

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to document long- and short-range plans for specialized transportation for persons with disabilities and elderly persons in the Colorado Springs Urbanizing Area. In addition, this report provides planning documentation for grant assistance from the Colorado Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration. This plan is an element of *Destination 2025: A Mobility Plan for the Pikes Peak Region* and was coordinated with the development of that plan, and specifically the Transit Element, which was prepared by the City of Colorado Springs Transit Services Unit.

This Final Report presents a summary of the existing conditions related to specialized transportation services in the Colorado Springs urbanized area. Information in this report includes a description of the communities, a review of the existing specialized transportation providers in the study area, goals and issues to be addressed in the study, the specialized transportation demand estimates for the study area, and the long-range and short-range transit elements for the Specialized Transportation Plan.

The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments was formed in 1967 under the Colorado laws regarding regional planning and intergovernmental contracting. Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) is a voluntary organization of local governments serving the regional communities. The governing body of PPACG is composed of elected officials from participating local governments, and memberships are open to all general purpose local governments (municipalities and counties) in the Pikes Peak Region (comprised of El Paso, Park, and Teller Counties). PPACG has no authority to tax, legislate, or condemn. Rather, PPACG provides a forum for local officials to identify regional problems and opportunities, develop solutions, and make recommendations to local governments on areawide strategies to deal with those issues.

This Final Report incorporates Technical Memoranda #1, #2 and #3 for the Colorado Springs area. These Technical Memoranda were presented as part of the planning process. This Final Report was submitted to the Specialized Transit Advisory Subcommittee (STAS) and the public for review and comment prior to the submittal of the final product. The final product is a single document that will provide the specialized transit plan for the Transit Element within *Destination 2025: A Mobility Plan for the Pikes Peak Region*. The Specialized Transportation Plan was approved as part of the Destination 2025 Plan on November 14, 2001.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) has established a goal of changing from its reliance on Transit Development Plans (TDPs) to using Transit Elements of 20-Year Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) to show needs and strategies. After 2004, a TDP will no longer be required, but all transit projects must be in the Transit Element of the 20-Year RTP in order to be funded.



PPACG has received a Federal Transit Administration (FTA)-funded grant from CDOT to prepare the Specialized Transportation portion of the Transit Element. PPACG hired LSC Transportation Consultants to work under the guidance of PPACG staff and with the advice of the Specialized Transit Advisory Subcommittee (a subcommittee of the Transportation Advisory Committee) to prepare this Specialized Transportation Plan to be included in *Destination 2025: A Mobility Plan for the Pikes Peak Region* and address specialized transportation needs in the region. The specialized transportation needs for the urbanized area were considered in this report and used to develop alternatives for this Final Report. This Specialized Transportation Plan will be incorporated into *Destination 2025: A Mobility Plan for the Pikes Peak Region*.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

Chapter II provides a community economic and demographic overview of the entire study area. The chapter includes projections covering the six-year and 2025

planning horizons. Other pertinent data within the chapter include activity centers and land use patterns.

Chapter III presents the existing specialized transportation providers. Information includes service descriptions, schedules, operating data, and ridership. Chapter IV presents the specialized transportation needs assessment for the Colorado Springs urbanized area. Chapter V offers service alternatives for meeting increasing future demands. The alternatives range from no changes to the existing conditions to major modifications such as a broker or single provider providing all specialized transportation services within the region.

Chapter VI presents the Long-Range Specialized Transit Plan. The Long-Range Transit Element includes an analysis of unmet needs, gaps in service areas, regional transit needs, a policy plan for the Pikes Peak Region, and a funding plan.

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

ISSUES

The list of issues presented in the following text has been identified from a variety of sources including previous reports, the inventory of existing providers, interviews with transit managers, regional transit meetings, and discussion with and observation of users. Issues have been identified that may require short-range or long-range actions. Each of the issues were considered when developing transit alternatives for the study area.

- Inadequate funding for operations and management of transit services.
- Lack of regional transit connections to Denver, except for Greyhound.
- Congestion is increasing and contributing to route delays.
- Increased population will deteriorate air and environmental quality.











