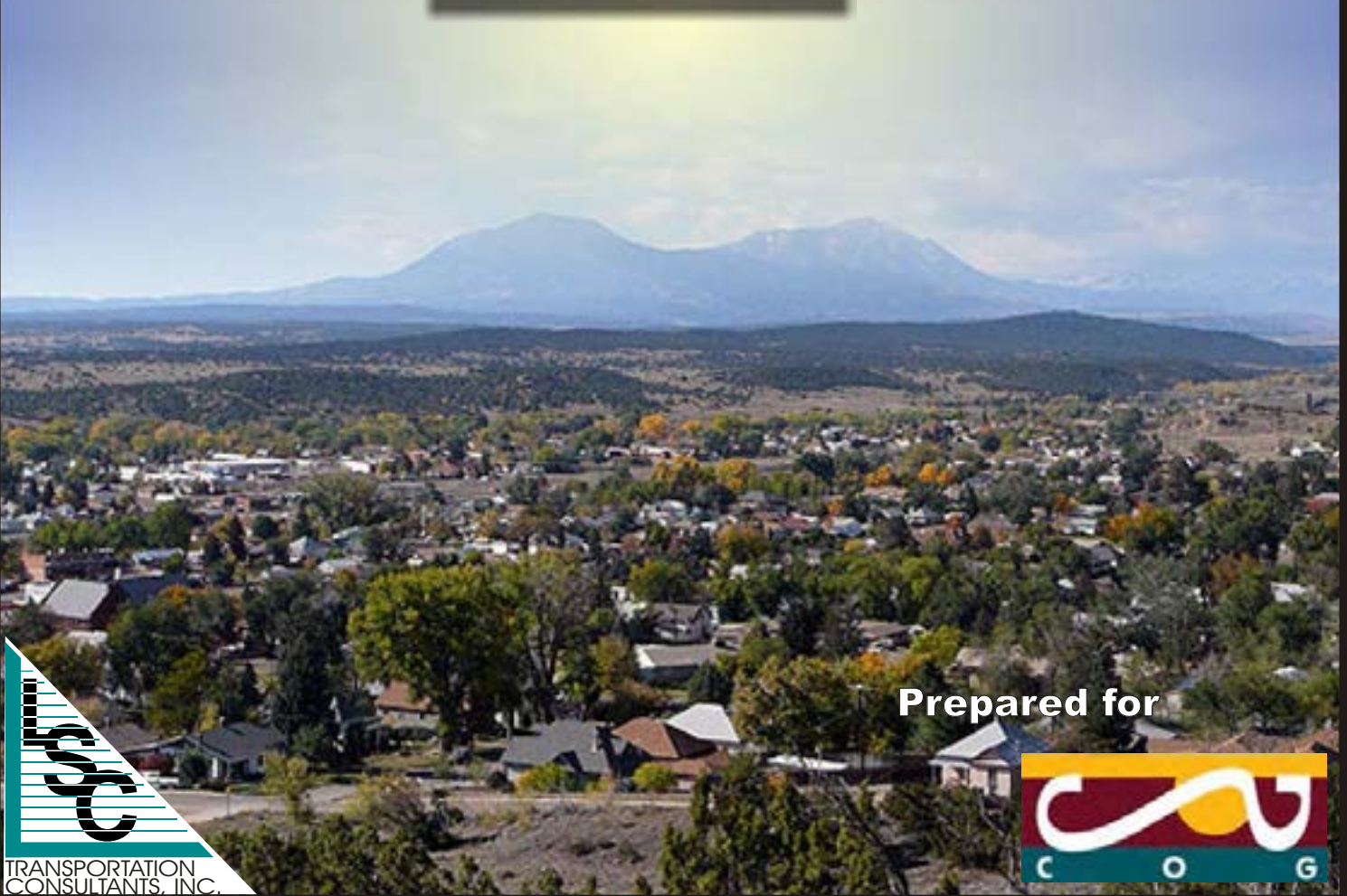


# Enhancing Transit Services in South-Central Colorado



Prepared for



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# Enhancing Transit Services in South-Central Colorado

## Final Report

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# CHAPTER I

## Introduction

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South Central Council of Governments Transit (COG Transit) contracted with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. to conduct this Strategic Transit Plan to enhance and expand regional public transit service in the South-Central Transportation Planning Region (TPR) which includes Las Animas and Huerfano Counties. The plan specifically focuses on the services provided by COG Transit to determine the needs for future service expansion and ways to enhance the services. The plan also examines transit needs and alternatives to better serve residents of Las Animas and Huerfano Counties.



General public transportation service in the study area is provided by COG Transit. For some residents in Las Animas and Huerfano Counties, COG Transit service is their only link to work, shopping, health care facilities, education, and other necessary services. The project focuses on transportation for the general public, the elderly, people with disabilities, and employment trips.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to analyze existing services and recommend modifications/expansions to COG Transit service over the next five years. This study describes the existing conditions in the community related to public transit services and discusses service alternatives for meeting needs into the future, identifies the locally preferred set of alternatives, and presents an implementation plan for the next five years.

### **REPORT CONTENTS**

Chapter II presents the goals and objectives for providing transit service. These goals will continue to help guide COG Transit's service development in the next five years.

## *Introduction*

Chapter III presents a summary of community input, which includes stakeholder interviews and community input obtained through surveys distributed online and through paper format. The stakeholder interviews were conducted by the planning team. Each person interviewed was asked identical questions. Answers to these questions are summarized in this chapter and serve as public input into this enhancement plan.

A detailed overview and analysis of COG Transit's current operating environment is provided in Chapter IV. This includes ridership, financial, and fleet characteristics collected from COG Transit. This information is extremely important in determining how effectively and efficiently service is provided and where deficiencies currently exist. This chapter also describes other transportation providers in the study area and the services they provide.

Chapter V presents a summary of community demographics and economics. This chapter specifically looks at various market segments that use transit such as older adults, people with disabilities, zero-vehicle households, low-income population, and youth. It also looks at means of transportation used to commute to work and commuter patterns to and from the Las Animas and Huerfano Counties area.

Chapter VI presents a review of transit demand for the area that was used to evaluate service options. The greatest transit need model helps identify the areas that need transit and whether those areas are served by the existing COG Transit service.

Chapter VII introduces coordination strategies that *might* be possible for the South Central area. These opportunities are listed and described as possible strategies for purposes of discussion *and are not to be taken as recommendations*. This chapter introduces possible communication/public relations/marketing strategies, possible technical assistance/training/planning ideas, vehicle coordination ideas, and service coordination concepts.

Chapter VIII presents service alternatives which were considered. Service alternatives explored include a fixed-route service in Trinidad, extended hours of ser-



vice on weekdays, service on Saturday, scheduled service between Trinidad and Walsenburg, and scheduled service between Trinidad and Raton, New Mexico. The service alternatives include operating cost, potential demand, and performance measures.

Chapter IX presents coordination opportunities that should be pursued in the South Central area. The implementation plan for better serving the South Central region is presented in Chapter X. Funding alternatives and a financial plan are also included.

## **STUDY APPROACH**

COG Transit is taking a closer look at how services are provided in Las Animas and Huerfano Counties. A key element in the plan is a clear evaluation of the unmet needs of the local community residents. This effort focuses on the continuation of public transit services to meet the community's needs. One important step toward providing an integrated community-wide transportation system is involving key players such as residents of Las Animas and Huerfano Counties, key stakeholders, human service agencies, school district representatives, other transportation providers, and those agencies that need transportation. The process follows the general planning approach used by LSC.



### **Project Team**

An initial “kick-off” meeting was held in Trinidad, Colorado on January 2, 2013. Various stakeholders were informed and invited by COG Transit to participate in a stakeholder group to provide feedback throughout this transit study. The meeting was attended by members of COG Transit and various social service agencies such as Trinidad Inn Nursing Home, Spanish Peak Behavioral Health, Mt. San Rafael Hospital, SCCOG Early Learning Children’s Program, Mt. Carmel, Harry S. Sayre Senior Center, Las Animas County Department of Human Services, and Trinidad State Junior College. The project team met to discuss project goals, priorities, and project tasks for completion of the final study. The project team also discussed the key local stakeholders that would be critical to be interviewed and for providing input into this transit study. At each step, feedback from the COG Transit staff and the stakeholder group was used to guide development of the plan.

## **SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES AND PROJECT GOALS**

During the January kick-off meeting, the LSC team briefed COG Transit staff and other agencies present at this meeting on the study process to be undertaken. Major issues and concerns regarding public transportation were discussed. Following are summaries of the major issues that arose through the meeting:

- The need to extend hours beyond 5:00 p.m.
- The need to better schedule trips.
- The need for transportation on weekends, particularly on Saturday.
- People need to go to Pueblo for child psychiatry services.
- The need for intermodal connections.
- Lack of taxi service.
- The need for access to recreational opportunities.

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# Goals and Objectives

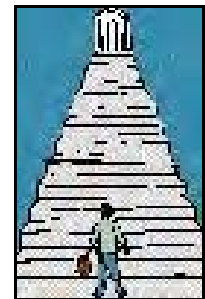
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## INTRODUCTION

The basis for any transit plan is the careful consideration of realistic service options. Passenger needs, travel patterns, and funding dictate the type of service to be provided in an area. The goals and priorities of the local community are significant factors to determine the level and quality of service to be provided. The following discussion outlines their existing mission, proposed goals and objectives for transit service, and provided direction for the preferred options.

## TRANSIT VISION

The following section details the goals and objectives developed through this planning process. The vision for COG Transit service consists of a mission statement, four action goals, and objectives for each goal. The mission statement, goals, and objectives typically form a hierarchical structure with the mission statement being the most general. Goals support the achievement of the mission, and objectives support the goals.



### Mission Statement

The Mission Statement establishes the overall direction of an agency and enumerates the most generalized set of actions to be achieved by that agency. The current mission statement for COG Transit service is as follows:

**Mission Statement**

To provide safe, reliable, cost-effective, and accessible transportation to all residents of Huerfano and Las Animas Counties, with special attention to individuals who cannot access or afford other transportation alternatives.

## **Goals and Objectives**

Based on the kick-off meeting with stakeholders and conversations with staff, LSC formulated goals and objectives for COG Transit service. These goals and objectives were refined based on input received from stakeholders. For transportation planning purposes, a goal is defined as a purpose or need that should be attained to address a transportation issue. An objective is a specific method or activity that is designed to achieve the identified goal.

### Goal #1: Attract new passengers while continuing to serve existing passengers

Objective 1.a: Maintain the existing level of ridership by continuing to serve older adults, disabled or low-income individuals, those who cannot drive or cannot afford a vehicle, as well as students and youth.

Objective 1.b: Provide extended hours of service on weekdays and weekends, especially on Saturday.

Objective 1.c: Develop a transit service that is easy and effective to use, and that allows for any individual to use the service.

Objective 1.d: Develop a strategy to get new riders to use the system through a combination of marketing and providing more efficient services.

Objective 1.e: Service will be provided to key activity centers within the community, including hospitals, retail businesses, education centers, and major employment centers.

Objective 1.f: The transit service should connect with other intercity services such as Amtrak and Greyhound to create a seamless transportation service to meet regional transportation needs.

### Goal #2: Continue to enhance the sustainability of the transit system

Objective 2.a: Obtain federal funding through all available programs to help offset the cost of capital and operations.

Objective 2.b: Develop a long-term commitment for public funding of transit services and seek sustainable and stable funding sources for COG Transit service.

Objective 2.c: Create partnerships that will provide transportation services more effectively and efficiently and cover gaps in transit services.

Goal #3: Provide efficient, effective, safe, and reliable services

Objective 3.a: Operate COG Transit service at an average productivity of five passengers per service-hour.

Objective 3.b: Provide service to 85 percent of the population in the areas with the greatest transit needs.

Objective 3.c: Ensure operations have fewer than 2.5 preventable accidents per 100,000 vehicle-miles.

Objective 3.d: Demand-response service should operate within 15 minutes (plus or minus) of the scheduled arrival time.

Goal #4: Promote the services provided by COG Transit

Objective 4.a: Use every opportunity to promote the transit service including, but not limited to, the following ideas:

- Provide information on COG Transit, cities of Trinidad and Walsenburg, Trinidad Job Services, and other local businesses websites.
- Post flyers with the telephone number and hours of operation at various locations (such as stores, hospitals, and Chamber of Commerce) within the service area.
- Place regular public service announcements with the newspaper, radio, and television.

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## CHAPTER III

# Community Input

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### INTRODUCTION

An integral part of any planning process is the public participation effort. During the course of this plan, two methods were used for involving the community were undertaken—Key Stakeholder Interviews and Community Transportation Survey. Details about each of the two methods used to gather community input are presented in this chapter.

### KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

This section of the chapter presents a summary of the stakeholder interviews conducted during January and February 2013. Stakeholder interviews were part of the public input plan used in this study. The LSC Planning Team—with input from the Project Working Group—developed a list of individuals to be contacted about transit and the role that transit could play in the Huerfano/Las Animas Counties area. The stakeholders interviewed included members of city administration of Trinidad and Walsenburg, hospital and nursing home administration personnel, Department of Human Services, and Trinidad State Junior College. The focus of the interviews was to help in identifying important transit destinations, hours and days of operation, potential ridership, incentives to encourage ridership, and willingness to provide local matching dollars for existing and expanded transit services. LSC staff interviewed 20 individuals. A list of agencies/businesses interviewed is presented in Appendix A.

The interviews were conducted by LSC via telephone. The conversations were structured interviews, meaning the stakeholders were each asked the same questions, in the same order, using the same wording, and were given the opportunity to provide additional insight or information. A total of 11 questions were asked, with one question that had seven sub-questions specific to meeting the needs of that business or agency. During the interviews, the interviewer was able to ask follow-up questions which may have differed from person to person. The results

## *Community Input*

of these questions are summarized below and were used in the overall assessment of the community's needs. The results were then used in the development and selection of a preferred transit service alternative. A copy of the structured interview question set is in Appendix B.

The conversations were confidential individually, with the results being summarized. The different worker shift times and locations were not confidential and the stakeholders were informed of it, as that information would be used to improve transit service to better meet the needs of the agency or business.

### **Key Issues in Huerfano and Las Animas Counties**

During the interview, several questions were asked about key issues in Huerfano and Las Animas Counties. One question asked stakeholders to list or name the issues that came to mind for them, looking at the next five to ten years. Another question asked stakeholders to provide some sense on how important public transportation was compared to other issues in the region.

The overarching concern among most stakeholders was about the economy and the creation of jobs. People wanted to see economic growth in the region and the need to create jobs in the region with the high unemployment rates observed in the region. The two largest industries—oil/gas and agriculture—have been hit hard and it is important to draw businesses to the area. Others expressed the need for more stable jobs as opposed to job fluctuations seen due to the oil and gas industries. Some stakeholders expressed the need for transportation as an important concern, especially for low-income individuals, seniors who do not drive, and people with disabilities to access services and opportunities. Other concerns expressed included aging infrastructure such as water and sewer lines, water rights issues, and drug/alcohol abuse.

Overall, transportation was ranked in the middle, though some stakeholders ranked it higher as they see that transportation integrates people with jobs and other services. While transportation was ranked high, it was not the highest priority compared to the economy and jobs.

## **Transportation and Transit in Huerfano and Las Animas Counties**

Stakeholders were asked their opinion about the major transportation issues facing the area and what role they think public transportation has in the region. Major transportation issues facing the area, as reported by the stakeholders, are varied. Some stakeholders pointed out the lack of a taxi service or a 24-hour transportation service. The increasing cost of all forms of transportation is a concern. The maintenance on major highways, keeping local roads in good repair, and major highways passing through the area which bring a lot of traffic to the community were some of the major transportation issues reported. Some stakeholders see the lack of public transportation as a major issue facing the area. Public transportation is important to serve the increasing aging population that are not able to drive themselves, people who do not have transportation or a driver's license, people who need to get to medical appointments in Pueblo or Colorado Springs, and the need to get to major employers that are located outside the region. A few stakeholders focused on COG Transit service—the need for more vehicles and more drivers to provide the service. One stakeholder pointed out that Las Animas County is the largest county in the state by area, and the biggest challenge is to serve people in the outlying areas to access services. In Trinidad, the loss of Amtrak's Southwest Chief line, the need to enhance alternative transportation services, and the need for local transit services within Trinidad which are not currently being met are seen as some of the major transportation issues facing the Trinidad area. A few stakeholders pointed out that some people who rely on public transportation cannot afford to pay a fare, especially those on fixed incomes.

The opinion of stakeholders is that the role of transit in this rural area is to get people to and from work, doctor's appointments, shopping, and other services. Many stakeholders shared the opinion that transportation is for those individuals that need transportation—especially the elderly, people with disabilities, low-income individuals, people who do not own a car, and people without a driver's license—to participate in the community. Few stakeholders see transit as a way to combat congestion and give people alternative ways to get to work other than relying solely on private vehicles. One stakeholder sees the role of transit to connect people to the major airports.

### **Need for Local and Regional Transit Services**

Stakeholders were asked to list the needs of the community for local and regional transit services. They were also asked if the current COG Transit services meet those needs and whether they recommend any changes or expansions to the existing transit services. Most of the stakeholders see the need for both local and regional services. Locally, some of the stakeholders think the destinations served by COG Transit are sufficient, but see the need to have extended hours of service. Local service is especially important for people who do not have any means of transportation to get to work, the store, doctors' appointments, and the hospital (especially in the Trinidad and Walsenburg areas). Some of the stakeholders suggested bringing back the circulator service in Trinidad. Regionally, some of the areas identified were service to Pueblo and Colorado Springs for specialized medical needs, with a few identifying service to Denver. Some saw the need for transit to serve veterans that have to travel south to Albuquerque and Santa Fe in New Mexico. Some stakeholders also see the need to serve college students who come from Raton, New Mexico. One stakeholder sees the need to serve the major airports in the region, such as Colorado Springs, Pueblo, and Denver.

### **Making Transit Successful in the Community**

Stakeholders had different recommendations for making transit successful in the community. The highest responses focused on extending the hours of operation and marketing to increase the awareness of the COG Transit services. One stakeholder suggested extending the hours from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. They suggested publicizing the benefits of public transportation, making the service cost-effective by grouping trips, and having more regular interaction with the community to understand what works and what does not work would help with making transit successful. Others are convinced that having community support and financial support from city and county government is a way to make transit successful. Still others are convinced that when gas prices go up, people would be willing to ride transit. Some think that COG Transit is already successful in doing what the transit service was supposed to be doing. Others think a balance between a scheduled service coming to certain stops versus door-to-door service to people who really need the service would make transit successful. A transit

service that is easy to understand and convenient to use was also listed as a recommendation to make transit successful.

### **Level of Community Support**

Most of the stakeholders think there is high level of community support for public transportation in Huerfano and Las Animas Counties because it provides a needed service, especially to older adults. Some stakeholders said that they never heard any criticism of COG Transit services. One stakeholder commented that people in general like to have public transportation, but do not use it as much. There were a few stakeholders that thought the level of community support is low.

### **Means of Funding Public Transportation**

Stakeholders were asked if Huerfano and Las Animas County citizens would be supportive of other means of funding public transportation. Many stakeholders chose federal, state, or local funding sources (such as city and county funding). Many think that any sort of tax initiative would not work with the citizens of Huerfano and Las Animas Counties. Some stakeholders suggested applying for grants, getting funds from foundations, or holding fund-raising events. Some suggested user fees—a fee paid by people who would use the service—or bus passes. Some stakeholders reported that the community has a number of people that are retired and people with disabilities. Some suggested approaching businesses/agencies to fill the gap for people who cannot afford to pay the fees.

### **Incentives That Could Motivate Increased Transit Usage**

Stakeholders were asked to list some incentives that could motivate increased transit usage. Many stakeholders realize that this is a rural area and people use their personal vehicles to get around because of the flexibility and the long distances between locations. Overall, the most common response was that marketing and education to the public would motivate increased transit usage, especially if COG Transit wanted to reach different demographic markets. A regular route, posted bus stop signs, convenience to access the transit service, quick response time, sticking to schedules, and expanded hours of operation were some of the reported incentives to motivate increased transit usage.

### **Factors Discouraging Transit Usage**

Stakeholders were asked to list any factors discouraging transit usage. The limited hours of operation provided by COG Transit, lack of a regular route or a schedule, and people not knowing how the transit service works were listed by stakeholders as factors discouraging transit usage. Some stakeholders think that the low cost of fuel also discouraged transit usage.

### **Agencies' Willingness to Provide Local Matching Dollars**

Stakeholders were asked about their willingness to provide local matching dollars for state and federal funding sources. Most of the stakeholders were not ready to provide local matching dollars. Some said that they do not have a budget for it, but could work with COG Transit to help apply for grants. Some others said that they are a state agency and have a strict budget. One stakeholder said that, with funding being reduced, they are unable to get funds but would help in ways they can. Since no concrete plans were given for expansion of the transit service and ways it would benefit the agency, no agencies were willing to commit to providing local matching dollars.

### **Service Provided to Agencies/Businesses**

Information was collected about the individual agencies/businesses and ways that the South Central Council of Governments (COG Transit) can better meet their needs. Information was also gathered regarding worker shift times. In most cases, COG Transit serves business/agency clients more than they serve business/agency employees.

### **Las Animas County Rehabilitation Center**

This agency currently has a contract with COG Transit to provide trips. There are approximately 40 riders a day picked up by COG Transit at this agency. The needs of this agency are currently being met. They usually see the need for transportation in the morning between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. and in the afternoon between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m.

### Las Animas County Department of Human Services

COG Transit also serves this agency well. The agency does find that their clients have to travel outside the county to Pueblo for medical appointments. The agency has a staff of 41 employees in the Trinidad office that work from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### Mt. San Rafael Hospital

The agency has 230 full-time and part-time employees. Employees have varying shifts—8-hour, 10-hour, and 12-hour shifts. Ways in which COG Transit can serve the hospital were not reported.

### Trinidad Inn Nursing Home

COG Transit serves the Trinidad Inn Nursing Home well. The agency recommends that COG Transit extend its hours of service from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The agency's employees have two shifts from approximately 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and from 6:30 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Agency clients need transportation for doctor appointments. Most clients are debilitated. The agency does provide its clients with in-house transportation services.

### Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center

COG Transit serves the agency well. The agency has two shifts—from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. The clinic is served Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (except on Tuesdays and Thursdays when the clinic is open until 8:00 p.m.).

### Branson, Colorado

COG Transit does not serve Branson, Colorado. They would like COG Transit to provide a trip from Branson to Trinidad. The demand for such a service is unknown. Branson has a group of ladies that would like to go from Branson to Raton, New Mexico.

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### Mt. Carmel Health and Wealth Wellness Center

The primary care facility is open from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. They have patients from within the region as well as from outside the region. They have clients from Trinidad, Walsenburg, Aguilar, and some from Raton, New Mexico.

### Trinidad Workforce Center

The agency sees transportation needs to and from work and child care services generally between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

### Trinidad State Junior College

The Trinidad State College would like to see the Trinidad circulator service back as it was very useful to its students. They would like COG Transit to serve the college with two trips in the morning (around 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.) and two trips in the evening (around 4:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.). They would also like to explore carpool/vanpool programs for their students who commute from Walsenburg, Aguilar, and Raton, New Mexico.

## **COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION SURVEY**

This section of the chapter presents the analysis of data collected through a survey of Las Animas and Huerfano County residents. This survey was distributed by the various stakeholders of this project to their clients, staff, and contacts, in both paper and electronic formats. Trinidad State Junior College (TSJC) also sent out the survey to its students, faculty, and staff. The survey was coded so that information from TSJC could be tracked separately. While all surveys received were analyzed together, responses from TSJC students, faculty, and staff on only certain relevant questions are presented separately. The questionnaire was provided in English and is included in Appendix C. A total of 116 usable responses were received in various formats, although not all questions have this number of responses as not everyone answered every question. Information is provided about demographics, travel characteristics and potential use, transportation needs, changes to COG Transit, and new services to be implemented. Responses from the usable questionnaires were entered into a database and an analysis was per-



formed in a spreadsheet program. The responses are summarized in the following sections.

This survey was not based on a representative sample of the area population. The results should be interpreted as information about those who completed the questionnaire. The results should be used with care and should not be considered as representative of all residents of the south-central Colorado area.

## **Community Survey Findings**

### Demographic Characteristics

There were a number of questions asked to determine demographic characteristics of the Las Animas and Huerfano Counties region. This includes demographic characteristics such as age, number of people in a household (over 10 years of age), annual household income, automobile, and driver's license availability.

#### Age

Respondents were asked to report their age as part of the survey. The average age of survey respondents was 40. Survey respondents range in age from 18 years to 80 years.

#### Number of People (Age 10 Years or Older) in a Household

Respondents were asked how many people age 10 years and older are in their household. On average, there are two people per household over 10 years. In total, there are 197 people in respondents' households over the age of 10.

#### Annual Household Income

The annual household income of respondents is shown in Table III-1. The largest proportion of respondents (55 percent) indicated an annual household income of less than \$15,000. Another 15 percent indicated an annual household income between \$35,000 and \$49,999. Approximately 13 percent of respondents indicated an annual household income of more than \$75,000. Overall, the survey respondents make up a wide spectrum of earnings, ranging from less than \$7,500 annually to more than \$75,000 annually.

Table III-1 Annual Household Income		
Income Range	#	%
Less than \$7,500 per year	38	38%
\$7,500 -\$14,999 per year	16	16%
\$15,000-\$34,999 per year	13	13%
\$35,000-\$49,999 per year	15	15%
\$50,000-\$74,999 per year	4	4%
\$75,000 or more per year	13	13%

Source: LSC Community Transportation Survey, 2013.

### Vehicle Availability and Licensed Drivers

Lack of a private vehicle influences people to use public transportation. This comparison provides an indication of the number of *potential choice riders* compared to those who are *transit-dependent*. Potential choice riders refer to those respondents that live in households with an operating vehicle and a driver's license, and who may choose to use transit.

Licensed drivers made up the majority of respondents, with 78 percent having a license to operate a car. Figure III-1 shows the proportion of respondents who are licensed drivers.

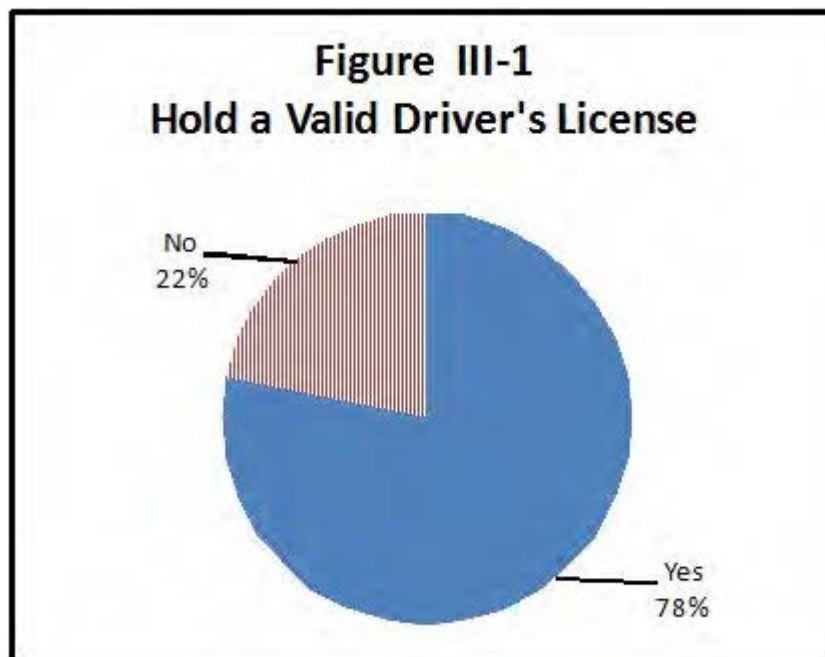


Figure III-2 shows the proportion of people in a household that do not have a valid driver's license. The largest proportion of respondents (57 percent) indicated that they do not have anyone in their household without a driver's license. Approximately 30 percent of respondents indicated that they have one person in their household without a driver's license. According to the respondents of the survey, there are a total of 74 people that live in respondent households that do not have a valid driver's license and may possibly use a public transportation service. On average, there is a total of one person per household that does not have a valid driver's license.

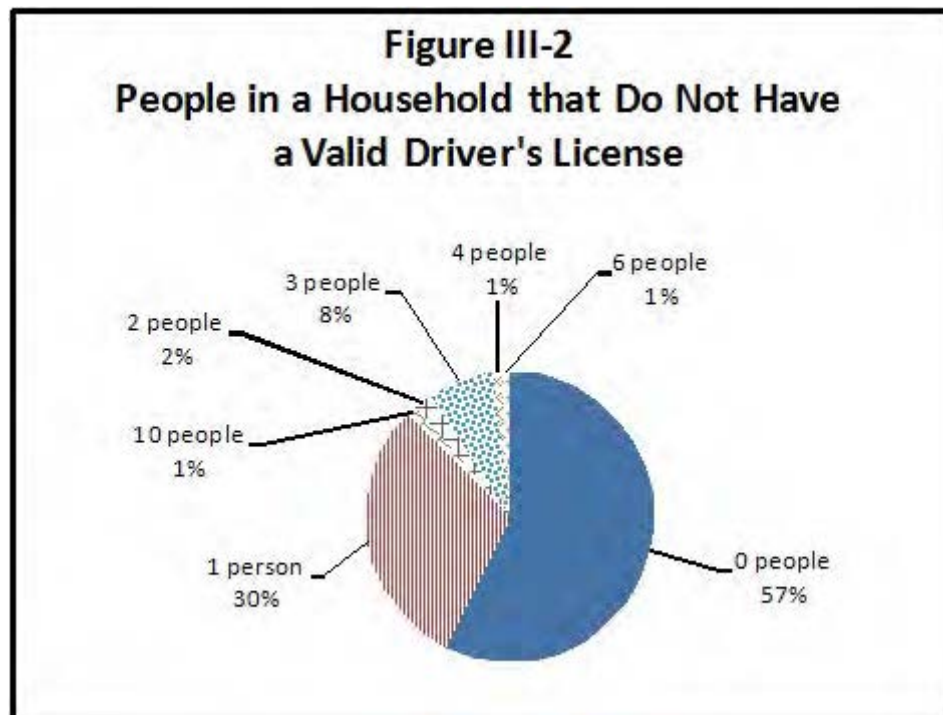
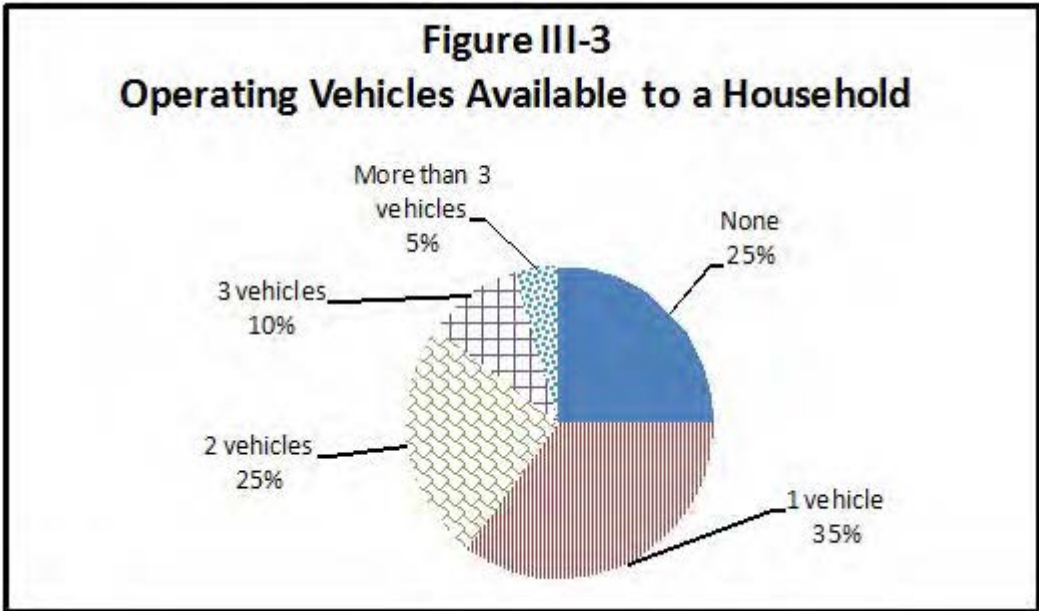
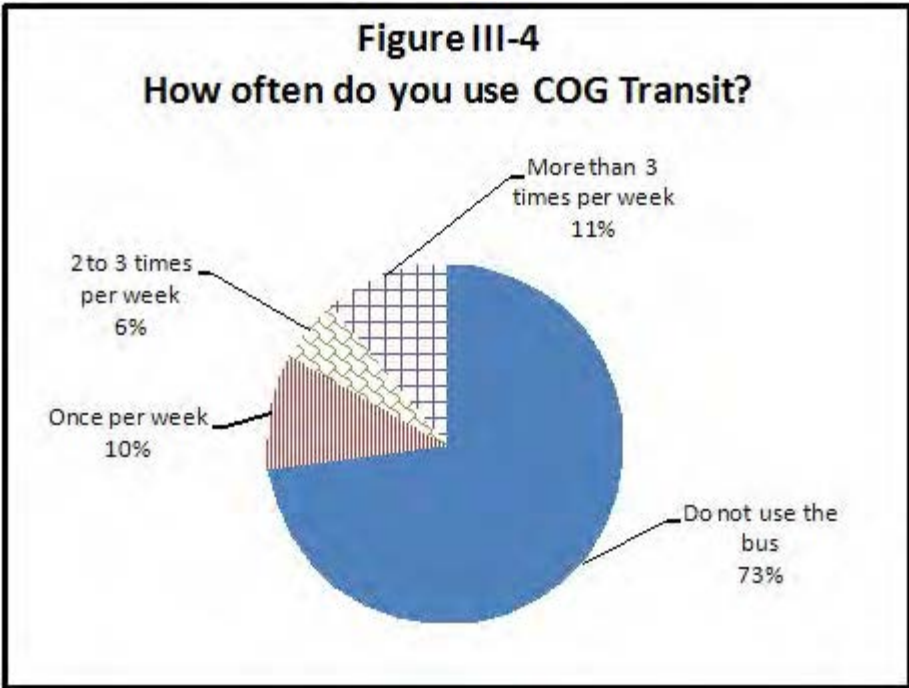


Figure III-3 shows the proportion of operating vehicles available to a household. Approximately 35 percent of respondents live in single-vehicle households. Another 25 percent of respondents have two operating vehicles in a household. Most important to note is that 25 percent of households (27 responses) have no operating vehicles available and would potentially use public transportation for their transportation needs.



#### Frequency of COG Transit

Respondents were asked how often they use COG Transit. Figure III-4 shows the information. The majority of respondents (73 percent) indicated that they do not use the bus. Eleven percent indicated that they use COG Transit more than three times per week. This is followed by 10 percent of respondents who indicated using the service once per week.



## Residences

Respondents were asked to indicate the nearest intersection to their residences. There were 73 respondents who answered this question. The majority of respondents (86 percent) indicated that they live in the Trinidad area. This is due to the large number of responses from Trinidad State Junior College students, faculty, and staff. Another five percent of respondents reside in the Walsenburg area. Approximately three percent of respondents indicated that they reside in Coke-dale—a community located southwest of Trinidad.

## Travel Disabilities

Respondents were asked if they or a member of their household who needed transportation had a disability, health concern, or other issues that made travel difficult. Approximately 30 percent of respondents reported that they or a member of their household have a disability which limits their ability to travel. Specific health concerns such as back problems, a disability, heart problems, and use of wheelchairs were reported by respondents to specify the types of issues that make transportation difficult.

## Travel Characteristics and Potential Use

This section of the chapter examines respondents' current travel characteristics and their use of South Central Council of Governments Transit (COG Transit).

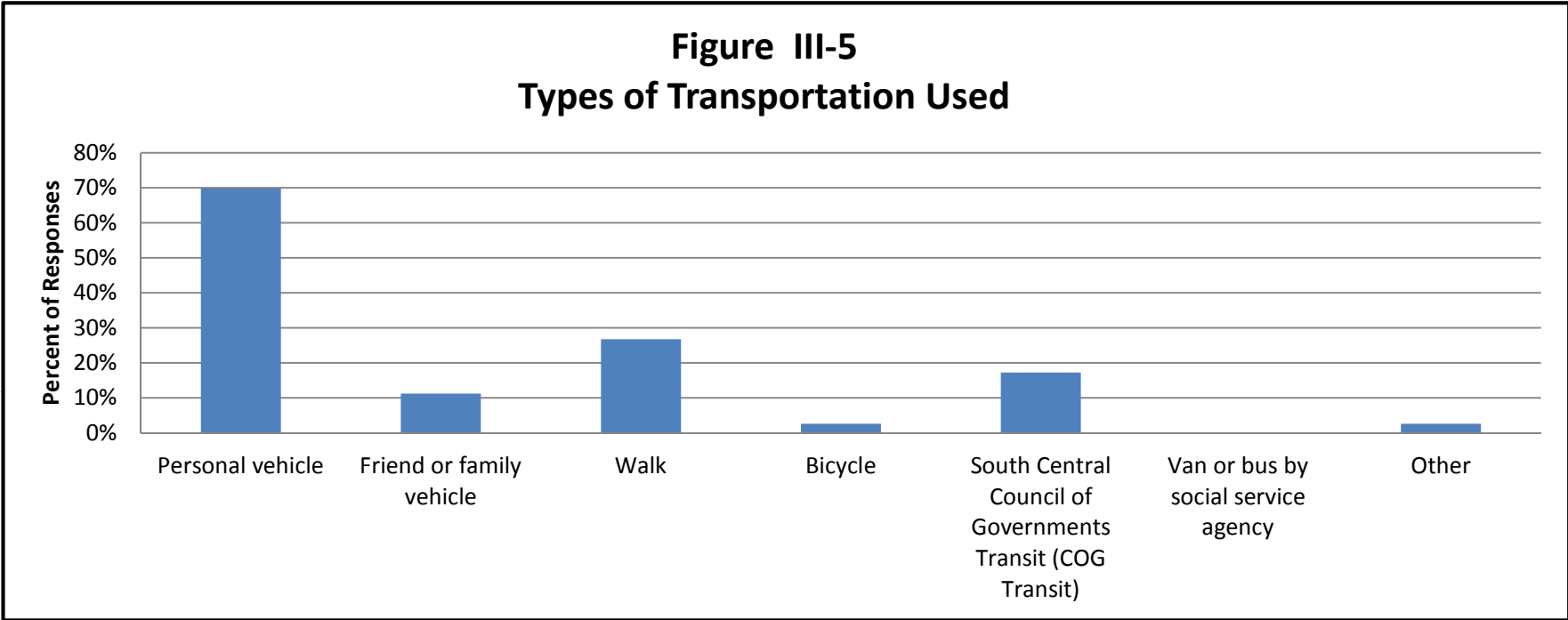
## Types of Transportation Used

Respondents were asked the types of transportation their household uses—a personal vehicle, using a friend or a family vehicle, walking, using a bicycle, South Central Council of Governments Transit (COG Transit), van or a bus provided by a service agency, or other types of transportation. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses to explain the types of transportation currently used by their household. The types of transportation used are shown in Figure III-5. Approximately 70 percent of responses reported that they use a private vehicle, which indicates the number who are choice riders. Approximately 27 percent of respondents indicated that walking is their means of transportation. Seventeen percent of respondents indicated using COG Transit. Eleven percent said they use

## *Community Input*

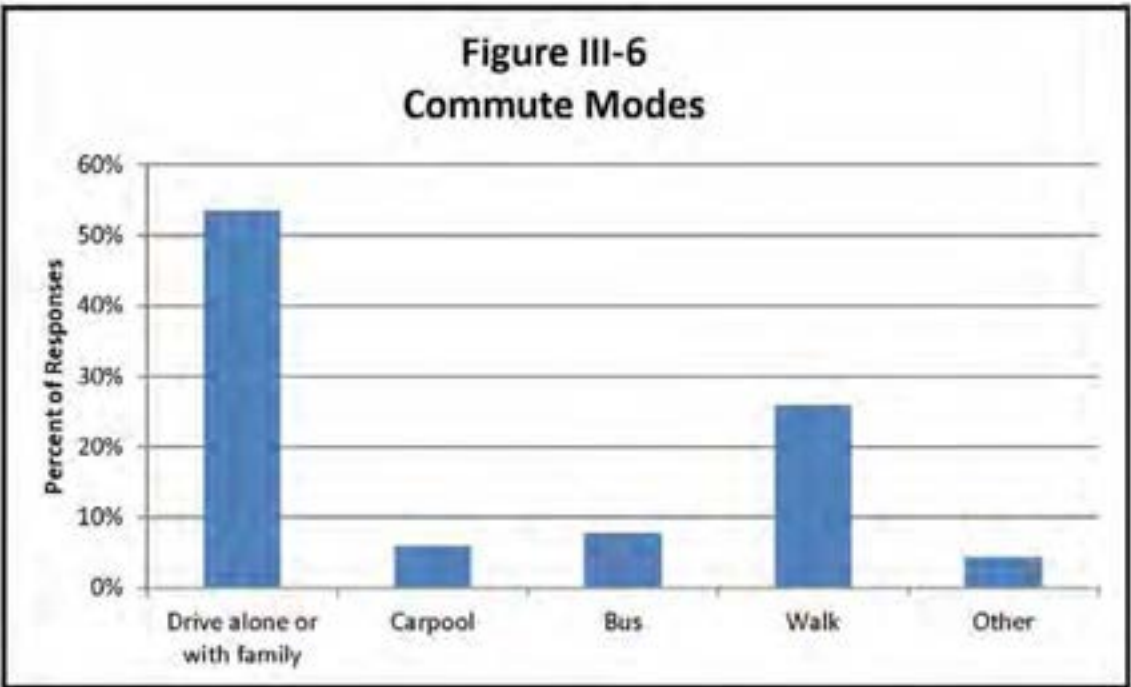
a friend's or a family vehicle. Only three percent reported using a bicycle, and another three percent reported using other types of transportation.

**Figure III-5  
Types of Transportation Used**



Commute Modes

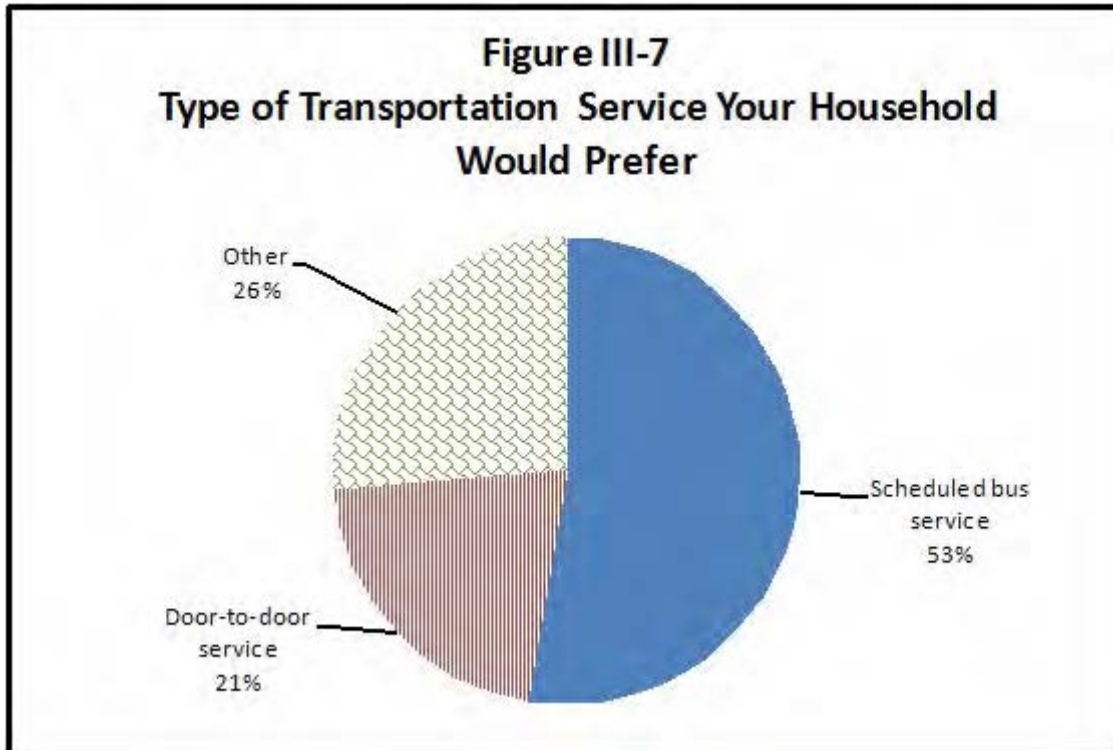
Respondents were asked if they or a another member of their household work outside the home, what modes of transportation they currently use to get to work. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses to explain their travel modes to work. The results of this information are presented in Figure III-6. Approximately 53 percent of respondents drive alone or with family to work. Approximately 26 percent of respondents indicated that they walk to work. Only eight percent of respondents indicated using the bus.



Type of Public Transportation

The survey asked respondents the type of transportation that their household would prefer. Figure III-7 presents this information. Approximately 53 percent of respondents prefer scheduled bus service. This is followed by 21 percent of respondents who prefer door-to-door service. The remaining 26 percent selected “Other” types of transportation services mostly because they had no need for transportation as they had their own vehicle.





