

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE FIVE COUNTY CONSOLIDATED PLAN CONTAINS A HOUSING PLAN, A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND AN ECONOMIC PLAN FOR THE FIVE COUNTY REGION. THE FIVE COUNTIES IN THIS REGION INCLUDE BEAVER, GARFIELD, KANE, IRON AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES. THIS PLAN ALSO PROVIDES A NEEDS ASSESSMENT BOTH ONE-YEAR AND FIVE-YEAR ACTION PLANS (CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLANS FROM EACH OF THE FIVE COUNTIES IN THE REGION AND MOST OF THE REGION'S CITIES AND TOWNS). THIS PLAN IS A GUIDE FOR BETTER PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING IN SOUTHWESTERN UTAH.

INTRODUCTION STATEMENT

The 2005 edition of the Five County District's *Consolidated Plan* marked the second five-year rewrite of the original plan which was adopted in 1995 when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development initiated the consolidated planning process for federal and state funding programs. Each year thereafter, until the next five-year rewrite, the plan will be updated with key information to perpetuate the strategic planning process. The core components of the plan address affordable housing, community and economic development issues for counties, cities, and towns in the Five County District emphasizing regional programs that will benefit low and moderate income residents. The Five County Association of Governments encourages local and regional decision makers to engage in comprehensive planning and coordination to maximize overall use of federal, state and local resources.

REGIONAL PROFILE

The Southwest District, located in the southwest region of Utah and bordering Nevada and Arizona, encompasses five counties – Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane and Washington, and is often referred to as the Five County District. The District contains 36 incorporated cities and towns working with the Five County Association of Governments. A map of the District is provided in the Appendices of the Plan.

Geography and Environment

The geography and environment of a region play important roles in community planning. As towns, cities, and counties develop, planners must consider the "lay of the land" and the many environmental issues that come with it. It is now more important than ever that we understand the land on which we develop, and its accompanying limitations and potential problems. The Five County Area is no exception, and has many unique issues pertaining to its distinct geography and environment.

Physical Description

The Five County District is located at the southwest corner of Utah, near the heart of the Intermountain West. The five counties are contained in two major physiographic provinces. Most of Beaver, Iron, and Washington County lay within the Basin and Range province, which generally consists of north-south trending mountain ranges separated by broad arid valleys with interior drainage, and vegetated with sagebrush and other plants of the Great Basin. Garfield and Kane counties are located in the Colorado Plateau, which consists of uplifted sedimentary rock strata vegetated with desert sage scrub.

On a more localized scale, the area is also speckled with a variety of topographic features. Some of this area has experienced a great amount of volcanic activity, which is evident in extinct volcanoes, mountains, great lava fields, and mesas. Geologic forces have uplifted huge portions of the land, and have created great rifts in others. Of particular notoriety are the erosional features of the area including the great canyons and cliffs carved by water and wind that make up the national and state parks, such as Zion's, Bryce, and Snow Canyon.

The soil in this area consists mostly of aridisols, an iron-rich desert soil that can be quite productive if cultivated. Aridisols are used mainly for range, wildlife, and recreation. Because of the dry climate in which they are found, they are not used for agricultural production unless irrigation water is available. Native to the valleys throughout most the region is a variety of grasses, junipers, and pinion pines, while xerophytes and desert scrub are native to the lower elevations. Farming has produced a diversity of crops, including barley, alfalfa, hay, and cotton (which earned the southern region the name of "Dixie"). Much of the region has also been prime land for ranching cows, sheep, and horses.

Climate

Because of its general location, the Five County District is mostly semi-arid. As moist air moves in from the Pacific Ocean, it is forced to rise over the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range, which causes it to cool and drop its precipitation, leaving very little moisture left for the region East of the Sierra Nevadas. While all of the Intermountain West is generally dry due to this phenomenon, the aridity in the Five County District is accentuated by its lower latitude, which makes it warmer than most regions to the north. Much of this area is characterized by lower elevation, which also increases the mean annual temperature.

For example, the area near St. George City is a warm climate, which is unique to the state of Utah, can be attributed to the fact that it has the lowest elevation of any Utah city and lies at the very southern end of the state. In fact, this area, also known as Utah's Dixie, has the highest mean annual temperatures in Utah, averaging 61-62 degrees Fahrenheit. It also boasts the highest maximum temperature ever recorded in Utah, which was 117 degrees Fahrenheit, observed on July 5, 1985.

Though scholars classify most of the region as "desert," only the areas with lower elevations are considered "hot" deserts, or regions where the winters average above 32 degrees Fahrenheit. This would include most of Washington County. This region usually does not have snow in the winter, and has extremely warm summers. The rest of the region, which consists of higher elevations, is considered to be a "cool" desert, with snowy winters and warm summers. Some exceptions exist over the highest elevations, mountainous regions such as Brian Head, which are classified as "undifferentiated highlands" since they experience cooler temperatures and higher humidity than the rest of the area. These regions generally have very cold, snowy winters and cool summers.

