Integration of Modes
- \$ Economic Impact
- \$ Environment
- \$ System Continuity
- \$ System Preservation

Criteria Weighting

In the second step, each criterion is assigned a scoring range and weight for the score.

Project Evaluation

The third step in the process is to evaluate each project and assign a score for each of the criteria.

CORRIDOR EVALUATION

Each South Central corridor was ranked using the criteria from the Regional Transportation Plan. Transit emerged as the high priority. The Regional Transportation Plan has the detailed information for this process. It must again be noted that the assumption “*Maintain Existing Service*” for all transit systems in the region is the highest priority.

CORRIDOR PRIORITIZATION

The application of evaluation criteria to corridors is a subjective process. No quantitative information is required to score each project. General CDOT guidelines may be used for the criteria. The corridor prioritization is described in detail in the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan.

CHAPTER VII

Long-Range Transit Element (2030)

INTRODUCTION

Transportation planning was once simple. It meant more money for more roads, especially freeways. Building roads was also simpler. There was more available land, better funding, fewer environmental constraints, and people clearly wanted more and better roads for their cars. Today the situation and the regulatory climate are much more complex. Clearly there is a crisis in transportation, but the only consensus on solutions may be that there is no easy solution.



There are not enough transportation funds, preservation for right-of-way is not readily practiced in communities, and public opposition often arises. Yet the mobility needs of a growing population need to be met.

Making better use of our existing transportation system will require overcoming significant obstacles. Local governments and rural counties are hard-pressed to maintain the roads they have. The transportation issue itself is now interlinked with many complex issues. Air quality and transportation go hand in hand. Accommodating growth, land use, environmental concerns, and public safety directly relate to transportation. The state spending limit, budgeting process, and the economics of transportation tie the issue to a myriad of often conflicting or competing interests. This report focuses on the long-range and short-range transit alternatives to meet these transportation challenges.

This chapter presents the Long-Range 2030 Transit Element for the Regional Transportation Plan. The Long-Range Transit Element includes an analysis of unmet needs, gaps in the service areas, regional transit needs, a policy plan for the region, and a funding plan. This chapter identifies a policy plan for the South Central Region, which identifies policies and strategies for transit service within the region.

The South Central Region is a challenging environment for public transportation due to the distinct rural nature of the area and scattered development. Funding and land-use development patterns are constraints to transit growth in the region. One constraint is due to transit operations being dependent on federal transit funds and the *lack of* dedicated local funding in the study area. A second constraint is the low residential density within the two counties, combined with scattered work destinations, which limit the ability of traditional transit service to efficiently serve an increasing number of people. Also, the demands stimulated from tourism industry, from visitors to employees to residents, present a different challenge. Transit services present opportunities for travelers and commuters to use alternate forms of ground transportation rather than personal vehicles.

The communities of each county are continuously working to update the general comprehensive plans, land use plans, and transportation plans within the study area. Changes in these plans are needed to meet the long-range transit needs and to develop a sustainable transit system for the future.

UNMET NEED

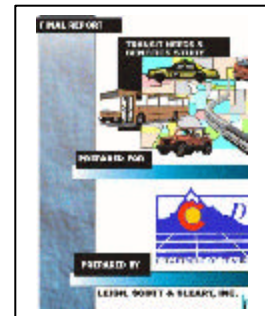
As mentioned previously, the existing transportation providers were presented in Chapter III, along with the transit demand for the region in Chapter IV. The following section summarizes unmet transit need for the area.

Unmet need has several definitions. This study introduces two different definitions of unmet need. The first unmet needs analysis is from the Statewide Transit Needs and Benefits Study, as presented in Chapter IV. The second unmet needs analysis is from public feedback from the open houses, which were held in the South Central Region on August 27, 2003 and April 1, 2004. The LSC Team received very few comments and suggestions regarding the adequacy of transit services in the local area. Most residents were very satisfied.



Statewide Transit Needs and Benefits Study

The Colorado Department of Transportation completed a Transit Needs and Benefits Study (TNBS) for the entire state in 1999. An update of the existing transit need was performed in 2000 using 1999 data, which replaced the 1996 data from the original study. Transit need estimates were developed for the entire state, for each region, and on a county-by-county basis. Chapter IV presents the detailed methodology for the TNBS.



The LSC Team updated the TNBS transit needs estimates using the recently released 2000 census numbers. The 2002 annual transit need estimates for the South Central Region were 626,990 trips for the rural general public including youth and seniors; 5,185 trips for persons with disabilities, and 320,773 program trips. The total transit need in 2002 for the South Central Region is estimated at 952,948 annual trips.

Table VII-1 presents a summary of the TNBS methodology for the South Central Region. The table indicates that approximately eight percent of the existing transit need *is being* met with 92 percent of the transit need for the region unmet.