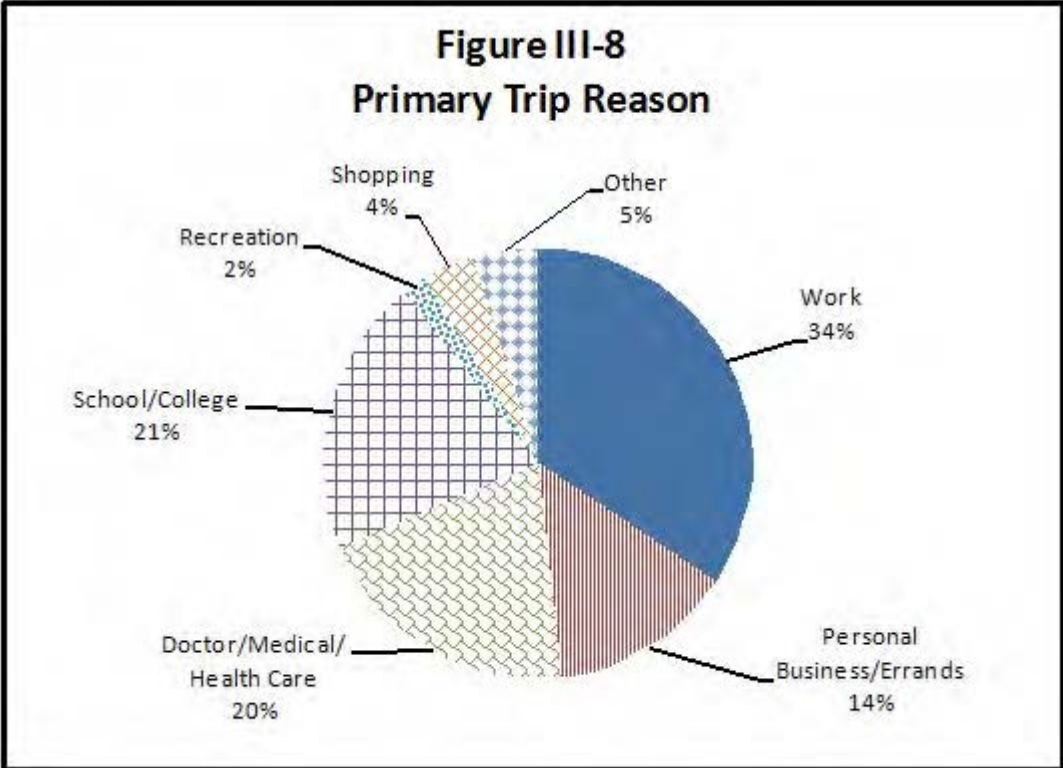
### Destinations

Respondents were given an opportunity to list two destinations and the community in which they would need transportation most frequently. There were 137 responses to this question. Many of the responses were vague and simply reported that they need to get to these destinations for “work,” “doctor appointments,” and “shopping.” These data were separated into destinations/communities and the top locations were identified. The top locations, listed below, are some of the destinations/communities to which respondents or members of their household need transportation.

1. Trinidad (82 responses). Listed are some of the needs in descending order such as service to get to the Trinidad State Junior College, Walmart, Mt. San Rafael Hospital, Safeway, school, for medical appointments/doctors, and shopping.
2. Walsenburg (3 responses).
3. Pueblo (3 responses).
4. Colorado Springs (2 responses).
5. Raton, New Mexico (2 responses).

Primary Trip Reason

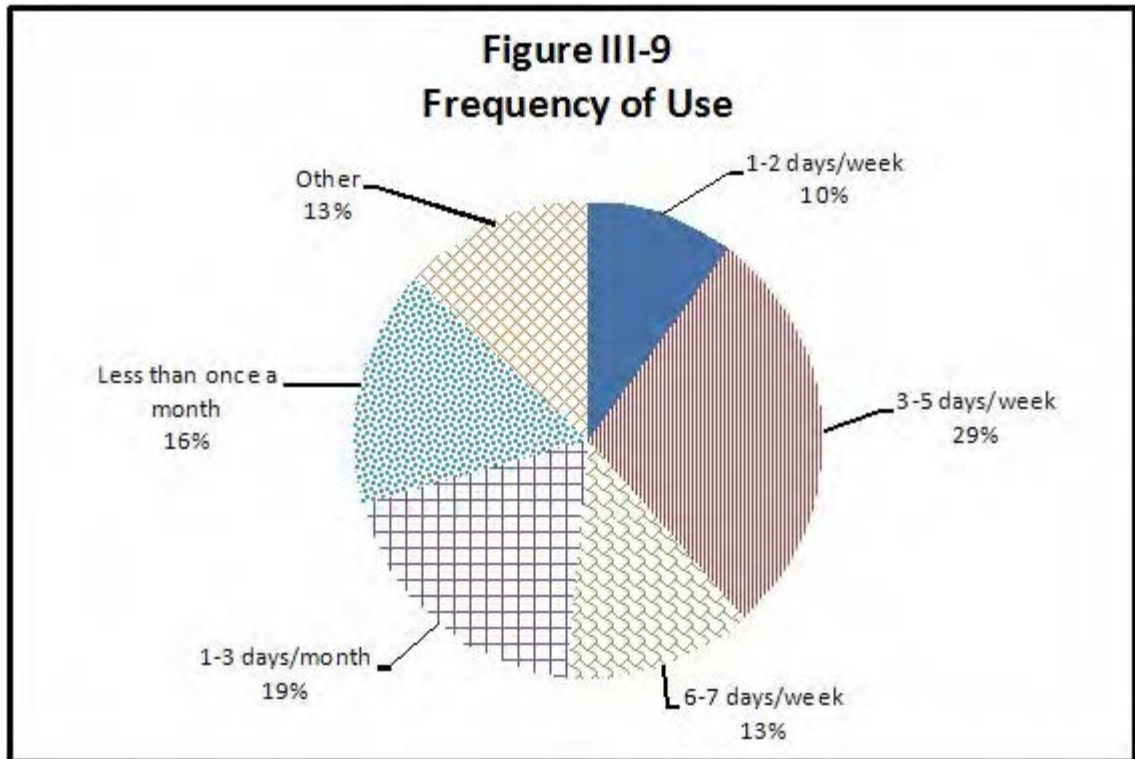
Respondents were also asked to indicate what would be the primary reason for needing public transportation to that community. Primary trip reasons are shown in Figure III-8. The primary trip reason (34 percent) was to and from work. The second most common reason (21 percent) was for school/college purposes. This was followed by 20 percent of respondents who indicated that their primary trip purpose was for doctor/medical/health care purposes.



Frequency of Use

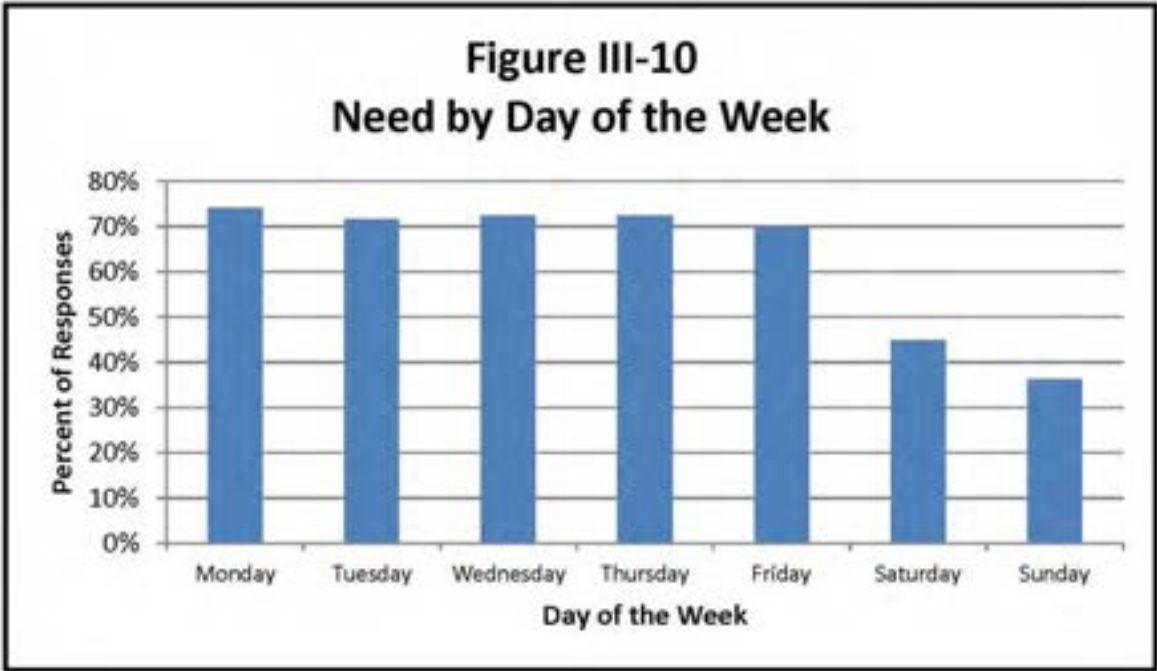
Respondents were asked to report how often they would use such a service. Figure III-9 shows the information. Approximately 29 percent of respondents indicated that they would use such a service three to five days a week. Approximately 19 percent of respondents indicated that they would use such a service one to three days per month. Approximately 41 percent of respondents indicated that they would be a frequent rider using such a service three to seven days a week. The average response for this question was that users would ride such a service two

days per week. The results of this question were spread out fairly evenly between frequent and non-frequent riders.



### Days of the Week Use

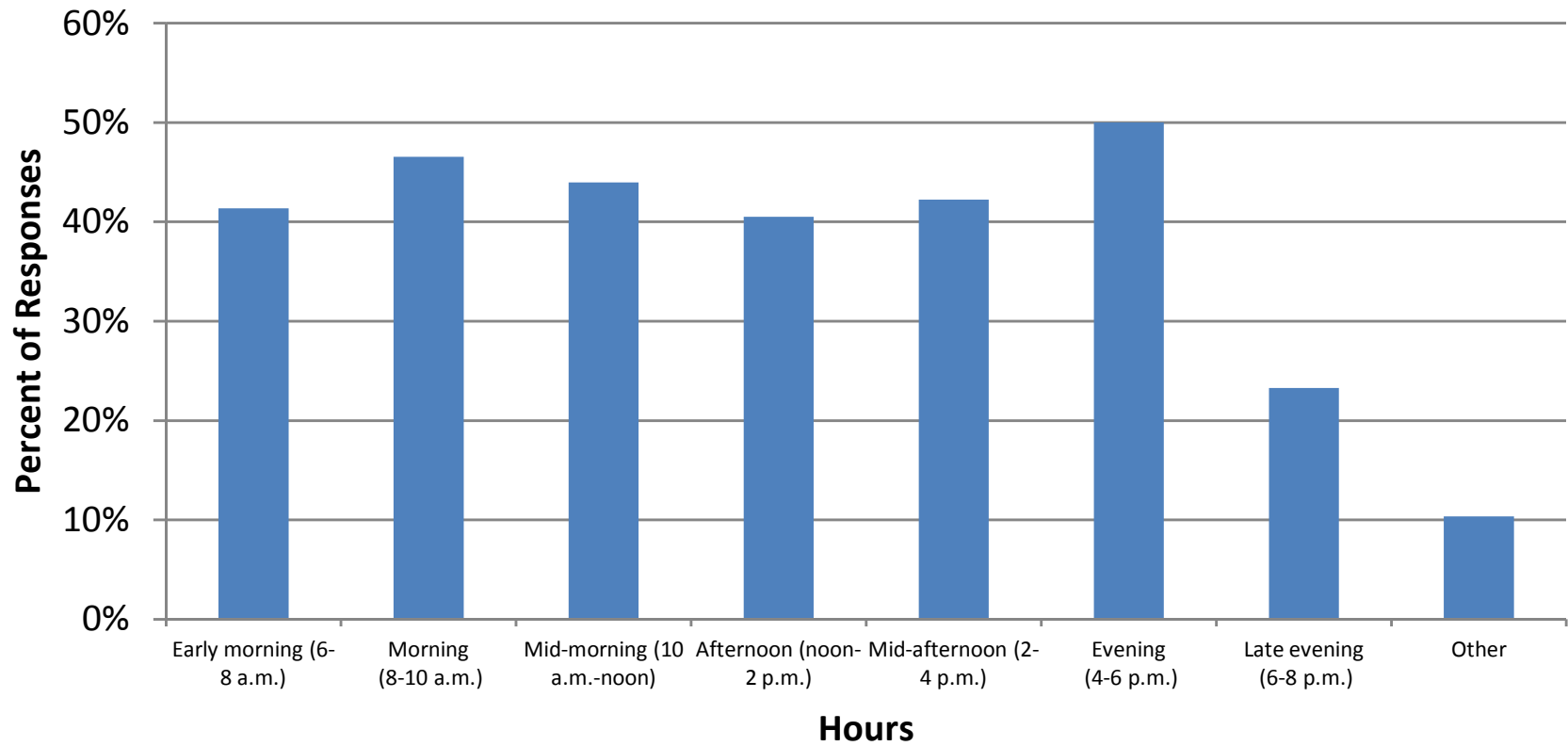
Respondents were asked to specify the days of the week of such a service. Respondents were given a chance to select multiple responses. Figure III-10 presents the responses on the days of the week people would use such a service. As illustrated, the responses were fairly evenly split among the various days of the week listed, with approximately 70 to 74 percent responses reporting that they would use a service Monday through Friday. The proportion of responses on Saturday was lower at 45 percent. The proportion of responses on Sunday was still lower at 36 percent. The results thus indicate that the days of operation should be Monday through Friday, with the demand for such a service lower on Saturday and still lower on Sunday.



Hours of Use

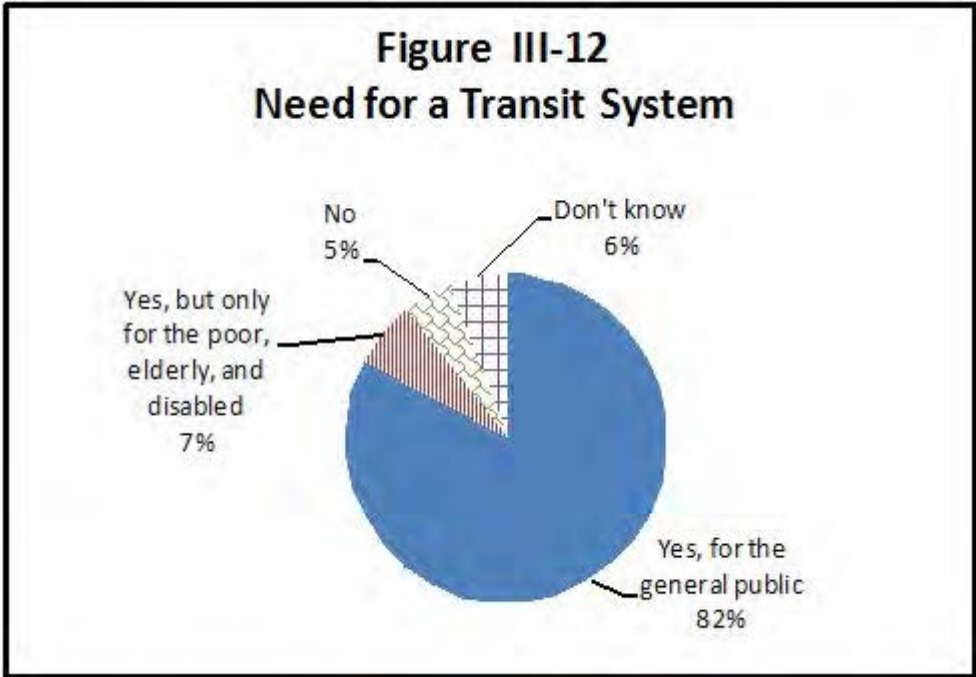
Respondents were given the chance to report in two-hour time periods the hours of service they desire. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses. If the options given in the survey—which ranged from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.—did not meet the hours of transportation that they preferred, they were also allowed to specify other hours of transportation. The results of this information are shown in Figure III-11. As seen in the figure, the largest responses were seen during the peak evening commute hours from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. (50 percent). As illustrated in Figure III-11, the demand for transit is throughout the day (6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.), especially during the peak hours between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. and between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. The level of demand tapers after 6:00 p.m. Approximately 10 percent of responses indicated “Other” hours of transportation. Most of these responses suggested an early start such as 6:00 a.m. or 7:00 a.m. and a service that ends at 6:00 p.m. or 8:00 p.m.

### Figure III-11 Need for Transportation by Hours



Need for a Transit System

Respondents were asked if they thought there is a need for a transit system in the Huerfano/Las Animas Counties region. As shown in Figure III-12, the majority of respondents (82 percent) reported that they thought there is a need for a general public transit service. Approximately seven percent of the respondents think there is a need for a transit service that serves only the poor, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

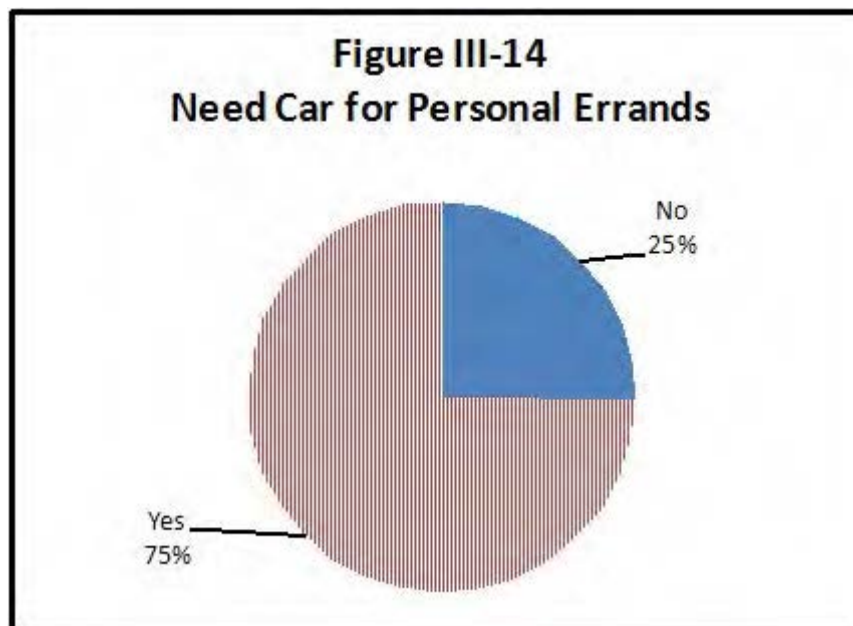
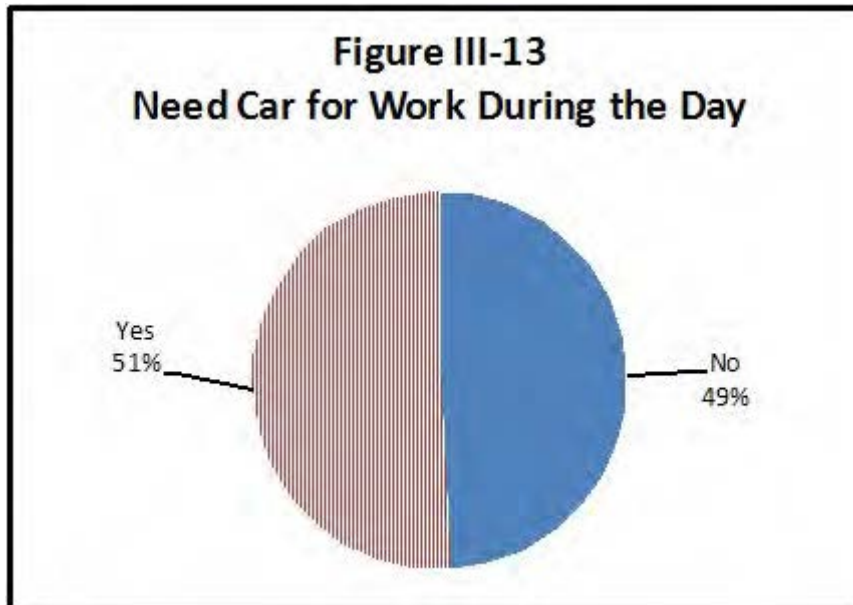


Personal Vehicle Use

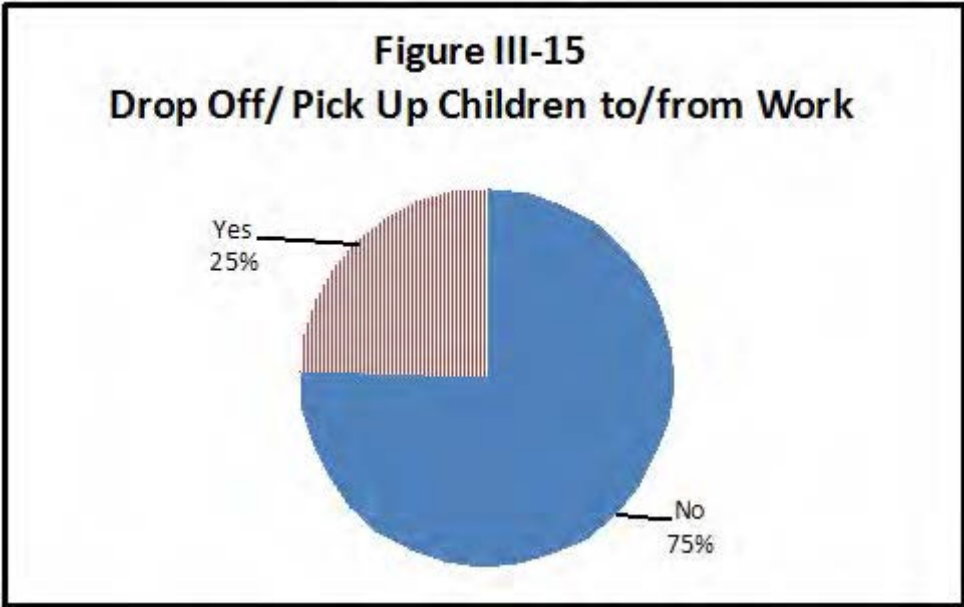
To determine potential riders who would use COG Transit, the survey asked respondents to indicate whether they need to use their car during the day for various purposes including for work, personal errands, and to drop off/pick up children on the way to and from work.

Figure III-13 shows the responses received for those who need their car for work during the day (approximately 51 percent of respondents). Respondents were also asked if they need their cars for personal errands during the day. Figure III-14 shows the responses. A large majority (75 percent) indicated that they would need their personal car for errands during the day. Finally, approximately 25 percent

indicated that they need their car to either pick up or drop off children on their way to or from work, as shown in Figure III-15.







Potential Riders of a Transit System

To determine the community’s potential riders who would use the current COG Transit, a multi-step analysis was done. Respondents were first asked if they needed a car for work during the day—52 out of the 105 respondents responded that they would not need a car for work during the day. The next question asked respondents whether they would need their car for personal errands during the day. Out of the 52 respondents who indicated they would not need a car for work during the day, 26 respondents indicated they would not need a car for personal errands. Finally, respondents were asked if they needed their car to drop off or pick up children to and from work. Based on the responses, about 23 respondents out of the total 105 responses were then determined to be potential riders who could regularly use a transit system in the Huerfano/Las Animas Counties region. This indicates that 22 percent of the total number of respondents could do without their cars while at work, reflecting potential riders who might use the transit system in the Huerfano/Las Animas Counties region.



### Transportation Needs

Identifying transportation needs or making changes to COG Transit that would make residents of Huerfano/Las Animas Counties regular riders is an important factor for creating an efficient public transportation.

### Changes to COG Transit

Respondents were asked to recommend changes to COG Transit that would make them a regular rider. The actual comments on this question are included in Appendix D. Some of the comments suggested that a good regular schedule with scheduled times and locations for pick-up and drop-off and a service that is on time were some of the changes recommended. Many of the responses from Trinidad recommended bringing back the circulator service. One person recommended a transit service to TSJC in the morning and a return service in the evening. Some of the changes recommended better customer service. There were a few comments that did not see themselves using COG Transit as they did not need it, it would take them so long on a bus, or it was not cost-effective to use transit because of other errands that they had to do between their trips.

### New Services to Be Implemented

Respondents were asked to recommend new services that should be implemented. The actual comments on new services are included in Appendix E. Some of the comments suggested a transit service between Trinidad and Walsenburg, transit service around Trinidad, and transit service to Pueblo for doctor appointments. Some of the comments related to TSJC were that many TSJC students commute to the college from Raton, New Mexico and Walsenburg as well as a few from Aguilar. Two trips a day—one in the morning and one in the evening—to and from both Raton and Walsenburg/Aguilar could help faculty, staff, and students if such a service were available. Some comments also suggested getting the Trinidad circulator service back.

### Additional Comments

Respondents were given the opportunity to include additional comments about the service they would like to see. The actual comments are included in Appendix F. In general, people reported that they would like to see the Trinidad circulator

## *Community Input*

service back. Some of the respondents want reliable transportation. There were some who were thankful for the service provided by COG Transit. Some comments reiterated the need for providing transportation between Walsenburg and Trinidad, once or twice daily.

### Trinidad State Junior College

In order to assess the demand for transit in the TSJC community, surveys submitted by people associated with the college were analyzed separately. As mentioned, only TSJC responses from pertinent questions are presented.

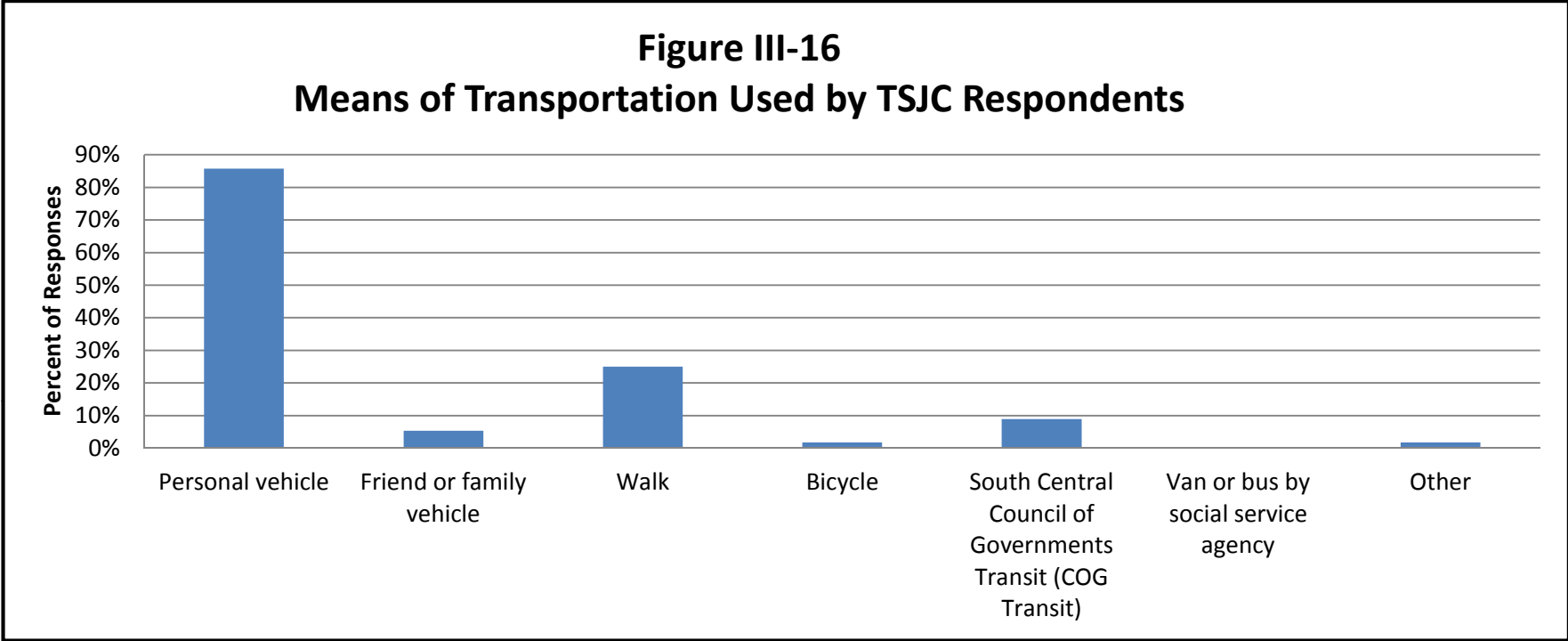
A total of 56 questionnaires were returned through TSJC. Not every respondent answered every question, so the number of responses for individual questions varies. The results of the 25-question survey are grouped into the two following topics:

- Transit Demand
- Respondent Characteristics

### Means of Transportation Used

TSJC respondents were asked the means of transportation their household uses. Respondents were allowed to select multiple responses to explain the means of transportation currently used by their household. The means of transportation used by TSJC students, faculty, and staff are shown in Figure III-16. As illustrated, the majority of respondents (86 percent) reported that they use a personal vehicle. Twenty-five percent of respondents indicated that walking is their means of transportation. Nine percent of TSJC respondents reported using COG Transit as their means of transportation, reflecting the limited availability of this service to them.

**Figure III-16**  
**Means of Transportation Used by TSJC Respondents**

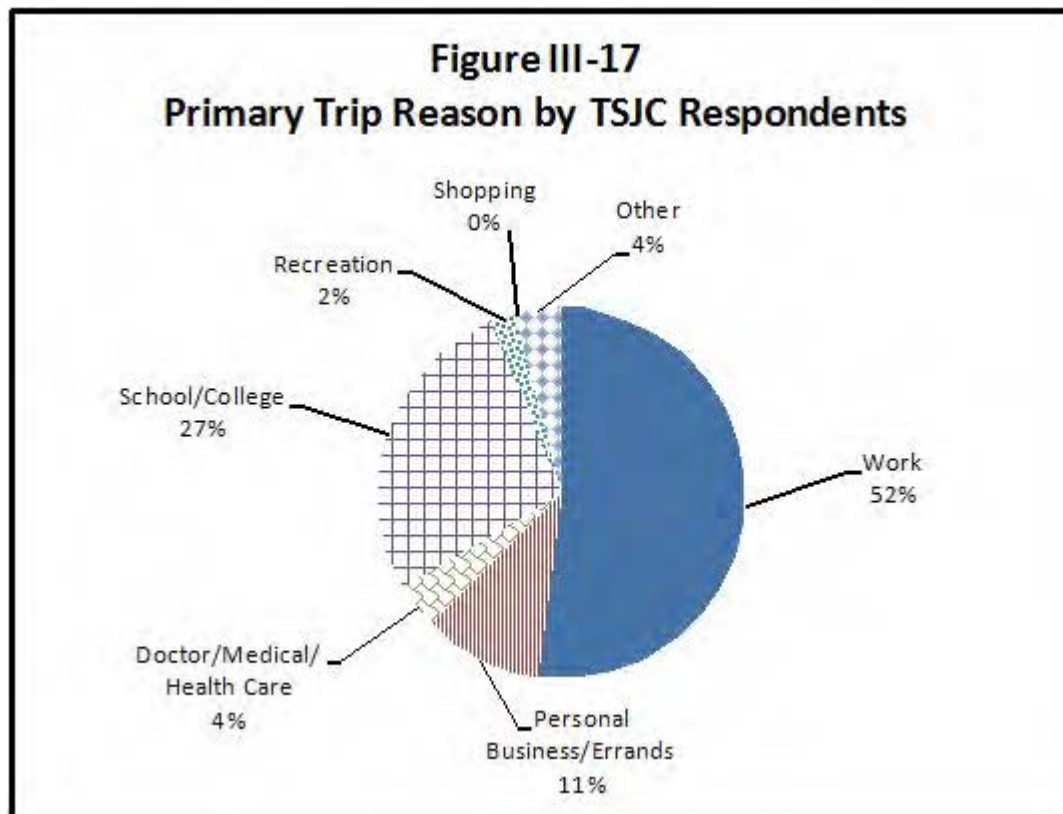


### Assessment of Preferences

Certain survey questions were designed to determine the likelihood that TSJC participants would use a transit service if it were offered. Other questions were designed to help determine the desired services and amenities of the new system.

### Primary Trip Reason

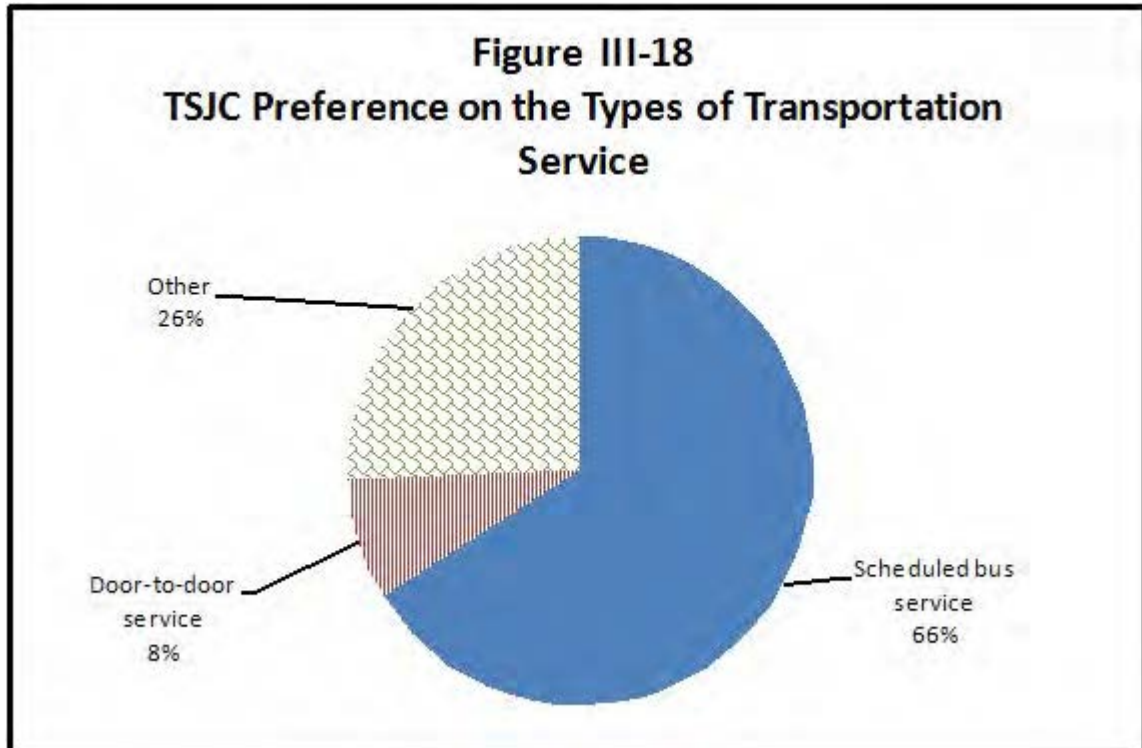
Respondents were also asked to indicate what would be the primary reason for needing public transportation to that community. Primary trip reasons by TSJC respondents are illustrated in Figure III-17. As shown, 52 percent reported that their primary trip reason was to and from work, followed by 27 percent who reported using transportation for school/college purposes.



### TSJC Preference on the Types of Public Transportation

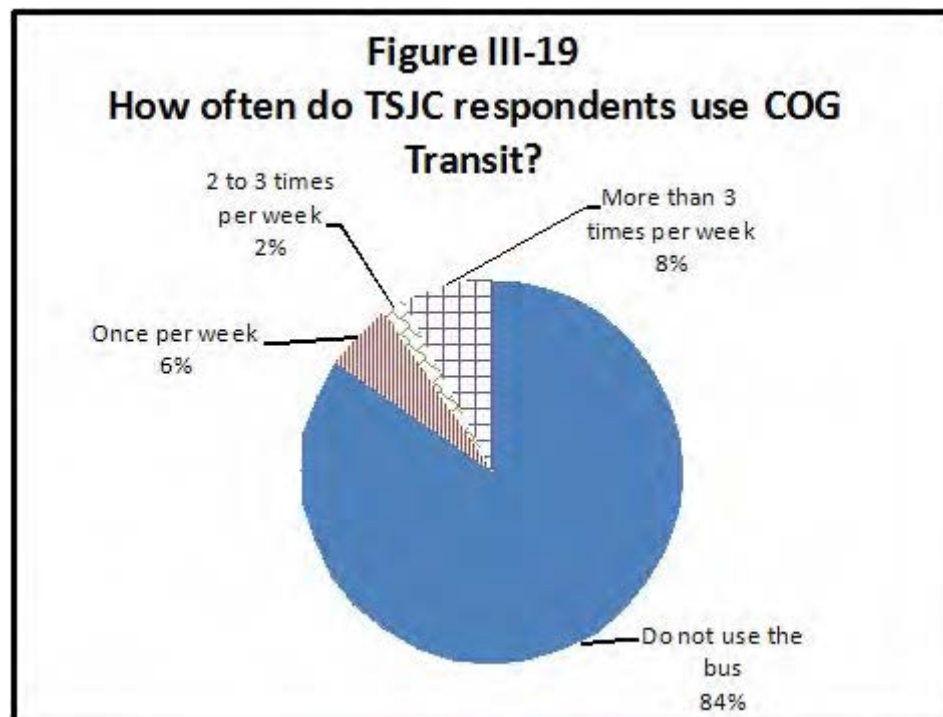
TSJC respondents were asked the types of transportation that their household would prefer. Figure III-18 presents this information. As shown, the majority of TSJC respondents (68 percent) prefer scheduled bus service compared to 53 percent of community members who prefer such a service. This is followed by 26

percent who reported their preference is using other types of transportation. When looking at “other” types of transportation they needed, most of these responses were from TSJC who would not use public transportation and would rely on their personal vehicle.



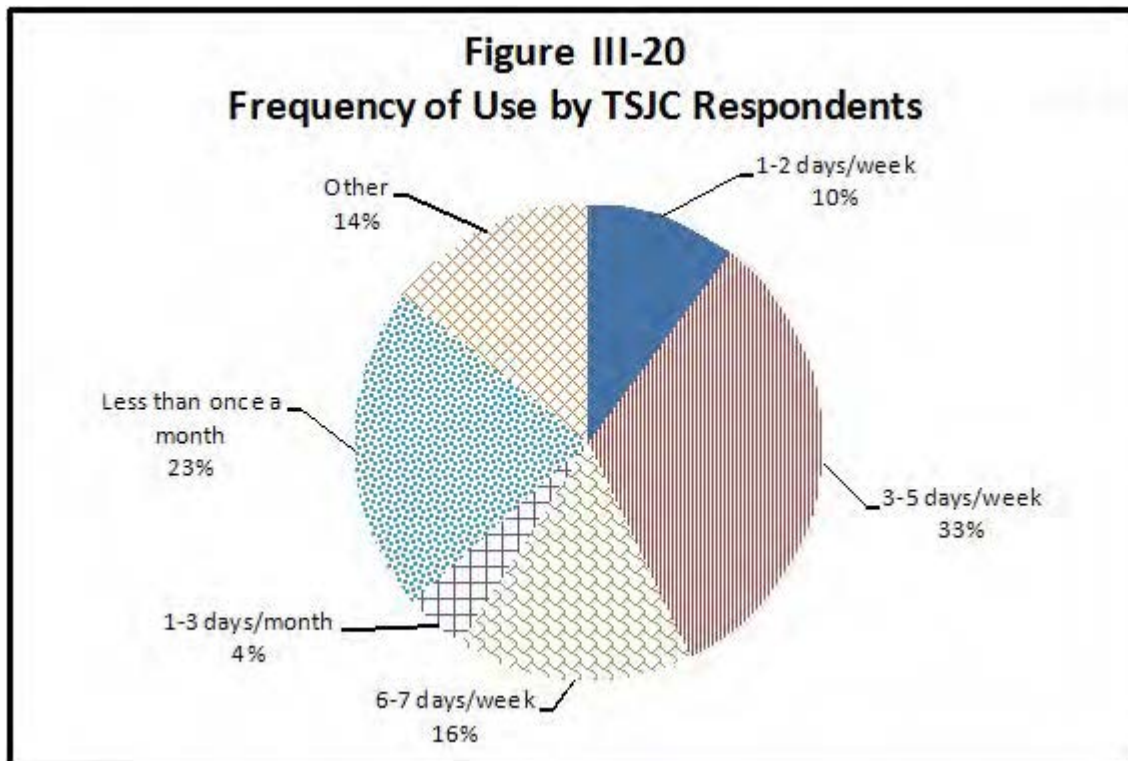
#### Frequency of Using COG Transit

TSJC respondents were asked how often they use COG Transit. Figure III-19 presents this information. As illustrated, the majority of TSJC respondents (84 percent) do not use the bus, again reflecting that the current COG Transit service does not meet their needs. Only four respondents use the COG bus service more than three times per week, and three respondents use the bus service once per week.



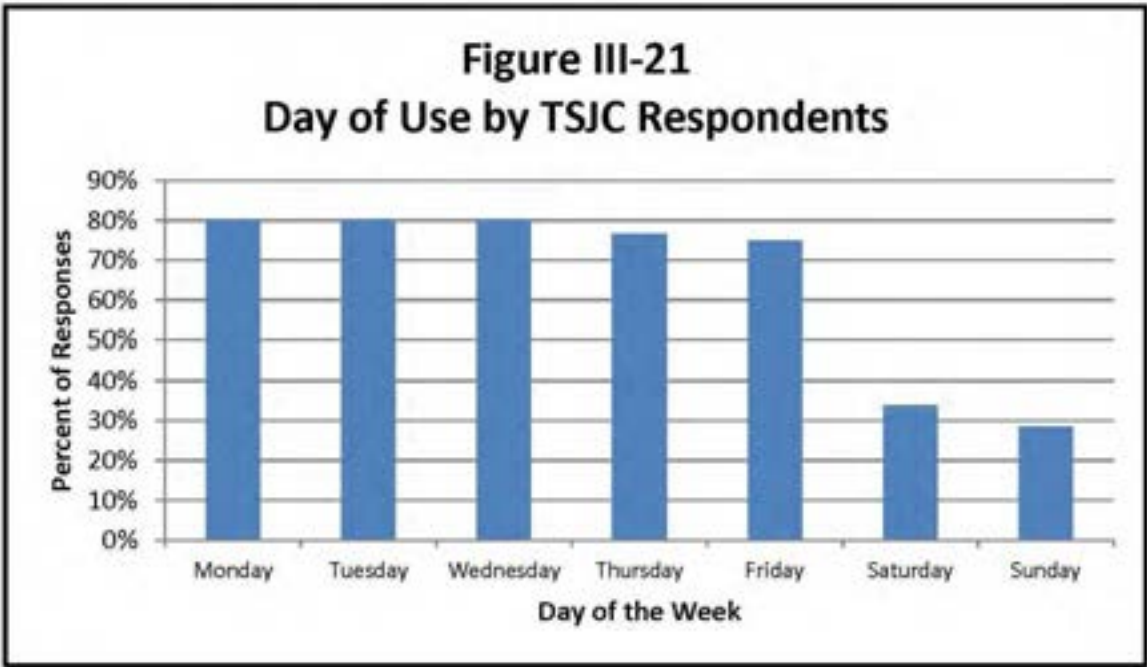
#### Frequency of Use by TSJC Respondents

TSJC respondents were asked to report how often they would use such a transit service. Figure III-20 shows the information. Approximately 49 percent of respondents indicated that they would be a frequent rider using such a service one to seven days a week. The average response for this question was that users would ride such a service three days per week.



#### Day of Week Service is Needed

Participants were also asked to indicate what days of the week they would likely use the shuttle service, if offered. Figure III-21 presents the responses on the days of the week TSJC people would use such a service. As shown in the figure, 75 to 80 percent of responses indicated Monday through Friday. The proportion of responses for Saturday drops to 34 percent respondents and still lower on Sunday at 29 percent. This indicates that the days of operation should be Monday through Friday.