Like the rest of the Intermountain West, during the winter, most precipitation results from the passage of mid-latitude cyclones, while in the summer, convection from localized heating can trigger isolated thunderstorms. Without the moderating effects of the ocean, and therefore, cloud cover from water vapor in the air, this region experiences great daily and yearly fluctuations in temperature.

The nature of the climate in this region leaves it susceptible to a few hazardous weather recurrences. Although most of the country is subject to flash floods, they are particularly damaging in this region since the soil is dry, somewhat non-vegetated, and easily eroded.

Threats to human lives and damage to property are not only a result of rapidly rising waters, but of catastrophic mud slides as well. This area is also subject to tornadoes, although they are a rare occurrence. More common in the warmer regions are dust devils, which are rarely severe enough to damage property. The higher elevations always have the potential for blizzards, cold spells, and avalanches in the winter. The entire region is susceptible to fires resulting from lightning strikes in the spring and summer, which is actually a frequent occurrence.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND POPULATION

Migration Patterns

Any long time resident of the Five County District could tell you that this region has changed in the last several years. The 90s brought a population boom to most of the area, which was obvious by the prospering housing and real estate market. Since the Five County District is generally rural and people generally migrate to urban areas, the migration boom came as a surprise to many residents. However, the boom was actually part of a much larger phenomenon taking place all over the Intermountain West. In the past two decades, Western rural towns have become increasingly attractive to urban dwellers all over the country, especially Californians. Tired of city traffic, pollution, crime, an economic recession in California, people moved to the rural West to find a simpler, and slower-paced life. Southwestern Utah is no exception.

Based on the net migration figures between the years 2000 to 2003, three of the five counties experienced positive net migration since 2000 - Beaver, Iron and Washington. Garfield County and Kane County both experienced a negative net migration between 2000 and 2004. Table 1.1 illustrates Net Migration by County, 2000-2003.

Table 1.1 Utah Implied Net Migration by County, 2000-2003

	Beaver	Garfield	Iron	Kane	Washington
2000	-3	103	584	-62	1,824
2001	104	-151	235	-4	3,405
2002	18	-57	9	-115	3,792
2003	-64	-91	226	-62	3,770
NET MIGRATION 2002-03	55	-196	1,054	-243	12,791
Source: Utah Population Estimates Committee					

Profile of Populations

The 2000 U.S. Census documented the region's population by race and ethnicity. (See Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 Five County Year 2000 Population by County & Race/Ethnicity

	Beaver	Garfield	Iron	Kane	Washington	Region
White	5,599	4,496	31,416	5,804	84,543	131,858
Black or African American	16	8	119	2	186	331
American Indian or Alaskan Native	54	87	737	94	1,328	2,300
Asian	37	19	251	13	405	725
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5	2	92	3	384	486
Some other race	188	53	600	45	2,020	2,906
Two or more races	106	70	564	85	1,488	2,313
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	333	136	1,383	140	4,727	6,719
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000						

Economic Snapshot

Although the five counties of the Southwest District share common geographic boundaries, the economic make-up of the individual counties varies considerably. Information taken from the Utah Department of Workforce Services quarterly newsletters (September 2004), shows a wide variety of economic conditions. The three counties that share access to Interstate 15 (Beaver, Iron and Washington) also exhibit more diverse economic bases and more resilient economies. The two more remote counties (Garfield and Kane) are dependent upon tourism as their primary economic base. Chapter 5 details the economic development strategies for the region.

REGIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Combining the concerns of large and small communities in the Five County District yields a number of regional goals and objectives. Goals and objectives for communities in the region are to:

- implement effective planning processes
- meet the needs and demands of a growing population
- provide a diversified economy
- promote economic opportunities for low-to-middle income populations
- preserve cultural and historical heritage
- protect agricultural lands and local land use traditions
- maintain a high quality of life in clean, safe, and attractive surroundings

A primary focus of community development in southwestern Utah continues to be “brick and mortar” projects that improve basic qualities of life. These important needs are documented in the capital investment plan tables presented in Chapter 8. Communities’ needs fall under various classifications from public protection to economics to recreation. To get a feel for what the region is most lacking, AOG staff summarized the needs of each jurisdiction in Table 4.3; the jurisdictions are listed on the left of the table, and the various need categories are across the top. Jurisdictions’ needs are tabulated according to the category they fall under. For example, Beaver County documented three needs relating to their fire protection, therefore they have “3” indicated under the “Fire/ambulance” category.

The following list shows the categories with the largest number of identified locally identified capital projects in the region. Note that the list reflects needs as documented on Tables 8.1 and 8.2 (1-year and 5- year Capital Investment Plans).