Table VII-1 2002 Transit Demand Summary (TNBS Methodology)						
Methodology	Srs./Youth/ Gen. Public	Disabled	Program	TOTAL DEMAND	Trips Provided*	Unmet Need
TNBS South Central Region	626,990	5,185	320,773	952,948	79,050	92%
* Information from local providers.						
Source: LSC, 2004.						

The TNBS approach used a combination of methodologies and aggregated the need for the South Central Region. However, the approach used factors based on statewide characteristics and is not specific to the South Central Region counties. The TNBS level of need should be used as a guideline to the level of need and as a comparison for the other methodologies.

Unmet Need Based on Public Input

The purpose of the unmet transit needs analysis is to ensure that all reasonable unmet transit needs are met. Unmet transit needs are currently defined in terms of a couple of target groups—specifically, people who are recognized as “transportation disadvantaged” and people who are “choice riders.” An individual is considered “transportation disadvantaged” when his or her transportation needs are not adequately met by the automobile. The following are examples of people who meet this definition:

- *Individuals who do not own and/or operate an automobile for reasons of low income.*
- *Individuals who do not own and/or operate an automobile because of advanced age, physical disability, and/or mental impairment.*

The definition includes all individuals who, by virtue of their age, income, or disability, are not adequately served by the automobile. Transportation disadvantaged persons are the primary targets for proposals to provide or expand public transportation services. Choice riders are those persons who have a vehicle available for transportation, but opt to utilize the public transportation system for any number of reasons—environmental consciousness, saving gas, parking too expensive, transit convenience, etc.

Local Meetings

This report addresses unmet needs based on input received from local citizens at open houses for the Regional Transportation Plan held August 27, 2003 and April 1, 2004. Comments and suggestions from those meetings are included in this Final Report, where appropriate.

To conclude, the second method of looking at unmet needs has several different aspects with unique transit needs around the region. Most suggestions from residents are realistic and were included in the 2030 Preferred Plan.

GAPS IN SERVICE AREAS

Going hand-in-hand with unmet needs are gaps in service areas. The existing regional transit services were presented in Chapter III and are used to identify gaps in the service area. The future transit projects presented in this report consciously plug some of the most glaring gaps in service. However, the funding sources for future projects are not dedicated and provoke the obvious question of “How will we pay for it?” Many sources could potentially be used, such as: higher fares charged, private/public partnerships, more county funding, more federal and state funds, rural transportation authority, and others.

REGIONAL NEEDS - PREFERRED PLAN

Each provider in the South Central Region study area was asked to submit operational and capital projects for the next 25 years to address long-range transit needs. The projects discussed in the fol-



Following pages are the 2030 Long-Range Preferred Plan for the South Central Region, *not* the Constrained Plan. The Long-Range Constrained Plan is presented later in the chapter. The Preferred Plan is based on *unrestricted funding* for the transit providers. The submitted projects include costs to maintain the existing system and also projects that would enhance the current transit services. All of the projects are eligible for transit funding.

Under TEA-21, transportation plans must show the ability to fund all proposed projects. This requirement has compelled the South Central Region to focus on projects that are high-performing and cost-effective. The available funding is expected to be far short of meeting all the identified needs. Therefore, it is important to provide a Preferred Plan that is not constrained by financial resources. Projects in the unconstrained list could be advanced through the amendment process to the Constrained Plan, if new funds were identified—subject to the approved performance and environmental considerations. Under this arrangement, decision-makers have flexibility to consider new projects and to respond to funding opportunities that may present themselves in the future.

Table VII-2 presents a regional total for the long-range transit projects. The transit projects for the region for the next 20-plus years have an estimated cost of approximately \$12.8 million dollars. This total includes operational and capital costs. Appendix B presents the detailed Preferred Plan and the Existing Plan.

Table VII-2 Long-Range Preferred Plan -- Transit			
Corridor	Project Description	Investment Category	2030 Plan Cost
SC TPR	Bus purchase - capital (existing service)	System Quality	\$1,500,000
SC TPR	Transit operating funds (existing service)	System Quality	\$4,980,513
SC TPR	Bus purchase - capital (new service)	System Quality	\$635,000
SC TPR	Transit operating funds (new service)	System Quality	\$5,641,800
SC Total			\$12,757,313

FUNDING PLAN

This section of Chapter VII presents the funding plan for the South Central Region Long-Range Financially-Constrained Plan. The revenue projections are presented along with alternative funding sources to be pursued by the agencies within the region. This Financially-Constrained Plan relies on the funding sources that are currently being used by the transit agencies or are likely to be realized over the planning horizon.



Funding for transit services within the region will come from federal and local (public and private) sources. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) is the current legislation guiding the federal transit program. Under TEA-21, the Federal Transit Administration administers formula and discretionary funding programs that are applicable to the South Central Region.



Currently, no state funding is available for transit services in Colorado. Senate Bill 1 will result in state funding for transit, but no funds are anticipated for several years. The following text provides a short description of other existing funding sources.