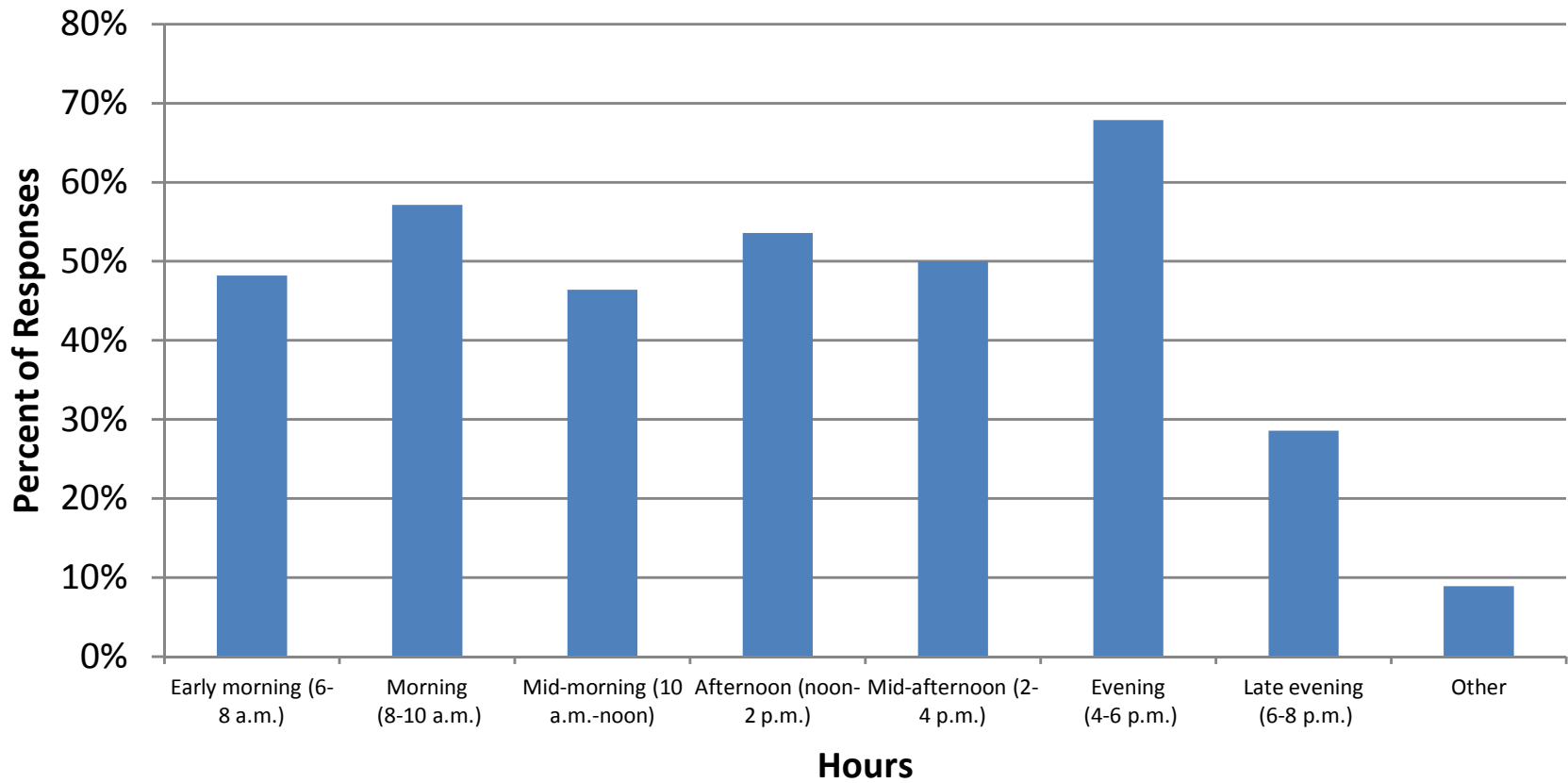


Time of Day Service Needed by TSJC

Regarding their potential use of the service, participants were also asked to indicate what time of day they would most likely use the service. Figure III-22 illustrates that the hours between 4:00 and 6:00 a.m. (68 percent of responses) was the most likely time TSJC people would ride a transit service, followed by the morning hours between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. (57 percent of responses) and the morning hours between 6:00 and 8:00 a.m. (48 percent of responses). These hours reflect a daytime work schedule for most participants. The results show that there is a high level of demand between 6:00 and 10:00 a.m. and between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m.



### Figure III-22 Time of Use by TSJC Respondents



### Potential Riders of a Trinidad Transit Service

To determine the potential riders who would use COG Transit, a multi-step analysis was done. TSJC respondents were first asked if they needed a car for work during the day—24 out of the 52 respondents responded that they would not need a car for work during the day. The next question asked respondents whether they would need their car for personal errands during the day. Out of the 24 respondents who indicated they would not need a car for work during the day, 10 respondents indicated they would not need a car for personal errands. Finally, respondents were asked if they needed their car to drop off or pick up children to and from work. Based on the responses, about nine respondents out of the total 52 responses were then determined to be potential TSJC riders who might regularly use a Trinidad transit service. This indicates that 17 percent of potential TSJC riders might use the transit service in Trinidad.



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## Existing Transportation Services

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### INTRODUCTION

Chapter IV provides an overview of the various transportation providers in the Las Animas and Huerfano Counties area whether they are public, private, or nonprofit. The South Central Council of Governments Transit (COG Transit) is the lead agency that provides general public transportation services in the study area. Not all the providers reviewed here are “transit agencies” in the traditional sense of the word. Rather, the various providers are entities that provide some type of passenger transportation. The services provided by these agencies are presented in the discussion that follows.

### SOUTH CENTRAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

COG Transit is operated by the South Central Council of Governments. This transportation service has been in operation since 1975. The transportation started as part of a senior ride program with the Area Agency on Aging (AAA). COG Transit since then has become a general public transportation service serving the residents in both Las Animas and Huerfano Counties.

COG Transit office and bus storage (in the garage basement) is located at Trinidad. COG Transit has purchased an adjoining office for future expansion. COG Transit also has a small office in Walsenburg located in the Walsenburg Community Center (Senior Center).

COG Transit has push-to-talk phones between the drivers and the dispatchers. They use EnGragh-Paraplan Pro software for scheduling and dispatching.

### Description of Transportation Services

COG Transit provides door-to-door demand-response service to the general public with scheduled service to certain communities. The service area includes Las

## *Existing Transportation Services*

Animas and Huerfano Counties with service primarily concentrated in the communities of Trinidad, Walsenburg, La Veta, Aguilar, Gardner, Hoehne, and Primero, with out-of-county trips to Pueblo and Raton, New Mexico. The transit services provided by COG Transit are as follows:

- The COG Transit demand-response service is provided Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a prior day advance reservation, although some immediate requests are filled if time permits. Trips within Trinidad and Walsenburg must be made between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- The trips from Walsenburg/Trinidad to Pueblo are provided on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
- The trips between Walsenburg and Trinidad are provided along with the Pueblo runs on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
- Trips from Walsenburg to La Veta are provided on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- The trips from Walsenburg to Gardner are provided Tuesday and Thursday on an as-needed basis.
- Trips from Trinidad to the Raton VA Clinic in New Mexico are provided on an as-needed basis between the hours of 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. This includes making a connection to the VA bus that goes to Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- Trips to Primero (along Colorado State Highway 12) and Hoehne are also provided on an as-needed basis.

COG Transit did provide circulator service in both Trinidad and Walsenburg, but these are no longer in service. The Walsenburg circulator started in 2011 and stopped operating in 2011. The Walsenburg circulator was a 30-minute route that operated on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from approximately 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Walsenburg circular service operated as a flex route that deviated to pick-up/drop-off passengers within three-quarters of a mile of the designated route. A one-way fare to ride the Walsenburg circular service was \$1.00.

The Trinidad circulator also started in 2011, but stopped operating around November 15, 2012. Similar to the Walsenburg circulator, the Trinidad circulator service operated as a deviated flex route. Some of the locations served by the Trinidad circulator included Downtown Trinidad, Mt. San Rafael Hospital, Safeway, Walmart, Trinidad State Junior College, and Big R. The Trinidad circulator

was an hourly route that operated on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from approximately 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A one-way fare to ride the Trinidad circulator service was also \$1.00.

COG Transit works with several social services agencies and businesses who contract services with COG Transit by paying fully allocated costs. COG Transit currently has an intergovernmental agreement with the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and works with the Las Animas County Rehabilitation Center (LACRC) which is billed on a cost-per-trip basis.

### Fares

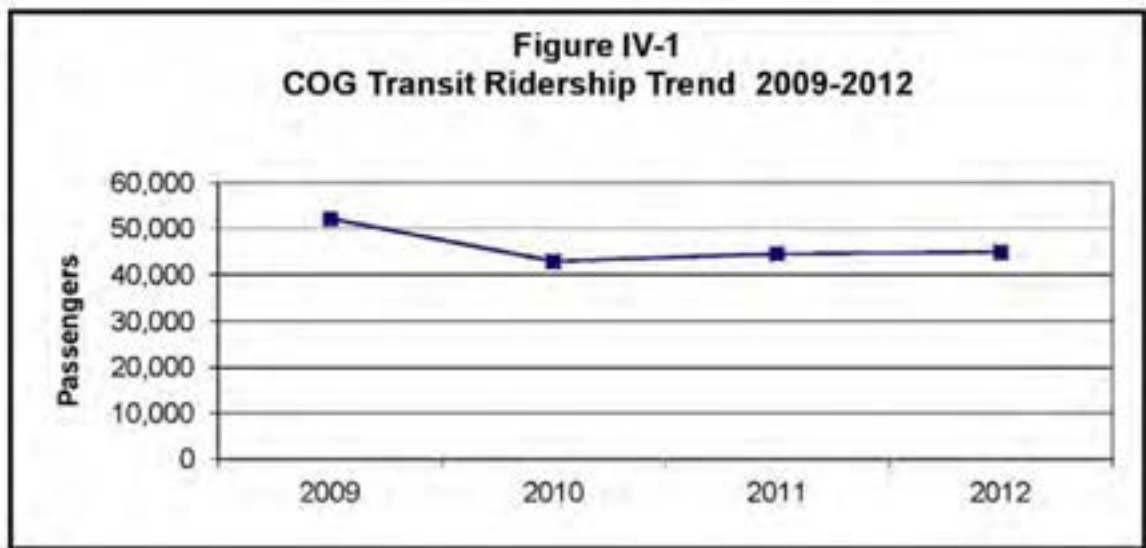
The current one-way fares for the COG Transit are listed in Table IV-1. There are discounted fares available to registered AAA clients. Registered AAA clients receive a notification at the end of the month stating the number of rides that were taken and the suggested contribution requested. Family rates are also available for two or more people that are part of the same family.

<b>Table IV-1 COG Transit One-Way Fares</b>			
	<b>General Public Fare</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>AAA Client Fares</b>
<b>In Town Service</b>			
In town demand-response	\$2.00	\$4.00	suggested donation \$1.50
<b>Trips Between Communities</b>			
Trinidad to Aguilar	\$3.00	\$6.00	\$1.00
Trinidad to Hoehne	\$3.00	\$6.00	\$1.00
Trinidad up Hwy 12	\$3.00	\$6.00	\$1.00
Trinidad to Walsenburg	\$4.00	\$8.00	\$2.00
Trinidad to Pueblo	\$9.00	\$18.00	\$7.00
Trinidad to Raton	\$7.00	\$14.00	\$5.00
Trinidad to La Veta or Gardner	\$7.00	\$14.00	\$5.00
Walsenburg to Gardner	\$3.00	\$6.00	\$1.00
Walsenburg to LaVeta	\$3.00	\$6.00	\$1.00
Walsenburg to Trinidad	\$4.00	\$8.00	\$2.00
Walsenburg to Aguilar	\$3.00	\$6.00	\$1.00
Walsenburg to Pueblo	\$7.00	\$14.00	\$5.00
Walsenburg to Raton, NM	\$7.00	\$14.00	\$5.00
<i>Source: COG Transit, 2013.</i>			

## Ridership Patterns

### Ridership Trend

Figure IV-1 shows the ridership trend for COG Transit since 2009. As shown in the figure, the ridership decreased drastically from 2009 to 2010 by approximately 20 percent. Ridership shows a slight increase from 2010 to 2011 by four percent and an increase from 2011 to 2012 by one percent. The ridership in 2012 was 44,812 one-way passenger-trips.



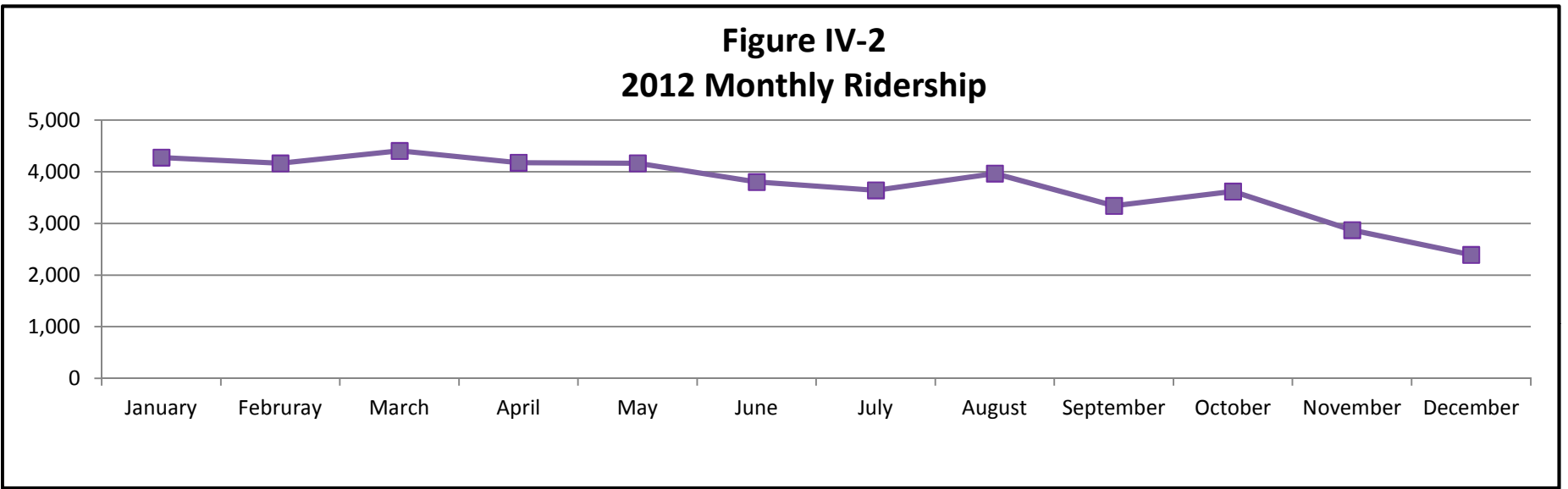
### Recent Trends

Table IV-2 and Figure IV-2 show the month-to-month variations in ridership for 2012. As shown in the figure, March had the highest ridership with approximately 4,400 trips. Ridership was lowest in December with approximately 2,400 trips.



<b>Table IV-2</b> <b>COG Transit Bus Ridership 2012</b>	
<b>Month</b>	<b>Ridership</b>
January	4,276
February	4,162
March	4,403
April	4,176
May	4,164
June	3,801
July	3,642
August	3,966
September	3,341
October	3,618
November	2,872
December	2,391
<b>TOTAL 2012 Ridership</b>	<b>44,812</b>
<i>Source: COG Transit, 2012.</i>	

**Figure IV-2  
2012 Monthly Ridership**



### Ridership by Market Segment

COG Transit tracks the different types of passengers—disabled (over 60 years), non-disabled (over 60 years), disabled (under 60 years), and non-disabled (under 60 years)—based on CDOT’s request. Based on 2010 data, the highest percentage of riders were disabled patrons (under 60 years) at approximately 37 percent of the overall transit riders for COG Transit. This is followed by non-disabled (under 60 years) and senior riders (non-disabled and over 60 years) that represent approximately 32 and 24 percent, respectively, of the total ridership. Disabled patrons over 60 years of age comprise the smallest market segment with an average of seven percent of the total ridership.

In past years, COG Transit had a contract with LACRC WSW and tracked ridership. Based on 2010 data, approximately 27 percent were LACRC clients, and the remaining 73 percent belonged to general public. COG Transit continues to track LACRC clients and other agencies that they bill.

### Ridership by County

COG Transit also records ridership by county. Based on 2010 data, approximately 69 percent of ridership is from Las Animas County, and the remaining 31 percent is from Huerfano County.

### Ridership by Day of the Week

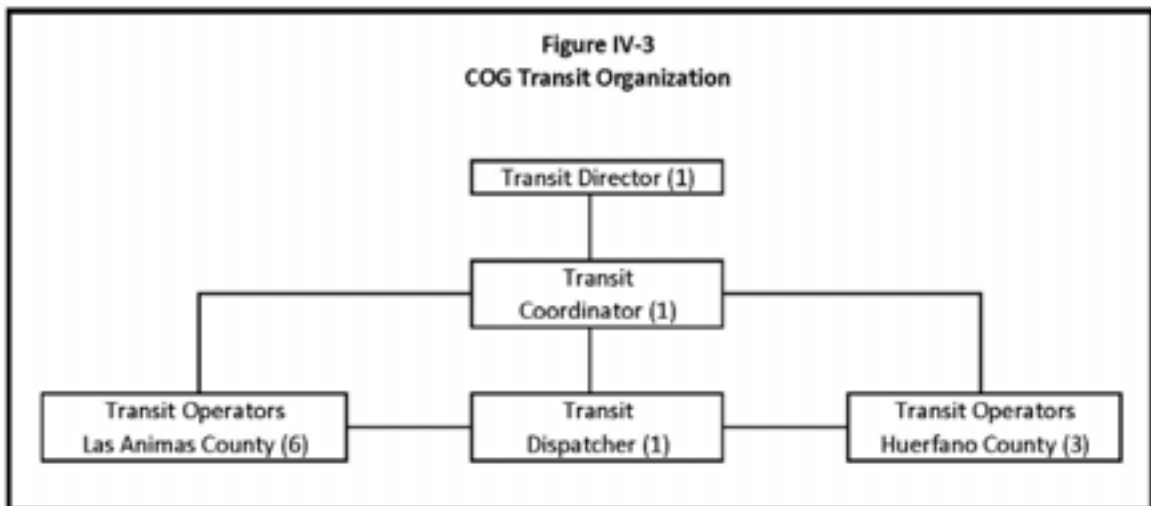
Ridership by day of the week is shown in Table IV-3. Ridership is the highest from Tuesday through Thursday with a daily average of 153 to 163 passengers (ranging from 21 to 22 percent of the total ridership) followed by Monday with 136 passengers daily (approximately 19 percent of the total ridership).

Existing Transportation Services

Table IV-3 Day of the Week		
Day of the Week	Daily Average	2012 % of Ridership
Monday	136	19%
Tuesday	156	21%
Wednesday	163	22%
Thursday	153	21%
Friday	114	16%
Saturday	4	0%
Sunday	3	0%
<b>728</b>		
<i>Note: The data were based on ridership of year 2012.</i>		
<i>Source: COG Transit, 2012;LSC, 2012.</i>		

**Staff**

The COG Transit organization chart is shown in Figure IV-3. COG Transit has four full-time drivers and five part-time drivers. Drivers get paid \$9 to \$11 per hour. Only full-time employees receive complete benefits, including health insurance. Part-time drivers do receive Social Security and Medicare.



## **Vehicle Fleet**

COG Transit service currently has 18 vehicles for passenger transportation (presented in Table IV-4). The vehicles are maintained at local garages by getting cost estimates. The buses are stored at either Trinidad or Walsenburg as indicated in Table IV-4. All but five of these vehicles are wheelchair-accessible—three vehicles are not equipped for wheelchairs and two vehicles have broken lifts.

Table IV-4 COG Transit's Vehicle Fleet						
Vehicle Year/Model	Seating Capacity	No. of Wheelchairs	COG Holds Title	Funding	Location	Condition
1997 Ford Bus	11 passengers	1	Yes	5310	Trinidad	Fair
1999 Dodge Para Van	10 passengers	1	Yes	5310	Trinidad	Broken Lift
2002 Ford 138 Econoline Van	10 passengers	1	Yes	5310	Trinidad	Broken Lift
2004 Ford StarTrans Bus	13 passengers	1	Yes	5310	Walsenburg	Fair
2007 Ford Starcraft AllStar	12 passengers	1	Yes	5310 Repl	Trinidad	Good
2004 Ford Goshen Bus/Pacer II	12 passengers	1	Yes	5310	Trinidad	Fair
2006 Ford Supreme Senator II	14 passengers	2	Yes	5310	Trinidad	Good
2007 Dodge Caravan SXT	7 passengers	0	Yes	5311 Exp	Walsenburg	Good
2007 Dodge Caravan SXT	7 passengers	0	Yes	5311 Exp	Trinidad	Good
2007 Chevy Eldorado	24 passengers	2	No	5311	Trinidad	Good
2007 Chevy Eldorado	24 passengers	2	No	5311	Trinidad	Broken Transmission
2007 Chevy Eldorado	24 passengers	2	No	5311	Trinidad	Good
2008 Chevy Braun Uplander Entervan	6 passengers	1	No	5310	Trinidad	Good
2008 Chevy Braun Uplander Entervan	6 passengers	1	No	5310	Walsenburg	Good
2009 Ford Allstar Starcraft	14 passengers	2	No	5310	Transit	Good
2008 Jeep Liberty	4 passengers	0	Yes	VA	Trinidad	Good
2009 Ford Starcraft Allstar	14 passengers	2	No	5310	Walsenburg	Good
2010 Ford Starcraft Allstar	14 passengers	2	No	5310	Trinidad	Good

Source: SCCOG, 2012.

## Financial Status

### Revenues

The 2012 revenues to operate COG Transit come from a variety of funding sources, as presented in Table IV-5. The table shows the percentage of total revenue that each funding source brings. As shown in the percentages of funding sources, the system's largest resource is the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) which indicates COG Transit's effectiveness in attracting federal dollars into the Las Animas and Huerfano Counties' economy. The FTA funds are made up of 84 percent of FTA 5311 funds followed by FTA 5316 and FTA 5317 operating funds (each made up eight percent of the total FTA funds). The local share in 2012 came from New Elk Mine (no longer in operation), Las Animas Rehabilitation Center, AAA, City of Trinidad tourism board, Pioneer Natural Resources, Care Services, Huerfano County Department of Social Services (DSS), and other social service agencies.

	<b>Revenues</b>	<b>Percentage of Budget</b>
Revenue - FTA	\$226,763	42%
Revenue - Local funds	\$165,614	31%
Fare Revenues	\$15,155	3%
Misc. State Revenue (Medicaid)	\$128,210	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$535,742</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>Source: COG Transit, 2012.</i>		

### Expenses

The other half of the total operating equation is, of course, expenditures. Annual budgeted expenditures for 2012 were \$606,558. The primary expenses for COG Transit service and all other transit agencies across the United States are salaries and benefits. Operating and administration salaries and benefits represent nearly 66 percent of the cost of operations. The COG transit service expenses are shown in the following section, which presents the cost allocation model.

### Cost Allocation Model

Financial, ridership, and service information, presented in Table IV-6, can be used to develop internal evaluation tools for the COG Transit service. A cost allocation model provides base information against which current operations can be judged. In addition, the model is useful for estimating cost ramifications of any proposed service alternatives.

<b>Table IV-6</b>				
<b>COG Transit Cost Allocation Model</b>				
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>Actual Costs</b>	<b>Vehicle-Hours</b>	<b>Vehicle-Miles</b>	<b>Fixed Cost</b>
Driver and Operation Salaries/Wages/Benefits	\$306,559	\$306,559		
Administration Salaries/Wages/Benefits	\$97,218			\$97,218
Office Expenses	\$5,411			\$5,411
Uniform Expense	\$325			\$325
Utilities	\$2,238			\$2,238
Advertising	\$5,858			\$5,858
Telephone	\$8,576			\$8,576
Vehicle Fuel/Tires	\$100,302		\$100,302	
Insurance	\$37,720			\$37,720
Dues/Subscriptions	\$2,937			\$2,937
Vehicle Preventive Maintenance	\$1,166		\$1,166	
Other Maintenance Expenses	\$22,756			\$22,756
Other Miscellaneous Expenses	\$17,491			\$17,491
<b>TOTAL OPERATING COSTS</b>	<b>\$608,558</b>			
		\$306,559	\$101,468	\$200,530
Service Variable Quantities		veh-hrs	veh-mls	Fixed-Cost
<i>Used for Planning Purposes</i>		18,424	210,852	Factor
		<b>\$16.64</b>	<b>\$0.48</b>	<b>1.49</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING COST</b>	<b>\$608,558</b>			

*Source: COG Transit, 2013.*

Actual cost information from 2012 was used to develop a two-factor cost allocation model of the current COG Transit operations. In order to develop such a model, each cost line item is allocated to one of two service variables. The two service variables used in this model are hours and miles. In addition, fixed costs are identified as being constant. This is a valid assumption for the short term, although fixed costs could change over the longer term (more than a year or two).



Examples of the cost allocation methodology include allocating fuel costs to vehicle-miles and allocating operator salaries to vehicle-hours. The total costs allocated to each variable are then divided by the total quantity (i.e.; total revenue-miles or hours) to determine a cost rate for each variable.

The allocation of costs for COG Transit operation yields the following cost equation for the existing bus operations:

$$\text{Total Cost} = \$200,530 + \$0.48 \times \text{revenue-miles} + \$16.64 \times \text{revenue-hours}$$

**OR**

$$\text{Total Cost} = (\$0.48 \times \text{revenue-miles} + \$16.64 \times \text{revenue-hours}) \times \text{fixed-cost factor (1.49)}$$

Incremental costs such as the extension of service-hours or service routes/areas are evaluated considering only the mileage and hourly costs:

$$\text{Incremental Costs} = \$0.48 \times \text{revenue-miles} + \$16.64 \times \text{revenue-hours}$$

## **Performance Measures**

This section of performance measures provides an evaluation of the COG Transit service.

### Systemwide Performance

Operating effectiveness and financial efficiency of the transit system are two important factors to the success of the system. The operating effectiveness is the ability of transit service to generate ridership. Financial efficiency is the ability of the system to provide service and serve passenger-trips in a cost-efficient manner. Table IV-7 presents COG Transit's characteristics for 2012.

<b>Table IV-7 Systemwide Performance</b>	
<b>Characteristic</b>	
Operating Budget	\$608,558
Fare Revenue	\$15,155
Fare box Recovery	2%
Ridership	44,812
Vehicle-Miles	210,852
Vehicle-Hours	18,424
<b>Operating Effectiveness</b>	
Pass.-Trips per Mile	0.2
Pass.-Trips per Hour	2.4
<b>Financial Efficiency</b>	
Cost per Pass.-Trip	\$13.58
Cost per Veh.-Hour	\$33.03

## PLANNED MULTIMODAL CENTER

The City of Trinidad, the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), COG Transit, Amtrak, and Greyhound have planned a multimodal center near the old Amtrak Station in Trinidad. The construction of the multimodal transportation center is currently expected to begin in summer 2014. The transportation center is expected to be owned by the City, but operated by SCCOG. It will serve as a hub for COG's transit service, and will connect with Amtrak and Greyhound bus lines.

The multimodal transportation center is planned as a one-story structure which will consist of a waiting area, ticket booths, and restrooms. Funding for the project is expected from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF), CDOT, a liveability grant from FTA, with possible funding from Funding Advancement for Service Transportation and Economic Recovery (FASTER) grant and a CDOT enhancement grant.

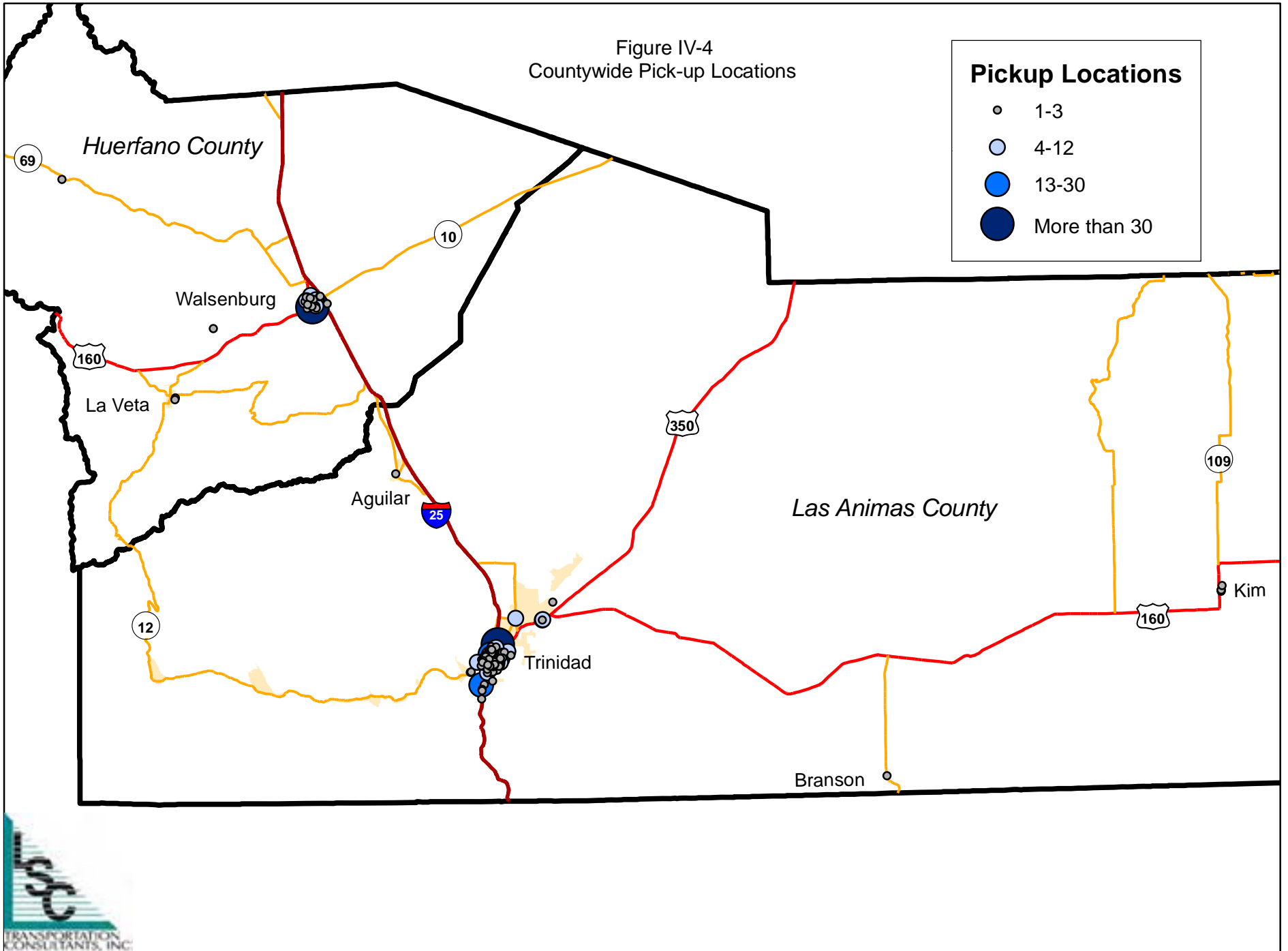
## ORIGIN AND DESTINATION ANALYSIS

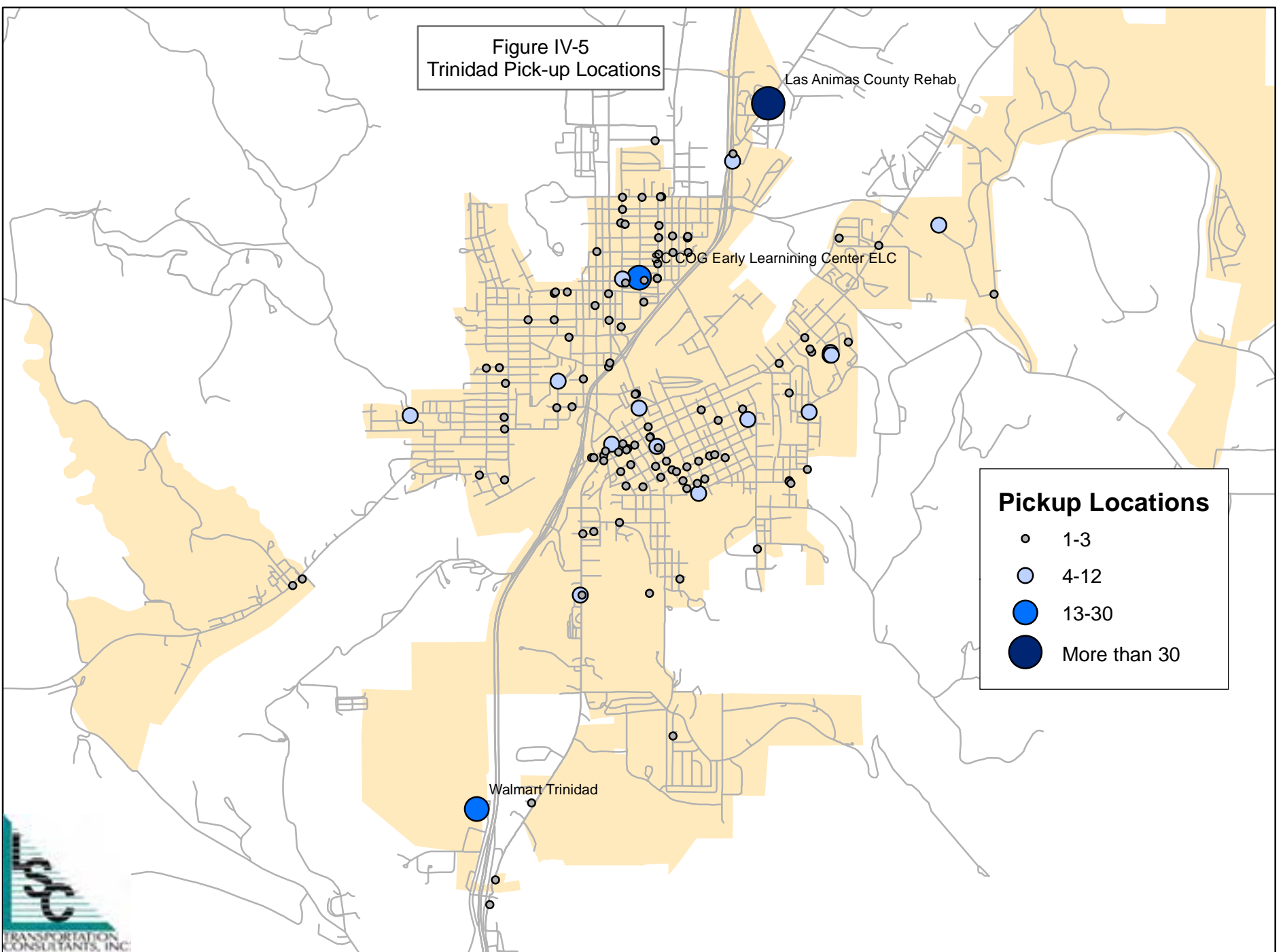
This section presents maps that detail the origins and destinations of trips on the COG Transit service. The information presented on the maps is based on the transit manifests of three days from three different days of the week. There were 486 entries from the three days analyzed. The pick-up and drop-off locations were used to analyze the existing ridership and to determine the locations that have the greatest demand and those that are underutilized. There are a total of six maps—three maps showing COG Transit pick-up locations and three maps showing COG Transit’s drop-off locations.

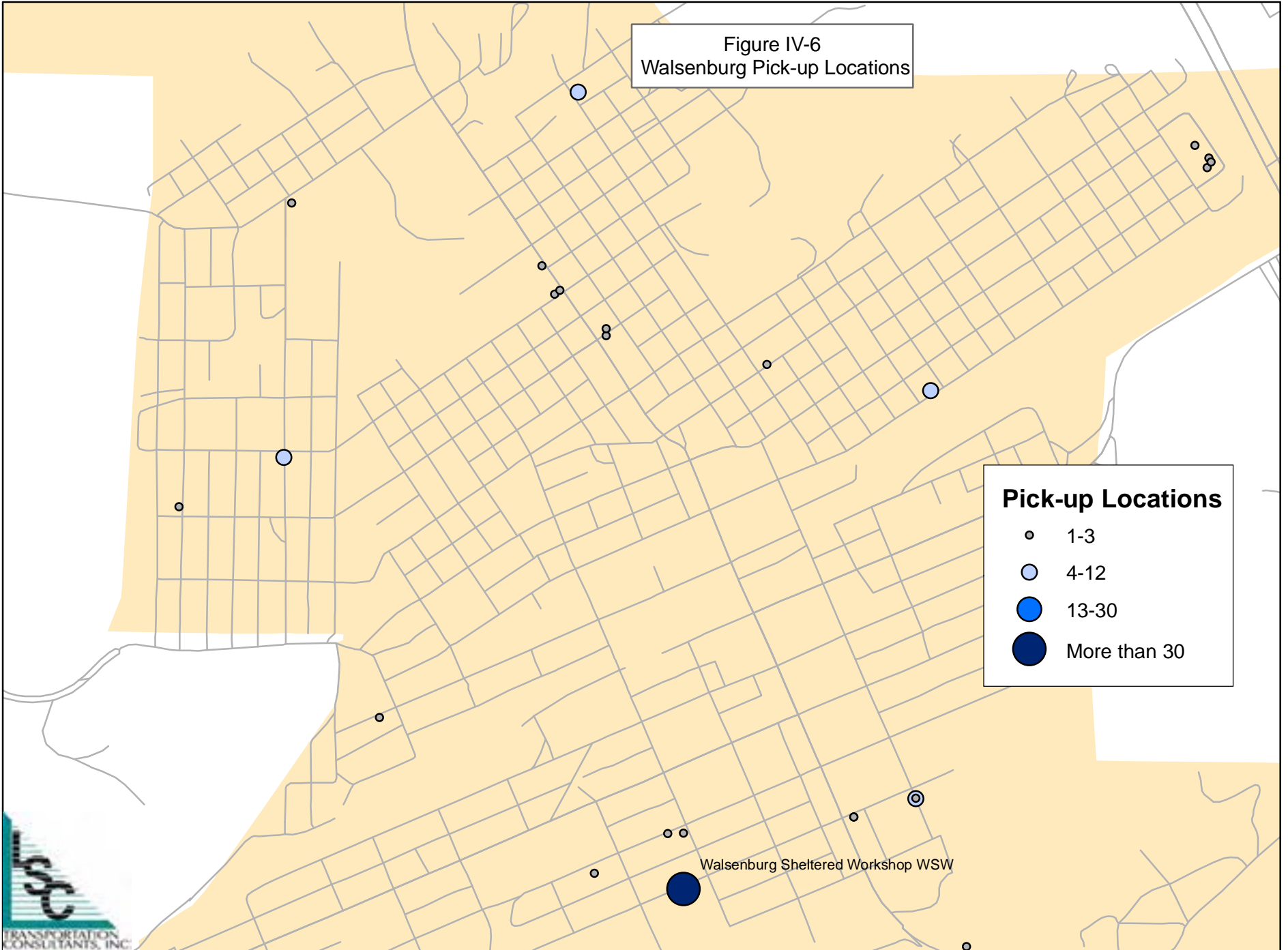
Figures IV-4 through IV-6 present the pick-up locations for COG Transit. Table IV-8 presents the top pick-up locations for the transit service. As shown in Figures IV-5 and IV-6 and Table IV-8, the major pick-up locations for the transit service are the Las Animas Rehabilitation Center, the Walsenburg Sheltered Workshop (WSW), the SCCOG Early Learning Center (ELC), Walmart, the Fresenius Medical Care Walsenburg, Safeway in Trinidad, the Harry Sayre Senior Center, and the Trinidad State Junior College.

<b>Table IV-8</b>			
<b>Top Pick-Up Locations on COG Transit</b>			
<b>Pick-Up Address</b>	<b>Pick-Up City</b>	<b>Pick-Up Location</b>	<b>Pick-Up #</b>
1205 Congress Drive	Trinidad	Las Animas County Rehab	47
330 W 9th Street	Walsenburg	Walsenburg Sheltered Workshop WSW	33
1225 Rosita Avenue	Trinidad	SCCOG Early Learning Center ELC	14
2921 Toupal Drive	Trinidad	Walmart Trinidad	13
Undisclosed Address	Walsenburg	Home	12
23450 US 160	Walsenburg	Fresenius Medical Care Walsenburg	10
457 W Main Street	Trinidad	Safeway Trinidad	10
Undisclosed Address	Trinidad	Home	9
1222 San Pedro Avenue	Trinidad	Harry Sayre Senior Center HSC	8
600 Prospect Street	Trinidad	Trinidad State Junior College TSJC	8

Figure IV-4  
Countywide Pick-up Locations



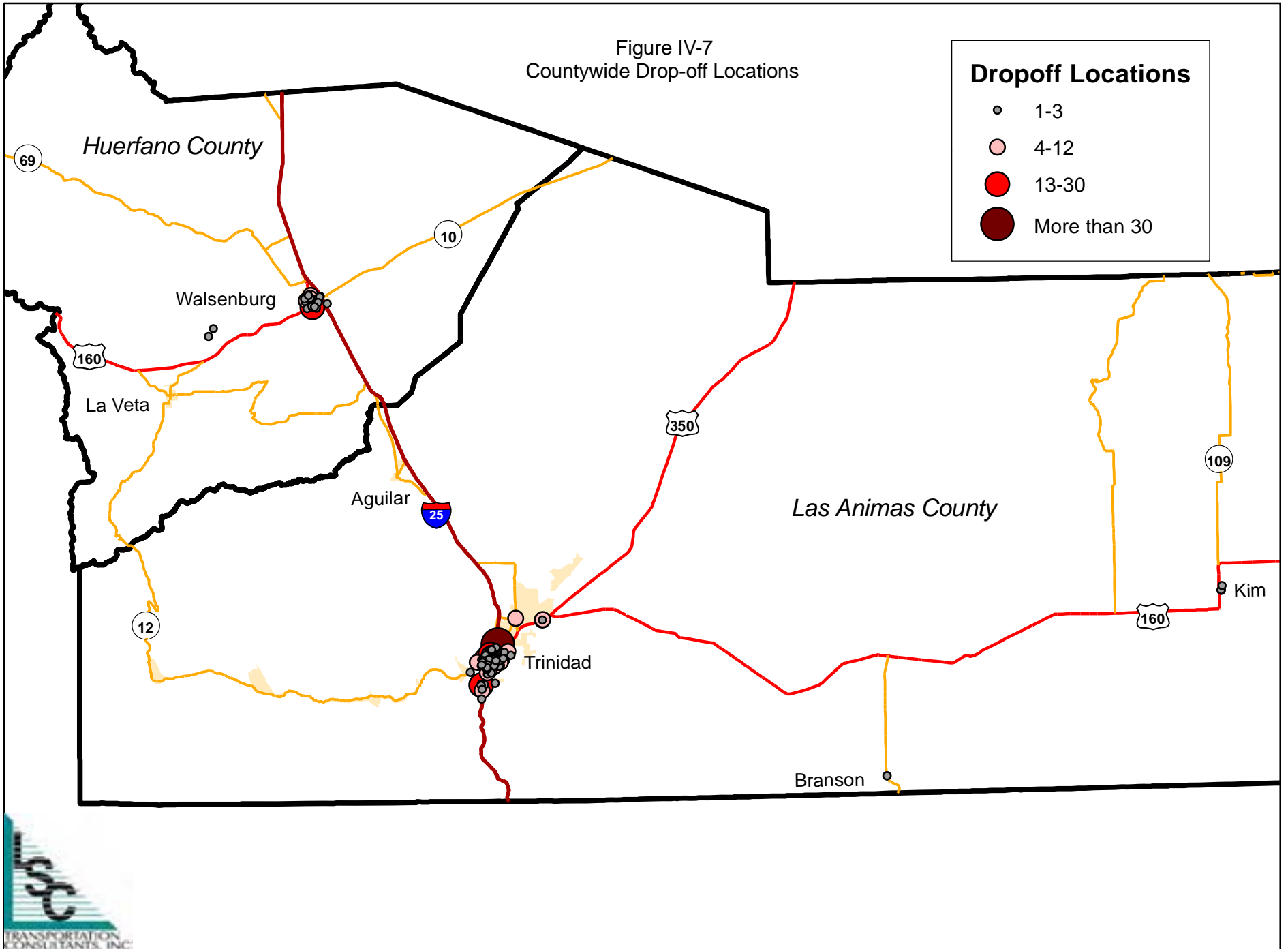




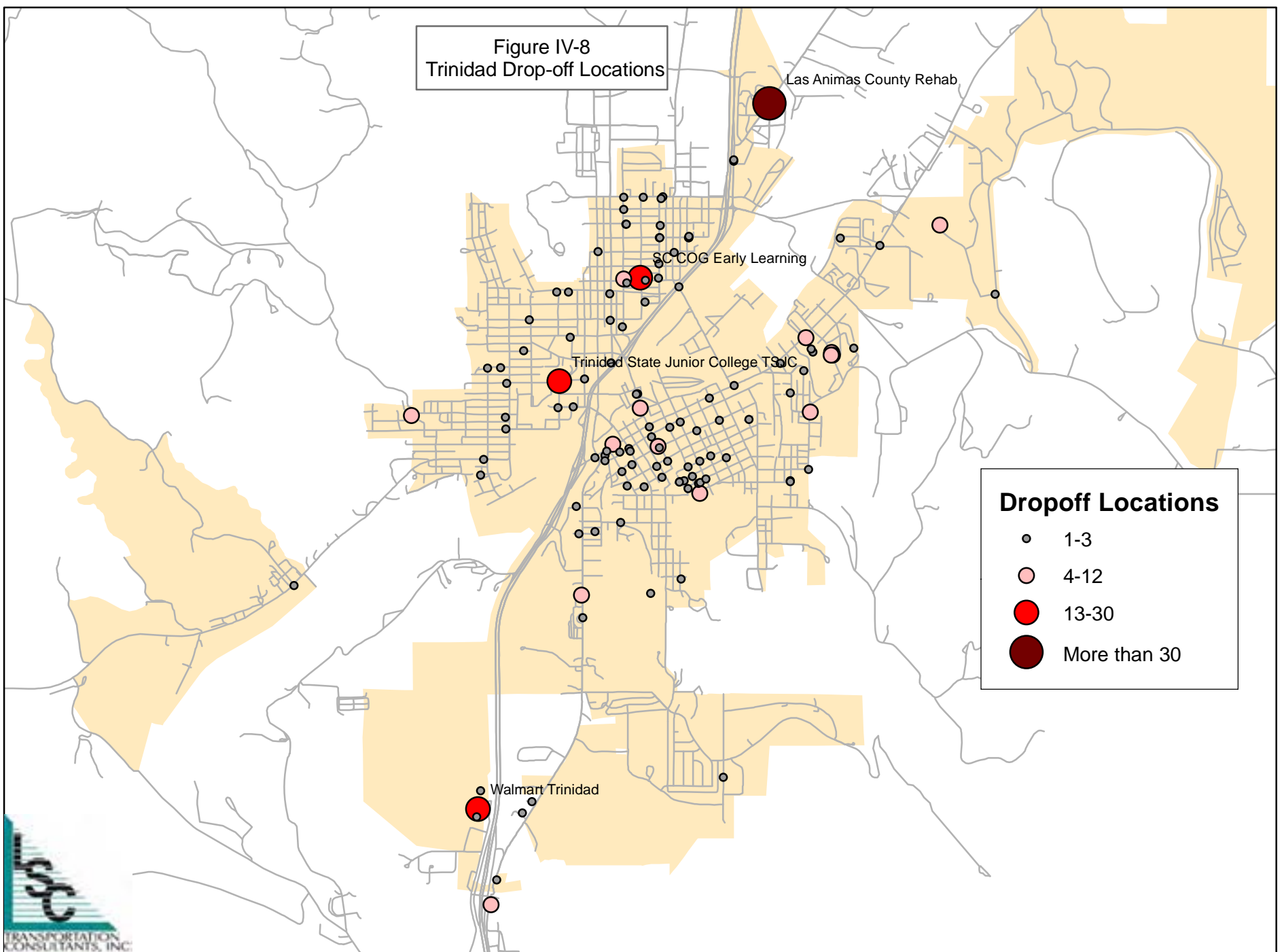
The demand-response destination patterns are very similar to the origin patterns. This could be due to the operation of door-to-door service. Door-to-door service picks up one to three individuals and links them to particular locations and then provides return trips in the opposite direction. Figures IV-7 through IV-9 present the drop-off locations/destinations for COG Transit. Table IV-8 presents the top drop-up locations for the transit service. As shown in Figures IV-7 and IV-8 and Table IV-9, the major drop-off locations for the transit service are the Las Animas Rehabilitation Center, the Walsenburg Sheltered Workshop (WSW), Walmart, Trinidad State Junior College, the SCCOG Early Learning Center (ELC), Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center, the Harry Sayre Senior Center, Fresenius Medical Care in Walsenburg, Trinidad Medical Offices, and Mt. San Rafael Hospital.