- Need more frequent service.
- Shortage of drivers.
- High turnover of staff.
- Expensive service.
- Community involvement is a must from the beginning.
- Need more night service.
- Need service to unserved areas within Colorado Springs.
- Continue coordination efforts and look for more opportunities.
- Target presentation of the Final Plan.
- Identify all transit needs.
- Look at access to regional destinations, jobs, medical centers, educational facilities, and social/recreational opportunities.
- Continue use of Springs Transit to promote self-sufficiency.
- Marketing of transit services and education of the public.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

LSC met with the Specialized Transportation Advisory Subcommittee (STAS) for a half-day workshop on May 8, 2001 to develop goals and objectives for the Specialized Transportation Plan as an element of *Destination 2025: A Mobility Plan for the Pikes Peak Region*. During the workshop, members of the STAS identified issues to be addressed in the Specialized Transportation Plan. Following the discussion of issues, draft objectives were developed.

The objectives for the Specialized Transportation Plan are based on Goals and Objectives in *Destination 2025: A Mobility Plan for the Pikes Peak Region*. Appropriate Objectives have been developed which correspond to relevant Goals. The Goals and Objectives are shown in Table I-1. The Goals are referenced to the overall transportation plan, and specific Objectives for Specialized Transportation are identified by the paratransit van symbol.

The draft Objectives were presented to the STAS at a regular meeting held on May 22, 2001. At that meeting, the Objectives were approved for use in developing the Specialized Transportation Plan. Evaluation of future specialized transportation options, presented in Chapter V, were based on these objectives and criteria.

Table I-1 Colorado Springs Urbanizing Area Specialized Transportation Goals and Objectives	
<p>A-1)</p>	<p>Preserve, maintain, and enhance the existing transportation system.</p> <p> <i>To what extent does the project preserve, maintain, and enhance the existing transportation system?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Provide continued funding for specialized transportation services.  Provide specialized transportation services to areas that are currently unserved.  Enhance specialized transportation service in areas that are currently underserved.
<p>A-4)</p>	<p>Emphasize transportation system management and operations techniques and travel demand management strategies to maximize efficiency and safety of the existing transportation system.</p> <p> <i>To what extent does the project emphasize transportation system management and operations techniques and travel demand management strategies?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Identify potential options for coordination of specialized transportation services.  Increase coordination of specialized transportation services.
<p>A-5)</p>	<p>Coordinate and integrate the planning and development of the transportation system facilities to improve accessibility for all users.</p> <p> <i>To what extent does the project improve access to the transportation system for all users?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Provide accessible facilities at all bus stops including sidewalks and crosswalks for people with special needs.  Fixed-route transit services should provide the maximum possible accommodation for people with disabilities to minimize demand on specialized transportation services.

A-7) Base the planned improvements to the transportation system upon revenues reasonably expected to be available during the planning period and recommend other needed improvements to be implemented should additional revenues become available.

- 🚗 The specialized transportation element will identify long-range needs with priorities for services to be provided under projected financial constraints.

A-10) Provide regional multimodal access to major activity centers.

🚗 *To what extent does the project provide the major activity centers with regional multimodal access?*

- 🚗 Specialized transportation services will provide access to shopping, social/recreation destinations, jobs, health services, and education.

C-1) Develop a convenient, cost-effective public transportation system to serve the mobility needs of all segments of the population and to and from major regional destinations.

🚗 *Does this public transportation project serve the mobility needs of all segments of the population to and from major regional destinations?*

- 🚗 Specialized transportation services will focus on the needs of the elderly and individuals with disabilities.
- 🚗 Specialized transportation services will be coordinated to complement public transportation services.

D-4) Pursue funding sources to address deficiencies in the transportation system, which cannot be corrected through development-related construction or user-pay principles.

🚗 *To what extent does the project pursue other funding sources?*

- 🚗 Identify and obtain new sustainable funding for specialized transportation services.