Federal Funding Sources

5309 Discretionary Funds

Established by the Federal Transportation Act of 1964 and amended by the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1978 and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, this program provides capital funding assistance to any size community. The program is administered by the FTA. The funds are available to public transportation providers in the state on a competitive discretionary basis, providing up to 80 percent of capital costs. These funds are generally used for “big ticket” major capital investment projects, such as modernization of a fleet and expansion plans. Competition for these funds is fierce, and generally requires lobbying in Washington, DC and receiving a congressional earmark.

Total Section 5309 funding nationwide increased from a Fiscal Year 1997-98 level of \$1.9 billion to a Fiscal Year 2001-02 apportionment of \$2.8 billion. Approximately 10 percent of the funds are set aside for rehabilitation or replacement of buses and equipment, and the construction of bus transit facilities. In Fiscal Year 2001-02, \$7,672,725 was earmarked for projects in Colorado. It should be noted that in recent years the transit agencies in Colorado have submitted requests for projects through a statewide coalition—CASTA. The LSC Team encourages the transit agencies in the South Central Region to join the CASTA coalition.

5310 Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Capital Funds

This program is administered by the Colorado Department of Transportation and provides funds to private, nonprofit agencies that transport elderly and disabled persons. The funds are available on a discretionary basis to support 80 percent of capital costs such as vehicles, wheelchair lifts, two-way radios, and other equipment. In Fiscal Year 2001-02, Colorado received \$994,098 for this program. Preliminary estimates by FTA Regional staff indicate that CDOT’s apportionment for Fiscal Year 2002-03 was approximately \$1,115,251.

5311 Capital and Operating Funds

Established by the Federal Transportation Act of 1964 and amended by the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1978 and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, this program provides funding assistance to communities with a population of less than 50,000. The Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) is charged with distributing federal funding for “purposes of mass transportation.”

The program is administered by the Colorado Department of Transportation. The funds are available to public and private transportation providers in the state on a competitive, discretionary basis to support up to 80 percent of the net administrative costs and up to 50 percent of the net operating deficit. Use of this funding requires the agency to maintain certain records in compliance with federal and state requirements. Most of the funds are apportioned directly to rural counties based upon population levels. The remaining funds are distributed by the Department of Transportation on a discretionary basis, and are typically used for capital purposes.

Cuts in this program have been substantially smaller than in the urbanized area program, equaling roughly 16.4 percent. According to FTA Regional staff, CDOT's apportionment for Fiscal Year 2002-03 was approximately \$2,791,089—\$538,500 more than last fiscal year.

5312 Research, Development, Demonstration, and Training Projects

The Secretary of Transportation may make grants or contracts that will help reduce urban transportation needs, improve mass transportation service, or help mass transportation service meet the total urban transportation needs at a minimum cost. The Secretary of Transportation may make grants to nonprofit institutions of higher learning:

- To conduct research and investigation into the theoretical or practical problems of urban transportation.
- To train individuals to conduct further research or obtain employment in an organization that plans, builds, operates, or manages an urban transportation system.

The grants could be for state and local governmental authorities for projects that will use innovative techniques and methods in managing and providing mass transportation.

5313 State Planning and Research Programs

Planning and research appropriations provided under 5338 are split in Section 5313. Fifty percent of the research grants are available to the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP), and fifty percent are available to states to conduct their own research. The dollars for state research are allocated based on each state's respective funding allotment in other parts of the Mass Transportation Chapter of the US Code.

5319 Bicycle Facilities

These funds are to provide access for bicycles to mass transportation facilities or to provide shelters and parking facilities for bicycles in or around mass transportation facilities. Installation of equipment for transporting bicycles on mass transportation vehicles is a capital project under Sections 5307, 5309, and 5311. A grant under 5319 is for 90 percent of the cost of the project, with some exceptions.

Transit Benefit Program

The "Transit Benefit Program" is a provision in the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) that permits an employer to pay for an employee's cost to travel to work in other than a single-occupancy vehicle. The program is designed to improve air quality, reduce traffic congestion, and conserve energy by encouraging employees to commute by means other than single-occupancy motor vehicles.

Under Section 132 of the IRC, employers can provide up to \$100 per month to those employees who commute to work by transit or vanpool. A vanpool vehicle must have seating capacity of at least six adults, not including the driver, to qualify under this rule. The employer can deduct these costs as business expenses, and employees do not report the subsidy as income for tax purposes. The subsidy is a qualified transportation fringe benefit.

Under TEA-21, this program has been made more flexible. Prior to TEA-21, the transit benefit could only be provided in addition to the employee's base salary. With the passing of TEA-21, the transit pass may be provided as before, or can be provided in lieu of salary. In addition, the transit pass may be provided as a cash-out option for employer-paid parking for employees. To summarize, this

program may not necessarily reduce an employer's payroll costs. Rather, it enables employers to provide additional benefits for employees without increasing the payroll.

Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) ISTEA Funding

A strong new source of funding for many transit services across the country has been provided by the Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) program, authorized through ISTEA. This funding is available to metropolitan areas that do not meet federal air quality standards regarding ozone or carbon monoxide. If any of the South Central Region communities are designated as a non-attainment area in the future, these funds could be accessed.

Surface Transportation Program (STP)

The funds from this program may be spent on any road that is functionally classified as a collector or arterial for urban streets or as a major collector or arterial for rural areas. The type of projects may range from rehabilitation to new construction. These funds may also be used for transit projects.

Fifty percent of a state's STP funds are allocated to urban and rural areas of the state based on population. Thirty percent can be used in any area of the state at the discretion of the State Transportation Commission. For the remaining 20 percent of the funds, 10 percent must be spent on highway safety projects, and 10 percent must be spent on Transportation Enhancements. Enhancement projects can range from historic preservation and bicycle and pedestrian facilities to landscaping and water runoff mitigation.

Advantages

- Using federal funding reduces the need to raise funds locally, freeing up funds for other needed services.

Disadvantages

- Many organizations are frustrated by the "bureaucratic" requirements attached to using federal funding.
- Competition for federal funding is strong.
- Federal funding is never a certainty, especially given current federal efforts to reduce expenses and balance the budget.
- Only certain entities can secure funds.

Other Federal Funds

The US Department of Transportation funds other programs including the Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's State and Community Highway Grants Program funds transit projects that promote safety.

A wide variety of other federal funding programs provide support for transportation programs for the elderly and handicapped. Some of these are currently being utilized in the region and others can be explored further, including the following:

- Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
- \$ Title IIIB of The Older Americans Act
- \$ Medicaid Title XIX
- \$ Veterans' Affairs
- \$ Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)
- \$ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- \$ Developmental Disabilities
- \$ Housing and Urban Development (Bridges to Work and Community Development Block Grants)
- \$ Head Start
- \$ Vocational Rehabilitation
- \$ Health Resources and Services Administration
- \$ Senior Opportunity Services
- \$ Special Education Transportation
- \$ Weed and Seed Program, Justice Department
- \$ National Endowment for the Arts
- \$ Rural Enterprise Community Grants, Agriculture Department
- \$ Department of Commerce, Economic Development, and Assistance Programs
- \$ Pollution Prevention Projects, Environmental Protection Agency
- \$ Access to Jobs/Reverse Commute Program

State Funding Sources

The Colorado Legislature passed legislation that will provide state funding for public transportation under House Bill 1310. House Bill 1310 requires that 10 percent of funds raised under Senate Bill 1 be set aside for transit-related purposes. Funds under this legislation are not anticipated until 2007 to 2009. Potential funding from this source could be as much as \$24 million statewide.

Local Transit Funding Sources

A variety of local funds are available in the South Central Region. Examples of local support that could be used for transit include the following: voluntary assessments of municipalities; contributions by major business associations; and taxes (sales tax, lodging tax, property tax, fuel tax, real estate tax). Many local agencies benefit from business support in the form of advertising. These and other local funding sources are discussed below.

- \$ **General Fund Appropriations:** Counties and municipalities appropriate funds for transit operations and maintenance and for transit capital needs. Monies to be appropriated come generally from local property taxes and sales taxes. Competition for such funding is tough and local governments generally do not have the capacity to undertake major new annual funding responsibilities for transit.

\$ **Advertising:** One modest but important source of funding for many transit services is on-vehicle advertising. The largest portion of this potential is for exterior advertising, rather than interior “bus card” advertising. The potential funds generated by advertising placed within the vehicles are comparatively low.



\$ **Voluntary Assessments:** This alternative requires each participating governmental entity (cities and counties) and private businesses to contribute to funding of the system on a year-to-year basis. This alternative is common for areas that provide regional service rather than service limited to a single jurisdiction. An advantage of this type of funding is that it does not require voter approval. However, the funding is not steady and may be cut off at any time.

\$ **Private Support:** Financial support from private industry is essential to provide adequate transportation services in the South Central Region. This financial support should continue even if an Authority is established to ensure that adequate service is provided. The major employers in the South Central Region are potential sources of revenue.

\$ **Transportation Impact Fees:** Traditional methods of funding transportation improvements required by new development raise questions of equity. Sales and property taxes are applied to both existing residents and to new residents attracted by development. However, existing residents then inadvertently pay for public services required by the new residents. As a means of correcting this inequity, many communities nationwide, faced with strong growth pressures, have implemented development impact fee programs that place a fee on new development equal to the costs imposed on the community.

Previous work by the LSC Team indicates that the levy of impact fees on real estate development has become a commonplace tool in many areas to ensure that the costs associated with a development do not fall entirely on existing residents. Impact fees have been used primarily for highways and roads, followed by water and sewer projects. A program specifically for mass transit has been established in San Francisco.