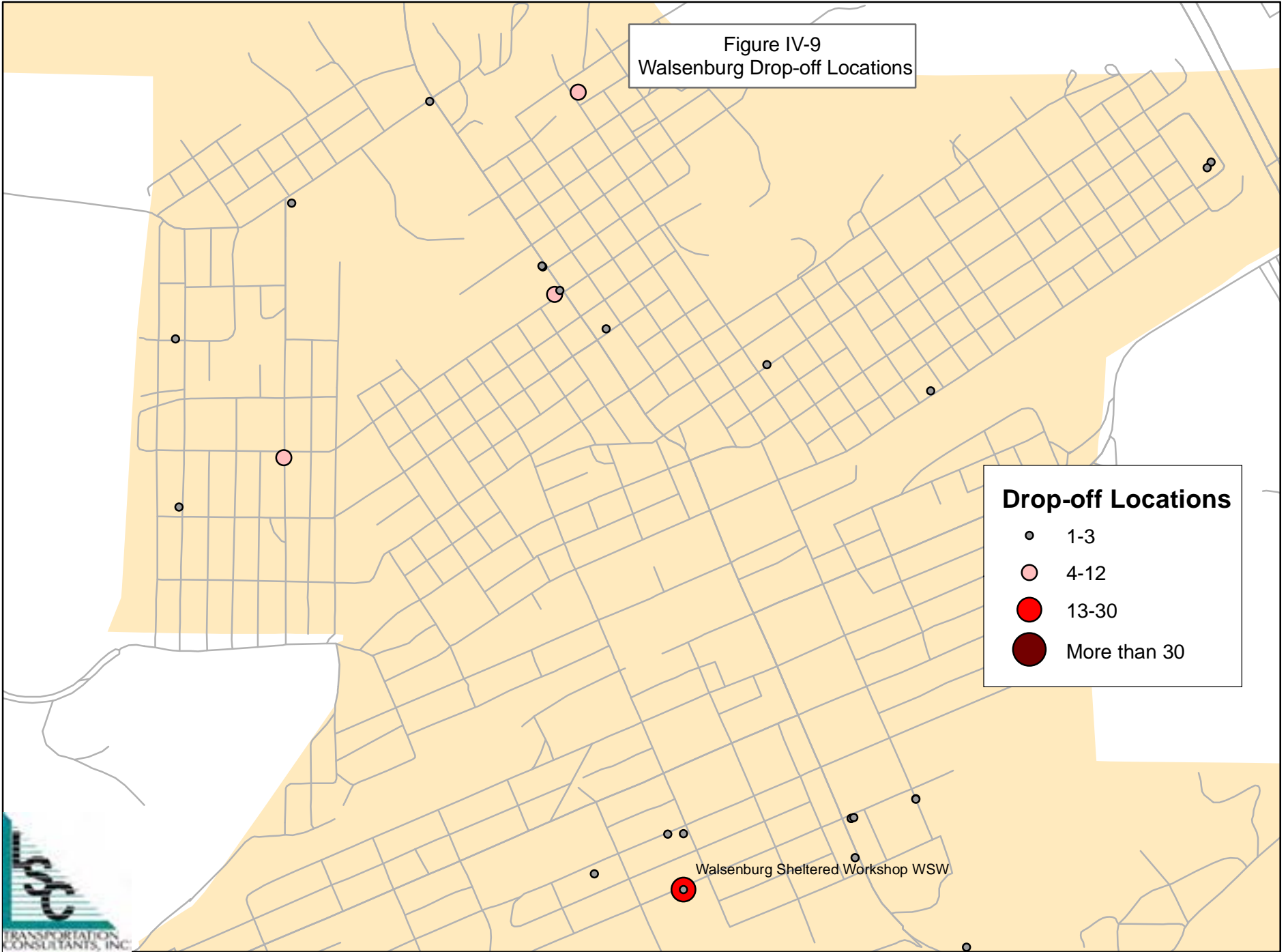
<b>Table IV-9</b>			
<b>Top Drop-Off Locations on COG Transit</b>			
<b>Drop-Off Address</b>	<b>Drop-Off City</b>	<b>Drop-Off Location</b>	<b>Drop-Off #</b>
1205 Congress Drive	Trinidad	Las Animas County Rehab	51
330 W 9th Street	Walsenburg	Walsenburg Sheltered Workshop WSW	30
2921 Toupal Drive	Trinidad	Walmart Trinidad	18
600 Prospect Street	Trinidad	Trinidad State Junior College TSJC	16
1225 Rosita Avenue	Trinidad	SCCOG Early Learning Center ELC	14
Undisclosed Address	Walsenburg	Home	12
23500 US 160	Walsenburg	Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center	9
1222 San Pedro Avenue	Trinidad	Harry Sayre Senior Center HSC	8
23450 US 160	Walsenburg	Fresenius Medical Care	8
400 Benedicta Avenue	Trinidad	Trinidad Medical Offices	8
410 Benedicta Avenue	Trinidad	Mt. San Rafael Hospital	8

Figure IV-7  
Countywide Drop-off Locations









## **OTHER TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS**

This section reviews the existing transportation providers within the Huerfano and Las Animas Counties area. A brief summary of each provider is presented. This information is critical in determining what transportation resources exist in the study area. The main objective of this effort was to determine the extent to which these transportation providers serve the residents of Huerfano and Las Animas Counties.

### **Agencies**

#### Branson-Trinchera Community Senior Center

This senior center is located in Branson, Colorado. Two minivans were donated to this community center by the Trinidad Ambulance District. The two minivans are 2007 Ford Freestars and are wheelchair-accessible. The two vehicles are both in good working condition. The intent of the Town of Branson is that the minivans would be efficient and pay for themselves. The minivans are available for seniors and the general public of the community. It is calculated that a per-person/per-trip to Trinidad would cost \$30 and for two people the cost per-person/per-trip would be \$20. However, they have found that not many people are prepared to pay that price for transportation. They have volunteer drivers who would drive the minivan.

#### Colorado State Veterans Home at Walsenburg

The Colorado State Veterans Home at Walsenburg is a 120-bed long-term care facility for veterans and their families. This facility is attached to the Spanish Peaks Regional Hospital. Transportation is provided to approximately 113 residents. Transportation is provided to and from doctor appointments and weekly scheduled activities such as shows, plays, eating out, picnics, and trips to the park. The agency has five vehicles—two activity vans (13-passengers vehicles with two wheelchair tiedowns), one small van (eight-passenger vehicle with two wheelchair tiedowns) with a higher roof top, one minivan, and one sedan (Buick). One of the 13-passenger activity vans is non-operational. The agency has applied for a veterans grant for a new 14-passenger bus. One scheduled activity is shopping every first Friday of the month. Residents are taken to different stores in Pueblo

## Existing Transportation Services

or Trinidad for shopping. This agency provides approximately 10-20 round-trips a week not including individual trips made by residents. This calculates to approximately 1,000 one-way trips. Funding for this facility comes from a variety of sources—US Department of Veterans, grant funds, donations, Medicaid, and private pay.

### Dan the Taxi Man

This is a private taxicab company that has been in service for 16 years. This company provides taxi service in the Walsenburg area. Transportation is provided from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m., seven days a week. A one-way fare for in-town services is \$5.00 and a round-trip fare is \$10.

### 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 is provided once or twice a month. The senior center refers their members to COG Transit service for all their transportation needs—to get them to and from senior meals and/or to doctor appointments.

### Mt. Carmel Health, Wellness, and Community Center

This organization has a 15-passenger bus that is used for special events. This vehicle was donated to the organization. This organization does not provide any regular transportation to its clients.

### The Trinidad Trolley

As part of the City of Trinidad's Master Plan to attract tourism, the City of Trinidad offers a 30-passenger rubber-tire trolley. This is a free trolley tour that runs seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. from Memorial Day to Labor Day weekend. The Trolley leaves the Colorado Welcome Center hourly and makes a loop to many of the local attractions such as Mitchell Memorial Museum and Gallery, the Baca and Bloom Mansions, the Children's Museum and the Loudon-Henritze Archeology Museum, Kit Carson Park, Ava Maria Shrine, and the Opera House.

The driver is well-versed on the local sites and provides a running commentary about the local attractions as well as gives information about the historic architecture and the history of Trinidad. The tour is about 1.5 hours long and ends at the mural at the Mt. San Rafael Hospital. The transportation budget, which includes driver wages and maintenance, is approximately \$24,000. The Trolley is funded through the City of Trinidad Tourism Board (funded through the City's lodging tax). The Trolley carries approximately 4,500 people per season.

### Trinidad Inn 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 accommodates 103 residents and is operated by the Colorado Department of Human Services.

Transportation for medical trips, shopping, and other activities is provided in a total of three vehicles—two buses (one is an eight-passenger vehicle and the other is a 12-passenger vehicle) and one Ford Escape. Transportation is available to residents 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Staff members drive these vehicles as part of other responsibilities. The nursing home also uses the COG Transit service for client transportation to medical appointments. The nursing home would like to see COG Transit expand their hours of operation from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The agency does not track ridership. The agency's transportation budget is approximately \$22,000 a month. The transportation budget includes maintenance for both the vehicles and the building in which they are located.

### **School Transportation**

#### Aguilar School District RE-6

This public school in Aguilar, Colorado has 133 students from elementary through high school. Approximately 30 students are transported using two school buses and one GMC Yukon. Total annual operating cost for providing transportation is approximately \$65,000. This school transportation provides approximately 8,640 one-way trips.

## *Existing Transportation Services*

### Branson Reorganized School District No. 82

This public school in Branson, Colorado has 30 students from kindergarten through 12th grade. In addition, this school district provides online classes. This school district provides transportation to their students using a 36-seater school bus and one Suburban. Total annual operating cost for providing transportation is approximately \$80,000. This school transportation provides approximately 6,400 one-way trips.

### Hoehne Reorganized School District No. 3

This public school in Hoehne, Colorado buses 330 students from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This school district provides transportation to their students using six school buses. Total annual operating cost for providing transportation is \$256,000. This school transportation provides approximately 95,000 one-way trips.

### Huerfano School District RE-1

This public school has 520 students from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Transportation is provided with a fleet of 24 vehicles. Total annual operating cost for providing transportation is approximately \$243,000.

### Kim Reorganized School District 88

This public school in Kim, Colorado has 33 students from kindergarten through high school. Transportation is provided with five Suburbans. Total annual operating cost for providing transportation is approximately \$85,000. This school transportation provides approximately 8,640 one-way trips.

### La Veta School District RE-2

This public school in La Veta, Colorado has 226 students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Transportation is provided to/from school and for extra-curricular field trips. Total annual operating cost for providing transportation is approximately \$80,000. This school transportation provides approximately 18,720 one-way trips.

Primer RE-2 School District

This public school located along Colorado State Highway 12 has 197 students from pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This school district provides transportation to approximately 184 students (kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade) using seven school buses. Total annual operating cost for providing transportation is approximately \$200,000. This school transportation provides approximately 52,900 one-way trips.

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 to Head Start children within approximately five miles of Trinidad RE-1 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 a week, 40 weeks per year. The Trinidad (Las Animas County) Head Start program operates from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with peak transportation hours being 8:00-9:00 a.m., 2:00-3:00 p.m., and 4:00-5:00 p.m. The Walsenburg (Huerfano County) Head Start program operates from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with peak transportation hours being 8:00-9:00 a.m. and 2:00-3:00 p.m.

The program has one transportation supervisor, one operation manager, and one transportation coordinator in Pueblo. There are a total of two drivers—one full-time and one part-time driver—to serve the Trinidad and Walsenburg programs. There are 161 students in the Trinidad Head Start program. Transportation in Trinidad is provided with a fleet of two school buses and provides approximately 18,500 one-way trips. There are 40 enrolled students in the Walsenburg Head Start program. Transportation in Walsenburg is provided with one school bus and provides approximately 7,560 one-way trips.

## *Existing Transportation Services*

Total annual operating cost for providing transportation is approximately \$144,500. Funding for this program comes from the US Department of Health and Human Services.

### Trinidad School District #1

This public school in Trinidad, Colorado buses 800 students from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This school district provides transportation to their students using 12 school buses. Total annual operating cost for providing transportation in FY2013 is \$352,000. This school transportation provides approximately 332,800 one-way trips.

### Trinidad State Junior College (TSJC)

TSJC has limited transportation services that are used primarily for busing athletes and TSJC employees (that are state vehicles to check out).

## **Intercity Services**

### Amtrak

Passenger service is provided by Amtrak (the Southwest Chief), which runs one westbound train and one eastbound train through 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 Amtrak station is located at 110 West Pine Street. This station has no shelter, but does have a newly constructed platform (in 2011). The westbound train arrives in Trinidad at approximately 9:50 a.m. The eastbound train arrives in Trinidad at approximately 5:49 p.m. The Amtrak schedules may change slightly on a seasonal basis.

### Greyhound

Greyhound provides service in several southwest states. In Colorado, Greyhound primarily operates on the I-25 corridor with most service terminating in Denver, but some continuing north to Wyoming. In addition, Greyhound provides service on Highway 160 between Walsenburg and Alamosa. The Greyhound stop in



Trinidad is located in the JRS Travel Shoppe located at 639 West Main Street. Based on schedules posted on the Internet, a summary of the schedules departing from Trinidad is shown in Table IV-10.

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Departure/ Day</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Standard One-Way Fare</b>	<b>Web-Only One-Way Fare</b>	<b>Refundable One-Way Fare</b>
Denver	1	0	\$58.00	\$52.20	\$66.00
Raton, NM	1		\$14.00	\$12.60	\$18.00
Lamar	1	2	\$58.00	\$52.20	\$66.00
Alamosa	1	2	\$74.00	N/A	\$84.00

### 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.

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## Community Conditions

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Chapter V consists of two elements. The first element presents the community conditions and demographics. The second element is the presentation of the economy of Las Animas and Huerfano Counties and local travel patterns. Where appropriate, maps and tables are used to demonstrate pertinent information regarding the characteristics being discussed.

### COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

#### Study Area Location

The South Central study area, shown in Figure V-1, is located in the south-central portion of Colorado, east of the Sangre de Cristo mountains and just north of the New Mexico state line. The study area consists of two counties—Las Animas County and Huerfano County. The two-county region is a rural, sparsely populated area with an economy based primarily on the natural attractions to the region and its associated services. There are numerous tourist attractions and recreational opportunities in the area. The study area includes the cities of Trinidad and Walsenburg that have population of 9,096 people and 3,068 people, respectively, based on the 2010 Census. This is followed by the smaller communities of La Veta (800 people), Aguilar (538 people), Hoehne (111 people), Segundo (98 people), Branson (74 people), Kim (74 people), Starkville (59 people), and the smaller towns of Weston, Gardener, Redwing, Stonewall, and Ludlow. The South Central area has an approximate population of 22,378 people (2011 American Community Survey data). The overall population density is approximately four persons per square mile. The South Central study area is crossed by various roads, including Interstate 25, US Highways 160 and 350, and Colorado State Highways 10 and 109. Figure V-2 shows the 2010 US Census block groups that were used for demographic analysis purposes.

Figure V-1  
Study Area

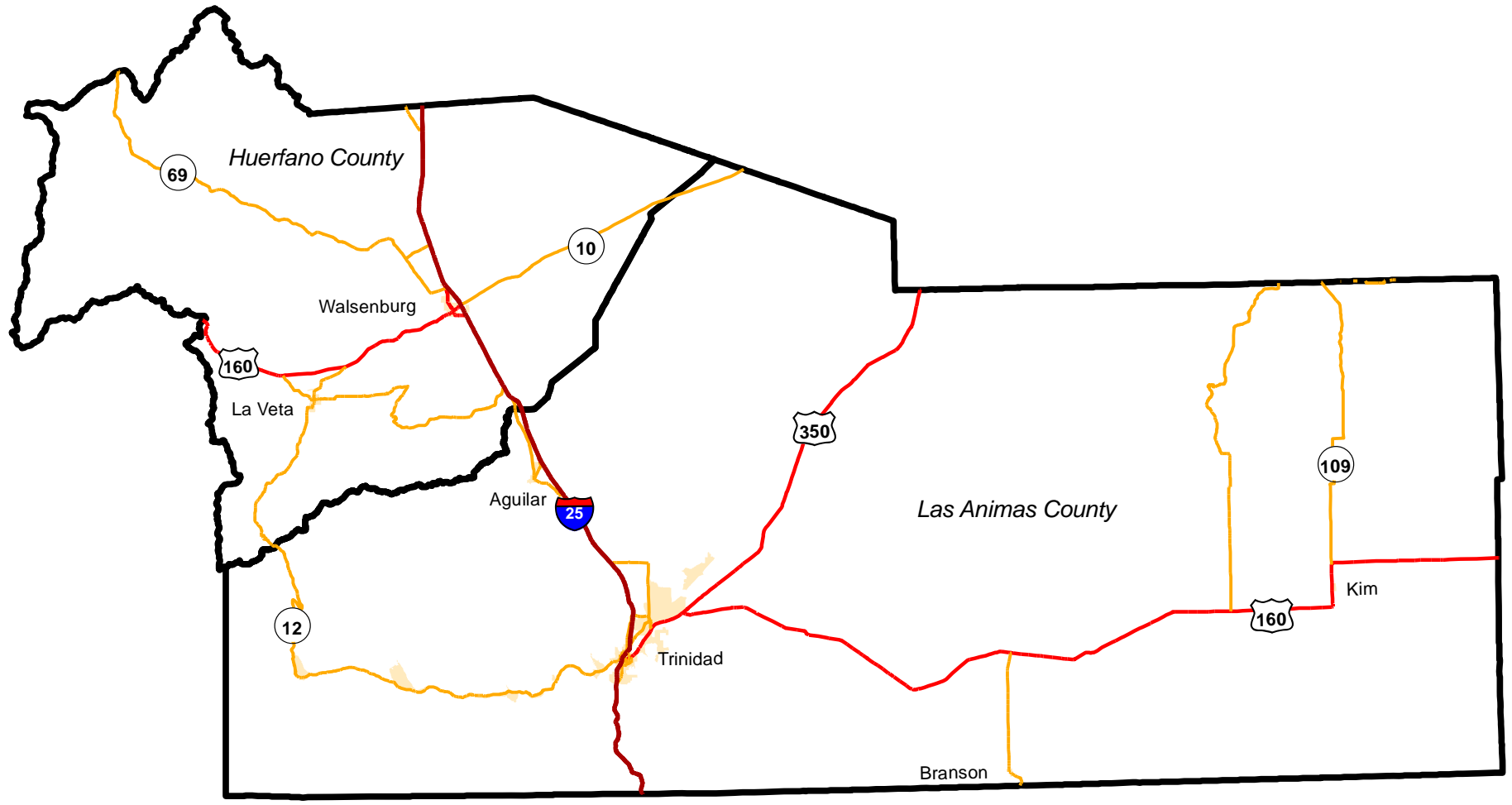
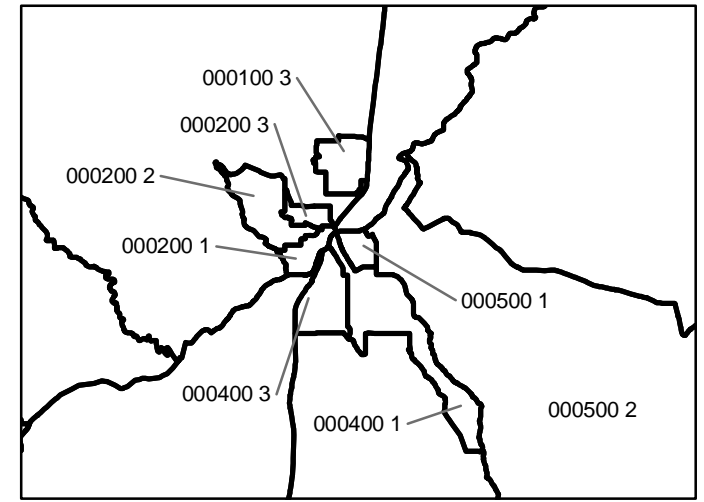
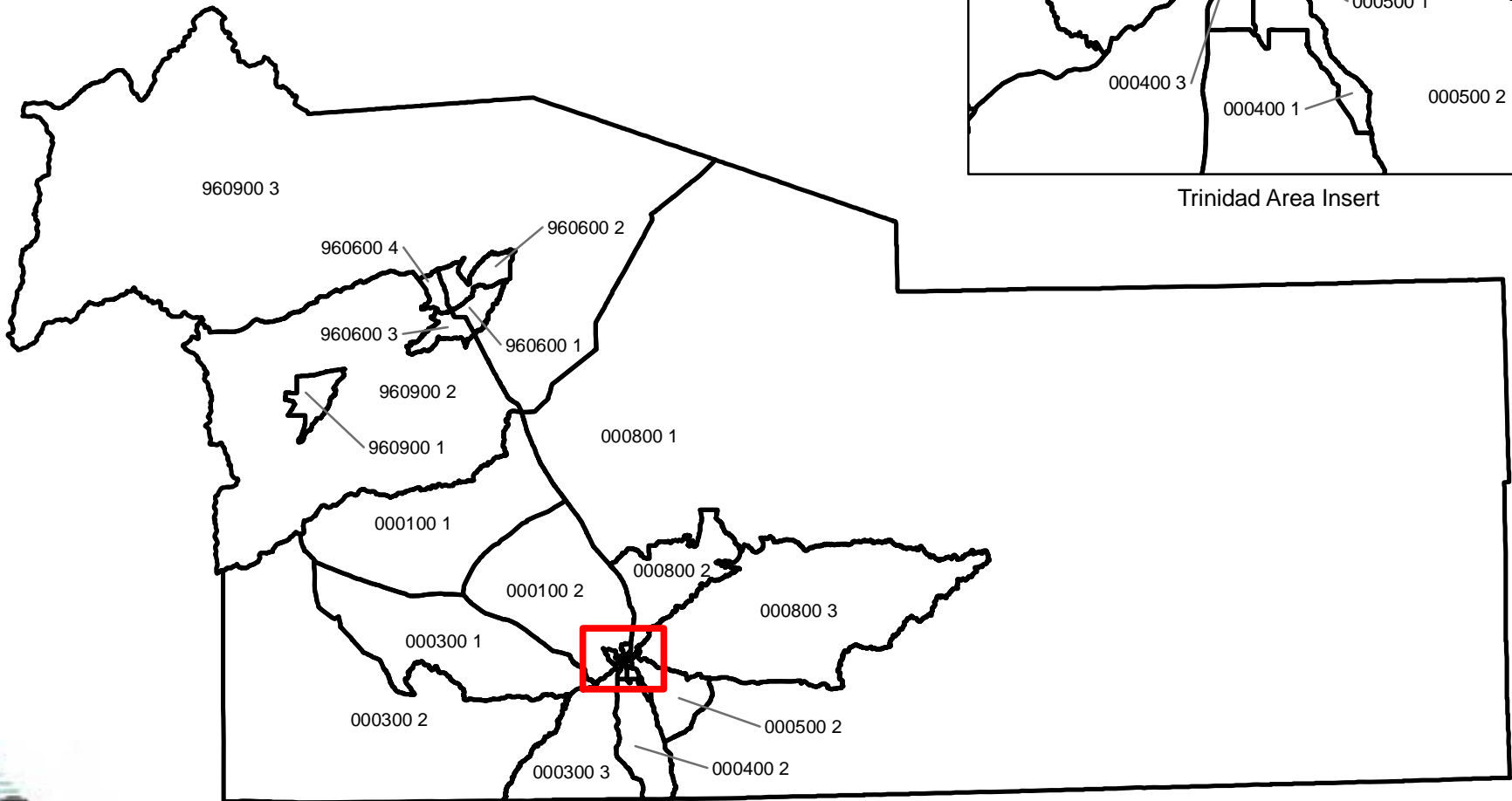


Figure V-2  
2010 Census Block Groups



Trinidad Area Insert



## **STUDY AREA DEMOGRAPHICS**

Data were taken from the 2007-2011 American Community Survey (2011 ACS) five-year estimates for most of this demographic analysis, except the mobility-limited population. Since the question on disability was changed in the 2008 ACS data, the 2007-2011 ACS five-year estimates do not contain information about disabilities or the mobility-limited population. The five-year estimates for disability will, however, be available in the ACS 2008-2012 estimates in 2013. While disability information is available from three-year estimates (2005-2007 ACS), that information is not available at the census block group level. The smallest level of geography for which the three-year estimates are available is at the county level. Therefore, the mobility-limited information was used from the 2000 Census and projected to 2013. The Census boundaries from 2000 were changed in 2010 and so an estimate was used to apportion the mobility-limited population from the 2000 data to the 2010 Census block group boundaries. The information was then projected to the year 2013.

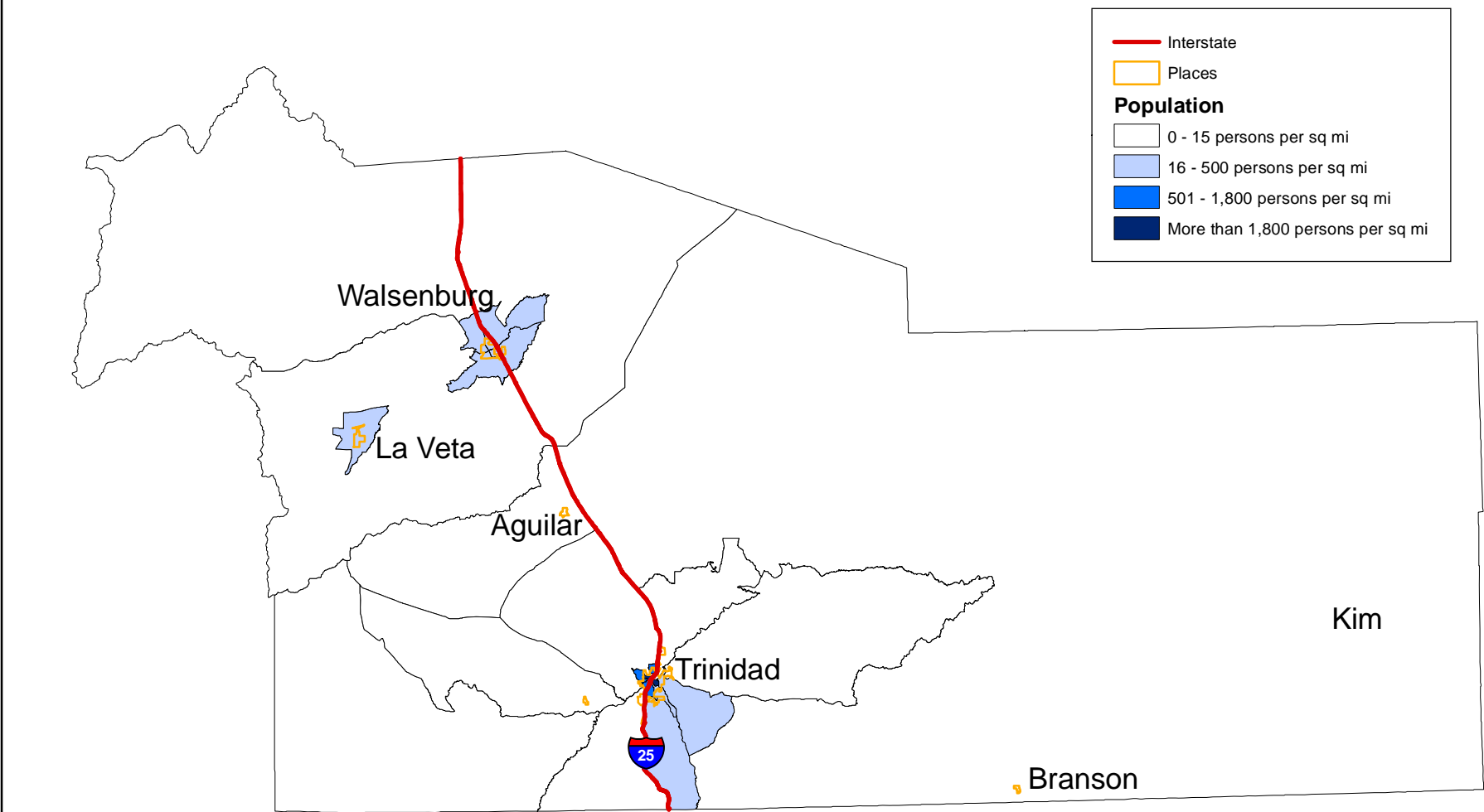
While the low-income population was available at the 2007-2011 ACS level, the smallest level of geographical unit for which information was available was at the tract level. The information from the tract level was then apportioned to the block group level based on the population of the block group compared to the total population in the tract.

### **Population Density**

Figure V-3 shows the population density for the study area by census block groups using the 2011 ACS data. The figure shows that the majority of the population is located in the City of Trinidad followed by the City of Walsenburg and Town of La Veta. The population is most dense in the central and northern portions of Trinidad.



Figure V-3  
Population Density



## **Transit-Dependent Population Characteristics**

This section provides information on the individuals considered by the transportation profession to be dependent upon public transit. In general, these population characteristics preclude most such individuals from driving, leaving carpooling and public transit as the only motorized forms of available transportation.

The four types of limitations that preclude people from driving are physical limitations, financial limitations, legal limitations, and 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 to drive (generally under age 16). Self-imposed limitations refer to 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 US Census is generally capable of providing information about the first three categories of limitation. The fourth category of limitation is currently recognized as representing a relatively small portion of transit ridership, particularly in smaller areas such as the south-central area of Colorado. Table V-1 presents the study area's US Census statistics regarding the older adult population, mobility-limited population, below-poverty population, and zero-vehicle households. These data are important to various methods of transit demand estimation.

**Table V-1  
Estimated Population Characteristics using American Community Survey 2011  
South Central Study Area**

County	Census Tract	Census Block Group	Total Population 2011 ACS	Area (sq. miles)	Total Population est. 2013*	Total Number of Households 2011 ACS		Zero-Vehicle Households 2011 ACS		Youth Population 10-19 years 2011 ACS		Total Number of Older Adults 65 and Over 2011 ACS		Mobility-Limited Population est. 2013*		Low-Income Population 2011 ACS	
						#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Huerfano	9606	1	1015	10.0	1,216	230	55	23.9%	58	5.7%	140	13.8%	23	1.9%	281	27.7%	
	9606	2	856	16.1	809	427	23	5.4%	99	11.6%	103	12.0%	59	7.3%	237	27.7%	
	9606	3	446	10.2	630	221	27	12.2%	56	12.6%	116	26.0%	32	5.1%	123	27.7%	
	9606	4	1017	5.8	820	469	95	20.3%	198	19.5%	201	19.8%	31	3.8%	281	27.7%	
	9609	1	997	15.0	843	512	11	2.1%	97	9.7%	336	33.7%	29	3.4%	119	12.0%	
	9609	2	1401	440.3	1,056	689	41	6.0%	121	8.6%	649	46.3%	36	3.4%	168	12.0%	
	9609	3	1097	1096.6	806	548	26	4.7%	77	7.0%	102	9.3%	10	1.3%	131	12.0%	
Las Animas	1	1	1093	173.1	936	494	26	5.3%	86	7.9%	302	27.6%	43	4.6%	231	21.1%	
	1	2	1569	135.7	1,550	705	27	3.8%	106	6.8%	341	21.7%	92	5.9%	331	21.1%	
	1	3	1204	0.7	1,162	438	82	18.7%	135	11.2%	116	9.6%	95	8.2%	254	21.1%	
	2	1	654	0.4	619	328	133	40.5%	55	8.4%	100	15.3%	33	5.4%	110	16.9%	
	2	2	810	1.0	730	313	0	0.0%	111	13.7%	64	7.9%	18	2.5%	137	16.9%	
	2	3	1104	0.2	865	402	38	9.5%	137	12.4%	217	19.7%	37	4.3%	186	16.9%	
	3	1	885	148.0	815	394	18	4.6%	116	13.1%	216	24.4%	26	3.2%	100	11.3%	
	3	2	823	408.5	760	341	20	5.9%	118	14.3%	143	17.4%	16	2.1%	93	11.3%	
	3	3	689	77.5	711	254	1	0.4%	130	18.9%	68	9.9%	18	2.5%	78	11.3%	
	4	1	558	1.9	526	247	50	20.2%	81	14.5%	66	11.8%	43	8.3%	95	17.1%	
	4	2	688	36.2	744	340	0	0.0%	34	4.9%	158	23.0%	18	2.4%	118	17.1%	
	4	3	801	0.8	762	335	96	28.7%	121	15.1%	184	23.0%	73	9.6%	137	17.1%	
	5	1	1128	0.3	798	431	30	7.0%	245	21.7%	72	6.4%	18	2.2%	323	28.6%	
	5	2	1047	27.9	1,110	394	29	7.4%	185	17.7%	257	24.5%	62	5.6%	299	28.6%	
	8	1	887	3458.2	800	369	14	3.8%	136	15.3%	220	24.8%	9	1.2%	45	5.1%	
8	2	568	61.3	624	223	9	4.0%	25	4.4%	75	13.2%	48	7.7%	29	5.1%		
8	3	1041	247.8	551	348	26	7.5%	194	18.6%	131	12.6%	20	3.7%	53	5.1%		
<b>Study Area TOTAL:</b>			<b>22,378</b>	<b>6373.468</b>	<b>20,241</b>	<b>9,452</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>2,721</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>4,377</b>	<b>19.6%</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>3,958</b>	<b>19.6%</b>	

Note:\* Mobility-Limited Population is not currently available in the 5-year ACS data by block group level, hence the 2000 US Census data were used and projected to 2013.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey- 2011, LSC 2013.

### Older Adult Population

The older adult population represents a significant number of the national transit-dependent population and represents 19.6 percent of the total population in the study area. The older adult population includes individuals 65 years and older. Figure V-4 illustrates the density of the older adults in the study area using the 2011 ACS data. The highest density of older adults is in the City of Trinidad followed by the City of Walsenburg and the Town of La Veta.

### Mobility-Limited Population

As discussed above, since mobility-limited information at the census block group level was not available through the ACS data, the 2000 US Census was used and information was projected to the year 2013. Figure V-5 presents the 2013 estimated mobility-limited population in terms of people-per-square-mile density. An individual is classified as “mobility-limited” if they are between the ages of 16-64 years and identify themselves as having some form of mobility impairment that restricts their travel outside the home. Persons age 16-64 years are considered because that age group is more inclined to use transit. Persons over 65 years are considered in the “older adult population” category. Approximately four percent of the population of the study area has some type of mobility limitation. The greatest concentration of individuals with mobility limitation is also in downtown Trinidad along Interstate 25. This is followed by the City of Walsenburg and the Town of La Veta.

Figure V-4  
Density of Elderly Persons

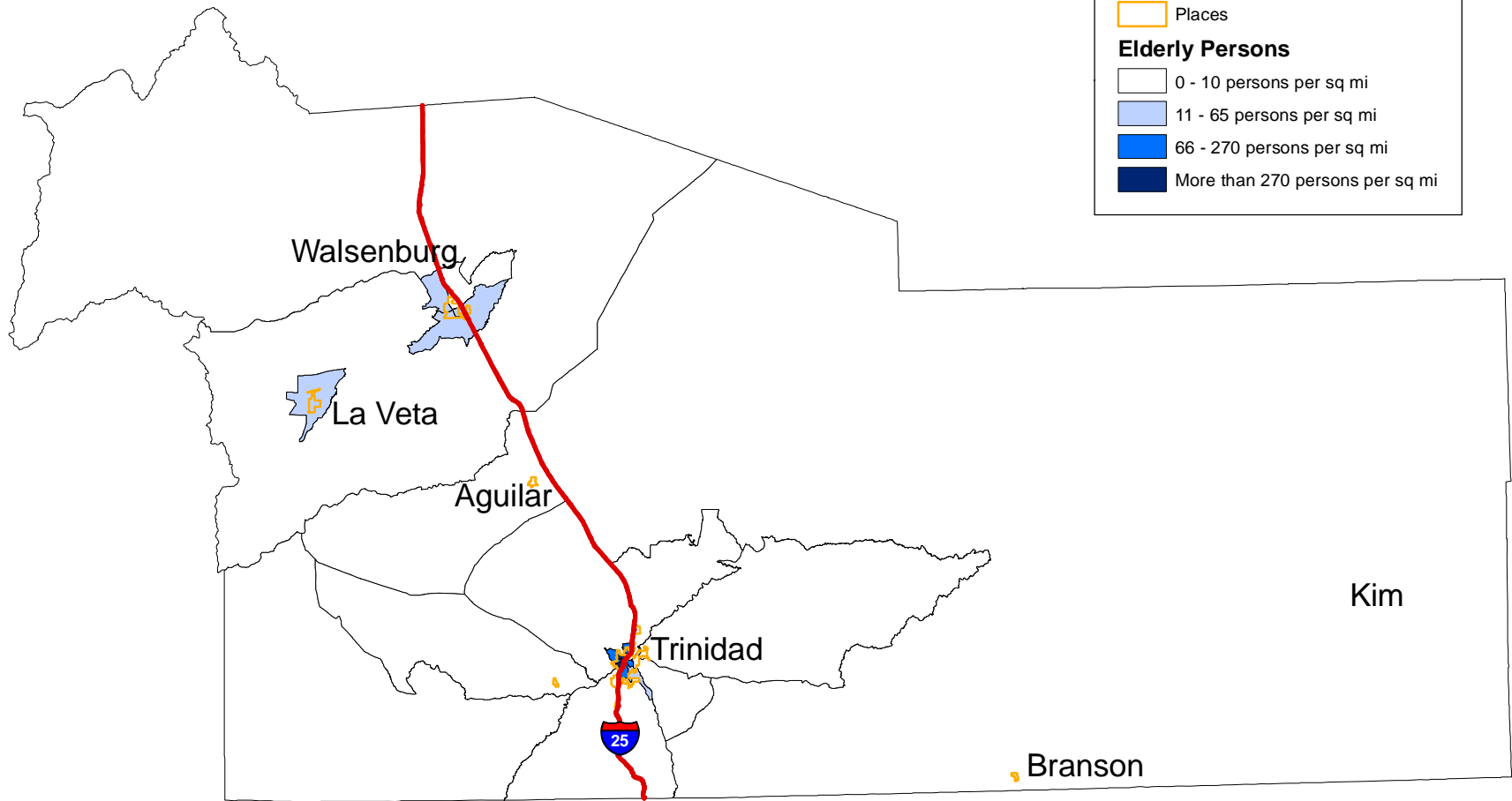
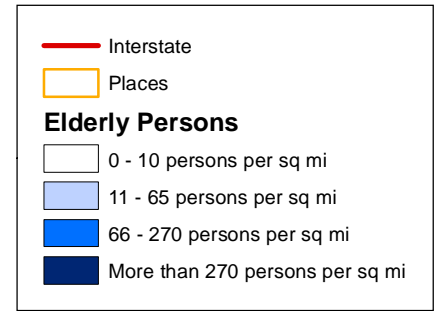
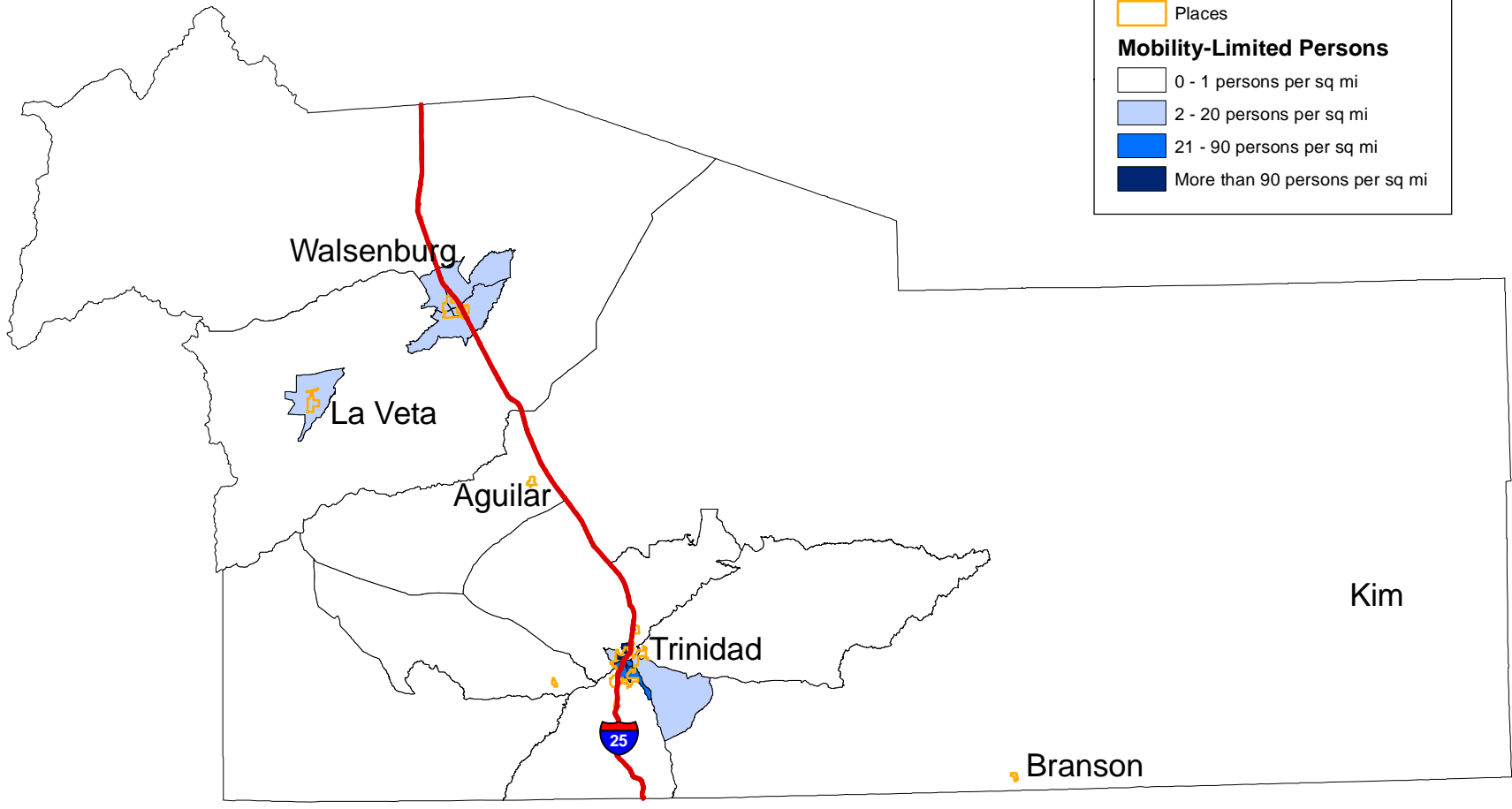
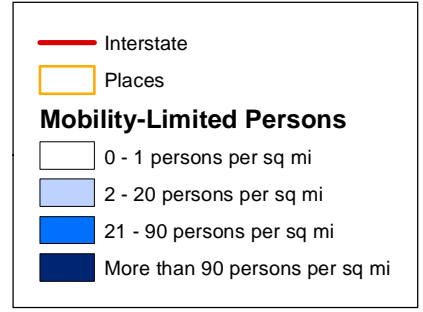


Figure V-5  
Density of Mobility-Limited Persons



### Below-Poverty Population

The below-poverty population tends to depend upon transit to a greater extent than the wealthy population or those with a high level of disposable income. Figure V-6 illustrates the density of the low-income population in the study area using the 2011 ACS data. Low-income population, as defined by the FTA, includes persons whose household income is at or below the Department of Health and Human Services' poverty guidelines. The low-income population used in the tables and GIS maps includes those individuals who are living below the poverty line using the Census Bureau's poverty threshold. The highest densities of low-income population are in the City of Trinidad. This is followed by the City of Walsenburg and the Town of La Veta. Approximately 20 percent (3,958 individuals) of the population of the study area can be considered low income.

