



CHAPTER I

Introduction

The Farmington Metropolitan Planning Organization (Farmington MPO) contracted with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. to provide transit planning assistance for a comprehensive operational analysis of the Red Apple Transit system. The mission of the Farmington MPO is to provide a forum to develop an effective transportation system to move people and goods safely, economically, and efficiently while maintaining a high quality of life. This transit planning effort is an outgrowth of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the region which establishes a 20-year vision for transportation within the Farmington MPO and helps to guide investments in all modes of transportation including highways, roads, bridges, buses, airports, bicycle, and pedestrian. The MTP made the following statement about this transit plan:



“The Farmington MPO will work in cooperation with Red Apple Transit on a transit needs assessment and evaluation of the existing transit system to develop a fixed-route and demand response public transit system that serves all areas within the MPO region in the most efficient, economical, and effective manner. A comprehensive study of the Red Apple Transit system will determine the type of transit services needed in the MPO by 2020. To be consistent with the 2035 planning horizon of this document, additional estimated services by the year 2035 will be based upon the recommendations for 2020 that result from the study.” (March 2010)

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The transit study was expected to achieve the following key outcomes:

- Determine the most feasible options for expansion of the system to meet existing and projected needs of the community.
- Determine optimum locations for a transit hub terminal in Farmington as well as other key locations in the MPO region.
- Determine if bidirectional, linear routes would better serve the public than the existing loop system, and identify how to transition from the existing loop system to a bidirectional line route system.
- Determine feasible routes and schedule changes to improve service levels by 2015 and 2020.

Identification of new expansion routes assisted in determining:

- Projected annual ridership by the year 2020
- Future bus stop locations
- Fleet and personnel needs
- Capital and operating costs
- Future headway times

REPORT CONTENTS

Chapter II presents the public involvement efforts that have been undertaken during this study. This includes a brief summary of public meetings and a description of the outcomes.

Chapter III presents community conditions and demographics, including current 2010 estimates of population, 2020 forecasts, and 2035 forecasts. The chapter also presents information about the regional economy and local travel patterns.

Chapter IV presents an overview of transportation services within the Farmington MPO. This includes detailed information about the Red Apple Transit system. Information is also provided about transportation services provided by senior centers, tribal transit providers, an intercity bus company, and the San Juan Center for Independence. Many of these organizations provide program-based services and rely on Red Apple Transit for other trips.

Chapter V examines the demand for transit that exists within the study area. The chapter uses numerous models and formulas to help quantify different segments of demand, both current and future.

Chapter VI provides a comparison of Red Apple with a range of peer transit systems. Most peers perform similarly to Red Apple. A few perform outside the averages of this group and offer some ideas useful to Red Apple's planning efforts. Also included is pertinent information about how other systems have found the revenue to support the delivery of their services.

Chapter VII explores a range of route-level alternatives for Red Apple. The route-level alternatives are concepts that could be implemented independent of other changes. Included is a map of each alternative, an estimate of the costs involved in implementing each alternative, and the expected benefits of the alternatives.

Benefits may include operational efficiency improvements, ridership increases, or both.

Chapter VIII looks at alternatives at the system level. The intent of this chapter is to evaluate the interactions of several route alternatives being implemented together. Included is a discussion of potential changes to transfers between and among routes, as well as a discussion of the implications for infrastructure investments in transit hubs.

Chapter IX presents information on the preferred long-range plan. This plan was chosen after weighing the available alternatives with the stakeholder committee and the public. The chapter presents a description of the plan, including an analysis of headways and the location of transit hubs.

Chapter X presents the implementation plan for the preferred service discussed in the previous chapter. The implementation plan covers several key aspects, including the phasing and financial plans. The last part of the chapter examines the institutional steps that need to be taken in order for the implementation plan to be executed, as well as marketing strategies that can be adopted.