A number of administrative and long-term considerations must be addressed:

- It is necessary to legally ensure that the use on which the fees are computed would not change in the future to a new use with a high impact by placing a note restricting the use on the face of the plat recorded in public records.
- The fee program should be reviewed annually.
- The validity of the program, and its acceptability to the community, is increased if a time limit is placed on the spending of collected funds.
- TIF funds need to be strictly segregated from other funds. The imposition of a TIF program could constrain capital funding sources developed in the future, as a new source may result in a double payment.
- TIF fees should be collected at the time that a building permit is issued.

\$ **Lodging Tax:** The appropriate use of lodging taxes (a.k.a. occupancy taxes) has long been the subject of debate. Historically, the bulk of these taxes are used for marketing and promotion efforts for conferences and general tourism. In other areas, such as resorts, the lodging tax is an important element of the local transit funding formula. A lodging tax can be considered as a specialized sales tax, placed only on lodging bills. As such, it shares many of the advantages and disadvantages of a sales tax. Taxation of this type has been used successfully in Park City, Utah; Sun Valley, Idaho; and Telluride, Colorado. A lodging tax creates inequities between different classes of visitors, as it is only paid by overnight visitors. Day visitors (particularly prevalent in the summer) and condominium/second homeowners, who may use transit as much as lodging guests, do not contribute to transit.

\$ **Sales Tax:** A sales tax could be implemented with funds to go to transit services. Sales tax is the financial base for many transit services in the western United States. The required level of sales tax would depend upon the service alternatives chosen. One advantage is that sales tax revenues are relatively stable and can be forecast with a high degree of confidence. In addition, sales tax can be collected efficiently, and it allows the community to generate revenues from visitors in the area. This source, of course, would require a vote of the people to implement. In addition, a sales tax increase could be seen as inequitable to residents not served by transit. This disadvantage could be offset by the fact that sales taxes could be rebated to incorporated areas not served by transit. Transit services, moreover, would face competition from other services that may seek to gain financial support through sales taxes.

\$ **Ad Valorem Property Taxes for Capital Projects:** Counties are authorized (Sec. 39-13-103) to impose property taxes for specific capital projects with voter approval.

\$ **Rural Transportation Authority:** Legislation adopted in 1997 and amended in the 2000 session (CRS Sec. 43-4-603) provides authority for Colorado municipalities and counties (outside the RTD area) to establish RTAs. RTAs are able to impose a \$10 annual vehicle registration fee and, with voter approval, may levy a sales tax of up to one percent and/or a visitor benefit fee (fee added to the lodging rate within the area) of up to two percent of the price of overnight lodging. Local governments have considerable flexibility in designing the boundaries of RTAs, which may include all or a portion of the areas of participating jurisdictions. An RTA is a regional, multi-jurisdictional entity that becomes a separate subdivision of the state, but which operates pursuant to an intergovernmental agreement adopted by its member governments.

A visitor benefit fee was added to the statute in the 2000 legislative session. Extensive research would be required to estimate the funding potential from this source.

\$ **Special Districts:** Colorado local governments also may create a variety of local districts including special districts (CRS Sec. 32-1-101), service authorities (CRS Sec. 32-7-101), municipal general improvement districts (CRS Sec. 31-25-601), county public improvement districts (CRS Sec. 30-20-501), municipal special improvement districts (CRS Sec. 31-25-501), and county local improvement districts (CRS Sec. 30-20-601). In general, these districts are funded from fees or property taxes, with the exception of the county improvement district, which, with voter approval, may levy a sales tax of up to 0.5 percent. In general, these districts are limited in their usefulness as mechanisms for funding transit systems, particularly in a multi-jurisdictional setting.

§ **Local College Funding:** A strategy to generate transit revenues from campus communities is to levy a student activity fee for transit services or an established amount from the college general fund. An activity fee would have to be approved by a majority of students and would be applied each semester or quarter of school.

The best and most versatile of the above funding sources for local and regional transit services will be the RTA, which offers more options for funding sources and much greater flexibility in designing the boundaries and makeup of a multi-jurisdictional transit system.

Financially-Constrained Plan

The following section presents the financially-constrained transit plan for the South Central Region. The long-range transit projects include the continuation of existing services. Table VII-3 presents the transit cost information for the South Central Region. Table VII-4 shows the anticipated funding. The estimated total for the existing services over the next 25 years is approximately \$6.5 million. As stated earlier, Appendix B provides the detailed information to maintain the existing service level. This financially-constrained plan is the basis for developing the Short-Range Transit Element, presented in Chapter VIII.