### Zero-Vehicle Households

People who do not own or have access to a private vehicle are also considered transit-dependent. A zero-vehicle household is defined as a household in which an individual does not have access to a vehicle. These individuals are generally transit-dependent as their access to private automobiles is limited. Approximately nine percent (877) of the study area's households reported no vehicle available for use. The density of zero-vehicle households for the study area using the 2011 ACS data is shown in Figure V-7. The highest density of zero-vehicle households is located in the central portion of the City of Trinidad. There are slightly less dense populations of individuals without access to a vehicle in the City of Walsenburg.

### Youth Population

The population density of youth (10 -19 years of age) for the study area using the 2011 ACS data is shown in Figure V-8. The largest youth population pockets are in the City of Trinidad. This is followed by the City of Walsenburg and the Town of La Veta.

Figure V-6  
Density of Low-Income Persons

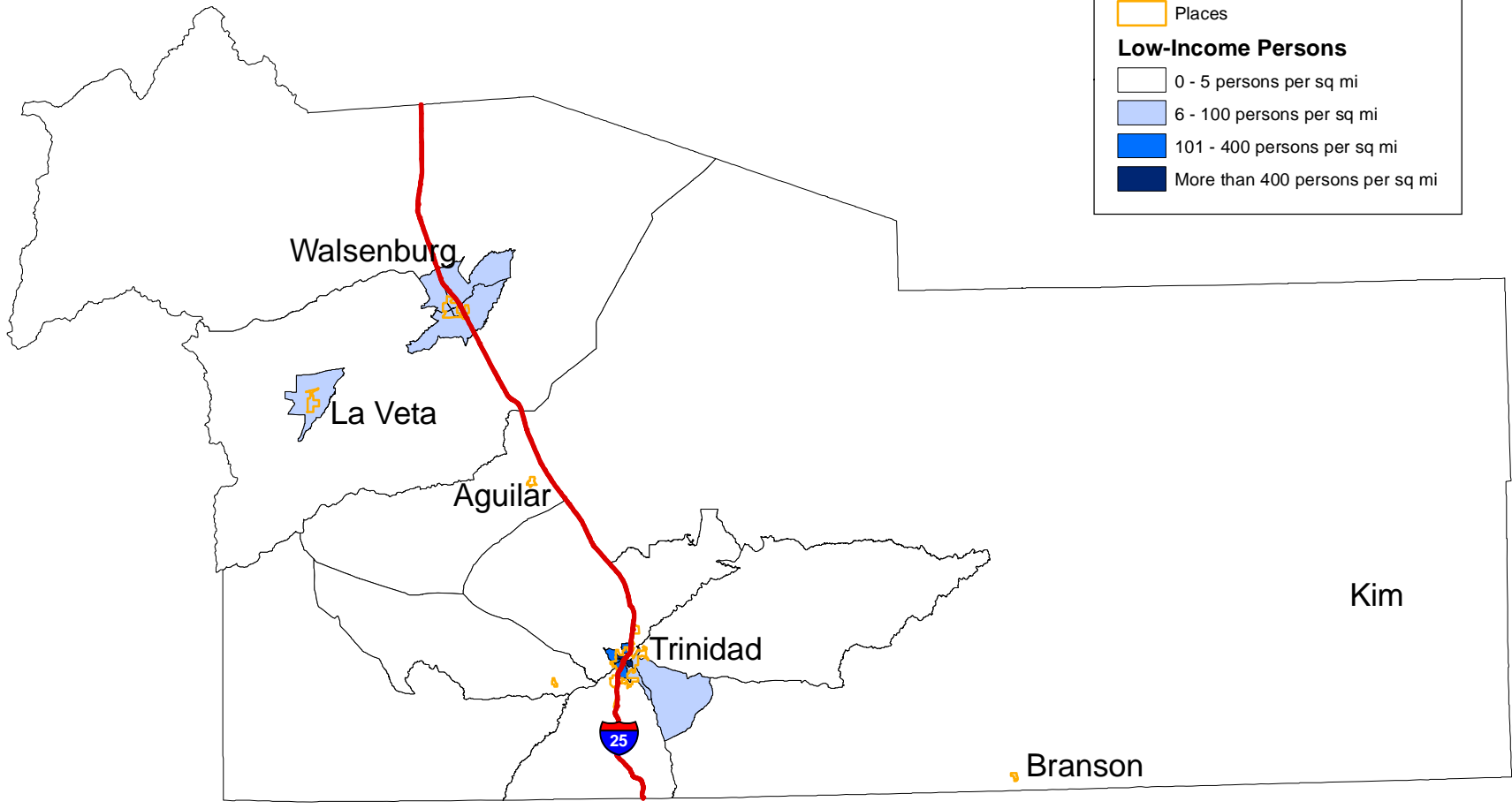
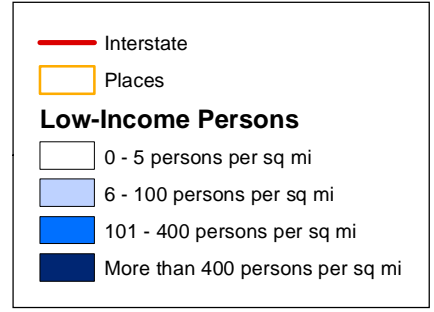




Figure V-7  
Density of Zero-Vehicle Households

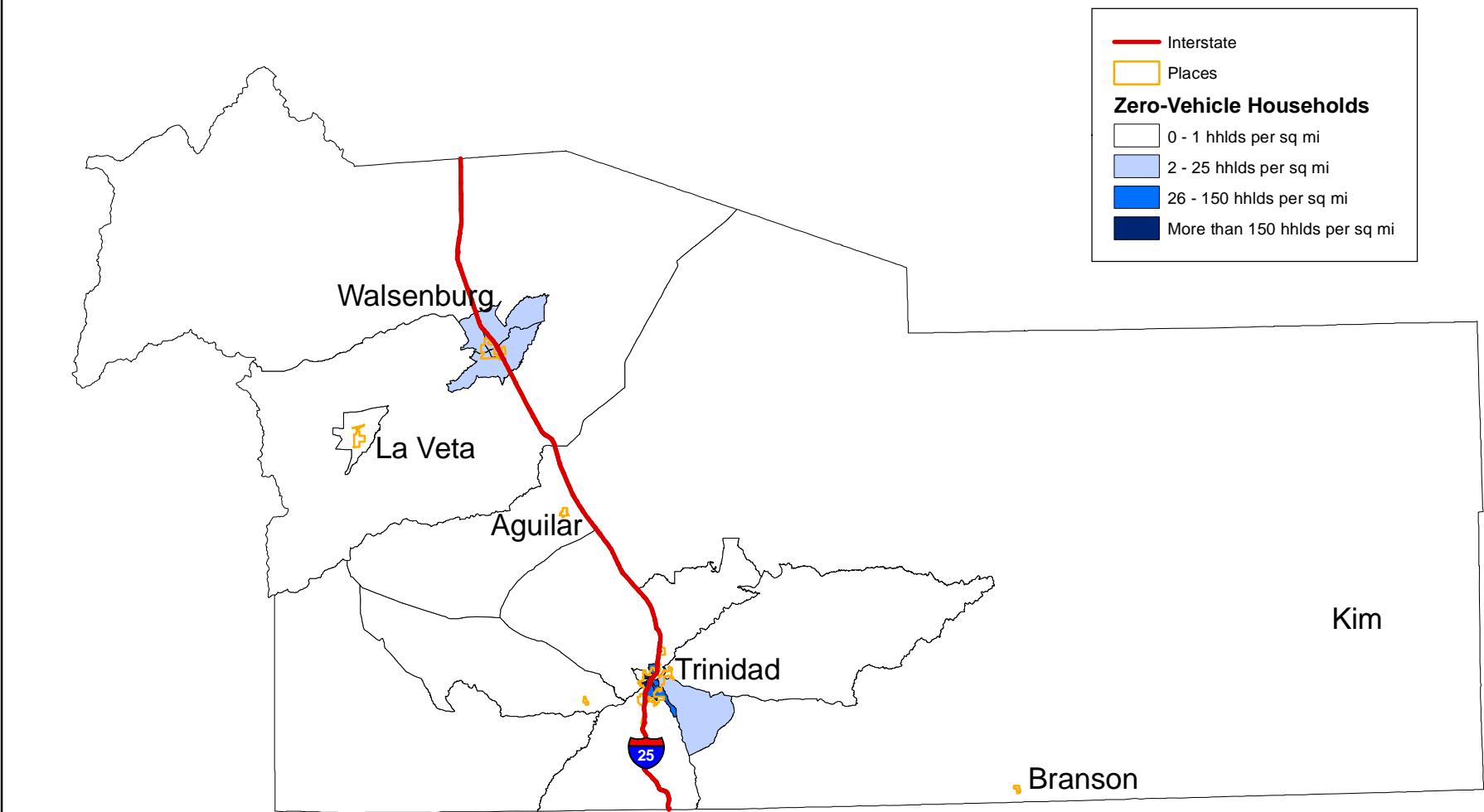
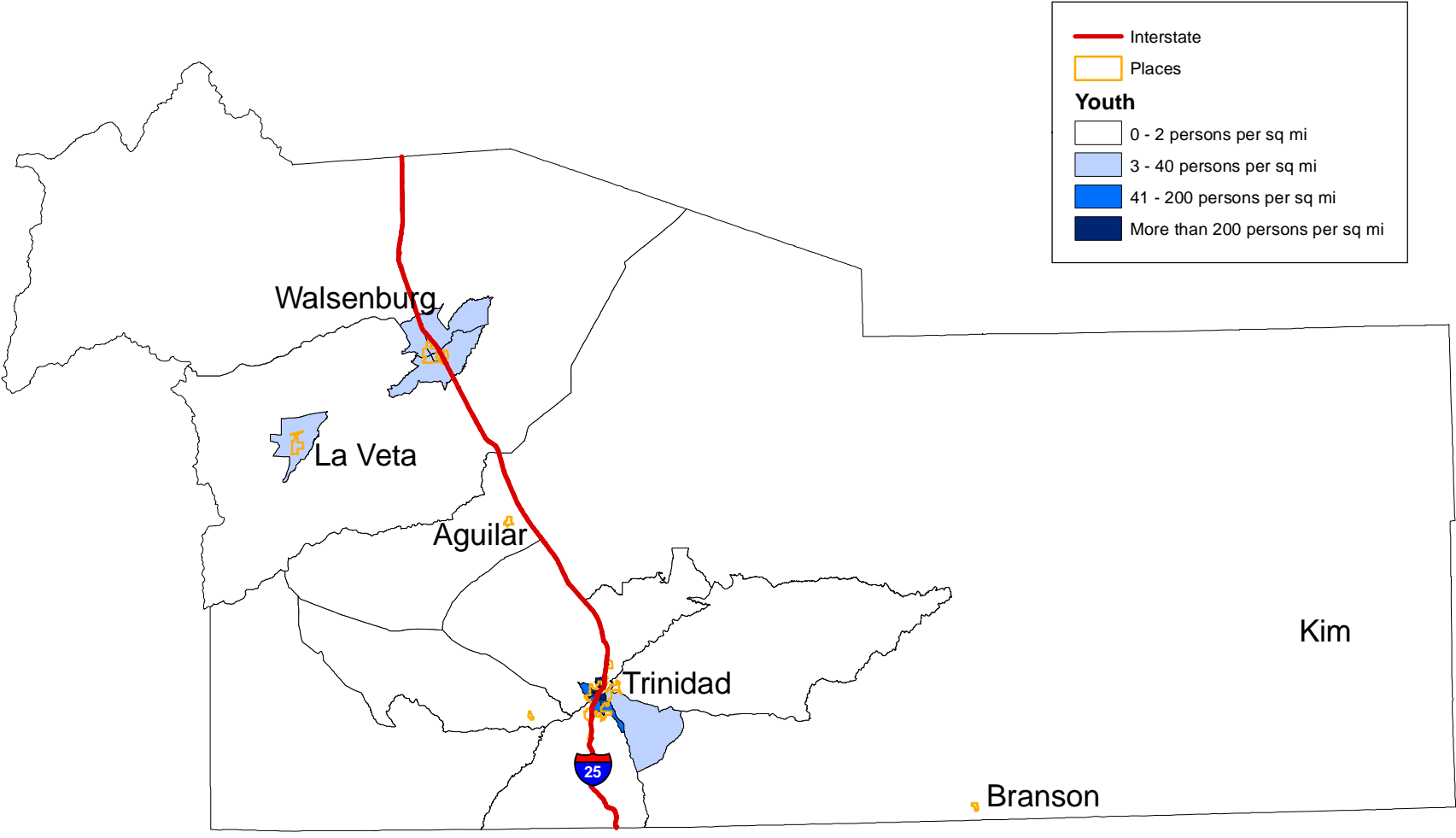


Figure V-8  
Density of Youth



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS

According to Bureau of Labor Statistics data, using the 2011 average, Las Animas County has a civilian labor force of 7,891 with 770 unemployed. Huerfano County has a civilian labor force of 3,244 with 366 unemployed, also using the 2011 average. Las Animas County has an unemployment rate of 9.8 percent, and Huerfano County has a higher unemployment rate of 11.3 percent, both being much higher than the Colorado unemployment rate of 8.3 percent.

### Historic Unemployment Rates

The amount of unemployment in Las Animas and Huerfano Counties has varied substantially between 1990 and 2010, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Figure V-9 and Table V-2 show the data organized by year for the county. The highest unemployment rate over the past 20 years in Las Animas County was seen in 1992 when unemployment was 10.6 percent, and in Huerfano County was seen in 2010 when unemployment was 11.8 percent. Conversely, the lowest unemployment for both Las Animas and Huerfano Counties was experienced during 2007 with 3.7 percent and 4.8 percent, respectively. Overall, unemployment was trending down from 1991 through 2000, and has been in the upward trend until 2009. In 2011, the Las Animas County unemployment rate was 9.8 percent, and the Huerfano County unemployment rate was 11.3 percent.

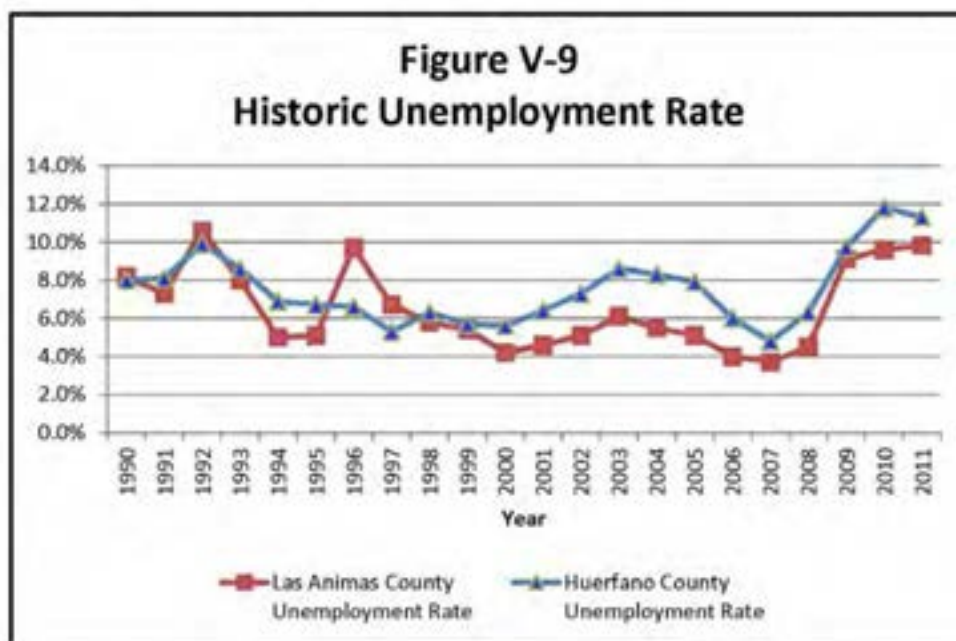


Table V-2 Historic Unemployment Rates		
Year	Las Animas County Unemployment Rate	Huerfano County Unemployment Rate
1990	8.2%	8.0%
1991	7.3%	8.1%
1992	10.6%	9.9%
1993	8.0%	8.6%
1994	5.0%	6.9%
1995	5.1%	6.7%
1996	9.7%	6.6%
1997	6.7%	5.3%
1998	5.8%	6.3%
1999	5.4%	5.7%
2000	4.2%	5.6%
2001	4.6%	6.4%
2002	5.1%	7.3%
2003	6.1%	8.6%
2004	5.5%	8.3%
2005	5.1%	7.9%
2006	4.0%	6.0%
2007	3.7%	4.8%
2008	4.5%	6.3%
2009	9.1%	9.7%
2010	9.6%	11.8%
2011	9.8%	11.3%

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics: Labor Force Data by County, Annual Averages.*

**Employment Sectors**

Table V-3 shows the available 2007-2011 American Community Survey five-year estimates on Las Animas and Huerfano Counties employment sectors. Table V-3 shows employment by sector for Las Animas and Huerfano Counties. The Educational/Health/and Social Services make up the largest sector in both Las Animas and Huerfano Counties, accounting for 19 percent and 25 percent of employment, respectively, in their county. In Las Animas County, this could be attributed to Trinidad State Junior College, Mt. San Rafael Hospital, and the Trinidad School District, which are also the major employers in the Trinidad area. According to the Trinidad Las-Animas County Economic Development, in 2010, there were 44 establishments in the health care and social assistance industry that employed

713 employees in the Trinidad area. This was followed by the education industry that had 13 establishments employing 680 employees in the Trinidad area.

In Las Animas County, the next highest industry sectors are Retail Trade (13 percent) and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining (12 percent). In Huerfano County, the next highest industry sectors are Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining (13 percent); Construction (13 percent); and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; and Accommodation and Food Services (13 percent). Both Las Animas and Huerfano Counties have significant agriculture activities, coal mining, and gas operations. While these industries still play a vital role in the community's economy, they are less significant than in past years.

<b>Table V-3 Employment by Sector for Huerfano and Las Animas Counties</b>				
<b>Industry</b>	<b>Las Animas County Employees</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Huerfano County Employees</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	802	12%	285	13%
Construction	637	10%	276	13%
Manufacturing	208	3%	75	3%
Wholesale trade	132	2%	8	0%
Retail trade	873	13%	128	6%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	567	9%	97	4%
Information	53	1%	33	2%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	264	4%	40	2%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	255	4%	118	5%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1,270	19%	636	29%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	633	10%	288	13%
Other services, except public administration	343	5%	43	2%
Public administration	508	8%	171	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,545</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,198</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.</i>				

## **Major Employers**

Table V-4 reflects the major employers in the South Central area. Information on the largest employers in the Trinidad area was obtained from the Trinidad Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The local coal mine is also one of the largest employers with approximately 250-300 employees. The Pioneer Natural Resources and Exxon Mobil are the largest employers, each with approximately 250 employees. This is followed by Mt. San Rafael Hospital with 230 employees (includes both full-time and part-time employees). This is then followed by Trinidad State Junior College (100 employees), South Central Council of Governments (75-100 employees), followed by the City of Trinidad and Las Animas County, each with around 100 employees. Walmart is also a major employer in the area with 100 employees.

Other major employers in the South Central study area are the local school districts and other local government offices in the region.

<b>Table V-4 Major Employers in the South Central Area</b>	
<b>LAS ANIMAS COUNTY</b>	<b>HUERFANO COUNTY</b>
<b>Employers in Aguilar</b>	<b>Employers in Cuchara</b>
Aguilar Reorganized School District No. 6 Aguilar Public Library/ Community Center Ringo's Food Market Aguilar Housing Authority	Cuchara Country Store Complex
<b>Employers in Branson</b>	<b>Employers in La Veta</b>
Branson Reorganized School District No. 82	Charlie's Cash & Carry Huerfano County School District RE-2 La Veta Police Department La Veta Public Library La Veta Town Hall
<b>Employers in Segundo</b>	True Value Hardware
Ringo's Super Trading Post & Liquor Store	US Forestry Office
<b>Employers in Trinidad</b>	<b>Employers in Walsenburg</b>
Local Coal Mine Pioneer Natural Resources Exxon Mobil American Red Cross, Spanish Peaks Branch Carnegie Public Library Samuel Freudenthal Memorial Library Head Start School Helping Hands Senior Care Las Animas County Chamber of Commerce  Trinidad Las Animas County Economic Development, Inc. Las Animas County-Government Offices Mt. San Rafael Hospital Safeway Food and Drug Trinidad State Junior College Walmart Super Center Trinidad Housing Authority	First National Bank in Trinidad-Huerfano County Branch City of Walsenburg Community Banks of Southern Colorado Duckwalls Edla's Yarns Huerfano County Commissioners Office Huerfano County School District RE-1 Kays Liquors Main Street Office Supply  Walsenburg Head Start Center/ Rocky Mountain Service Employment Redevelopment (RMSER) Safeway San Isabel Electric Appliance Store Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center Star Drug Inc. Vigil Family Chiropractic Colorado State Veterans Home Walsenburg Care Center
<i>Source: Trinidad Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; LSC, 2012.</i>	

### **Major Transit Activity Centers**

Major transit activity centers are important in terms of land use, trip generation, and the ability to be served by public transit. Figure V-10 shows the locations of important points of interest/destinations identified within the South Central study area identified for both current and potential users. Many of these points of interest are clustered together into what can be referred to as “activity centers.” Major activity centers in Trinidad and Walsenburg are shown in Figures V-11 and V-12. Figures V-13 and V-14 illustrate the transit destinations in Aguilar and La Veta, respectively. Activity centers are locations that are typically shown to generate transit trips because they are prime origins or prime destinations. There is no set formula that is used to derive a list of activity centers as the process is subjective. Activity centers generally include a wide variety of land uses including shopping/retail areas, commercial, hospital, and education centers. These are the most critical land uses for individuals who use transit.



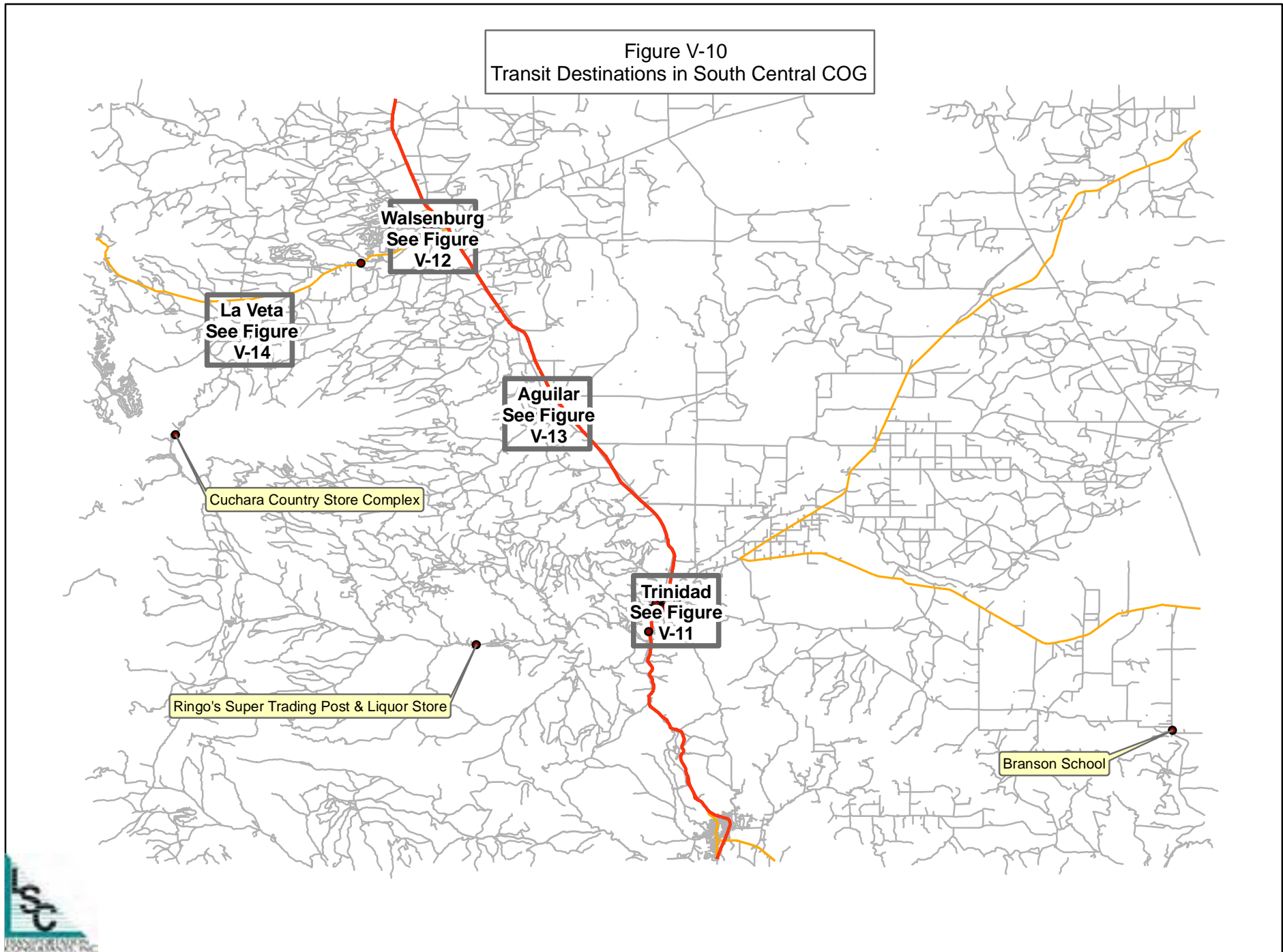


Figure V-10  
Transit Destinations in South Central COG

Walsenburg  
See Figure  
V-12

La Veta  
See Figure  
V-14

Aguilar  
See Figure  
V-13

Trinidad  
See Figure  
V-11

Cuchara Country Store Complex

Ringo's Super Trading Post & Liquor Store

Branson School



Figure V-11  
Trinidad Transit Destinations

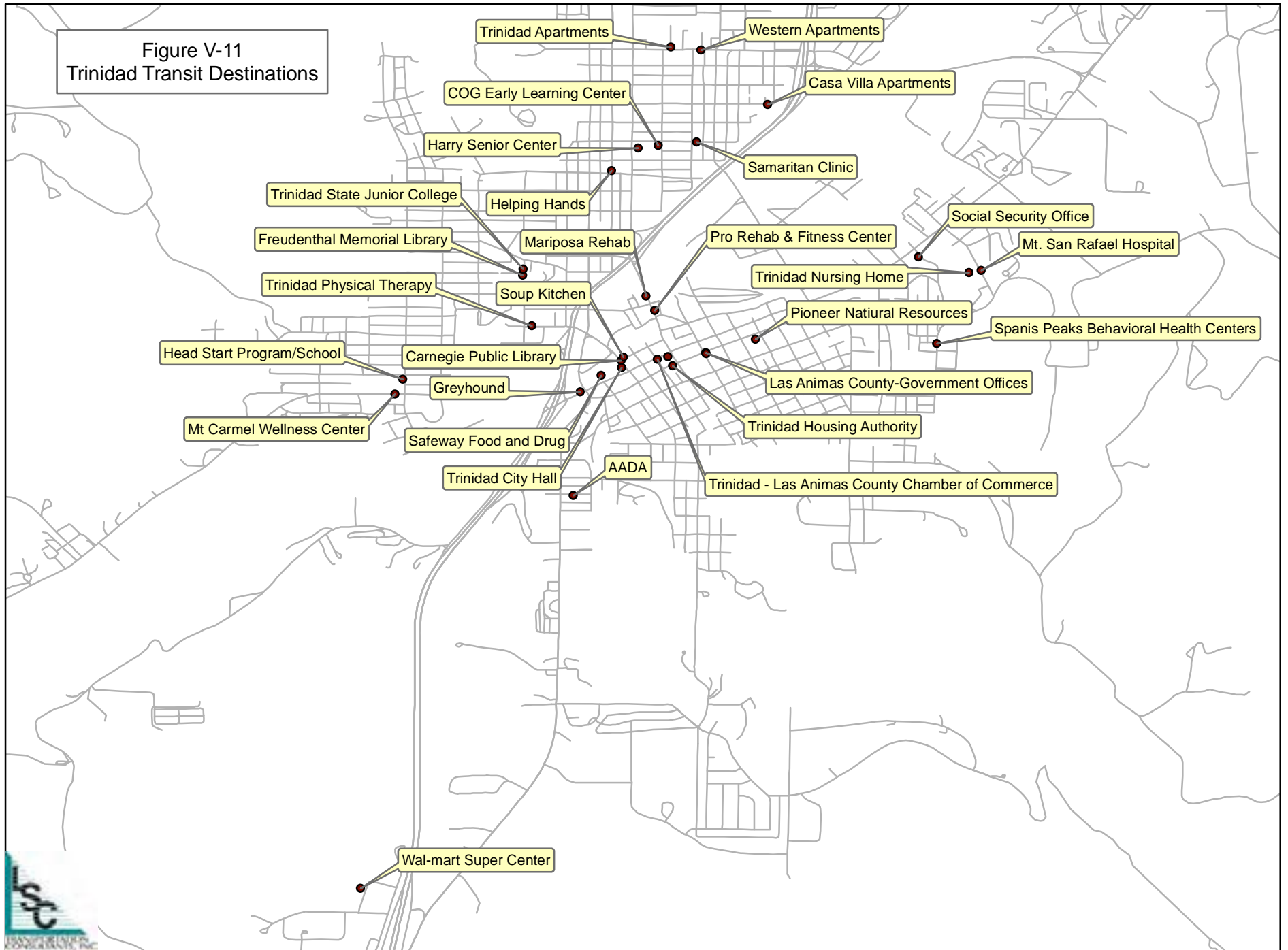


Figure V-12  
Walsenburg Transit Destinations

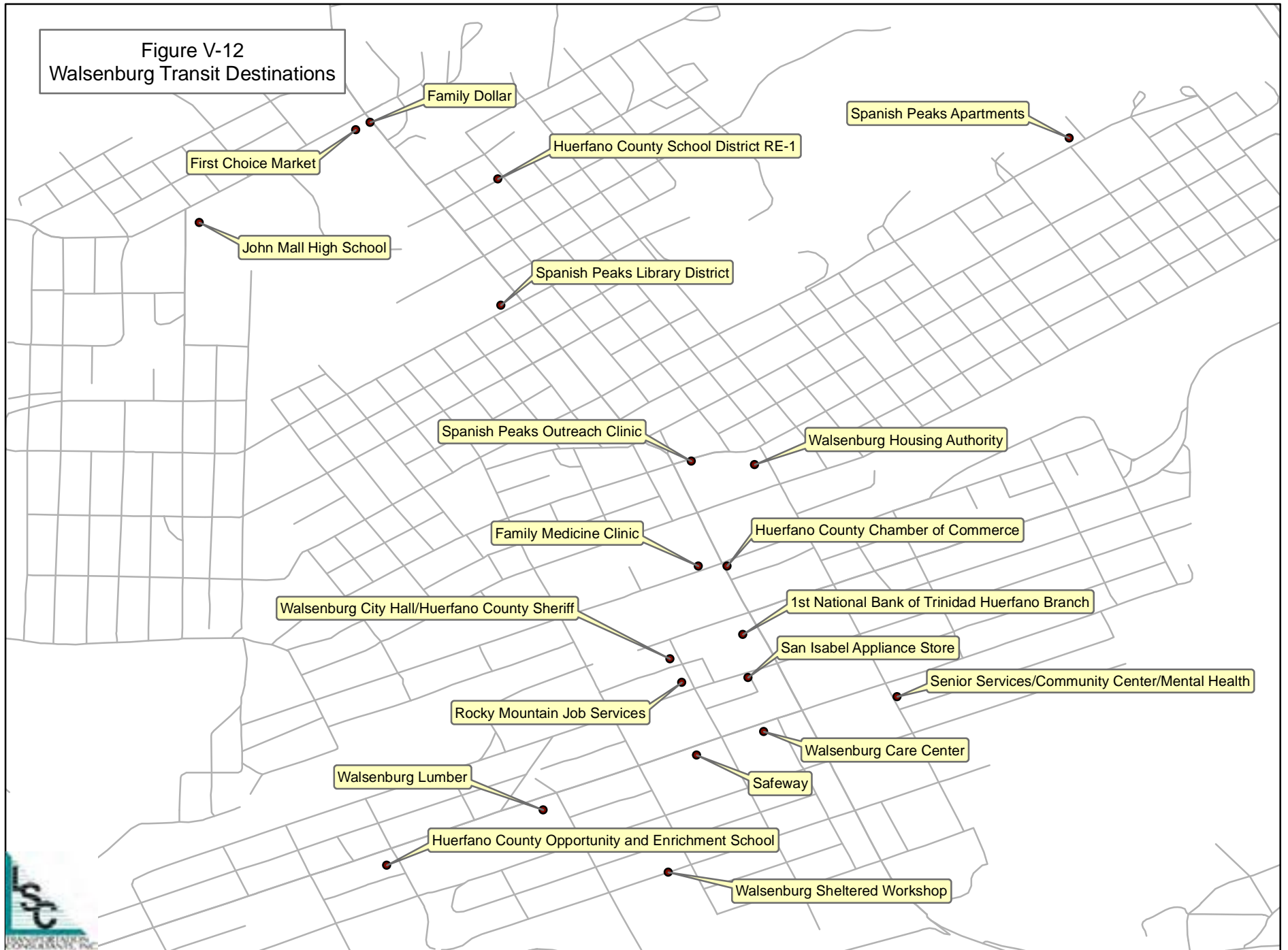


Figure V-13  
Aguilar Transit Destinations

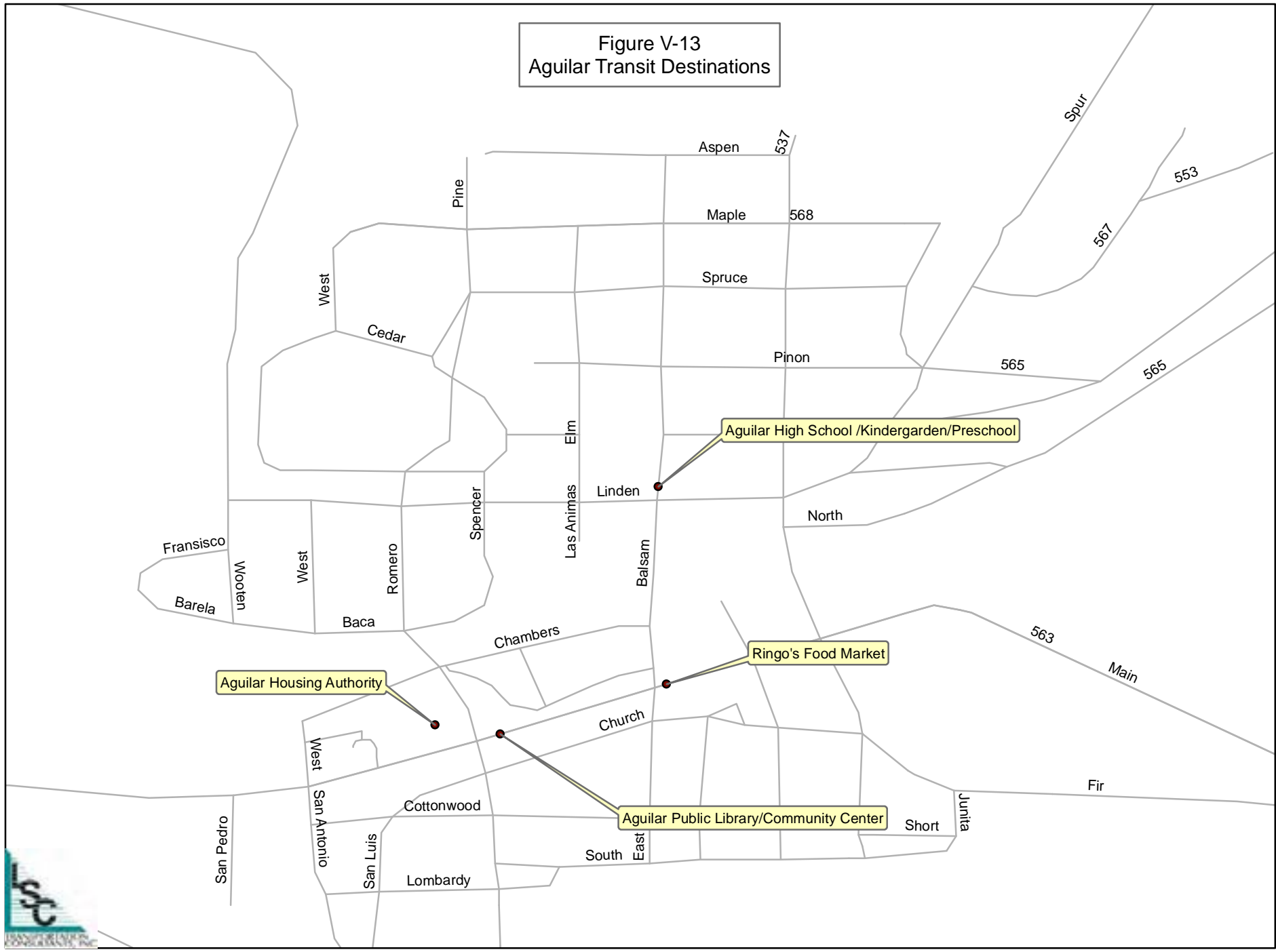
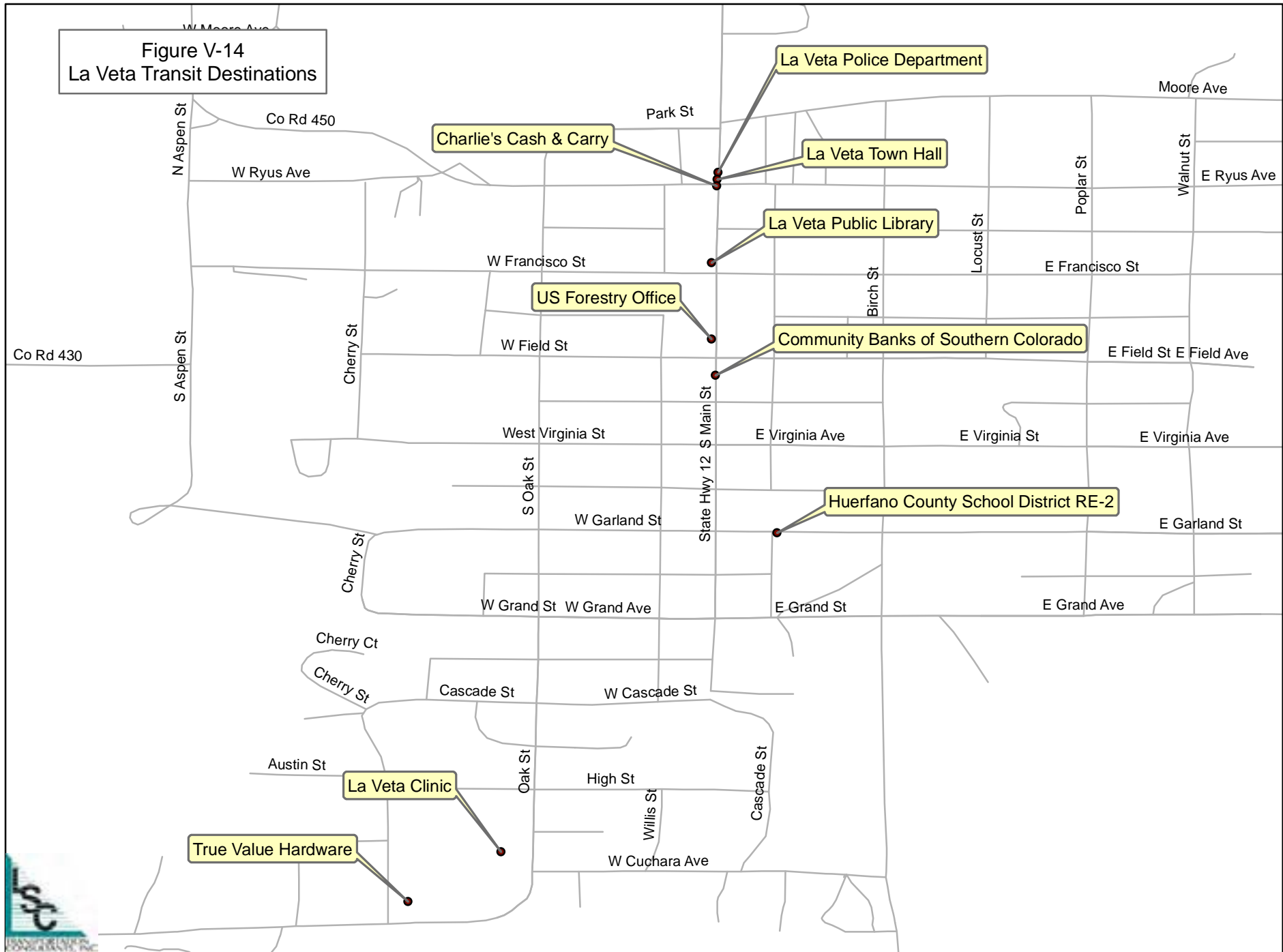


Figure V-14  
La Veta Transit Destinations



## **TRAVEL PATTERNS**

### **Work Transportation Mode**

The 2011 American Community Survey from the US Census Bureau yields information useful to the South Central study area regarding the means of transportation to and from work for the study area's residents. Table V-5 shows the number of people in the Las Animas and Huerfano Counties' workforce and their modes of travel. These data were tabulated for employees 16 years of age and older who were at work when the American Community Survey questionnaire was completed.

In Las Animas County, the majority of the workforce drives alone to work (4,965 people or 74 percent). Carpooling (15 percent) and walking (five percent) are the next modes of choice. Only 0.2 percent of employees reported using public transit as their mode of choice for work. Approximately six percent of individuals in Las Animas County reported working from home.

In Huerfano County, the majority of the workforce also drives alone to work (1,355 people or 64 percent). Carpooling (13 percent) and walking (six percent) are the next modes of choice. Only 0.4 percent of employees reported using public transit as their mode of choice for work. Approximately 12 percent of individuals in Huerfano County reported working from home.

Table V-6 shows that the mean commute time for Las Animas County residents was 20.9 minutes and for Huerfano County residents was 23.2 minutes. The most frequent response for both Las Animas County and Huerfano County residents was less than 10 minutes, with 31 percent of each county's respondents. In Las Animas County, individuals taking between 10 and 14 minutes to commute to work represent 19 percent of its residents, while workers commuting between 15 and 19 minutes represent another 13 percent of its residents. In Huerfano County, individuals taking between 10 and 14 minutes to commute to work represent 17 percent of its residents, while workers commuting more than 60 minutes represent 13 percent of its residents.

Table V-5 Means of Transportation to Work				
Means of Transportation	Las Animas County Workers	Percent	Huerfano County Workers	Percent
Drove alone	4,695	74.1%	1,355	63.7%
Carpooled	949	15.0%	280	13.2%
Walked	293	4.6%	116	5.5%
Worked at home	352	5.6%	263	12.4%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means	29	0.5%	106	5.0%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	15	0.2%	8	0.4%
Note*: Workers 16 years and over <i>US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011.</i>				

Table V-6 Travel Time to Work				
Travel Time	Las Animas County Workers	Percent	Huerfano County Workers	Percent
Less than 10 minutes	1879	31%	584	31%
10 to 14 minutes	1143	19%	320	17%
15 to 19 minutes	759	13%	188	10%
20 to 24 minutes	481	8%	153	8%
25 to 29 minutes	208	3%	21	1%
30 to 34 minutes	465	8%	136	7%
35 to 44 minutes	191	3%	69	4%
45 to 59 minutes	391	7%	156	8%
60 or more minutes	464	8%	238	13%
Mean travel time to work	20.9 minutes		23.2 minutes	
<i>Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates.</i>				

*Community Conditions*

Table V-7 shows the time ranges for Las Animas County and Huerfano County residents leaving home to go to work. The most frequent response for Las Animas County was between 7:00 and 7:59 a.m., with 35 percent of Las Animas County residents leaving home during that time. The most frequent response for Huerfano County was between 9:00 and 9:59 a.m. (15 percent) and between 7:30 and 7:59 a.m. (12 percent) of Huerfano County residents leaving home during that time.