Table VII-3 2030 Financially-Constrained Transit Plan			
Corridor	Project Description	Investment Category	2030 Plan Cost
SC TPR	Bus purchase - capital (existing service)	System Quality	\$1,500,000
SC TPR	Transit operating funds (existing service)	System Quality	\$4,980,513
SC Total			\$6,480,513

Table VII-4 Anticipated Funding for South Central Region	
Funding Source	\$
Local Funding	\$3,244,715
FTA 5310	\$1,083,398
FTA 5311	\$2,152,400
2030 Total	\$6,480,513

CHAPTER VIII

Short-Range Transit Element

INTRODUCTION

The LSC Team prepared this Final Report, which includes the Short-Range Transit Element for the South Central Region. The Short-Range Plan establishes transit services which will be provided over the next six years.

2006 - 2011

SHORT-RANGE TRANSIT ELEMENT (Six-Year Transit Plan)

This section presents the Short-Range Transit Element. The South Central Region shows maintaining the existing services as the plan for the next six years. CDOT requires dedicated funds to be used for the Short-Range Transit Element and the South Central Region does not currently anticipate increased funding.

The major assumptions used in developing revenue and cost projections are sources *currently dedicated* to the transit agencies or to be realized over the short planning horizon.

The Short-Range Transit Element is the basis for operational plans for each transit provider within the South Central Region. Each operator is responsible for developing their own detailed operational plans to implement the Short-Range Transit Element. The Short-Range Transit Element is used by the Colorado Department of Transportation in the evaluation of transit grant applications.

Service Plan – South Central Region

The fiscally-constrained Short-Range Transit Element for the South Central Region is presented in Table VIII-1. SCCOG is the primary transit provider in the region. The agency would like to expand transit service, but will phase in any expansions over the long term due to funding constraints. The current economic status with statewide budget cuts and unsteady markets does not favor transit agencies. However, transportation is necessary to get employees to jobs and people to services. The primary funding sources for transit services in the South Central Region are from local and county governments, fares/donations, and the federal government.

**Table VIII-1
Short-Range Plan - SC Region
2006-2011**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
OPERATING COSTS						
SC COG	\$ 177,366	\$ 177,366	\$ 177,366	\$ 177,366	\$ 177,366	\$ 177,366
Harry Sayre Sr. Center	\$ 5,464	\$ 5,464	\$ 5,464	\$ 5,464	\$ 5,464	\$ 5,464
City of Trinidad Trolley	\$ 16,391	\$ 16,391	\$ 16,391	\$ 16,391	\$ 16,391	\$ 16,391
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$ 199,221	\$ 199,221	\$ 199,221	\$ 199,221	\$ 199,221	\$ 199,221
CAPITAL COSTS						
SC COG (veh. replacement)	\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Harry Sayre Sr. Center	\$ 50,000					
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$ 100,000		\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Expense Total	\$ 299,221	\$ 199,221	\$ 249,221	\$ 199,221	\$ 249,221	\$ 249,221
REVENUES						
Local funding	\$ 171,456	\$ 113,125	\$ 121,456	\$ 113,125	\$ 121,456	\$ 121,456
FTA 5310	\$ 41,669		\$ 41,669		\$ 41,669	\$ 41,669
FTA 5311	\$ 86,096	\$ 86,096	\$ 86,096	\$ 86,096	\$ 86,096	\$ 86,096
<i>Revenue Total</i>	\$ 299,221	\$ 199,221	\$ 249,221	\$ 199,221	\$ 249,221	\$ 249,221

Source: LSC, 2004.

Note: 2005 Constant Dollars

Section 1: Transportation Provider Information

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Contact Person: _____

Title/Dept.: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Who is eligible for transportation service with your agency? (check all that apply)

- Elderly (60+) Non-disabled
- Elderly Disabled
- Non-elderly Disabled (mental/physical)
- Low Income
- Youth
- General Public
- Other _____

What type of service does your agency provide?

- Fixed-Route (FR)
- Demand-Response (DR)
- Both FR and DR
- Route Deviation
- Other _____

Does your agency provide contract service?

- Yes. If YES, FR or DR (circle the correct response)
- No

How many days per week do you regularly provide transit service?

Days _____

How many weeks per year do you regularly provide transit service?

Weeks _____

How many people at your agency are involved in transit?

of Full-time employees _____

of Part-time employees _____

How many drivers do you employ?

TYPE OF DRIVER	# Year-round	# Seasonal
Full-time Drivers		
Part-time Drivers		
Volunteer Drivers		

Are your drivers required to be CDL-certified?

- Yes
- No

How many vehicles do you have in service on an average day?

of Vehicles _____

How many vehicles do you have in service for peak periods?

of Vehicles _____

What are your peak period hours?

From _____ to _____

From _____ to _____

From _____ to _____

Section 2: Transportation Cost Information

FIXED-ROUTE SERVICE ONLY (Demand-response information goes on the following page.)