<b>Table V-7 Time Leaving Home to Go to Work</b>				
<b>Time Ranges</b>	<b>Las Animas County Workers</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Huerfano County Workers</b>	<b>Percent</b>
12:00 midnight to 4:59 a.m.	169	3%	34	2%
5:00 to 5:29 a.m.	227	4%	130	7%
5:30 to 5:59 a.m.	416	7%	95	5%
6:00 to 6:29 a.m.	415	7%	249	13%
6:30 to 6:59 a.m.	658	11%	119	6%
7:00 to 7:29 a.m.	923	15%	186	10%
7:30 to 7:59 a.m.	1,191	20%	233	12%
8:00 to 8:29 a.m.	548	9%	205	11%
8:30 to 8:59 a.m.	218	4%	100	5%
9:00 to 9:59 a.m.	381	6%	274	15%
10:00 to 10:59 a.m.	135	2%	52	3%
11:00 to 11:59 a.m.	93	2%	17	1%
12:00 noon to 3:59 p.m.	258	4%	71	4%
4:00 to 11:59 p.m.	349	6%	100	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,981</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,865</b>	<b>100%</b>
<i>Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates.</i>				

**Commute Patterns**

Table V-8 shows where South Central residents—that includes both Las Animas and Huerfano Counties—are employed. The table shows that 33 percent of South Central residents living in the South Central area work in Trinidad. Another 14 percent of residents work in Walsenburg. Approximately three percent of residents reported traveling to Pueblo for employment. Another two percent of residents reported traveling to La Veta, and another two percent of residents reported traveling to Aguilar.



<b>Table V-8 Residents by Place of Employment</b>		
<b>Area of Work</b>	<b>South Central Residents</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Trinidad, CO	1,859	33%
Walsenburg, CO	759	14%
Pueblo, CO	164	3%
La Veta, CO	136	2%
Aguilar, CO	121	2%
Raton, NM	75	1%
Colorado Springs, CO	64	1%
Denver, CO	64	1%
Alamosa, CO	42	1%
Aurora, CO	41	1%
All Other Locations	2,236	40%

Source: LEHD; LSC, 2013.

Table V-9 shows where South Central workers live. The table show the largest percentage (29 percent) of workers are from Trinidad. Approximately nine percent come from Denver. Another seven percent come from Walsenburg.

<b>Table V-9 Workers by Place of Residence</b>		
<b>Area of Residence</b>	<b>South Central Workers</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Trinidad, CO	2,167	29%
Denver, CO	697	9%
Walsenburg, CO	543	7%
Aguilar, CO	399	5%
Colorado Springs, CO	367	5%
Pueblo, CO	319	4%
Raton, NM	105	1%
Aurora, CO	70	1%
Santa Fe, CO	65	1%
Lakewood, CO	59	1%
All Other Locations	2,588	35%

Source: LEHD; LSC, 2013.

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# Transit Need Assessment

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## INTRODUCTION

In order to evaluate various service alternatives, it is important to have a methodology to estimate transit demand as a function of demographics, economics, and service characteristics. This chapter describes the development of four models used for the South Central study area which were used in the identification of transit service alternatives.

- Greatest Transit Needs Index Model
- Fixed-Route Demand Model
- Commuter Demand Analysis
- Annual Average Daily Traffic
- TCRP Rural Demand Methodology

## GREATEST TRANSIT NEEDS

The “greatest transit need” is defined as those areas in the South Central study area with the highest density of zero-vehicle households, older adults, people with disabilities, and below-poverty populations. This information was used in the development of service alternatives and the identification of appropriate service constraints.

### Methodology

The American Community Survey (ACS) and US Census data were used to calculate the greatest transit need. The categories used for the calculation were zero-vehicle households, older adult population, disabled population, and below-poverty population. Using these categories, LSC developed a “transit need index” to determine the greatest transit need. The density of the population for each US Census block group within each category was calculated, placed in numerical order, and divided into five segments. Five segments were chosen to reflect a reasonable range. Each segment contained an approximately equal number of US Census block groups to provide equal representation.

## *Transit Need Assessment*

Census block groups in the segment with the lowest densities were given a score of 1. The tracts in the segment with the next lowest densities were given a score of 2. This process continued for the remainder of the block groups. The census tracts in the segment with the highest densities were given a score of 5. This scoring was completed for each of the categories (zero-vehicle households, older adult population, disabled population, and below-poverty population). After each of the census block groups was scored for the five categories, the five scores were added to achieve an overall score. Table VI-1 presents the rank for each census block group in the South Central study area. The scores range from 4 (lowest need) to 20 (highest need).

**Table VI-1  
Greatest Transit Need Model  
South Central Study Area**

County	Census Tract	Census Block Group	Land area (sq. miles)	Total Population ACS-2011 ACS	Total Population est. 2013*	Zero-Vehicle Households 2011 ACS				Total Number of Older Adults 65 & Over 2011 ACS				Mobility-Limited Population est. 2013*				Low-Income Population 2011 ACS				Overall Score (4-20)	Final (1-5)
						#	#	Density (Hhlds. Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank	#	Density (Persons Per Sq. Miles)	Rank		
Huerfano	9606	1	10.0	1,015	1,216	230	55	5.5	4	140	14.0	4	23	2.3	3	281	28.1	4	15	4			
	9606	2	16.1	856	809	427	23	1.4	4	103	6.4	3	59	3.7	4	237	14.7	4	15	4			
	9606	3	10.2	446	630	221	27	2.6	4	116	11.4	3	32	3.2	4	123	12.1	3	14	3			
	9606	4	5.8	1,017	820	469	95	16.3	4	201	34.4	4	31	5.4	4	281	48.2	4	16	4			
	9609	1	15.0	997	843	512	11	0.7	3	336	22.4	4	29	1.9	3	119	7.9	3	13	3			
	9609	2	440.3	1,401	1,056	689	41	0.1	2	649	1.5	2	36	0.1	1	168	0.4	2	7	2			
	9609	3	1,096.6	1,097	806	548	26	0.0	1	102	0.1	1	10	0.0	1	131	0.1	1	4	1			
	Las Animas	1	1	173.1	1,093	936	494	26	0.2	3	302	1.7	2	43	0.3	2	231	1.3	2	9	2		
		1	2	135.7	1,569	1,550	705	27	0.2	3	341	2.5	2	92	0.7	3	331	2.4	3	11	3		
1		3	0.7	1,204	1,162	438	82	124.4	5	116	176.0	5	95	144.5	5	254	385.6	5	20	5			
2		1	0.4	654	619	328	133	361.4	5	100	271.7	5	33	90.5	5	110	299.7	5	20	5			
2		2	1.0	810	730	313	0	0.0	1	64	66.0	4	18	19.1	4	137	140.9	4	13	3			
2		3	0.2	1,104	865	402	38	156.4	5	217	893.0	5	37	152.2	5	186	766.0	5	20	5			
3		1	148.0	885	815	394	18	0.1	2	216	1.5	2	26	0.2	2	100	0.7	2	8	2			
3		2	408.5	823	760	341	20	0.0	1	143	0.4	1	16	0.0	1	93	0.2	1	4	1			
3		3	77.5	689	711	254	1	0.0	1	68	0.9	1	18	0.2	2	78	1.0	2	6	2			
4		1	1.9	558	526	247	50	26.0	4	66	34.3	4	43	22.6	4	95	49.5	4	16	4			
4		2	36.2	688	744	340	0	0.0	1	158	4.4	3	18	0.5	2	118	3.2	3	9	2			
4		3	0.8	801	762	335	96	114.8	5	184	220.1	5	73	87.4	5	137	163.8	5	20	5			
5		1	0.3	1,128	798	431	30	101.0	5	72	242.4	5	18	59.2	5	323	1086.1	5	20	5			
5		2	27.9	1,047	1,110	394	29	1.0	3	257	9.2	3	62	2.2	3	299	10.7	3	12	3			
8		1	3,458.2	887	800	369	14	0.0	1	220	0.1	1	9	0.0	1	45	0.0	1	4	1			
8		2	61.3	568	624	223	9	0.1	2	75	1.2	2	48	0.8	3	29	0.5	2	9	2			
8		3	247.8	1,041	551	348	26	0.1	2	131	0.5	1	20	0.1	1	53	0.2	1	5	1			
<b>Study Area TOTAL:</b>			<b>6,373.5</b>	<b>22,378</b>	<b>20,241</b>	<b>9,452</b>	<b>877</b>		<b>9.3%</b>	<b>4,377</b>		<b>19.6%</b>	<b>890</b>		<b>4.4%</b>	<b>3,958</b>		<b>17.7%</b>					

Note:\* Mobility-Limited Population is not currently available in the five-year ACS data, hence the 2000 US Census data were used and projected to 2013.

Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 2000 US Census Bureau, LSC 2013.

**Results**

Figure VI-1 presents the South Central study area’s US Census block groups with the greatest transit need, along with the transit need index. Five block groups were determined to have the greatest transit needs based on zero-vehicle households, older adult population, disabled population, and below-poverty population. Table VI-2 presents information on these five block groups. As shown in Figure VI-1, the greatest transit need is mainly in downtown Trinidad followed by areas in the northern portion of Walsenburg.

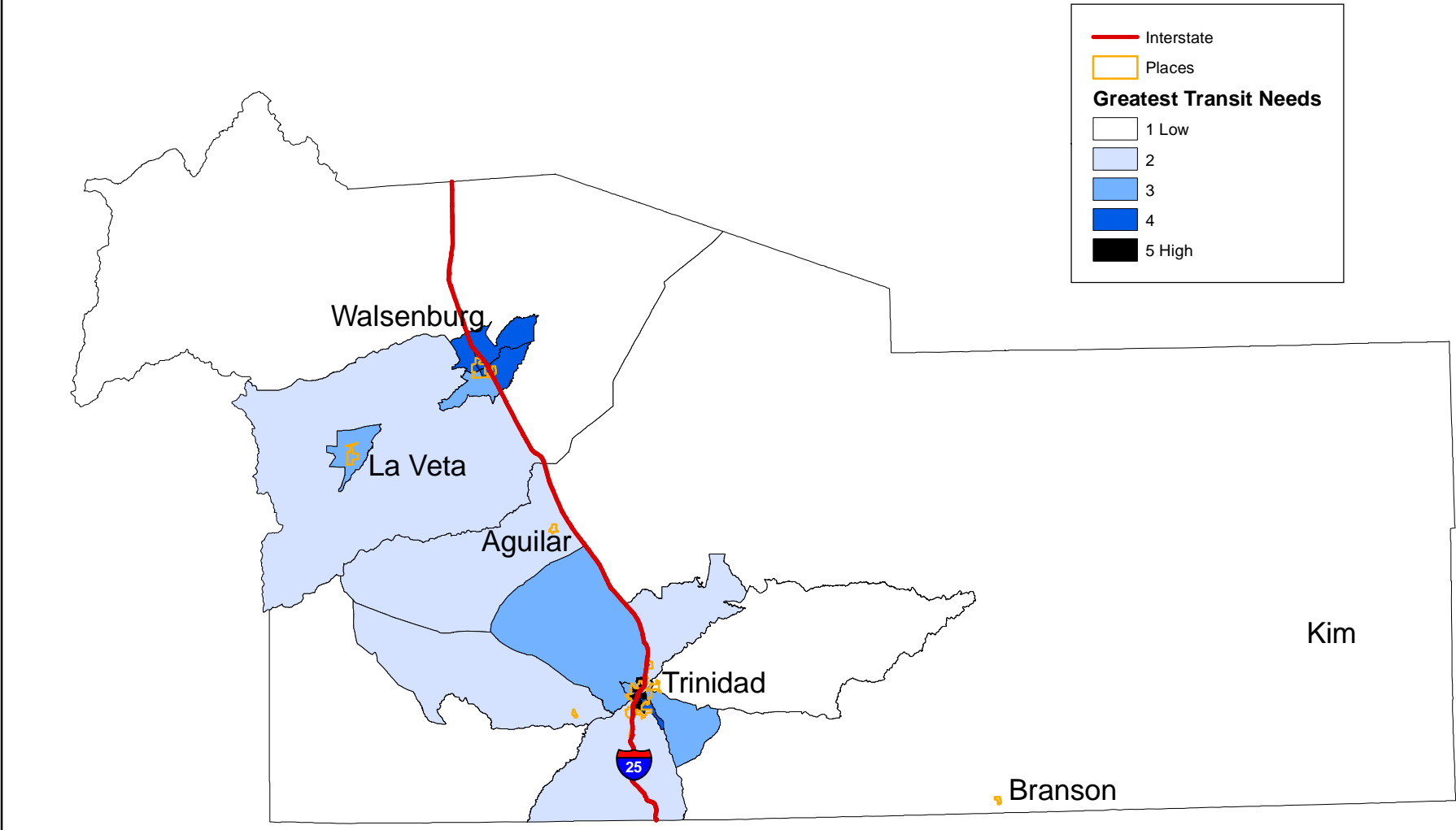
Table VI-2 Census Block Groups with Greatest Transit Need				
County	Census Tracts	Census Block Groups	Overall Score	Community
Las Animas	1	3	20	Northern portion of Trinidad
Las Animas	2	1	20	Central portion of Trinidad
Las Animas	2	3	20	Northern portion of Trinidad
Las Animas	4	3	20	Southern portion of Trinidad
Las Animas	5	1	20	Central portion of Trinidad
Las Animas	4	1	16	Southern portion of Trinidad
Huerfano	9606	4	16	Northern portion of Walsenburg
Huerfano	9606	1	15	Southern portion of Walsenburg
Huerfano	9606	2	15	Northern portion of Walsenburg

*Source: LSC, 2013.*

By identifying those areas with a high need for public transportation, LSC was able to uncover a pattern for the areas with the highest propensity to use transit service. As LSC examines service alternatives, Figure VI-1 can be used in the analysis to ensure that areas with a high transit need would be adequately served. Those US Census block groups not scoring in the highest category, but still having a high score, could still be considered a high priority for transit service.



Figure VI-1  
Greatest Transit Needs



## **FIXED-ROUTE MODEL**

In order to analyze whether a fixed route/deviated fixed route could be effective in serving the community and the ridership estimate that can be expected from such a service, LSC created a fixed-route demand model. This model was useful in exploring various fixed-route service alternatives and estimating ridership based on the planned route structure and headways. The model format is based on household vehicle ownership, average walking distance to bus stops, and frequency of operation. The basic approach is described in the paper *Demand Estimating Model for Transit Route and System Planning in Small Urban Areas, Transportation Research Board, 730, 1979*. This model incorporates factors for walking distance, distance traveled on the bus, and frequency of service or headway.

LSC created an ideal fixed-route model based on several assumptions. The assumptions included the headways, the destinations of the route structure throughout the community, and access to the transit routes. Based on these assumptions, LSC generated the estimated demand for an ideal fixed-route service. LSC used 60-minute headways on all routes, an average walking distance to the route of 500 feet, and 100 percent of all households having access to transit. These data are shown in Table VI-3. The model generated 157 daily trips and approximately 39,200 annual trips, as presented in Table VI-3.

This fixed-route model was used to estimate ridership for the alternate service concepts. The alternate concepts may be incorporated into the model by changing the percentage of households served by transit, the walking distance, and frequency of service.

**Table VI-3**

**Ideal Fixed-Route Demand Model - South Central Area**

County	Census Tract	Census Block Group	Total # of Hhlds 2011 ACS	# of Hhlds with		% of Hhlds with Transit Access	Hhlds Served by Transit		Basic Transit Trip Rates		Walk Distance (ft)	Walk Factor		Headway (min)	Headway Factor		Daily Transit Trips		Daily Trip # of	
				0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto	0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto		0 Auto	1 Auto	0 Auto	1 Auto		
Huerfano	9606	1	230	55	90	100%	55	90	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	6	2	8	
	9606	2	427	23	303	100%	23	303	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	6	9	
	9606	3	221	27	99	100%	27	99	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	2	5	
	9606	4	469	95	128	100%	95	128	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	11	3	13	
	9609	1	512	11	196	100%	11	196	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	1	4	5	
	9609	2	689	41	192	100%	41	192	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	5	4	9	
	9609	3	548	26	90	100%	26	90	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	2	5	
Las Animas	1	1	494	26	134	100%	26	134	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	3	6	
	1	2	705	27	180	100%	27	180	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	4	7	
	1	3	438	82	120	100%	82	120	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	9	2	12	
	2	1	328	133	111	100%	133	111	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	15	2	17	
	2	2	313	0	76	100%	0	76	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	0	2	2	
	2	3	402	38	122	100%	38	122	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	4	2	7	
	3	1	394	18	134	100%	18	134	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	2	3	5	
	3	2	341	20	88	100%	20	88	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	2	2	4	
	3	3	254	1	74	100%	1	74	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	0	2	2	
	4	1	247	50	71	100%	50	71	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	6	1	7	
	4	2	340	0	38	100%	0	38	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	0	1	1	
	4	3	335	96	44	100%	96	44	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	11	1	12	
	5	1	431	30	223	100%	30	223	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	5	8	
	5	2	394	29	153	100%	29	153	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	3	6	
8	1	369	14	53	100%	14	53	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	2	1	3		
8	2	223	9	47	100%	9	47	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	1	1	2		
8	3	348	26	89	100%	26	89	0.15	0.02	500	1.25	1.20	60	0.60	0.85	3	2	5		
Subtotal			9,452	877	2,855		877	2,855											Estimated Daily Ridership	157

Source: LSC, 2013.

**COMMUTER DEMAND ANALYSIS**

The demand estimation technique established by the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Project B-36 involves applying a trip rate to the number of workers traveling to employment centers for work. The resulting formula is as follows:

*Commuter trips by transit from Place A to Place B per Day = Proportion using transit for Commuter Trips from Place A to Place B x Number of Commuters x 2*

*Proportion using Transit for Commuter Trips from Place A to Place B = 0.024 + (0.0000056 x Workers Commuting from Place A to Place B) - (0.00029 x Distance in Miles from Place A to Place B) + 0.015 (if the Urban Place is a state capital)*

*Percent Transit for Commuter trips from a Place A to Place B = 0.024+ (0.0056\* workers in the central place) - (0.00029\* distance in miles) + 0.015 if the central place is a state capital*

Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data were used to determine how many individuals were commuting from the South Central study area to various employment places in the region. Table VI-4 shows this number with the associated demand estimate.

<b>Table VI-4 Daily Commute Demand from the Study Area to Employment Places</b>			
<b>Place</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent Transit</b>	<b>Demand</b>
Trinidad, CO	1,859	3%	105
Walsenburg, CO	759	2%	35
Pueblo, CO	164	1%	2
La Veta, CO	136	1%	4
Aguilar, CO	121	2%	6
Raton, NM	75	1%	2

*Source: LEHD; LSC, 2013.*

As shown in Table VI-4, transit service from the study area to areas of Trinidad and Walsenburg shows a greater potential for commuter service. A total of 105

daily trips are predicted for service from the study area into Trinidad, while 35 daily trips are estimated for a service from the study area into Walsenburg. Based on the demand shown in Table VI-4, providing commuter service to Pueblo and Raton, New Mexico does not seem viable at this time.

## **ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (AADT)**

Traffic counts on Colorado state highways were conducted by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) in 2011. The AADT is the total number of vehicles on a road segment of a highway throughout the year divided by 365 days. The resulting AADT counts compensate for seasonal influence, weekly variation, and other variables which may be present. Figure VI-2 shows the AADT for the study area. As illustrated in the figure, the highest average daily traffic is along Interstate 25. The highest average daily traffic is seen coming from Pueblo to Walsenburg. The traffic then splits going to either Trinidad/south of Las Animas County or to Alamosa. Please note that the AADT does not account for much of through traffic that goes through the study area.

## **Mode Split Analysis**

The LSC team developed a mode split analysis to estimate the number of transit trips along the major highways. The mode split analysis was based on CDOT 2011 traffic counts on the major state highways to determine the travel patterns (Figure VI-2). The LSC team assumed a 0.5 percent mode split to determine the number of transit trips, based on the traffic counts of each major roadway with a reported average daily traffic. Figure VI-3 presents the results of this analysis by corridor for 2011. The numbers represent the daily one-way ridership that can be expected along that segment of roadway. The highest traffic volumes are on Interstate 25 from Walsenburg to Pueblo and in Trinidad. This analysis gives the LSC team a basic understanding of the travel patterns in the region to which potential regional transit users would be attracted.

Figure VI-2  
Annual Average Daily Trips (AADTs)

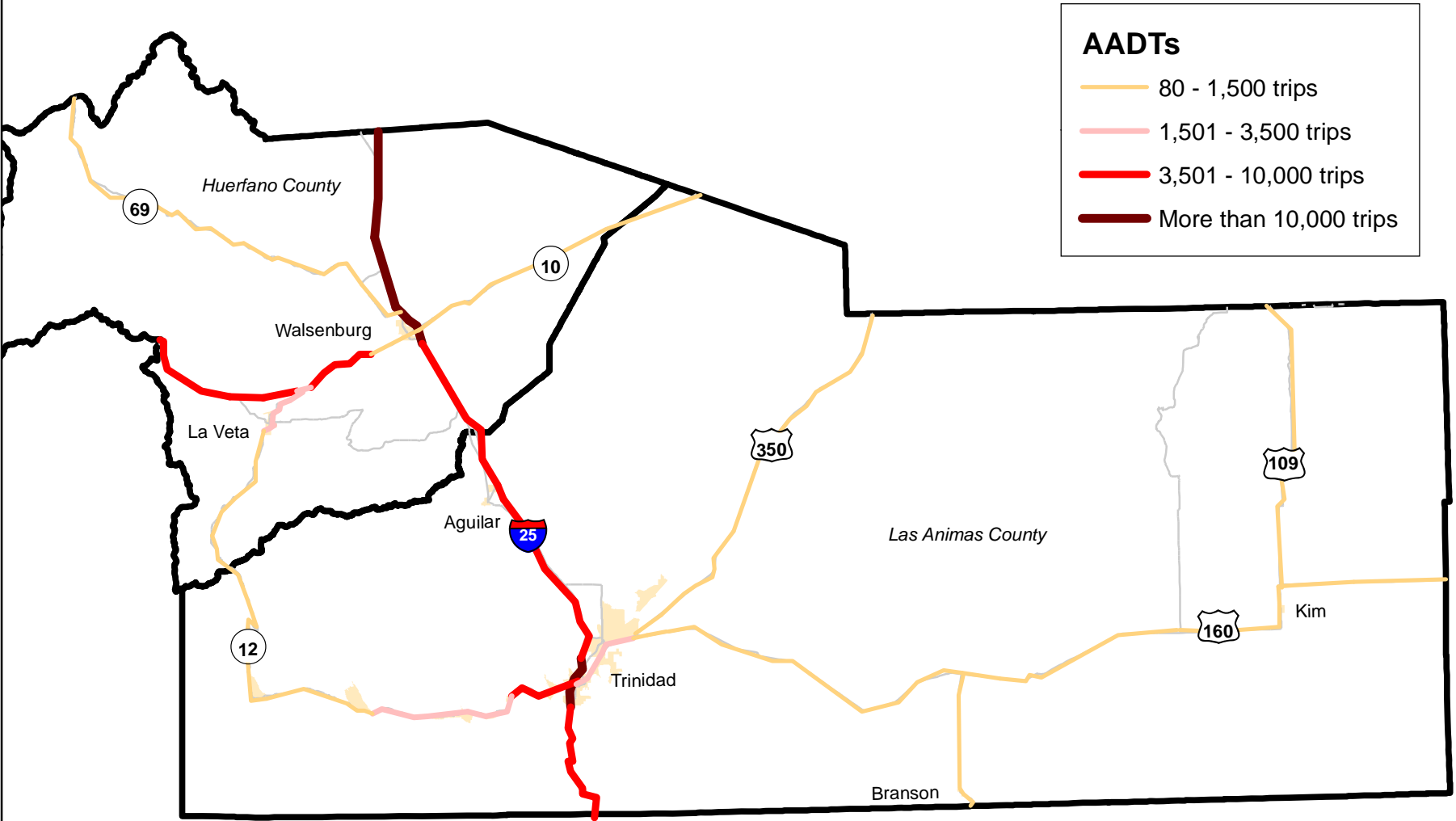
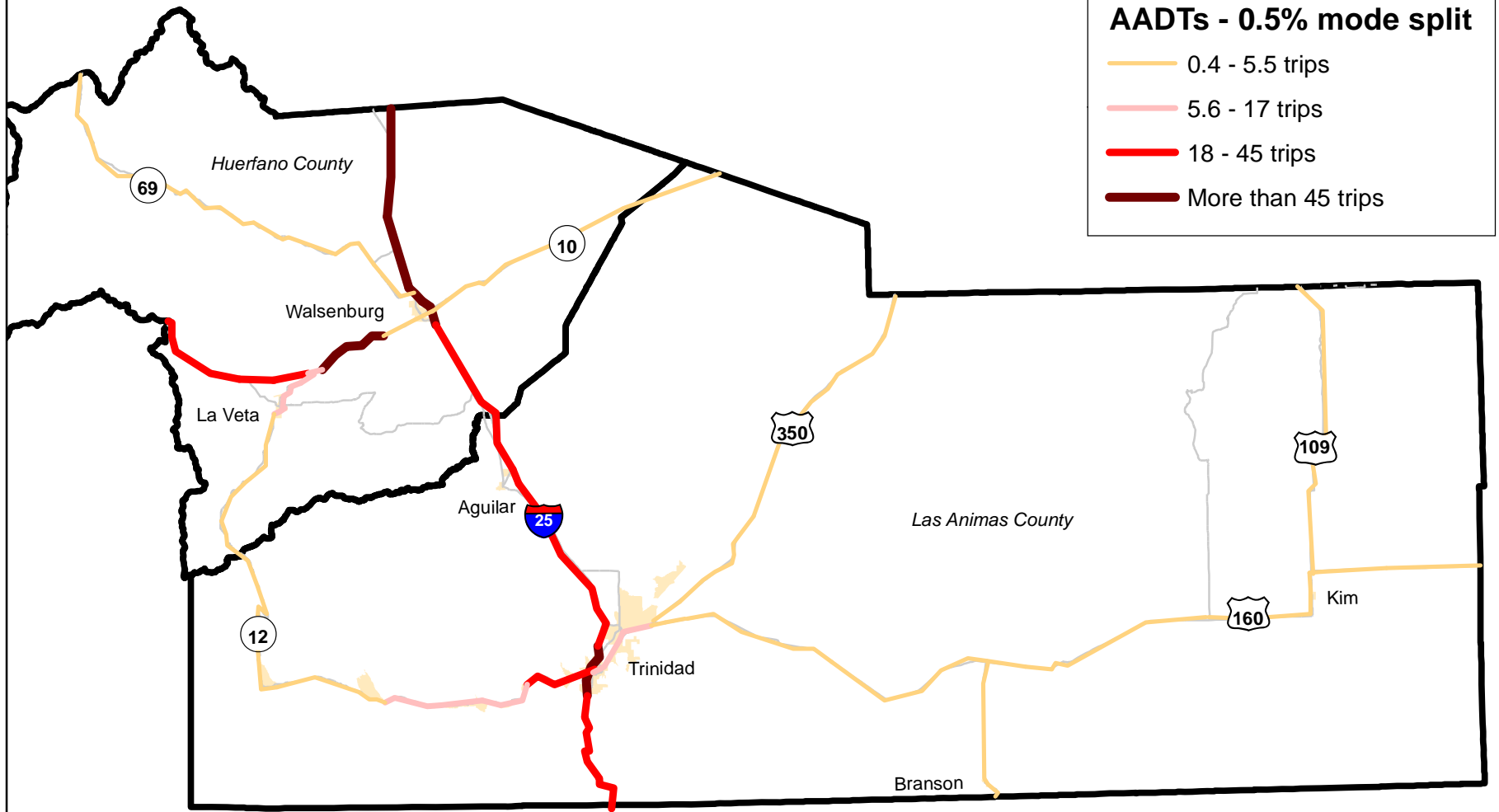
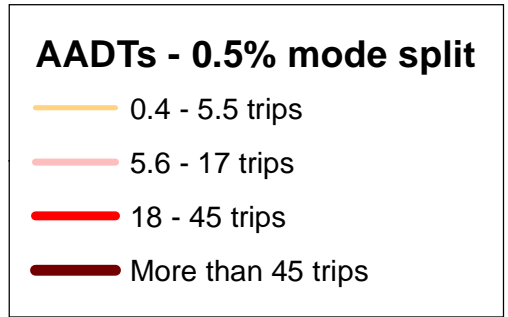


Figure VI-3  
Annual Average Daily Trips (AADTs)  
with 0.5% Mode Split



## **TCRP RURAL DEMAND METHODOLOGY**

### **Non-Program Trips**

TCRP rural demand methodology estimates demand for non-program trips. This method uses the elderly population, mobility-limited population, and low-income population to determine demand in an area. The methodology uses vehicle-miles per square mile which is then used to calculate demand by market segment.

A maximum level of service for the South Central area would be to serve every portion of the county 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. In order to calibrate the model to the existing service levels, LSC adjusted the vehicle-miles per square mile to 2,000 per year. The demand estimates for the South Central study area, based on the TCRP methodology, are provided in Table VI-5. The annual demand of 45,140 one-way passenger-trips is calibrated close to COG Transit's existing ridership.



Table VI-5 2007-2011 ACS Estimated Public Transit Demand using the TCRP Method South Central Study Area									
County	Census Tract	Block Group	Estimated Annual Passenger-Trip Demand					Estimated Daily Transit Demand	
			Elderly	Mobility-Limited	Elderly + Mobility-Limited	Low-Income	TOTAL	#	%
Huerfano	9606	1	790	100	890	1,180	2,070	8	4.6%
	9606	2	580	260	840	990	1,830	7	4.1%
	9606	3	650	140	790	520	1,310	5	2.9%
	9606	4	1,130	140	1,270	1,190	2,460	10	5.4%
	9609	1	1,890	130	2,020	500	2,520	10	5.6%
	9609	2	3,640	160	3,800	700	4,500	18	10.0%
	9609	3	570	40	610	550	1,160	5	2.6%
Las Animas	1	1	1,700	190	1,890	970	2,860	11	6.3%
	1	2	1,910	400	2,310	1,390	3,700	15	8.2%
	1	3	640	410	1,050	1,050	2,100	8	4.7%
	2	1	530	140	670	440	1,110	4	2.5%
	2	2	350	80	430	560	990	4	2.2%
	2	3	1,250	170	1,420	810	2,230	9	4.9%
	3	1	1,210	110	1,320	420	1,740	7	3.9%
	3	2	800	70	870	390	1,260	5	2.8%
	3	3	380	80	460	330	790	3	1.8%
	4	1	380	190	570	410	980	4	2.2%
	4	2	890	80	970	500	1,470	6	3.3%
	4	3	1,050	320	1,370	590	1,960	8	4.3%
	5	1	410	80	490	1,370	1,860	7	4.1%
5	2	1,440	270	1,710	1,260	2,970	12	6.6%	
8	1	1,240	40	1,280	190	1,470	6	3.3%	
8	2	420	210	630	120	750	3	1.7%	
8	3	740	90	830	220	1,050	4	2.3%	
<b>Total</b>			<b>24,590</b>	<b>3,900</b>	<b>28,490</b>	<b>16,650</b>	<b>45,140</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, LSC 2013.

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## Coordination Strategies

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Coordination is a technique for better resource management in which improved organization strategies are applied to achieve greater cost-effectiveness in service delivery. Coordination is about shared power, which means shared responsibility, shared management, and shared funding.

Coordination of transportation services is best seen as a process in which two or more organizations interact to jointly accomplish their transportation objectives. Coordination is like many other political processes in that it involves power and control over resources and coordination can be subject to the usual kinds of political problems and pressures, such as competing personalities and changing environments.

Coordination can be used to improve transportation system performance by eliminating duplicate efforts and improving the efficiency of transportation operations. Coordinating transportation means doing better with existing resources. It requires working together with people from different agencies and backgrounds. Coordination has been said to be the best way to stretch scarce resources and improve mobility for everyone.

The fundamental goals of coordinated transportation systems are to increase the number of people served and the number of rides provided with existing resources. Coordination achieves these goals through better resource management.

### HISTORY OF COORDINATION

The concept of coordination has been promoted since the late 1960s; however, it was not until recently that a real push for coordination, emphasized at the federal level, has been observed. More and more communities are realizing the scarcity of resources (fuel, vehicles, drivers, and funding) and that the cost-effective and efficient delivery of services is vital if local communities are to continue to ensure

## *Coordination Strategies*

access to vital human services, employment, recreation, and other opportunities and needs. Coordination should be looked at as a step-wise effort. It takes a firm understanding of local needs and resources to develop a plan that, in the end, increases the mobility of residents.

### **Levels of Coordination**

There are varying levels of coordination across a broad spectrum of operating scenarios. Levels can range from very low levels of coordination, such as sharing rides on several different vehicles, to intensive levels such as shared vehicles, shared maintenance, a brokerage established for all agencies, and others. It is important that the stakeholders and the public in Las Animas and Huerfano Counties understand that coordination of services generally may take some time and effort on the part of the local human service agencies and providers.

Coordination has been interpreted as everything from telephone conversations to transfer of vehicle ownership. There are four different phases or levels of coordination with regard to the shared use and efficient operation of equipment and facilities. These levels are defined below:

- a. Communication involves recognition and understanding of a problem and discussion of possible solutions. This improves the working relationships among various organizations that are in a position to influence transportation developments within their particular jurisdiction.
- b. Cooperation involves the active working together of individuals in some loose association in a cooperative way. The individuals or individual agencies retain their separate identities.
- c. Coordination involves bringing together independent agencies to act together in a concerted way, to provide for a smooth interaction of separate units of a transportation system. In coordination, the primary concern is in regard to common funds, equipment, facilities, or operations. Members or agencies preserve their separate identities.
- d. Consolidation involves joining together or merging agencies for mutual advantage. In the case of transportation services, consolidation is used in reference to a fully integrated transportation system in which the individual entities have been combined or consolidated into one integrated public transportation system. Individual agency identity for the purpose of transportation is no longer maintained.

## Resource Management

The first set of resource management objectives, targeting greater efficiencies, focuses on reducing duplication and fragmentation in operating, administering, and funding transportation services. Specific strategies for achieving these objectives include *reducing* the following:

- Operating and administrative costs.
- Capital costs on vehicles and other equipment.
- Other operating costs such as maintenance, fuel, and insurance.

The second set of resource management objectives—targeting more productive or effective services—focuses on improving acceptability, accessibility, adaptability, affordability, and availability of transportation services within the area. Specific strategies for achieving these objectives include *increasing* the following:

- Days and hours of service.
- Service area.
- The different kinds of persons and trip purposes served.
- The accessibility of vehicles and facilities for people with special needs.
- Public information concerning services.
- Funding available to help pay the cost of the service.

Table VII-1 shows a full range of possible coordination activities in an abbreviated format. Additional descriptions of many of the coordination activities follows in the next section.

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**Table VII-1  
Possible Coordination Activities**

<b>Concept</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Joint Public Relations/Marketing Concepts</b>	
Inclusive Brochures	Like a referral or a recommendation, information about COG Transit is included on an agency's brochure. This sort of coordination can be accomplished generally cost-free since it is limited to agencies already printing service brochures. There is no need for any management or oversight of this effort, and agencies have the freedom to choose which agencies to reference on their own brochures.
Resource Manual	This would describe all of the services available in the area. Such a manual could be distributed to transit riders, transit agencies, and other human service agencies serving transit-dependent clients. This would contain more information than a brochure and might be printed in a full-sized format.
Website	A website can serve both as a marketing tool and as a warehouse of information for potential riders. The design of the site should reflect the theme of the common brochure, but it could also provide access to all of the information in the resource manual.
Information Phone Line - Call Center	A shared informational telephone line provides potential users with the most convenient access to information on all transportation services in the area. The creation of a shared phone line is the most extensive of the efforts suggested under joint public relations because it would require a dedicated and knowledgeable customer service representative to answer the phone line. The phone number for this line could be distributed with all informational and marketing materials regarding transportation services.
<b>Joint Technical Assistance, Training, and Planning</b>	
Joint Grant Applications	This is where transportation providers in the area agree that they will submit a single grant to the state and/or FTA for transit funding for their capital and operational needs.
Joint Training Programs	Joint training programs between agencies—in everything from preventative maintenance to safe wheelchair tie-down procedures—can lead to more highly skilled employees. Joint training can lead to reduced training costs with agencies that each possess a specialized trainer who can be responsible for one or more disciplines. For example, one agency could provide Passenger Assistance Training, and one agency could specialize in preventative maintenance training, etc. Agencies can also purchase special training from reputable organizations and allow other agencies to attend.
Joint Planning and Decision Making	This involves agencies working cooperatively with either a local provider or other similar agencies to make known the needs of their clients and become involved in the local planning of services. For example, several local human service agencies may meet with local transit planners in an area to develop operations plans which attempt to meet the needs of the agencies' clients.
Sharing Expertise	Similar to sharing training resources, agencies can share their expertise in such things as grant writing skills, computer skills, and general assistance in operations of transportation services (such as tips for dispatching or accounting procedures). Sharing expertise may be something as general as a list of personnel across the area who have some expertise in a particular field which may benefit another agency. A "yellow pages" of the subject matter expert made available to each agency may be helpful in operating transportation service.
Coordinating Council	A coordinating council is made up of myriad agencies and partners with a common goal of coordinating transportation resources. This group differs from a coalition in that it is primarily made up of agencies which have a need for service and other groups (such as local municipalities) specifically formed to accomplish a strategic goal (such as to implement a new service). The coordinating council acts similar to a Transportation Advisory Committee in either a local or regional area.
<b>Vehicle and Vehicle-Related Concepts</b>	
Joint Procurement of Vehicles, Insurance, Maintenance, Hardware/Parts, and Software	Joint procurement, or bulk purchases, is a cost-effective approach to increase purchasing power. Joint maintenance and fuel purchase is being more widely used across the country, especially given the rising costs of parts and fuel. Shared maintenance can be done quite easily between agencies in a given locale. Many times, human service providers and other local providers contract out maintenance to a local vendor. While there may be very few qualified maintenance professionals, it may allow a competitive process between agencies to do fleet maintenance between multiple agencies. Insurance pooling is likely the most difficult joint procurement possibility.
Provide Vehicles	This strategy involves an agency providing a used vehicle—either one that is being replaced or retired—to another agency. This can be done either through a transfer of title, donation for a small price (in the case of a retired vehicle), or sale to a local agency in desperate need of a replacement vehicle.
Vehicle Sharing	This level of coordination requires that agencies own and operate vehicles. Memoranda of Understanding or Joint Agreements are needed for this element to work properly. Agencies that operate vehicles are able to share those vehicles with other agencies in a variety of circumstances, such as when one agency has a vehicle mechanical breakdown, when vehicles aren't in use by one agency, or when capacity for a specific trip is not available.
<b>Service Concepts</b>	
Contracts for Service	This is contracting with another human service agency or a public provider to provide needed trips. This can be done occasionally on an as-needed basis or as part of scheduled service. One example is a local Head Start contracting for service with a local public provider. This contract revenue can then be used as local match for the local public provider, using the same drivers and vehicles as used previously.
Joint Dispatching and Scheduling	A single office would oversee the dispatching of vehicles and the scheduling of reservations for all of the participating transportation entities to provide transportation service within a geographic area.
Consolidated Service	A consolidated transportation program occurs when all transportation services are provided by a single agency. This includes the vehicles, facilities, administration functions, maintenance, and operations.

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Table VII-2 shows qualitative measures of effort (input) and results (outputs) for each of the coordination activities. Effort includes the ease and cost of implementation. Results include both the dimensions of usefulness to current riders as well as the ability to attract additional riders.

Table VII-2 Comparison of Strategies						
Strategy	Benefit to Users	Ease of Implementation	Implementation Cost	Operating Cost	Productivity Improvements	Cost Savings
Inclusive Brochures	◐	●	\$	\$	○	○
Common Brochures	◐	●	\$	\$	○	○
Information Phone Line - Call Center	●	◐	\$\$	\$\$	○	○
Website	◐	◐	\$\$	\$	○	○
Resource Manual	●	●	\$\$	\$\$	○	○
Joint Grant Applications	○	●	\$	\$	○	◐
Sharing Expertise	○	●	\$	\$	◐	◐
Coordinating Council	○	●	\$	\$	○	○
Joint Procurement	○	◐	\$	\$	○	◐
Vehicle Sharing	◐	○	\$	\$	◐	◐
Contracts for Service	◐	◐	\$	\$	◐	◐
Joint Dispatching and Scheduling	●	○	\$\$	\$\$\$	●	●
Consolidated Service	●	○	\$\$\$	\$	●	●
Legend:	○	Lowest		\$	Lowest Cost	
	◐	Moderate		\$\$	Moderate Cost	
	●	Greatest		\$\$\$	Highest Cost	

## **JOINT PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING**

### **Inclusive Brochures**

In its most basic form, a joint public relations effort and shared marketing materials would consist of the inclusion of essential information for services on one another's brochures. For example, each agency could include information about COG Transit. This sort of coordination can be accomplished generally cost-free since it is limited to agencies already printing service brochures. There is no need for any management or oversight of this effort, and agencies would have the freedom to choose which agencies with which to coordinate.

### Benefits

- Increases the visibility of each organization in the brochure.
- Enables customers another means of finding the service they need.
- Educates customers to be better consumers.

### Implementation Steps

- Obtain permission to use another agency's logo and contact information.
- Include the logo and contact information in your agency's next brochure.
- Print and distribute the revised brochure.

### **Common Brochures**

A more involved option is to create a single brochure describing the different services available in the region. This common marketing material would distill the information of each provider into a brochure designed for broad distribution to potential users. Additionally, a common brochure may pave the way for other marketing opportunities.

The creation of a common brochure will require making numerous decisions about what information will be included and how it will be presented. Additional meetings of agency representatives may be required to reach an agreement on the general purpose and design of the brochure.

The cost of a common brochure is variable based on decisions about the quality of printing and level of distribution. The design of a common brochure would

## *Coordination Strategies*

require more time than adding additional information to individual brochures. The cost of a common brochure distributed over all participating agencies would reduce the individual cost for each agency.

A Resource Manual is a variation on the concept of the common brochure. A Resource Manual would differ in the amount of detail, the intended audience, and the use/storage. Normally a Resource Manual is the most comprehensive of the joint publications and for a transit agency would include detailed information such as operating hours, operating rules/schedules /routes (as appropriate), and possibly a brief listing of contact staff at each organization. In terms of the audience, it would be intended primarily for customers, but also serve as a staff-to-staff reference. Finally, it is usually printed in an 8.5 x 11 inch or similar format and is often used only as a desk reference, as opposed to the brochures which are pocket-sized.

### Benefits

- Increases the visibility of each organization in the brochure.
- Enables customers another means of finding the service they need.
- Educates customers to be better consumers.
- Provides more information about each organization than an Inclusive Brochure.

### Implementation Steps

- Agree which agency will lead the creation of the common brochure, and what roles each agency will fulfill in the creation of the common brochure.
- Draft the common brochure based on information provided by each agency.
- Allow review of the draft brochure by all participating agencies.
- Finalize the brochure for printing based on review comments.
- Print the brochure, distribute copies among agencies.
- Each agency then distributes the brochure to their customers.

### **Website**

Once a common brochure, or a more comprehensive resource manual, has been created, it will be possible to create a common website to post this information. A website can serve both as a marketing tool and as a warehouse of information for

potential riders. The design of the site should reflect the theme of the common brochure, and it could also provide access to all of the information available in a resource manual.

### Benefits

- Increases the visibility of each organization on the website.
- Enables customers another means of finding the service they need.
- Educates customers to be better consumers.
- Provides more information about each organization than if separate sites.

### Implementation Steps

- Agree which agency will lead the creation of the website, and what roles each agency will fulfill in its creation.
- Draft the content for the website based on information provided by each agency.
- Allow review of the draft website by all participating agencies.
- Finalize the website based on review comments.
- Make the website available on a “beta” basis to customers and make limited efforts to put out notices about its availability.
- Debug as needed for a month or two, then increase awareness further.

### **One-Call Center**

A shared informational telephone line provides potential users with the most convenient access to information on all transportation services in the region. One possibility is creating a new entity or using an existing agency like COG Transit that will fill a mobility manager position for the South Central area.

### Benefits

- The administrative costs for the participating agencies will be reduced.
- A one-call center is the first step to centralized dispatching.
- Users will only need to call one telephone number to obtain all the transportation information they need, thereby improving customer service.

### Implementation Steps

- The agencies should meet to determine which agency will house the call center, how the call center will be funded, and what information will be provided to customers.
- The telephone line should be set up and the needed communication equipment should be purchased.
- A marketing brochure should be developed detailing the purpose of the call center, hours of service, and telephone number.

## **JOINT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, TRAINING, AND PLANNING**

### **Joint Grant Applications**

The transit and human service providers in the region should work together to coordinate grant submissions. Grants should be coordinated so that duplication of requests is minimized. This will look more favorable to FTA, CDOT, and grant reviewers.

### Benefits

- The amount of time that each agency needs to spend in developing a grant on their own will be reduced.
- Agencies are able to use each other's knowledge in developing a grant.
- There is a greater likelihood of funding received if the applications show coordination among providers.