Please provide your agency's annual passenger transportation costs for FIXED-ROUTE services. Use Calendar Year 2002 information. If the information for 2002 is not available, use your agency's most current Fiscal Year information, and identify the fiscal year. _____

OPERATING COSTS – FIXED-ROUTE (variable/direct)	ANNUAL COST (\$)
Labor	
Driver(s) Salary	\$
Other salaries	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$
Services	
Professional and technical services	\$
Advertising fees	\$
Temporary help	\$
Vehicle maintenance services (including parts)	\$
Custodial services	\$
Other services	\$
Materials & Supplies	
Fuel and lubricants	\$
Tires and tubes	\$
Utilities	\$
Casualty and Liability Costs	\$
Taxes	
Property tax	\$
Vehicle licensing and registration fees	\$
Other taxes	\$
Purchased Transportation Service	\$
Leases and Rentals	
Passenger shelters	\$
Vehicles	\$
Facilities	\$
Miscellaneous Expense	
Dues and subscriptions	\$
Travel and meetings	\$
Other miscellaneous expense	\$
TOTAL OPERATING COSTS	\$

Because of the fluctuating nature of capital costs, please add the capital expenditures for the last 3 years, divide by 3 and enter the averages below.

CAPITAL COSTS – FIXED-ROUTE (3-year average)	ANNUAL COST (\$)
Vehicles	\$
Facilities	\$
Equipment	\$
TOTAL CAPITAL COSTS	\$

Section 2: Transportation Cost Information (cont.)

DEMAND-RESPONSIVE SERVICE ONLY

Please provide your agency's annual passenger transportation costs for DEMAND-RESPONSE services. Use Calendar Year 2002 information. If the information for 2002 is not available, use your agency's most current Fiscal Year information, and identify the fiscal year. _____

OPERATING COSTS – DEMAND-RESPONSE (variable/direct)	ANNUAL COST (\$)
Labor	
Driver(s) Salary	\$
Other salaries	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$
Services	
Professional and technical services	\$
Advertising fees	\$
Temporary help	\$
Vehicle maintenance services (including parts)	\$
Custodial services	\$
Other services	\$
Materials & Supplies	
Fuel and lubricants	\$
Tires and tubes	\$
Utilities	\$
Casualty and Liability Costs	\$
Taxes	
Property tax	\$
Vehicle licensing and registration fees	\$
Other taxes	\$
Purchased Transportation Service	\$
Leases and Rentals	
Passenger shelters	\$
Vehicles	\$
Facilities	\$
Miscellaneous Expense	
Dues and subscriptions	\$
Travel and meetings	\$
Other miscellaneous expense	\$
TOTAL OPERATING COSTS	\$

Because of the fluctuating nature of capital costs, please add the capital expenditures for the last 3 years, divide by 3 and enter the averages below.

CAPITAL COSTS – DEMAND-RESPONSE (3-year average)	ANNUAL COST (\$)
Vehicles	\$
Facilities	\$
Equipment	\$
TOTAL CAPITAL COSTS	\$

Section 3: Revenue Information

Please provide your agency's annual passenger transportation revenues. Use Fiscal Year 2002 information.

REVENUE SOURCE	AMOUNT (\$)
Fares/Donations	\$
Advertising	\$
Dedicated transit tax	\$
Grants	
FTA 5307 (urbanized)	\$
FTA 5309 (discretionary capital)	\$
FTA 5310 (elderly & disabled)	\$
FTA 5311 (rural)	\$
Other federal grants (CMAQ, FHWA, etc.)	
Other #1 (name)	\$
Other #2 (name)	\$
Other #3 (name)	\$
Other #4 (name)	\$
Other miscellaneous grants	
Other #1 (name)	\$
Other #2 (name)	\$
TOTAL OF ALL GRANTS	\$
Contracts	
Developmental Services	\$
Head Start	\$
Medicaid	\$
Older Americans	\$
Other #1 (name)	\$
Other #2 (name)	\$
Other #3 (name)	\$
TOTAL OF ALL CONTRACT REVENUE	\$
Other revenue sources	\$
	\$
TOTAL REVENUES	\$

Section 4: Transportation Conditions

The following questions will help measure existing conditions. The information is also needed to determine current deficiencies, future needs, and project costs for the planning horizon. Please be as specific as possible when answering the questions. Since the questions are more descriptive, you may fill in the answers on this sheet or supply us with the answers on sheets generated by your own agency.

What are the major transportation needs of your agency in the short term (1 – 6

years)? Please list specific projects. Some examples include the following: Replacement of 4 large buses at a cost of \$250,000 each; 2 minibuses at \$50,000 each; New service to the shopping mall with 30 minute headways at a cost of \$500,000 annually; 1-day per week demand-response service to the elderly apartments at a cost of \$20,000 annually; 4 new bus shelters at \$1,000 each; New schedules printed, estimated cost with labor and materials \$5,000; Hire 1 dispatcher at \$18,000 annually.

What are the major transportation needs of your agency in the long term (7 – 20

years)? Please list specific projects, such as the above examples.

Section 5: Service Information

Please provide information about general public transit services that your organization provides. Annual trips should be recorded as one-way or unlinked trips.

Service Performance

Service Type	Annual Veh. Miles	Annual Veh. Hours	Annual Pass. Trips
Fixed-Route			
ADA Services			
Demand-Response			
Other			
TOTAL SERVICE			

Passenger Information

Please list the number of rides provided. Record each ride in one category only.

Category	Contracted	Non-contracted
Elderly (60 yrs +)		
Under 60 yrs.		
Disabled		
TOTAL RIDES		

We hope to obtain as much of this information as possible at the beginning of the study. Each agency plays a key role in transportation and we will make every attempt to include each entity. The items which we will need include:

- Any reports or brochure regarding transit services – copies of the most recent TDPs.
- Organizational chart of each transportation provider.
- Hours of operation for each transit provider.
- Ridership for each transit provider; average daily and total for the past 3 years.
- Variations in ridership by time of day, day of the week month of the year, and year-to-year, and if possible, broken down by type of passenger (general public, elderly, disabled, etc.), and or route.
- Fares charged by each transit agency.
- Total vehicle-miles and vehicle-hours of service for the most recent year.
- List of intercity providers (Amtrak, Greyhound, etc.).

Section 6: Vehicle Fleet Inventory

Vehicle Inventory

Please include a vehicle inventory sheet. Information should include vehicle make, model, year, replacement year, seating capacity, wheelchair tiedowns, condition.

Section 7: Service Areas

The final section of the Survey includes service area information. Please provide a written description of your transportation services offered and the service area. Please specify the approximate boundaries of the service area and location of regular routes.

Please return this information to:

Corinne Donahue
LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
101 North Tejon Street, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Telephone: 800-677-1671
FAX: (719) 633-5430
Email: CLDONAHUE@LSCCS.COM

Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions.

DUE FRIDAY, AUGUST 22, 2003

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

**Appendix B
MAINTAIN EXISTING SERVICES**

Operating	Existing Transit Services		Assumed 3% inflation to 2005			
	Operating		2003	2004	Constant \$ 2005	2030
SC COG	\$ 162,315	2002	\$ 167,184	172,200	177,366	\$ 4,434,150
Harry Sayre Senior Center	\$ 5,000	2002 estimate	\$ 5,150	5,305	5,464	\$ 136,591
City of Trinidad Trolley	\$ 15,000	2002 estimate	\$ 15,450	15,914	16,391	\$ 409,773
SC Existing Transit Providers	\$ 182,315		\$ 187,784	\$ 193,418	\$ 199,221	\$ 4,980,513 operating
Head Start	\$ 89,014	2002	\$ 91,684	94,435	97,268	\$ 2,431,700
Trinidad St Nursing Home	\$ 25,000	2002 estimate	\$ 25,750	26,523	27,318	\$ 682,954
			\$ -	-	-	
<hr/>						
Capital	Maintain Existing Services					
	2030 costs					
SC COG	\$ 900,000	18 veh @ \$50K				
Harry Sayre Senior Center	\$ 100,000	2 veh @ \$50K				
City of Trinidad Trolley	\$ 500,000	2 veh @ \$250K				
Trinidad St Nursing Home						
SC Existing Transit Providers	\$ 1,500,000	capital				\$ 1,500,000
Head Start	\$ 561,000	9 veh @ \$55K				

**Appendix B
Preferred Plan - Projects**

OPERATING

Preferred Project List	Preferred Project List		
	Operating	2030	
	Annual	cost	
SC COG	\$ 10,000	\$ 85,000	Brochures, advertisement & website
	\$ 71,136	\$ 1,778,400	Expand service w/ 2 additional pd drivers
Harry Sayre Senior Center	\$ 15,000	\$ 375,000	Expand service w/ 1 pd driver
City of Trinidad Trolley	\$ 20,000	\$ 500,000	Expand service w/ 1 pd driver - full yr
SC Existing Transit Providers	\$ 116,136	\$ 2,903,400	
Head Start		\$ -	
Trinidad St Nursing Home		\$ -	
SC Preferred Projects Subtotal	\$ 116,136	\$ 5,641,800	
+ Maintain Existing	\$ 199,221	\$ 4,980,513	
Preferred Total- Operating	\$ 315,357	\$ 10,622,313	

CAPITAL

	Preferred		
	2030	costs	
SC COG	\$ 300,000		2 new veh @\$50K + 4 replace. Till 2030
	\$ 35,000		dispatch software
	\$ 250,000		facility expansion
Harry Sayre Senior Center			
City of Trinidad Trolley	\$ 50,000		trolley stops
Head Start			
Trinidad St Nursing Home			
Preferred Total- Capital	\$ 635,000		