### Implementation Steps

- Agencies should review their needs and create a list of capital and operational requirements.
- Agencies should itemize their lists and determine a priority of needs.
- The grant should be developed based on the priority lists.
- The grant should be approved by each of the agencies' boards/councils, along with approval of any local match funding.
- The agencies should ensure each grant references the additional agencies'/ providers' grants for the corridor.

### **Driver Recruiting, Screening, and Training**

Joint training programs between transportation agencies—in everything from preventative maintenance to safe wheelchair tiedown procedures—can lead to more highly skilled employees. Joint training can also lead to reduced training



costs with agencies that each possess a specialized trainer who can be responsible for one or more disciplines. For example, one agency could provide Passenger Service & Safety (PASS), one agency could specialize in preventative maintenance training, etc. The agencies could also purchase special training from reputable organizations/companies and allow other agencies' employees to attend. Training costs should be shared among the agencies.

### Benefits

- Each agency's training budget will be reduced.
- The drivers and staff have more opportunities to learn from each other.

### Implementation Steps

- The training needs of each agency's staff should be identified.
- The training courses that meet the greatest needs should be determined.
- The agency, organization, or company that could provide the needed training should be identified.
- State and federal grants that could assist in paying for the training should be determined.

### **Joint Planning and Decision Making**

Joint planning and decision making involves agencies working cooperatively with either other similar agencies or a local provider to make known the needs of their clients and become involved in the local planning of services. For example, COG Transit could meet with other transportation providers in the area to develop operations plans that attempt to meet the needs of the other agencies' clients, while also extending the effectiveness of their own service(s).

### Benefits

- The need for expensive planning documents for each transit agency will be reduced.
- More complex coordination in capital development and operational functions will be allowed.
- The duplication of services among the coordinating agencies will be reduced.

### Implementation Steps

- The agencies should meet with local transportation planners to develop a scope of work for the planning process.
- The scope of work should identify the goals and objectives.
- A time line should be developed for the completion of the planning document.
- The planning document should develop recommendations for making decisions about the operation of services, capital, funding, coordination process, and administration functions.

### **Sharing Expertise**

Similar to sharing training resources, agencies could share their expertise in such areas as grant writing, computer technology, and general assistance in operation of transportation services (such as tips for dispatching or accounting procedures). Sharing expertise may be as general as a list of personnel across the region who have some expertise in a particular field that may benefit another agency. A “yellow pages” of subject matter experts made available to each agency may be helpful in operating transportation service.

### Benefits

- The need for costly training sessions for drivers and staff will be reduced, thereby decreasing lost production time.
- Knowledge is passed on to other staff members and agencies, thereby increasing the efficiency of the region’s transportation providers.

### Implementation Steps

- The information, field of work, and expertise needed to operate an effective transit service should be identified.
- The individual in each agency who has expertise in each field of work should be determined.
- A yellow pages or contact list of the individuals in each agency who have expertise in certain fields of knowledge should be created.

### **Coordinating Council**

A coordinating council is made up of the various local agencies and partners with a common goal of coordinating transportation resources. This group differs from a coalition in the fact that a coordinating council is primarily made up of agencies which have a need for service and other groups (such as local municipalities)

specifically formed to accomplish a strategic goal (such as to implement a new service). A coalition is typically more of an advocacy organization and may not include those who are responsible for implementation.

### Benefits

- Allows for greater input from the key transportation agencies in the area.
- Allows members to share information and knowledge on a one-on-one basis.
- Provides greater opportunity to identify possible coordination actions.
- Increases the integration of transit planning within the region.

### Implementation Steps

- Agencies interested in being members of the council need to meet and develop by-laws for the council.
- Council members need to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair.
- Council members need to develop a mission statement, vision, goals, and objectives.
- Council members need to set a date for the monthly or quarterly meeting.

## **VEHICLE AND VEHICLE-RELATED COORDINATION**

### **Joint Procurement of Vehicles, Maintenance, and/or Parts**

Joint procurement (or bulk purchase) is a cost-effective approach to increasing purchasing power. Joint maintenance and fuel purchase is being more widely used across the country, especially given the rising costs of parts and fuel. Shared maintenance can be done quite easily between agencies in a given locale. Insurance pooling is likely the most difficult joint procurement possibility.

### Benefits

- Individual agency capital outlay will be reduced.
- An economy of scale in purchases will be created, thereby reducing the overall operational cost per agency.
- With a decrease in capital and maintenance costs, an agency may be able to shift funding from maintenance and capital to service hours, thereby increasing the level of service or operations of the transit system within the region.

### Implementation Steps

- The agencies need to meet to develop a basic understanding of how the procurement process will work.
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) should be developed and agreed upon.

### **Provide Vehicles**

An agency could provide a used vehicle—one that is either being replaced or retired—to another agency. This could be done either through a transfer of title, donation for a small price (in the case of a retired vehicle), or sale to a local agency in desperate need of a replacement vehicle.

### Benefits

- The capital outlay for the agency that obtains the used vehicle will be reduced.
- The need to retire older vehicles in the fleet will be reduced.
- Human service transportation providers will be allowed to obtain vehicles that they would otherwise not be able to purchase due to the cost of a new vehicle and the level of federal capital funding they are able to receive.

### Implementation Steps

- The agencies should meet to determine the procedures for transferring a vehicle from one agency to another, as well as the level of overall need for vehicles.
- The agencies that receive federally funded vehicles should review their fleet and determine which vehicles can be transferred to other agencies.
- The agencies that wish to receive vehicles should review their fleet needs.

### **Vehicle Sharing**

Vehicle sharing requires that agencies own and operate vehicles. Memoranda of Understanding or Joint Agreements are needed for this strategy to work properly. The agencies that operate vehicles are able to share those vehicles with other agencies in a variety of circumstances, such as when an agency vehicle has a mechanical breakdown or when capacity for a specific trip is at its maximum.

### Benefits

- The overall local capital outlay will be reduced.
- These funds could be shifted to cover operational costs or increase the level of service, depending on funding sources.

- These funds could also be used for capital funding for facilities, equipment, and other capital assets.

### Implementation Steps

- Agencies need to work closely together to develop MOUs and agreements on vehicle usage.
- Develop procedures, forms, and related materials to accommodate vehicle reservations, track mileage and use, assign refueling responsibilities, establish cleanliness standards/expectations, and specify incident/accident reporting requirements.

## **SERVICE COORDINATION**

### **Contracts for Service**

An agency/entity could contract with another agency/entity or another human service agency to provide needed trips. This could be done occasionally on an as-needed basis or as part of scheduled service. One example is other human service agencies in the South Central area contracting for service with COG Transit. Currently, COG Transit has an intergovernmental agreement with the Las Animas County Rehabilitation Center (LACRC) which is billed on a cost-per-trip basis. This could be set up as a contract for services.

### Benefits

- The amount of local match that can be used to pull additional state and federal funding for transit services into the region will be increased.
- The duplication of services in the region will be reduced, thereby creating an economy of scale and improving the overall transit performance level.

### Implementation Steps

- The agencies should meet to identify the needs and capacities of the contract parties.
- A contract should be developed detailing the responsibility of each party.

### **Centralized Functions (Reservations, Scheduling, Dispatching)**

A single office could oversee the dispatching of vehicles and the scheduling of reservations for all of the participating transportation agencies to provide transportation service within a geographic area.

## *Coordination Strategies*

### Benefits

- Duplication of administrative costs will be reduced, based on an economy of scale.
- Marketability of the region's transit service will be increased.
- Fleet coordination will be improved.

### Implementation Steps

- The agencies should meet to determine which agency will house the centralized reservations, scheduling, and dispatching or if a new entity would need to be created.
- Each agency's level of funding for the dispatching service cost should be identified.
- Intergovernmental agreements should be created detailing the responsibility of each agency.

## **Consolidated Transportation Program**

A consolidated transportation program occurs when all transportation services are provided by a single agency. This includes the vehicles, facilities, administration functions, maintenance, and operations.

### Benefits

- An economy of scale will be created; thereby reducing the cost per passenger, administrative costs, and operational costs.
- The level of local match funding available to obtain federal funding through contract services provided to other agencies in the region will be increased.
- The duplication of services and facilities will be reduced.

### Implementation Steps

- Intergovernmental agreements should be created detailing the level of service that will be provided by the single agency for the level of funding detailed in the contract.
- Each agency's council/board will need to approve the intergovernmental agreement.
- A new board should be created for the consolidated agency. The board should consist of the participating agencies and should oversee the service.
- All vehicles and facilities should be transferred to the consolidated agency.



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## CHAPTER VIII

# Service Alternatives

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### INTRODUCTION

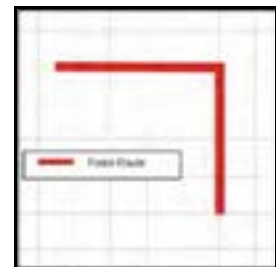
Chapter VIII examines the possible service alternatives for COG Transit. These potential service alternatives are based on origin and destination analysis performed in Chapter IV, the key stakeholder interviews, and input from the stakeholder meetings. The information in this chapter was presented to COG Transit staff and the stakeholder group for review and comment. The input received was then used to develop the preferred service alternative.

### TYPES OF TRANSIT SERVICE

The term “transit service” encompasses a wide range of alternatives. A number of other transit service alternatives exist, such as route-deviation service and flex route.

#### Fixed-Route Service

Fixed-route transit service fits the popular description of a bus system, with transit vehicles operating on specified routes and following set schedules. Specific transit stops are typically identified for the locations where passengers will be picked up and dropped off. Routes are usually laid out in either a radial or grid pattern.



*Fixed-Route Service*

In a radial route structure, all of the routes originate from a common point and extend to outlying areas. The central location serves as a transfer point and is frequently located at a destination with high transit activity. In many communities, this is the central business district or downtown area.

In a grid route structure, all of the routes function along a two-way direction (either north/south or east/west). The routes are normally spaced at equal distances if the roadway structure permits. This structure has no center transfer

## *Service Alternatives*

location. The transfers are conducted at the intersections of the routes. This type of service is mainly used in urban areas where the population density is greater and equally distributed across the area.

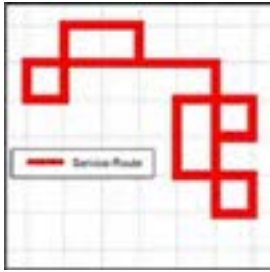
Fixed-route service is particularly convenient for passengers without disabilities. Research has shown that fixed-route passengers are willing to walk up to one-quarter of a mile to reach the bus stop. Therefore, a fixed-route service pattern may be efficiently laid out with routes having one-half-mile spacing. However, individuals with mobility impairments may have difficulty in accessing the fixed-route system.

The advantages of fixed-route service are that it can be provided at a relatively low cost on a per-passenger-trip basis, schedule reliability is high since buses do not deviate from their routes, service does not require advance reservations, and service is easy to understand.

Fixed-route transit service is seldom attractive for people with automobiles in smaller communities and rural areas. A private automobile offers flexibility compared to the rigid schedule of a fixed-route system. The need to walk even a few hundred feet to a bus stop, wait for the vehicle, and the comparatively slow travel time make the option of a private automobile an easy choice. Where there are significant congestion issues or limited parking availability, fixed-route transit service becomes a more attractive alternative. The low cost of transit as compared to owning and operating a private automobile can also be attractive, especially to young working couples who may be able to use the bus rather than own two vehicles.

The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that communities with fixed-route transit service also provide complementary paratransit service that operates, at a minimum, in a three-quarter-mile radius of each fixed route. Paratransit service is typically much more costly to operate than fixed-route service because of the characteristics of the service. Fixed routes are established to meet the highest demand travel patterns, while paratransit service must serve many origins and destinations in a dispersed pattern.

## Service Routes



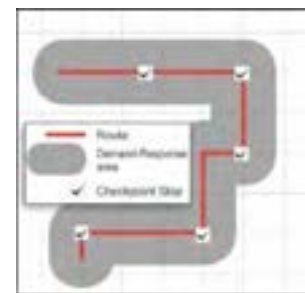
One concept which is being implemented in some communities as an alternative to traditional fixed-route or demand-response service is the service route. A service route is essentially a fixed route specifically designed to serve the elderly and disabled. Typically, a service route winds through residential neighborhoods with high concentrations of elderly and disabled persons in a pattern that passes within a block or two of all houses. It also directly serves important destinations, such as senior centers and commercial areas. The service provides a higher in-vehicle travel time and a longer wait for the bus than would normally be acceptable to the general public. The Bus (operating in Butte, Montana) and MET (in Billings, Montana) provide successful service routes to their local residents.

## Flexible-Route Service

Another alternative is flexible-route service such as route deviation, flex routes, or checkpoint service. With flexible routes, vehicle dispatching and scheduling must be done carefully to ensure that vehicles are available to serve the designated stops at the scheduled times. To provide a reasonable amount of flexibility, a lenient definition of on-time performance is typically used. A reasonable policy for flexible-route service is a 10- to 15-minute window at each designated stop. Flexible-route service is used to expand the potential service area and is commonly used in low-density areas. The following sections detail the different types of flexible-route service that are commonly used.

### Route Deviation

With route deviation, transit vehicles follow a specific route, but leave the route to serve demand-response origins and destinations. The vehicles are required to return to the designated route within one block of the point of deviation to ensure that all of the intersections along the route are served. The passengers on the bus may have a longer travel time than for fixed-route service and the service reliability is lower. However, the ADA-mandated complementary paratransit service is not

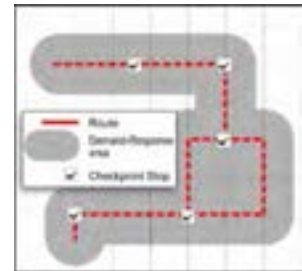


## *Service Alternatives*

necessary, since the bus can deviate from the route to pick up disabled passengers. Those customers that need the bus to deviate must make an advance reservation with the transit service up to 24 hours ahead of time. Advance reservations are needed so that the vehicles can be scheduled for pick-up and drop-off along the scheduled run.

### Flex Route

Flex route is very similar to deviation service in that the transit vehicle follows a specific route, but leaves the route to serve demand-response origins and destinations. The difference is that, in the flex-route service, the vehicle must return to the route only before the next transit stop. The distance between transit stops will determine the size of the deviation that the vehicle could make. For flex-route service, the demand-response rider must make advance reservations. The ADA-mandated complementary paratransit service is not necessary since the bus can deviate from the route to pick up disabled passengers.



### Checkpoint Service

Under checkpoint service, the vehicles make periodic scheduled stops at centers of activity (such as program sites, shopping areas, or residential communities). The specific routes are not established between checkpoints, thereby allowing the vehicles to provide demand-response service and alleviate the need for the ADA-complementary paratransit service. Riders are picked up, typically at a reduced fare, at the checkpoints and are taken either to another checkpoint or to a demand-response specific destination. Service between the checkpoints does not require advance reservations. However, service from any other location on a demand-response basis requires advance reservations so that the vehicles can be scheduled for pick-up and drop-off. Checkpoint service offers an advantage over route deviation because there is no specified route for the vehicles to use. Checkpoint service requires only that the vehicle arrive at the next checkpoint within the designated time window.



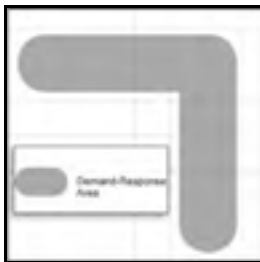
*Checkpoint Service*

## Demand-Response Service

Demand-response service, frequently termed dial-a-ride, is characterized as door-to-door transit service scheduled by a dispatcher. With demand-response service, advance reservations are typically required, although some immediate requests may be filled if time permits and if the service is particularly needed. COG Transit currently operates a demand-response type of service.



*Demand-Response Service in Small Communities*



*Demand-Response Service*

The concept of demand-response service was originally developed in the early 1970s as an alternate form of public transportation for the general public. The original efforts proved to be more expensive than envisioned and did not attract the ridership that was forecast. As a result, demand-response service has been used in the United States almost exclusively for elderly and disabled passengers. However, many communities are beginning to recognize the advantages of demand-response service for low-density areas with low levels of transit demand. Improved technology has led to improvements in dispatching and scheduling, which has increased the efficiency of demand-response service and allows for real-time dispatching.

## Regional and Commuter Service

With regional and commuter service, the route is primarily designed to link different communities for employment purposes. These communities may be within the same geographic area. In urban areas, this type of service is commonly known as express or limited express service. In rural areas, the regional and commuter service links communities across the study area with each other and with communities outside the study area.

## Vanpool Service

Vanpool service operates more of a point-to-point function. Vanpool service gathers riders within a community and then travels directly to a major employ-

ment center (such as Pueblo). Normally, a transit agency owns and maintains the vehicles. Individuals using the vanpool share the travel cost and may even share the driving responsibilities. The schedule and route of the vanpool service depends upon the individuals participating in the vanpool. Vanpool service is limited to individuals within the program and has limited service for medical or shopping trips. Vanpool service is primarily for employment trips for non-disabled individuals, since there are liability issues with disabled individuals riding on vanpool service.

## **SERVICE ALTERNATIVES**

Based on the information derived from the trip origins and destinations analysis of existing COG Transit patrons and the key stakeholder interviews, the following service options are explored. Table VIII-1 shows a comparison of the various service alternatives. These service alternatives are not autonomous and may be altered or combined to better fit the needs of local residents. Providing various levels of service (local, regional, etc.) is often the most appropriate mix of service for residents. Figure VIII-1 provides a graphical representation of the regional transit service options.

Alternative	Hours	Headways	Total Daily			Total Annual					Performance Measures		
			# of Veh.	Rev. Hrs.	Rev. Miles	Rev. Hrs.	Rev. Miles	Days	Annual Estimated Ridership	Total Operating Cost	Pass/Hr.	Cost/Hr.	Cost/Pas.
			<b>Status Quo</b>	M-F, 7:00a to 5:00p	varies	18	74	843	18,424	210,852	250	44,812	\$608,558
<b>Trinidad Fixed-Route and Paratransit Service</b>													
Option 1: All-Day Option - Fixed-Route	M-F, 7:00a to 6:00p	1 hour	1	11	176	2,750	44,000	250	11,000	\$99,825	4.0	\$ 36.3	\$ 9.1
Option 1: All-Day Option - Paratransit	M-F, 7:00a to 6:00p	as needed	1	11	33	2,750	8,250	250	2,750	\$74,166	1.0	\$ 27.0	\$ 27.0
<b>Total Option 1: All-Day Option</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>52,250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>13,750</b>	<b>\$173,990</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>\$ 31.6</b>	<b>\$ 12.7</b>
Option 2: 4 Trips a Day	2 RT in the morning; 2 RT in the evening	varies	1	4	64	1,000	16,000	250	5,000	\$36,300	5.0	\$ 36.3	\$ 7.3
Option 2: Limited Service - Paratransit	same hours as fixed-route	as needed	1	4	16	1,000	4,000	250	1,500	\$27,687	1.5	\$ 27.7	\$ 18.5
Option 2: Demand-Response (outside the limited hours)	M-F, 7:00a to 6:00p	as needed	1	7	21	1,750	5,250	250	4,200	\$47,196	2.4	\$ 27.0	\$ 11.2
<b>Total Option 2</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>3,750</b>	<b>25,250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>10,700</b>	<b>\$111,183</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>\$ 29.6</b>	<b>\$ 10.4</b>
<b>Demand-Response</b>													
Option 1: Extended Hours	M-F, 5:00p to 7:00p	varies	1	2	160	500	40,000	250	1,200	\$41,117	2.4	\$ 82.2	\$ 34.3
Option 2: Saturday Service	Saturday; 10:00a to 5:00p	varies	1	7	280	364	14,560	52	437	\$19,483	1.2	\$ 53.5	\$ 44.6
<b>Trinidad-Walsenburg Route</b>													
Option 1: 3 trips a day	1 RT in the morning; 1 RT midday; 1 RT in the evening	varies	1	6	234	1,500	58,500	250	7,500	\$79,212	5.0	\$ 52.8	\$ 10.6
<b>Trinidad-Raton Service</b>													
Option 1: All-Day Option	M-F, 7:00a to 6:00p 1 RT in the morning; 1 RT midday;	1 hour 15 mins	1	11	352	2,750	88,000	250	15,125	\$131,405	5.5	\$ 47.8	\$ 8.7
Option 2: 3 Trips a Day	1 RT in the evening	varies	1	4	132	938	33,000	250	5,625	\$46,950	6.0	\$ 50.1	\$ 8.3
Option 3: Vanpool Service	n/a	as needed	1	1	44	313	11,000	250	1,875	\$4,950	6.0	\$ 15.8	\$ 2.6

Source: LSC, 2013.

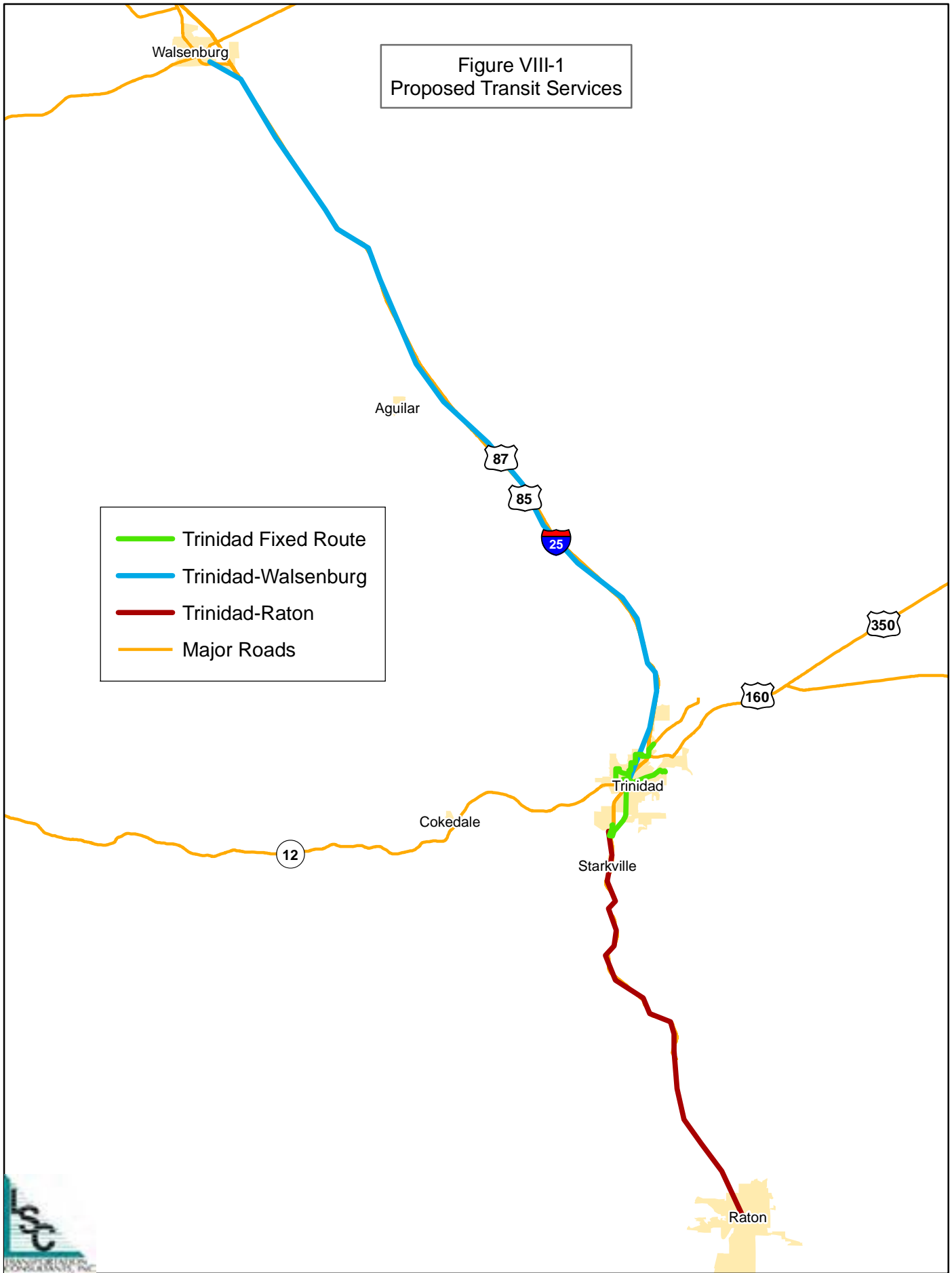


Figure VIII-1  
Proposed Transit Services

- Trinidad Fixed Route
- Trinidad-Walsenburg
- Trinidad-Raton
- Major Roads





## **Maintain Status Quo**

A good starting point for the evaluation of transit service alternatives is the consideration of the “status quo.” The status quo option involves no change in COG Transit service. This option is a viable alternative which may be appropriate when the current service meets the community’s needs and satisfies the goals and objectives for public transportation services.

The status quo includes the following:

- Demand-response service which is provided Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- The trips from Walsenburg/Trinidad to Pueblo are provided on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
- The trips between Walsenburg and Trinidad are provided along with the Pueblo runs on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
- The trips from Walsenburg to La Veta are provided on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- The trips from Walsenburg to Gardner are provided Tuesday and Thursday on an as-needed basis.
- Trips from Trinidad to the Raton VA Clinic in New Mexico are provided on an as-needed basis between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. This includes making a connection to the VA bus that goes to Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- Trips to Primero (along Colorado State Highway 12) and Hoehne are also provided on an as-needed basis.

A major disadvantage of maintaining the existing transportation services is that COG Transit will continue to possibly overspend for transportation services. Another disadvantage with a demand-response type service is that people have to call up a day in advance to schedule a trip.

Some of the existing services continue to work well. COG Transit would therefore continue to schedule trips from Walsenburg/Trinidad to Pueblo on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The trips from Walsenburg to La Veta would continue to be scheduled on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Also, the trips from Walsenburg to Gardner would continue to be scheduled on Tuesday and Thursday on an as-needed basis.

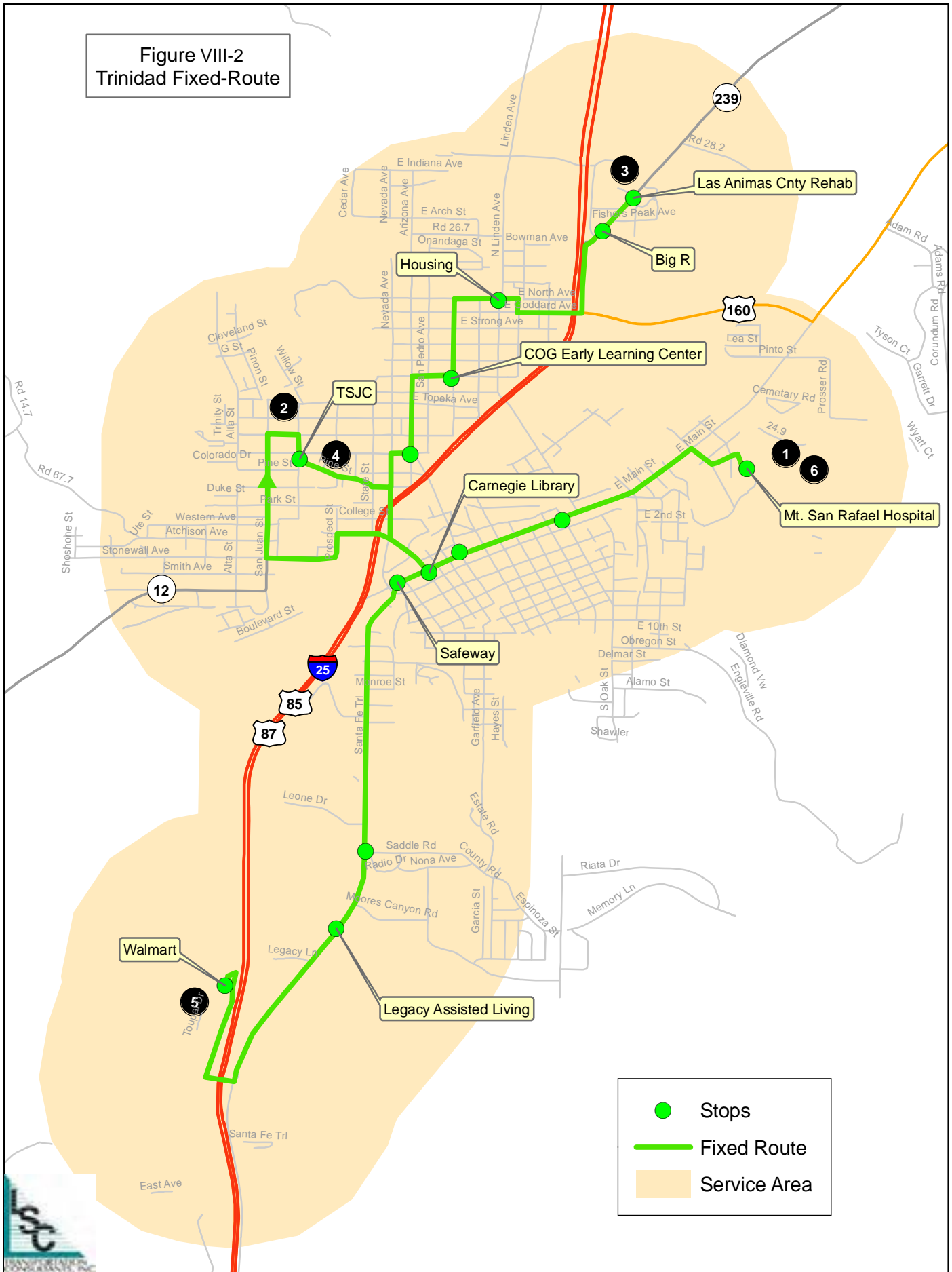
### **Trinidad Fixed-Route and Paratransit Service**

COG Transit can provide a fixed-route service in Trinidad as illustrated in Figure VIII-2. As shown, the route would start at the Mt. San Rafael Hospital, go southwest along Main Street, turn right onto North Animas Street and University Street, turn left on to Prospect Street, left on Stonewall Avenue, left on San Juan Street, then head left on West Colorado Avenue to serve the Trinidad State Junior College (TSJC). The route would then head northeast to serve Las Animas County Rehabilitation Center (LACRC) and Big R with stops at COG Early Learning Center and housing near the intersection of North Avenue and Linden Avenue. The route will again serve the TSJC before heading south to County Road 69.3/Santa Fe Trail to serve Safeway, the Legacy Assisted Living, and Walmart.

Options for operating the fixed-route service all day and with limited service are described and analyzed below.

An advantage of providing a fixed-route service is that it will allow for greater visibility of the transit system. The presence of fixed stops with signs and amenities, along with a fixed schedule, encourage users to see the transit service more prominently. Having fixed stops makes the service more convenient for tourists, college students, and users who are unfamiliar with the system. With a fixed-route service, riders just show up to the bus stop and do not need an advance reservation to schedule a ride. A round-trip on the Trinidad fixed-route service would take about an hour. A one-way fare to ride this fixed-route service would be \$1.00.

Figure VIII-2  
Trinidad Fixed-Route



### Paratransit Service

With a fixed route-service in Trinidad, COG Transit will have a paratransit service within the three-quarter-mile buffer of the fixed route only for Americans with Disability Act (ADA)-eligible riders. The ADA allows transit agencies to charge ADA-eligible persons using the complementary paratransit service a maximum of twice the base fixed-route fare. Based on the proposed fixed-route fare of \$1.00, COG Transit could charge as much as \$2.00 for its ADA-eligible passengers on the COG Paratransit service similar to the current in-town demand-response service.

COG Transit will be required by ADA regulations to provide ADA trips within plus or minus one hour of the customer's requested pick-up time. If trip capacity is not available within plus or minus one hour of a customer's requested pick-up time, an ADA trip denial will be recorded. COG Transit should create a separate brochure informing people about what ADA Paratransit Service is, eligibility and ways to apply for ADA service, customer guidelines, policies explaining scheduled pick-up time and window time, cancellation, no shows, and late cancellations.

Since the three-quarters of a mile from the Trinidad fixed-route service covers all of Trinidad, no demand-response would be provided for the general public within the Trinidad city limits. This is to encourage users to use the fixed-route service provided within Trinidad. The paratransit service for COG Transit can be grouped with other demand-response trips provided by COG Transit.

### Option 1: All-Day Option

In this option, the proposed Trinidad fixed route would operate Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. This fixed route would operate with a 60-minute headway. With 11 round-trips per day, this route service is estimated to cost \$99,825 per year. With both fixed-route and paratransit service, this service option would cost \$174,000 per year.

The proposed Trinidad fixed-route and paratransit service (Option 1) would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 2
- Annual operating cost: \$173,990
- Annual ridership: 13,750 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$12.70
- Passengers per hour: 2.5

### Option 2: Four Trips a Day

In this option, the proposed Trinidad fixed route would operate Monday through Friday with two trips in the morning and two trips in the evening. This option was explored specifically to meet the needs of TSJC students, faculty, and staff. With four round-trips per day, this fixed-route service is estimated to cost \$36,300 per year.

With this option, complementary paratransit service would be required during the hours of operation for the fixed-route service, and demand-response service would be needed to meet transportation needs during those times when the fixed-route is not operating. The cost of providing the demand-response service during those hours would be \$47,200.

The proposed Trinidad fixed-route and paratransit service with limited hours—including demand-response service provided during those times when the fixed-route is not operating—(Option 2) would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 3
- Annual operating cost: \$111,183
- Annual ridership: 10,700 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$10.40
- Passengers per hour: 2.9

### **Demand-Response**

These options look at extended days and hours of operation on COG Transit services.

### Option 1: Extension of Hours

In this option, COG Transit would continue to operate Monday through Friday with hours extending until 7:00 p.m. compared to their current service that operates until 5:00 p.m. This service option may encourage more people to use the transit service to get home from work. The estimated cost of this option is \$41,000 per year over the current operating cost.

The extension of hours until 7:00 p.m. would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1
- Annual operating cost: \$41,117
- Annual ridership: 1,200 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$34.30
- Passengers per hour: 2.4

### Option 2: Saturday Service

In this option, COG Transit would extend service to Saturday. This service would operate from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The estimated increase in cost to add this service is about \$19,500 per year. The proposed Saturday service would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1
- Annual operating cost: \$19,483
- Annual ridership: 437 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$44.60
- Passengers per hour: 1.2

### **Trinidad-Walsenburg Route**

This route between Trinidad and Walsenburg would operate three trips a day—one trip in the morning, one midday trip, and one evening trip. A round-trip on this route of approximately 78 miles will take about two hours. With three round-trips per day, this route service is estimated to cost \$79,200 per year.

The proposed route service between Trinidad and Walsenburg would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1
- Annual operating cost: \$79,212
- Annual ridership: 7,500 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$10.60
- Passengers per hour: 5.0

### **Trinidad-Raton Service**

This service between Trinidad and Raton, New Mexico is primarily designed to serve TSJC students who come from Raton, New Mexico, and veterans who need transportation to the Veterans' Administration Community Clinic in Raton, New Mexico. Three options are explored for the service between Trinidad and Raton.

#### Option 1: All-Day Option

In this option, the proposed service between Trinidad and Raton would operate Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. This service would operate with a 75-minute headway. With eight round-trips per day, this route is estimated to cost \$131,400 per year. This service would serve veterans that need a ride to Raton, New Mexico; college students who need a ride to TSJC; and others in Raton, New Mexico who need to access services in Trinidad.

The proposed service between Trinidad and Raton (Option 1) would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1
- Annual operating cost: \$131,405
- Annual ridership: 15,125 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$8.70
- Passengers per hour: 5.5

### Option 2: Three Trips a Day

In this option, the proposed service between Trinidad and Raton, New Mexico would operate Monday through Friday with one trip in the morning, one trip mid-day, and one trip in the evening. With three round-trips per day, this route service is estimated to cost \$46,900 per year.

The proposed between Trinidad and Raton (Option 2) would result in the following operational cost, ridership estimates, vehicles, and performance measures:

- Number of vehicles = 1
- Annual operating cost: \$46,950
- Annual ridership: 5,625 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$8.30
- Passengers per hour: 6.0

### Option 3: Vanpool Service

For this vanpool service, COG Transit or TSJC would need to create a ride-matching service where residents could call to be matched with a vanpool that operates at specific times. Riders could then subscribe to a scheduled seat. Riders may choose between a full-time (Monday through Friday) schedule or a part-time (Tuesday/Thursday or Monday/Wednesday/Friday) schedule. The van drivers would be volunteer participants traveling to Trinidad/Raton who would normally participate in the vanpool service at no cost. The drivers normally keep the vans at their homes and either travel to the other participants' homes or meet the participants at a designated location. For this vanpool service, only the cost per mile of \$0.45, not the cost per hour, is included since there is no bus driver.

Vanpools are a low-cost option that allow cost savings and mobility options for community members. The pick-up location also needs to be convenient to vanpool participants and convenient to the highway. A parking lot is a common starting point for vanpools. The lot is generally well lit and has a place to wait for vanpool participants or transit service under cover—the lobby of a TSJC building or a bus shelter, for example. Several federal programs can be used to support vanpooling. One example is the Denver Ride Arrangers operated by the Denver Council of Governments (DRCOG) and the Regional Transportation District (RTD), which



used CMAQ funds to purchase program expansion vehicles and FTA Section 5307 funds to subsidize pool operations. Another example is Missoula Ravalli Transportation Management Association (MR TMA) which has ridesharing services such as carpool, vanpool, and guaranteed ride home benefits for residents of Missoula, Ravalli, and Lake Counties. This program is operated using FTA 5311 funds.

This vanpool service between Trinidad and Raton for commuters and students was assumed to operate Monday through Friday with one trip in the morning and one trip in the evening for each van. This service is estimated to cost \$0.45 per mile.

The advantage of this vanpool service is that would work really well for students and commuters that have a fixed schedule. The disadvantage to a vanpool service is that it would not work for veterans to access the medical services at the VA Clinic in Raton on an as-needed basis.

Service characteristics are as follows:

- Number of vans: 1
- Annual operating cost: \$4,950
- Annual ridership: 1,875 passengers
- Cost per passenger: \$2.60
- Passengers per hour: 6.0

## **PROPOSED FARE STRUCTURE**

The proposed fares are shown in Table VIII-2. As shown in the table, if a person uses the scheduled trip between Trinidad and Walsenburg, a one-way fare on the service would be \$7.00. If a person is unable to use the scheduled trip that operates at the scheduled time and requests a demand-response trip (for medical appointments), it would cost \$10 for a one-way fare. Similarly, on a scheduled trip between Trinidad and Raton, New Mexico, a one-way fare on the service would be \$4.00. If a person requests a demand-response trip (for medical appointments), it would cost \$8.00 for a one-way fare.

*Service Alternatives*

<b>Table VIII-2 Proposed One-Way Fares</b>	
<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>Fare</b>
Trinidad fixed-route	\$1.00
Demand-response (same as current)	\$2.00
Trip between Trinidad and Walsenburg (scheduled service)	\$7.00
Trip between Trinidad and Walsenburg (as needed by rider)	\$10.00
Trip between Trinidad and Raton, NM (scheduled service)	\$4.00
Trip between Trinidad and Raton, NM (as needed by rider)	\$8.00
Trip between Trinidad and Pueblo, CO	\$9.00
Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Eligible within Trinidad ( <b>new</b> )	\$2.00



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## CHAPTER IX

# Coordination Opportunities

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This chapter discusses coordination opportunities to enhance transit services in the South Central area, which includes Las Animas and Huerfano Counties.

### **COORDINATING COUNCIL**

The first step would be to establish a Local Coordinating Council (LCC) for the Las Animas and Huerfano Counties which would be made up of agencies and partners that come together with a common goal of coordinating transportation resources. The LCC should be established through the use of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) among the participants. The MOUs should establish the functions of the LCC and the responsibilities of participating agencies. Formation of the LCC should include drafting bylaws. One function of the LCC would be to identify and evaluate opportunities to coordinate services. These may include sharing of vehicles, a common brochure, coordinating schedules among the providers, and other coordination activities the council chooses. An LCC would also identify obstacles to coordination and work with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Coordinating Council Specialist to remedy any obstacles.

### **PARTNERSHIPS/SETTING UP CONTRACTS FOR SERVICE**

COG Transit should create partnerships with various human and social service agencies and other businesses in the South Central area. These partnerships can be set up as contracts. COG Transit should create an informational brochure that can be given to new and existing partners and include ways that COG Transit can help them in providing transportation services. A sample contract should also be in place for current and future partners.

COG Transit should develop and implement an equitable contract rate based on their fully allocated costs (similar to the cost allocation model developed in Chapter IV). This fully allocated cost needs to be reviewed annually to make sure that it reflects the current operating costs and increases in transit costs such as fuel

## *Coordination Opportunities*

and insurances. Contract service usually arises when a contracting agency determines that it needs services at a more specialized level than that which is provided to the general public. All services provided by a transit agency—including contract services—must be open door to the general public. Although all services provided by COG Transit are open door and available to the general public, the contracting agency can choose to contract services with COG Transit for specific customers and arrange scheduled trips with specific times and specific pick-up/drop-off locations. The contracting agency will then be billed for the service provided because it was scheduled in advance to meet the needs of the contracting agency. That being said, COG Transit must not deny general public trips on a routine basis due to contract services. The contract rates should not be mandated by what the contracting agency desires or is willing to pay, but rather the fully allocated costs of the transit services provided. The fully allocated cost can vary depending on the requirements of the contracting agency such as providing door-to-door service, longer wait times, extended wait times for out-of-town appointments, or other special requests. COG Transit can choose to develop a phase-in plan and set up a timeline only to selected agencies that they are currently contracting with when implementing fully allocated contract rates. The selected agencies include agencies that have been paying contract rates less than the fully allocated costs. If an agency or a partner chooses to use the general public transit services rather than contracting services, the agency and its clients should not receive any special treatment and trips will be handled in the same manner as the general public trips provided. Some of the potential partnerships that COG Transit can set up contracts with are Trinidad State Junior College (TSJC); Las Animas County Rehabilitation Center (LACRC); Area Agency on Aging (AAA); Trinidad State Nursing Home; Colorado State Veterans Home at Walsenburg; Harry R. Sayre Senior Center; Spanish Peaks Behavioral Health Center; Mt. Carmel Health, Wellness, and Community Center; Segundo Senior Center; Kennedy Center; Huerfano County Department of Social Services; the Raton VA Clinic; and the Branson-Trinchera Community Senior Center. As part of creating a partnership with TSJC, COG Transit should also explore a college transit pass program for TSJC students. The college transit pass program can be set up where TSJC students pay a certain amount per semester in fees to COG Transit to fund

services provided to TSJC. This would further encourage students to use COG Transit and reduce TSJC's need for creating and maintaining parking lots.

Setting up contracts has many benefits to the contracting agency. The contracting agency will have their transportation needs met and will not have to deal with scheduling of trips, maintaining vehicles (includes safety, cleanliness of a vehicle, and the need for replacing old vehicles), and the need to hire and train drivers. COG Transit can benefit from contract revenue as those amounts can be used as local match to pull additional federal funding for transit services into the region. This is especially important for COG Transit as it does not receive any funding from local government (such as City Councils or County Commissioners) and depends on contracts to provide the local share of providing transit service in the community. Moreover, setting up a contract reduces duplication of transit services in the region by creating an economy of scale. Informal partnerships can also be created by COG Transit to promote its services to users. Promotion for services should be tailored to the following:

- Design an attractive rider brochure with key elements of service characteristics provided in an easy-to-read document.
- Establish an educational program that includes a simple one-page information sheet about COG Transit. Information should highlight the different services available, ways to access services, and destinations served by COG Transit.
- Establish relationships with local businesses to educate employers, employees, and tourists/visitors on the use and benefits of transit.
- Hold a training workshop for local social service agencies/businesses to acquaint them with the service and to receive input on how best to meet the transit needs of their clients.
- Advertise in the local paper, highlighting employees' or patrons' stories.
- Provide local businesses along the route with information brochures they can post at their place of business, including local restaurants.
- Work with local businesses to allow them to advertise on the buses, thereby generating revenue and creating business partnerships.
- Further explore the use of the Internet for advertising and information dissemination through various partnerships.
- Create an outreach program to visit groups, agencies, and businesses regularly to keep them abreast of COG Transit and/or changes.

## **JOINT GRANT WRITING**

COG Transit and human service providers in the region should work together to coordinate grant submissions for existing transit services. As services are coordinated to a greater degree, are expanded, or new services are initiated, joint grant writing efforts will become increasingly important.

Based on which service options might be operated, how vehicle sharing options might be implemented, and what marketing/education/outreach efforts might be needed, different grant application objectives and priorities would be created. The overall goal remains the same—to increase the amount and predictability of grant funding for the South Central area. If the total amount of grant funding is increased to the South Central area, then real and perceived barriers to coordination become easier to address.

The implementation steps below are expanded from the work presented in previous chapters.

### **Implementation Steps**

- The agencies should review their needs and create a list of capital and operational requirements.
  - ▶ A common set of information about the needs should be provided for all needs in the list.
  - ▶ The list should reflect the next six years worth of needs, a typical time frame for a transit development program (TDP) list.
- The agencies should itemize their lists and determine a priority of needs based on at least the following:
  - ▶ Schedule of need during the next six years.
  - ▶ Benefits of receiving and consequences of not receiving funding.
  - ▶ Ability of the funded project/item to meet multiple needs.
  - ▶ Equity measure that provides some distribution of benefit, geographically (i.e., two counties), and project size (i.e., some large and some small).
- The grant(s) should be developed based on the priority list.
  - ▶ Match priority lists to grants by establishing procedures for recurring (i.e., yearly or bi-annually) versus non-recurring grants (i.e., very infrequent or one-of-a-kind.)



- ▶ The priority list itself becomes a communication tool for common interests.
- The grant should be approved by each of the agencies' boards, along with approval of any local match funding.
  - ▶ Staff-level prioritization and agreement to that prioritization process often makes policy-level approval easier.
  - ▶ Clarify whether local match is cash or in-kind, and what, if any, reporting or other grant performance requirements exist.
- The agencies should ensure each grant references the additional agencies/providers grants for the corridor.
  - ▶ Regular intervals (e.g., yearly) for updating basic agency information will make it easier for the grant writers to make appropriate references in grant applications.

## **CONSOLIDATE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

The last and most important step would be to consolidate transportation services in the South Central area. This would involve consolidating transportation programs which would be done by a single agency such as COG Transit. This would include providing transportation services that meets the needs of all providers and those agencies that need transportation, including administration functions, maintenance, and operations.

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# Implementation Plan

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## INTRODUCTION

LSC has prepared the following implementation plan which identifies the recommended service plan, funding alternatives, and a financial plan to improve COG Transit service to better meet the needs of residents of Las Animas and Huerfano Counties effectively and efficiently.

## RECOMMENDED SERVICES

Several service alternatives were considered in this report. After completing the cost-benefit analysis for each of the transit service alternatives, the following set of transit options together appear to best meet the needs and goals of COG Transit as determined in Chapter II. Table X-1 and Figure X-1 present the recommended transit service plan. It includes the following:

- Trinidad Demand-Response Service: Monday through Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. with up to three vehicles in service. Scheduled service to Walmart four times a day.
- Trinidad-Walsenburg: Continue service between Trinidad and Walsenburg on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- Walsenburg Demand-Response Service: One vehicle operating to provide demand-response service in Walsenburg five days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Trinidad-Raton: This demand-response service would continue to be provided as needed.
- Trinidad-Raton - Vanpool: A vanpool service could be created between Trinidad and Raton for commuters and students which would operate Monday through Friday with one trip in the morning and one trip in the evening for each van. This would be set up only if there were enough people to create a vanpool.
- Trinidad-Pueblo: Continue service to Pueblo three days a week.
- Demand-response service for specialized medical trips (e.g., dialysis appointments) and other trips when the scheduled transit services are not able to meet the need. One vehicle would operate this service.

**Table X-1  
Recommended Services**

Alternative	Hours	Total Daily			Total Annual					Performance Measures		
		# of Veh.	Rev. Hrs.	Rev. Miles	Rev. Hrs.	Rev. Miles	Days	Annual Estimated Ridership	Total Operating Cost	Pass/Hr.	Cost/Hr.	Cost/Pas.
<b>2012 Service</b>	M-F, 7:00a to 5:00p	18	74	843	18,424	210,852	250	44,812	\$608,558	2.4	\$ 33.03	\$ 13.58
<b>Trinidad Demand-Response</b> All-Day Option	M-F, 7:00a to 6:00p	3	33	330	8,250	82,500	250	16,800	\$263,946	2.0	\$ 31.99	\$ 15.71
<b>Demand-Response</b> Other County Demand-Response Services	M-F, 5:00p to 7:00p	1	8	160	2,000	40,000	250	4,800	\$78,342	2.4	\$ 39.17	\$ 16.32
<b>Pueblo Service</b>		1	8	90	1,248	14,040	156	1,680	\$41,047	1.3	\$ 32.89	\$ 24.43
<b>Trinidad-Walsenburg Route</b> 3 days a week	Between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.	0.5	4	156	624	24,336	156	3,120	\$32,952	5.0	\$ 52.81	\$ 10.56
Walsenburg Demand-Response		1	11	0	2,750	0	250	3,500	\$68,244	1.3	\$ 24.82	\$ 19.50
<b>Trinidad-Raton Service</b> Demand-Response Service	as needed	0.5	4	132	400	13,200	100	2,200	\$19,401	5.5	\$ 48.50	\$ 8.82
Vanpool Service	as needed	1	1	44	313	11,000	250	1,875	\$4,950	6.0	\$ 15.8	\$ 2.6
<b>Total Service Plan</b>		<b>8</b>			<b>15,585</b>	<b>185,076</b>		<b>33,975</b>	<b>\$ 508,882</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>\$ 32.65</b>	<b>\$ 14.98</b>

Source: LSC, 2013.

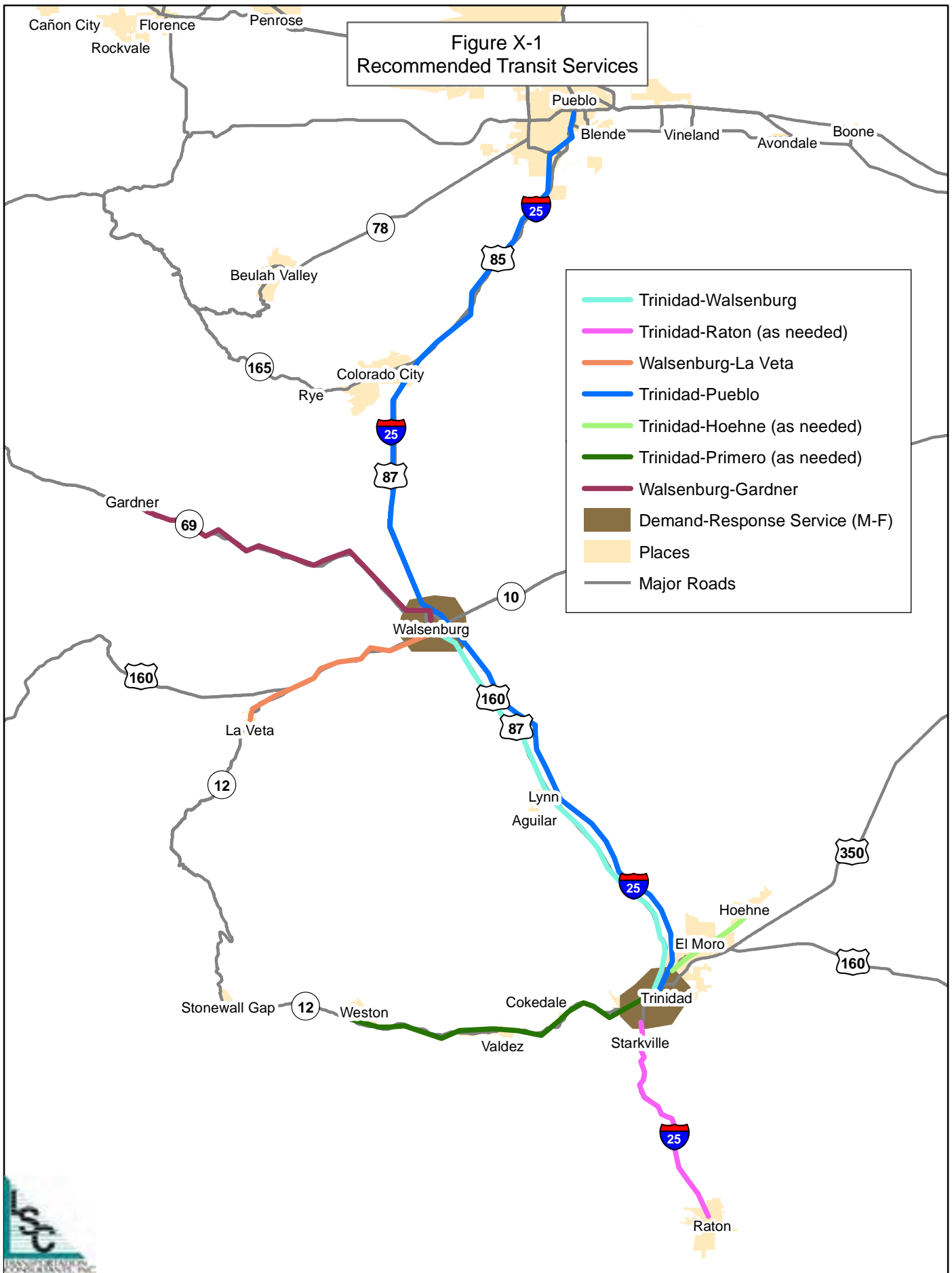


Figure X-1  
Recommended Transit Services

- Trinidad-Walsenburg
- Trinidad-Raton (as needed)
- Walsenburg-La Veta
- Trinidad-Pueblo
- Trinidad-Hoehne (as needed)
- Trinidad-Primero (as needed)
- Walsenburg-Gardner
- Demand-Response Service (M-F)
- Places
- Major Roads



## *Implementation Plan*

The estimated annual operating cost of the recommended transit service option is \$509,000 and the ridership is estimated to be approximately 34,000. In order to operate this recommended option, eight vehicles plus two spare vehicles would be necessary.

## **FACILITIES**

SCCOG, the City of Trinidad, CDOT, Amtrak, and Greyhound are in the process of developing a multimodal center which will serve Amtrak, Greyhound, and COG Transit. The facility will be operated by COG Transit. Amtrak passenger service will be relocated from an unstaffed modular building to the new facility. The new facility will include office space, a ticket booth, waiting area, restrooms, bus parking, and parking for private vehicles. The projected cost for the facility is \$900,000. Funding is available for the facility development with construction anticipated to take place in 2014.

## **ORGANIZATION**

COG Transit is organized as part of the South Central Council of Governments. No changes in the organizational structure are recommended. However, a full-time, dedicated Transit Manager or Transit Coordinator position should be created to oversee all operations of COG Transit. Responsibilities would include management of the program operations, financial management, grants management, and grant applications. The responsibilities of overseeing the transit program are significant and should not be a part-time job.

## **POTENTIAL FUNDING ALTERNATIVES**

This section provides an evaluation of potential funding alternatives for transit services within the Las Animas and Huerfano Counties study area. One of the principal challenges facing any transit service is developing a funding system that supports capital investment (buses, etc.) and provides a stable source of revenue for operations and maintenance. The following discussion presents an analysis of the most appropriate financial alternatives and a basis for making a decision.



## FUNDING SOURCES

Successful transit systems are strategic about funding and attempt to develop funding bases that enable them to operate reliably and efficiently within a set of clear goals and objectives according to both short-range and long-range plans. Potential strategies for funding COG Transit are described below.

### Capital Funding

The existing and future transit services will require capital funding for bus fleet procurement and other administration capital. The following strategies for funding capital development should be considered:



- Federal funding should be applied for within the existing Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Sections 5310 and 5311 programs. Small transit systems often underachieve their potential for federal grant assistance because they assume that they cannot compete in this arena. Close coordination with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will help COG Transit remain aware of funding opportunities and compete for funding.
- In general, the best use of state discretionary grant funding is for capital needs since this is a highly speculative source of money that requires extensive political effort at a level that is feasible only as a one-time or occasional undertaking.
- Planning for capital facilities (such as vehicles and transit and maintenance facilities) examines the long-range transit system's development needs. Many transit systems outgrow their facilities quickly and face costly relocation and expansion needs because of inadequate space or other constraints. The financial management system of any future organization overseeing the regional transit service should include specific provisions for fleet replacement and other capital investments. Note that buses and certain other capital facilities purchased with federal participation (80 percent under SAFETEA-LU) are also eligible for federal participation toward replacement costs once the buses and facilities reach maturity (as defined in the FTA rules).

## **Operations and Maintenance Funding**

Over time, the primary financial requirement of a local or regional transit system will be funding routine operations and maintenance, including daily transit service, vehicle maintenance, and system administration. In general, labor represents about 75 percent of the costs of operating transportation, with much of that going to drivers' salaries. The following strategies for funding operations and maintenance should be considered:

- Reliance on general fund appropriations from local governments should be avoided, if possible. It is common for local and regional transit agencies to be dependent on annual appropriations from their constituent towns, cities, and/or counties. As a practical matter, this means it will not be possible to forecast future funding levels, given the exigencies of local government funding. Such an agency will be unable to undertake capital planning and will continually face potential service cutbacks. This, in turn, makes it difficult or impossible for the transit agency to enter into partnership arrangements with other agencies or with private entities. Transit agencies, like highway agencies, require that most or all of their operations and maintenance funding comes from dedicated sources so that they can undertake responsible planning and offer reliable, consistent service.
- COG Transit collects fares as part of the transit system funding, although this is not an ideal source of revenue. Due to the realities of a transit system's cost and financing structure, it is generally not possible to recoup more than 10 to 20 percent of operations and maintenance costs from the farebox revenues within rural areas, for example. Fare collection itself incurs costs for farebox maintenance, cash management, and auditing. Fare collection slows down vehicle boarding and increases the operating costs by increasing the time required to run each route. Finally, fare collection deters ridership.
- Operations and maintenance funding mechanisms should be designed to anticipate transit system growth. Successful rural and small urban transit systems around the country are experiencing annual growth in ridership. It is important to be able to respond to such growth by increasing the service levels to meet the transit demand. This means that the ideal funding sources for operations and maintenance are those that have the flexibility to be increased or expanded as the transit demand grows. Such flexibility will, in most cases, require voter approval. The important consideration is that the need for growth has been anticipated and that the potential for larger budgets is not precluded by the choice of a specific funding source.



## Overall Service Considerations

There are also a few overarching considerations in developing a coherent transit system funding strategy including the following.

- Issues of funding and service equity are of paramount importance in designing funding systems. Informal systems based on annual appropriations and systems without *specific accounting for the distribution of costs and benefits* struggle with local elected bodies to find acceptable allocations of cost responsibility. This can become a significant barrier to coordinated system establishment and, later, to system growth.
- The strongest transportation systems are those that make extensive use of partnerships. Examples include partnerships with private companies, partnerships with national parks or other major public facilities, and partnerships with adjacent jurisdictions. Partnership arrangements enable a transit system to broaden its base of beneficiaries, expand its funding source alternatives, achieve better governance, and improve public support. As discussed in Chapter IX, some of the potential partnerships that COG Transit can set up contracts with are Las Animas County Rehabilitation Center (LACRC); Area Agency on Aging (AAA); Trinidad State Nursing Home; Colorado State Veterans Home at Walsenburg; Harry R. Sayre Senior Center; Spanish Peaks Behavioral Health Center; Mt. Carmel Health, Wellness, and Community Center; Segundo Senior Center; Kennedy Center; Huerfano County Department of Social Services; the Raton VA Clinic; and the Branson-Trinchera Community Senior Center.

## Potential Local and Regional Funding Sources

### College Pass Program

A strategy successfully applied in several similar communities to generate transit funding from college campuses is to levy a student activity fee for transit services or an established amount from the college general fund. A similar college pass program could be evaluated for Trinidad State Junior College (TSJC) students. An activity fee will have to be approved by a majority of the TSJC students and will be applied each school semester or quarter. If a \$5 activity fee per semester to COG Transit to fund services provided to the college was approved by TSJC students, the approximate annual revenue would be \$18,400 (based upon an estimated enrollment of 1,840 students). The activity fee will not dip into the college's general fund. The additional funds will allow increased transit service for the college students or possibly a night route. This would further encourage students to use COG Transit and reduce the college's need for creating and maintaining parking lots. Having more college students using the service will

## *Implementation Plan*

improve COG Transit's image as a transit service "open to the general public" and promote a positive image of transit in the community rather than a service only for seniors and people with disabilities.

## General Fund Appropriations

Counties and municipalities may appropriate funds for transit operations, maintenance, and capital needs. Money to be appropriated generally comes from local property taxes and sales taxes. Competition for such funding is high 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 agencies is on-vehicle advertising. The largest portion of this potential is for exterior advertising rather than interior "bus card" advertising since the potential funds generated by interior advertising are comparatively low.

## Voluntary Assessments

The voluntary assessments alternative requires each participating governmental entity and private business to contribute to the funding of the transit system on a year-to-year basis. This alternative is common with transit agencies that provide regional service rather than service limited to a single jurisdiction. The main advantage of voluntary assessment funding is that it does not require voter approval. However, the funding is not steady and may be discontinued at any time.

## Private Support

Financial support from private industries is essential to providing adequate transportation services within the study area. The major employers in Las Animas and Huerfano Counties should be considered as potential sources of revenue. These employers may be willing to help support the cost of vehicles or the operating costs for employee transportation.

### Transportation Impact Fees

Traditional methods of funding the transportation improvements required by new development raises questions of equity. Sales taxes and property taxes are applied to both existing residents and new residents attracted by the development. However, existing residents then inadvertently pay for the 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 upon new developments equal to the costs imposed on the community.

Previous work by LSC indicates that the levy of impact fees on real estate development has become a commonplace tool in many regions to ensure that the costs associated with a development do not fall entirely upon the existing residents. Impact fees have been used primarily for highways and roadways, followed by water and sewer projects. A program specifically for mass transit has been established in San Francisco, for example. However, this is not a likely source for transit funding for COG Transit.

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 are 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.

### Hotel Bed Tax

The appropriate use of lodging taxes (occupancy taxes) has long been the subject of debate. Historically, the bulk of lodging 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

## *Implementation Plan*

formula. A lodging tax can be considered a specialized sales tax placed only upon 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; Telluride, Colorado; and Durango, 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 home owners, who may use the transit system as much as the lodging guests, do not contribute to this transit funding source.

### Dedicated Sales Tax

This funding comes from a general vote that allows the local government to increase either real estate or sales taxes, and the revenue collected from this tax increase is dedicated solely to public transportation. Sales tax is the financial base for many transit services in the western United States. 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 allows the community to generate revenue from visitors in the area.



### Regional Transportation Authority

Colorado House Bill 97-1273 created the “Rural Transportation Authority Law” in 1997. This law enables any combination of local governments to create, by contract, an Authority that is authorized to exercise the functions conferred by the provisions of the law. In essence, a Rural Transportation Authority (RTA) can develop and operate a transit system, construct and maintain roadways within its service area, and petition the citizens within the RTA boundary to tax themselves for the purpose of funding the RTA and the services the RTA provides.

An RTA is an excellent institutional and funding mechanism for developing a regional transit system. However, it takes time to organize and must have support from all the towns and cities that are within the RTA’s service area.

### County Mass Transportation District Tax

In 1990, House Bill 1081 provided the “authority of counties outside the Regional Transportation District to impose a sales tax for the purpose of funding a mass transportation system.” Today, three counties in Colorado—Eagle County, Summit County, and Pitkin County—currently use this form of taxation to fund their transit systems. Unlike the RTA described above, this taxing power does not require the definition of a geography for taxation separate from the county and does not require the creation of another Board. Pitkin County and portions of Eagle County both have county mass transit and RTA taxes. Tax collection and tax rates are subject to the Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) under Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution.

### **Colorado State Transit Funding**

#### FASTER Legislation

Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery (FASTER) establishes a High-Performance Transportation Enterprise to encourage innovative financing strategies, including certificates of participation, public-private partnerships, operating concession agreements, user-fee financing, and design/build contracting. FASTER allocated \$14 million in funds in fiscal year 2013 for grants to local governments for local transit projects. Only capital projects for transit are eligible. Funds are allocated by CDOT Engineering Districts, based on a combination of Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF), population, and performance criteria. Projects must progress through county, MPO (where applicable), and CDOT TPR processes to be considered. FASTER is a competitive grant program administered by the CDOT Transit Unit. This grant requires a 20 percent local share of the FASTER Transit request.

SCCOG (COG Transit) received an award for the purchase of one van (MV-1 pilot project) of \$67,200 for FY2014.

### **Federal Transit Funding Sources**

On July 6, 2012, President Obama signed Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21) and extended the current law Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) provid-

## *Implementation Plan*

ing \$10.578 billion in authorized funding for federal surface transportation programs for FY2013. MAP-21 and the new provisions of the law went into full effect October 1, 2012. It authorized programs for two years, through September 30, 2014.

MAP-21 builds on many of the strengths of rural transit's favorable treatment in SAFETEA-LU, TEA-21, and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), the preceding highway and transit authorizations. Some of the desirable aspects of the rural transit program are brought into other elements of federal transit investment and an increased share of the total federal transit program will be invested in rural areas under this new legislation.

The highlights of MAP-21 for FTA grantees are listed below:

- It is steady and predictable funding.
- It consolidates certain transit programs to improve efficiencies.
- There are targeted funding increases particularly for improving the state of good repair.
- There are new reporting requirements.
- It requires performance measures for the state of good repair, planning, and safety.

Information provided below was gathered from FTA's implementation of MAP-21. Listed below are descriptions of federal funding programs that may be used by the area's providers:

- *Safety Authority 5329*: This is a new program under MAP-21. FTA granted new Public Transportation Safety Authority. It provides additional authority to set minimum safety standards, conduct investigations, audits, and examinations. It overhauls state safety oversight. There are new safety requirements for all recipients.
- *FTA Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (New Freedom)*: This grant consolidates the 5310 and New Freedom program eligibilities into a single formula program. In fiscal years 2013 and 2014, \$255 million and \$258 million in funding have been authorized, respectively.
- *FTA Section 5311 Rural Area Formula Grants*: This program consolidates the 5311 and JARC-eligible activities into a single program. This program provides funding to states for the purpose of supporting public transportation in rural areas (population less than \$50,000). The program establishes a \$5



million discretionary and \$25 million formula tribal grant program. In fiscal years 2013 and 2014, \$600 million and \$608 million in funding has been authorized, respectively.

- *FTA Section 5312 Research, Development, Demonstration, and Deployment:* This grant separates research from technical assistance, training, and workforce development. It creates a competitive deployment program dedicated to the acquisition of low- or no-emission vehicles and related equipment and facilities. In fiscal years 2013 and 2014, there has been \$70 million in general fund authorization each year.

### Transit Benefit Program

The Transit Benefit Program is a provision within the Internal Revenue Code 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 vehicles. Under Section 132 (f) of the Internal Revenue Code, employers can provide up to \$245 per month to those employees who commute to work by transit or vanpool. A vanpool vehicle must have a seating capacity of at least six adults, not including the driver, to qualify. The employer can deduct these costs as business expenses. Employees do not report the subsidy as income for tax purposes since the subsidy is considered a qualified transportation fringe benefit.

Under TEA-21 and SAFETEA-LU, the Transit Benefit Program has become more flexible. Prior to TEA-21, the program could only be provided in addition to the employee's base salary. With TEA-21 and SAFETEA-LU, the transit benefit program may be provided as before or can be provided in lieu of salary. In addition, the program may be provided as a cash-out option for employer-paid parking for employees. The Transit Benefit Program may not necessarily reduce an employer's payroll costs. Rather, it enables employers to provide additional benefits for employees without increasing the total payroll expenses.

### Transportation and Community System Preservation Program

The Transportation and Community System Preservation Program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration to provide discretionary grants for developing strategic transportation plans for local governments and communities. The goal

## *Implementation Plan*

of the program is to promote livable neighborhoods. Grant funds may be used to improve the safety and efficiency of the transportation system; reduce adverse environmental impacts caused by transportation; and encourage economic development through access to jobs, services, and centers of trade.

### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

States receive the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grants to provide cash assistance, work opportunities, and necessary support services for needy families with children. States may choose to spend some of their TANF funding on transportation and related services for program beneficiaries.

### Head Start Program

Head Start is a program of comprehensive services for economically disadvantaged preschool children. Funds are distributed to local public and nonprofit agencies to provide child development and education services, as well as supportive services such as transportation. Head Start funding can be used to provide transportation service, acquire vehicles, and provide technical assistance to local Head Start centers.

### Other Federal Funds

The US Department of Transportation funds other programs, including the Research and Special Programs Administration and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's State and Community Highway Grants Program (which funds transit projects that promote safety). A wide variety of other federal funding programs provide support for elderly and handicapped transportation programs, including the following:

- Retired Senior Volunteer Program
- Title IIIB of The Older Americans Act
- Medicaid Title XIX
- Veterans' Affairs
- Job Training Partnership Act
- Developmental Disabilities
- Housing and Urban Development - Bridges to Work and Community Development Block Grants

- Department of Energy
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Health Resources and Services Administration
- Senior Opportunity Services
- Special Education Transportation
- Justice Department - Weed and Seed Program
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Agriculture Department - Rural Enterprise Community Grants
- Department of Commerce - Economic Development and Assistance Programs
- Environmental Protection Agency - Pollution Prevention Projects

## **Funding Summary**

Experience with transit systems across the nation underscores the critical importance of dependable (preferably dedicated) sources of funding if the long-term viability of transit service is to be assured. Transit agencies that are dependent upon annual appropriations and informal agreements have suffered from reduced ridership (because passengers are not sure if service will be provided from one year to the next), high driver turnover (contributing to low morale and a resulting high accident rate), and inhibited investment in both vehicles and facilities.

The advantages of financial stability indicate that a mix of revenue sources is prudent. The availability of multiple revenue sources helps to avoid large swings in available funds which can lead to detrimental reductions in service. As the benefits of transit service extend over more than one segment of the community, dependence upon more than one revenue source helps to ensure that costs and benefits are equitably allocated.

Due to the varying amount of state transit funding within Colorado and the limited amount of federal funding, it is evident that transit funding must be addressed at the local level. State and federal funding are not consistent. Only a strong local transit subsidy funding source will allow the many plans and proposals for transportation improvements to reach implementation with an assurance of ongoing operating funding. Residents of Las Animas County, Huerfano County, Trinidad,

## *Implementation Plan*

and Walsenburg all benefit from the service provide by COG Transit. To sustain the transit program, funding from each county and municipality should be provided to support the transit service. Though all of the options regarding local funding have drawbacks, it is clear that a hybrid of these alternatives will be necessary if the short-term and long-range goals of the transit system and the community are to be met.

## **FINANCIAL PLAN**

This section presents a financial plan with projected expenditures and revenues for COG Transit. Table X-2 presents the information for 2014 through 2018, with the assumption of an annual five percent inflation rate. As detailed in the recommended service plan, the cost projection incorporates the following elements.

### **Short-Term Operating Plan**

- Trinidad Demand-Response Service: This service would operate five days a week between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Scheduled service to Walmart would operate four times a day.
- Trinidad-Walsenburg: This service would continue to operate between Trinidad and Walsenburg on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- Walsenburg Demand-Response Service: This service would operate in Walsenburg five days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Trinidad-Raton: This demand-response service would continue to be provided as needed.
- Trinidad-Pueblo: This service would continue to operate between Trinidad and Pueblo three days a week.
- Demand-response service for specialized medical trips, other scheduled trips, and other as-needed trips similar to existing services already being provided.

### **Long-Term Operating Plan**

- Trinidad-Raton - Vanpool: This vanpool service between Trinidad and Raton for commuters and students would be set up only if there were enough people to create a vanpool.

Table X-2 shows the local match required to be paid either for operational or capital expenses. For capital expenditures, COG Transit could apply for Colorado Department of Transportation's FASTER funds, which will be covered at 80 percent.

<b>Table X-2</b>					
<b>Transit Financial Plan, 2014-2018</b>					
	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
<b>OPERATING</b>					
<i>Trinidad Demand-Response Service (5 days a week)</i>	\$289,880	\$304,374	\$319,592	\$335,572	\$352,351
<i>Trinidad-Walsenburg Route (3 days a week)</i>	\$36,190	\$37,999	\$39,899	\$41,894	\$43,989
<i>Walsenburg Demand-Response Service (5 days a week)</i>	\$74,950	\$78,697	\$82,632	\$86,763	\$91,102
<i>Trinidad-Raton Demand-Response Service (as needed)</i>	\$21,307	\$22,372	\$23,491	\$24,665	\$25,898
<i>Trinidad-Raton - Vanpool</i>					\$6,017
<i>Trinidad-Pueblo (three days a week)</i>	\$45,081	\$47,335	\$49,701	\$52,186	\$54,796
<i>Demand-response service for specialized medical trips</i>	\$86,039	\$90,341	\$94,858	\$99,601	\$104,581
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$553,445</b>	<b>\$581,118</b>	<b>\$610,173</b>	<b>\$640,682</b>	<b>\$678,733</b>
<b>Capital</b>					
Multimodal Center	\$897,641				
Vehicles - 2 replacement, 1 van		\$67,000	\$67,000	\$50,000	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$897,641</b>	<b>\$67,000</b>	<b>\$67,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,451,086</b>	<b>\$648,118</b>	<b>\$677,173</b>	<b>\$690,682</b>	<b>\$678,733</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>					
<b>OTHER REVENUES</b>					
<b>Operation</b>					
FTA 5311 Operational Funding**	\$269,145	\$282,602	\$296,733	\$311,569	\$330,156
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$269,145</b>	<b>\$282,602</b>	<b>\$296,733</b>	<b>\$311,569</b>	<b>\$330,156</b>
<b>Capital</b>					
State FASTER	\$462,500				
CDOT 5309	\$224,141				
ARRA	\$36,000				
FTA 5311 Capital/State Grant Funding*	\$150,000	\$53,600	\$53,600	\$40,000	\$0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$872,641</b>	<b>\$53,600</b>	<b>\$53,600</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Local Revenues</b>					
Operational (Local Match)	\$259,145	\$272,602	\$286,733	\$301,569	\$320,156
Capital (Local Match)	\$25,000	\$13,400	\$13,400	\$10,000	\$0
Advertising	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Fares	\$15,155	\$15,913	\$16,708	\$17,544	\$18,421
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$309,300</b>	<b>\$311,915</b>	<b>\$326,841</b>	<b>\$339,113</b>	<b>\$348,577</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$1,451,086</b>	<b>\$648,118</b>	<b>\$677,173</b>	<b>\$690,682</b>	<b>\$678,733</b>
*An 80% federal share was estimated.					
**A 50% federal share was estimated for operations.					
Source: LSC, 2013.					

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# Appendix A: Agencies/Businesses Interviewed



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## Agencies/Businesses Interviewed

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List of agencies/businesses interviewed:

- ▶ Branson, Colorado
- ▶ Corazon Square of the Trinidad Housing Authority
- ▶ Huerfano County
- ▶ Huerfano County Administrator
- ▶ Las Animas County
- ▶ Las Animas County Administrator
- ▶ Las Animas County DHS
- ▶ Las Animas County Rehabilitation Center
- ▶ Mayor of La Veta
- ▶ Mayor of Walsenburg, CO
- ▶ Mt. Carmel Health Wellness and Community Center
- ▶ Mt. San Rafael Hospital
- ▶ Sayre Senior Center
- ▶ Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center
- ▶ Trinidad & Las Animas County Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Trinidad City Manager
- ▶ Trinidad Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Trinidad Inn Nursing Home
- ▶ Trinidad State Junior College
- ▶ Trinidad Workforce Center

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# Appendix B: Key Person Interview Questions

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## Expansion of a Regional Public Transit System for the South Central TPR

### Key Person Interviews

Name of Person Interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information (organization, phone, email): \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Introduction: Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ with LSC Transportation Consultants. We've been hired by the South Central Council of Governments Transit (COG Transit), a rural public transit provider for Las Animas and Huerfano Counties to conduct a study on improving transit services for the two counties. As part of the study, we are conducting key person interviews. I'm calling you because you've been identified by the project working group as one of key persons we should talk to. I'd like to get about 15 - 30 minutes of your time, all at once or over several conversations. Is this a convenient time or can we schedule a time as soon as possible?

All conversations we have will be confidential. The paraphrased and summarized collection of opinions from these interviews will be shared in a public report. The different worker shift times and locations will not be confidential, but will be used to improve transit services in the South Central region to better meet the needs of your agency/business/employees.

**Do you have any questions for me before we get started?**

- 1. What are the most important issues facing Huerfano and Las Animas Counties in the next 5-10 years?**
- 2. In your opinion, what are the major transportation issues facing the area?**
- 3. In your opinion, what is the role of public transportation in the region?**

4. How important is public transportation compared to other issues?
5. What are the needs of the community for local and regional transit service?
6. Does the current COG Transit service meet those needs? Do you recommend any changes or expansions to the existing transit services?
7. What do you think is the general level of community support in the two counties for public transportation?
8. What do you think would make transit service succeed in your community?
9. In your opinion, would Huerfano or Las Animas County citizens be supportive of any other means of funding public transportation in the region? If so, what?
10. Do you have any other comments or questions?
  - a. Now let's turn to your agency/department/business.
  - b. How well does COG Transit serve your agency/department/business?
  - c. How would you see your current services in relation to the enhancement/expansion of COG Transit service?
  - d. Would your agency/department/business be willing to provide local matching dollars for state and federal funding?
  - e. What are specific shift times or specific hours of service for different user groups within your agency?
  - f. Are there specific origins and destinations that you would like the transit service to serve for your client groups?
  - g. What are some of the incentives that could be used to motivate increased transit usage?
  - h. Are there any factors currently discouraging transit usage?

# Appendix C: Community Questionnaire

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# Huerfano/Las Animas Counties Area Transportation Survey

Issued by LSC for South Central Council of Governments

## Huerfano/Las Animas Counties Resident,

Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions about your personal/household transportation needs. Your answers will help identify transportation needs in the Huerfano/Las Animas Counties area. If you prefer to complete this survey online, go to: <http://lscgs.com/surveys/sccog/community.php>

**Only complete one survey, either paper OR online.**

1. **Which of the following types of transportation does your household currently use?** (check all that apply)

Personal vehicle, such as a car, pick-up, or SUV                      Friend or family vehicle  
Walk    Bicycle  
South Central Council of Governments Transit (COG Transit)  
Van or bus provided by a service agency (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. **To which destinations/communities do you or a member of your household need transportation most frequently?**

Destination \_\_\_\_\_ Community \_\_\_\_\_  
(i.e., Mt. San Rafael Hospital, Trinidad)  
Destination \_\_\_\_\_ Community \_\_\_\_\_

3. **What is the primary reason you or a member of your household need transportation to that community?** (check only one)

Work    Personal Business/Errands                      Doctor/Medical/Health Care  
School/College                              Recreation    Shopping  
Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

4. **What type of transportation service would your household prefer?**

Scheduled bus service                      Door-to-door service (scheduling needed at least 24 hours in advance)  
Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

5. **How often would you or a household member use such a service?**

1-2 days/week                                      3-5 days/week                                      6-7 days/week  
1-3 days/month                                      Less than once a month  
Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Do you or a household member who needs transportation have a disability, health concern, or other issue that makes travel difficult?**

No                      Yes (please specify – e.g., I use a wheelchair): \_\_\_\_\_

7. **What do you think the days of operation should be?** (check all that apply)

Monday                      Tuesday                      Wednesday                      Thursday                      Friday  
Saturday                      Sunday

8. **What should the hours of transportation be?** (check all that apply)

Early morning (6-8 a.m.)                      Morning (8-10 a.m.)                      Mid-morning (10 a.m.-noon)  
Afternoon (noon-2 p.m.)                      Mid-afternoon (2-4 p.m.)  
Evening (4-6 p.m.)                      Late evening (6-8 p.m.)  
Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

9. **Do you think there is need for a transit system in the Huerfano/Las Animas Counties region?** (check only one)

Yes, for the general public                      Yes, but only for the poor, elderly, and disabled  
No                      Don't know

**Please continue to the next page**

10. Do you need your personal car for work during the day?      Yes      No
11. Do you need your car to run personal errands during the day?      Yes      No
12. Do you pick up or drop off children on your way to or from work?      Yes      No
13. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
14. What is your total annual HOUSEHOLD income? (Include all income from all household members)
- |                            |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Less than \$7,500 per year | \$7,500-\$14,999 per year  | \$15,000-\$34,999 per year |
| \$35,000-\$49,999 per year | \$50,000-\$74,999 per year | \$75,000 or more per year  |
15. How many operating vehicles are available to your household?
- |      |           |            |            |                      |
|------|-----------|------------|------------|----------------------|
| None | 1 vehicle | 2 vehicles | 3 vehicles | More than 3 vehicles |
|------|-----------|------------|------------|----------------------|
16. Do you have a valid driver's license?      Yes      No
17. How many total people are in your household age 10 or older? \_\_\_\_\_
18. Including yourself, how many people living in your household do NOT have a valid driver's license?  
\_\_\_\_\_ people
19. If you or another member of the household work outside your home, how do you travel to work?  
(check all that apply)
- |                            |         |     |      |
|----------------------------|---------|-----|------|
| Drive alone or with family | Carpool | Bus | Walk |
|----------------------------|---------|-----|------|
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
20. What is the nearest intersection to your residence? (i.e., W 6<sup>th</sup> Street & S Hendren Avenue, Walsenburg)  
Understanding where you live helps us respond to concerns in specific geographic areas.  
Major Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cross Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_
21. How often do you use the South Central Council of Governments Transit (COG Transit)?
- |                            |               |                       |
|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Do not use the bus         | Once per week | 2 to 3 times per week |
| More than 3 times per week |               |                       |
22. What changes to COG Transit would make you a regular rider?
23. If new services were to be implemented, what would you recommend?  
(For example: service between Trinidad and Walsenburg)
24. Please provide any additional comments about the service you would like to see.
25. If you would like to be notified about this transit expansion study, please provide your e-mail address (PRINT CLEARLY): \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your input!

# Appendix D: Comments on Changes to COG Transit

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## Comments on Changes to COG Transit

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**Question: 22. What changes to COG Transit would make you a regular rider?**

- A good schedule.
- A regular schedule that will serve my street/area.
- Always on time.
- Availability.
- Better scheduled times for pick-up and drop-off; more financial support of mass transport in our community; special event transportation (i.e., ski days in the Springs, weekend travel to Pueblo, etc.).
- Bring back the circulator and provide more training to dispatchers.
- Can't always pay, so I just walk.
- Circulator!!
- Cokedale-Trinidad route
- Continuity, cost.
- Courtesy would be nice!
- Customer service.
- Even though I would appreciate the down time on a bus ride, I just don't know if it would be cost-effective since our population is so rural and small. I could see one day a week to see how it goes? But even then, the weather could be a factor at times. In addition, I normally have to grab groceries or run a few errands and I would have no transportation to do so if I rode the bus.
- Have someone return calls promptly (within 12 hours of call).
- I am a regular rider, and I would like the circulator back.
- I don't need it because I have a car.
- I don't need it regularly.
- I go to school from 8 to 4 and need to go to stores after school or on Saturday.
- I own my own vehicle, so really no need for COG unless my car breaks.
- I would consider using bus service to and from work if it came near my residence on a regular basis.
- I would prefer to use my personal vehicle as long as possible. If I had to use the bus, I would prefer stops close to my residence and workplace, or door-to-door service especially in the winter.

- If I can use it more often.
- If I had more money, I would ride more often. They are great.
- If it wouldn't take so long.
- If they had more trips.
- If they kept their scheduled times to pick people up. If their times were not different everyday. If they didn't make me wait for hours for someone to come pick me up at the drop-off point.
- If they would go back to the way it was.
- I'm already a regular rider.
- Keeping on schedule.
- Keeping the TSJC bus pass and changing back to a circulator and running until at least 7 p.m.
- Lower fee.
- More full-time drivers.
- More reliable.
- More vans.
- Most of the time I use my car. I would consider riding on the weekend to conserve energy and gas if there were at least two trips on the Circulator route so I could get to and from Walmart.
- Need to go to doctors in Pueblo, school.
- Need transportation, can't drive very far on my own.
- None as I am not in need of transportation, but several of my students are in need to get to and from TSJC and/or to drop off and pick up children in daycare.
- None, I do not need to use COG Transit.
- Not charging both ways.
- Not have to schedule appointment to be picked up.
- Not sure since I don't really know their route or the services they provide.
- On time.
- Open availability.
- Open no pay.
- Pick up and drop off close to home and work.
- Pick up at the nearest large intersection listed above.
- Regular schedule.
- Schedule stops daily frequently.

- Scheduled service/locations with a stop within walking distance of my home. Would only need to use if my personal vehicle broke down for more than a few days.
- Text message because some people don't have minutes on phone or don't want to use someone's phone.
- The ability to travel to TSJC in the AM and return in the PM. Lack of transportation affects many in the Walsenburg area that would benefit greatly from transportation to and from Trinidad.
- To have it all around and not on a time, it's harder when they have to pick you up an hour early.
- Train dispatch better, and reactivate the circulator.
- Transportation to and from Raton, NM to Trinidad State Junior College.
- We live out in the country so it is hard to imagine public transportation being of use to us.

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# Appendix E: New Service Comments

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## New Service Comments

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**Question: 23. If new services were to be implemented, what would you recommend?**  
(For example: service between Trinidad and Walsenburg)

- A taxi service around Trinidad.
- At least one scheduled trip a week and a reliable vehicle that has been properly maintained.
- Availability.
- Be on time.
- Between Raton, Trinidad, and Walsenburg.
- Between Trinidad and Walsenburg.
- Circulator.
- Circulator.
- Contract with community entities.
- For people that walk in bad weather.
- Good service for transportation.
- Have 2 buses available for faster trips to Walsenburg for less layover time.
- Highway #12.
- I am aware that transportation issues are a big problem for a number of TSJC students, both traditional and non-traditional. It is imperative that they attend classes in order to be successful in achieving their goals. If at all possible, reliable scheduled transportation to and from TSJC Trinidad Campus between both Raton, NM, and Walsenburg, CO can make a huge difference in eliminating this “road block” to student success. Thank you!
- I would like to know that the bus would take me to the doctor in Pueblo and back if necessary.
- Longer hours of operation. 7 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Many students commute to the college from both Raton, New Mexico and Walsenburg and a few from Aguilar. Two trips a day—one in the morning and one in the evening—to and from both Raton and Walsenburg/Aguilar could help faculty, staff, and students if the buses were available.
- NA to me but Trinidad and Walsenburg for friends.

- Only transit twice a day to and from Walsenburg and Pueblo if needed. Or to make the transit fit one or more people so not just transporting the one person.
- Open weekends.
- Regular scheduled service between Walsenburg and Trinidad.
- Regular stops/pickup around town to the downtown area.
- Service between Raton and Trinidad.
- Service between Raton and Trinidad, and Walsenburg and Trinidad.
- Service between Trinidad and La Veta.
- Service between Trinidad and Pueblo.
- Service between Trinidad and Raton.
- Service between Trinidad and Walsenburg is a great idea!
- Service between Trinidad and Walsenburg; service around town Trinidad.
- Service between Trinidad, Walsenburg, and Raton.
- Service to Trinidad and Pueblo on a regular basis.
- Service to/from Raton for TSJC students.
- Service west of Trinidad to Eagles Landing.
- Services to communities outside of the city limits.
- Taxi service or service for college students . . .to Walmart or other areas that are not within walking distance, such as the movie theater, Wendy's, etc.
- To go to Pueblo more.
- To have it any time of the day!
- Trinidad to Alamosa, Alamosa to Trinidad
- Trinidad to Denver.
- Trinidad to Raton - Pueblo.
- Trinidad to Springs.
- Trinidad to Walsenburg.
- Trinidad to Walsenburg (to Pueblo at least once a month).
- Trips to Pueblo.
- Two runs from Trinidad to Walsenburg in the same day.
- Wals. - Trinidad.
- Work later or on Saturdays.
- Yes.

# Appendix F: Additional Comments

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## Additional Comments

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**Question: 24. Please include any additional comments about the service you would like to see:**

- Affordable transportation is needed for people with a fixed income.
- Am satisfied with services at this time.
- Bring Donna back.
- Circulator.
- Circulator.
- COG HELPS!!
- I don't use the COG, it takes too long to get there.
- I have irregular work hours so I do not know if I could commit to use of the service.
- I think reliable transportation is a critical need in this community, so that citizens can go to school, shop, and get medical help.
- I would like to see the circulator back. I do not live directly "in town" but if my car were to break down and the repair bill would be costly, it would be nice to know that I would be able to get to the store/Walmart or doctors if needed. Even though I currently do not need the bus, it is always nice to know that it is running in case I do ever need it.
- Just like to see the circulator again because a lot of my friends rely on this public transportation to get place to place.
- Just would like to be able to get to my doctor appointments.
- Look into service to Raton and Trinidad.
- Lots of people in the area do not have cars so I think a service is needed, but you need to know where the people without cars need to go and I don't know.
- More dependable; less waiting time. Seniors would benefit from shorter waiting times.
- More phone lines available for calls and have people answer the phone instead of having to leave a voice mail or message for a pick up 24 hours in advance.
- No more busy signals and call back to confirm the same day. Give name when answering phone.
- Not sure.

- Providing once or twice daily transportation to and from Walsenburg and Trinidad would enable high school students to expand their educational opportunities, would allow the elderly access to additional services, and increase the number of students that could attend TSJC and continue to live at home in Huerfano County making a college education much more affordable.
- Return the circulator routes at least in the morning to get to college buildings downtown and near I-25 and include one or two at the end of the day to transport students to and from the buildings to the dorm and optionally out to shopping at Walmart.
- Thanks for your efforts!
- That they didn't make this change.
- Transportation in the snow.
- Trinidad is in dire need for taxi service. I hear this conversation time again when we go out to dinner and want to have a few drinks; or if we go out with friends. We need to help local respectable businesses (bar/restaurant) sustain their economic viability and provide a taxi service for those who go out or attend special events, like rodeo dances, to avoid DWAs or DUIs. Probably not the direction COG is heading or not COG's purpose, but there are many who really wish a cab or taxi service would be reactivated.
- We need a bus system.
- With the amount of students and employees driving back and forth from Raton, NM to TSJC, it would be worth having transit for the Raton, NM area.
- Would like to see bus service mainly for elderly from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 1 p.m.
- Yes, bring Donna back!