District Jurisdictions

There are 36 cities and towns in the five counties comprising the district. They are identified in Table 1.3. In addition the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah has three bands that are located in this area, they are also shown in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3 Jurisdictions of the Five County District

Beaver County	Garfield County	Iron County	Kane County	Washington County
Beaver City	Antimony	Brian Head	Alton	Enterprise
Milford	Boulder	Cedar City	Big Water	Hildale
Minersville	Cannonville	Enoch	Glendale	Hurricane
	Escalante	Kanarraville	Kanab	Ivins
	Hatch	Paragonah	Orderville	LaVerkin
	Henrieville	Parowan		Leeds
	Panguitch			New Harmony
	Tropic			Rockville
				St. George
		Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah		
		Cedar Band	Santa Clara	
		Indian Peaks Band	Springdale	
		Shivwits Band	Toquerville	
			Virgin	
			Washington City	

EXPLANATION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 2. Public Participation

Chapter Two describes public participation in development of the plan, including a program description, a description of involved organizations, outreach efforts pursued, and a summary of suggestions made during a 30-day comment period.

Public participation is important in any comprehensive planning process and is essential in the development of the Five County Association of Governments Consolidated Plan. Input is solicited not only on the plan but also in the development of regional priorities and goals, community development, economic development, housing, rating and ranking process and other components of the plan.

Chapter 3. Plan Development Process and Distribution of Funds Methodology

This Chapter highlights the Plan Development Process and Distribution of Funds Methodology. The development of the Five County Association of Governments Consolidated Plan followed a collaborative process.

Association staff conduct an outreach program to gather input from jurisdictions and other parties who are directly impacted by the plan, such as the Continuum of Care, provider organizations, special service districts, etc. Jurisdictions receive several notices and materials to aid them in updating the community assessment portion of the plan. The Steering Committee has final review and approves the regional priorities included in the plan. Association staff also gathers demographic, economic, housing and other related information about the region to meet the to the content requirements specified for the plan by the State of Utah Small Cities CDBG program. Once the primary data is gathered, staff organizes the plan following the outline provided by the State to create a draft document and makes the draft available for public comment. An open house and public hearing are held and the plan is made available for a 30-day public comment period. Input into the document is sought from a variety of sources, especially from jurisdictions within the region, through a public participation process. Comments received are considered and, where appropriate, are incorporated into the final draft of the plan. The final draft of the plan is submitted to the Steering Committee for final review and approval, and is then submitted to the State CDBG staff.

For CDBG funding distribution purposes, the Steering Committee has the responsibility to review regional Rating and Ranking policies on an annual basis. This is generally accomplished in the summer of each year. The Rating and Ranking as well as regional CDBG policies are adopted each August and provide the framework for the region's CDBG program. Regional policies are intended to ensure that HUD dollars are targeted toward those populations with the greatest need and to projects that will provide the greatest impact in addressing those needs.

As mentioned previously, the Steering Committee annually approves the CDBG Rating and Ranking Policies. In determining what criteria will be included in the policies, the staff ensures that criteria established by the State CDBG Policy Committee are included. Other criteria included are a collection of elements that are important in this region, either as evidenced through county and regional priorities established in the Consolidated Plan, or through comments provided by local jurisdictions. Criteria to be utilized for the 2005-06 CDBG program year along with adopted data sources to be utilized, as well as general CDBG program policies, are listed.

Chapter 4. Community Development

The Community Development Plan presented in Chapter Four inventories the various needs of communities in the Five County District to ensure that community needs are recognized. The goal of this community development plan is to provide a regional community development vision statement, identify needs of jurisdictions, identify barriers to fulfilling community development needs, and identify strategies to overcome barriers.

The following are general regional goals and objectives for communities in the region :

- implement effective planning processes
- meet the needs and demands of a growing population
- provide a diversified economy
- promote economic opportunities for low-to-middle income population
- preserve cultural and historical heritage
- protect agricultural lands and local land use traditions
- maintain a high quality of life in clean, safe, and attractive surroundings

Regional Summary of Identified Needs

A primary focus of community development in southwestern Utah continues to be “brick and mortar” projects that improve basic qualities of life. These important needs are documented in the capital investment plan tables presented in Chapter 8. Communities’ needs fall under various classifications from public protection to economics to recreation. To get a feel for what the region is most lacking, AOG staff summarized the needs of each jurisdiction in Table 4.3; the jurisdictions are listed on the left of the table, and the various need categories are across the top. Jurisdictions’ needs are tabulated according to the category they fall under. For example, Beaver County documented three needs relating to their fire protection, therefore they have “3” indicated under the “Fire/ambulance” category. The following list shows the categories with the largest number of identified locally identified capital projects in the region. Note that the list reflects needs as documented on Tables 8.1 and 8.2 (One and Five Year Capital Investment Plans).

1. **Streets/bridges** - development, improvement of roads and bridges (17 one-yr./38 five-yr.)
2. **Drinking water** - water tanks, piping systems, water storage (21 one-yr./23 five-yr.)
3. **Fire/ambulance** - fire and EMT stations, equipment, staff (16 one-yr./16 five-yr.)

4. **Community parks** - development of new parks, improvement to existing parks and playground equipment (14 one-yr./17 five-yr.)
5. **Permanent Housing** - affordable housing for low to middle income families (14 one-yr./13 five-yr.)
6. **Sports facilities** - recreation centers, ball fields, tennis courts, trails, swimming pools, golf courses, equestrian centers (10 one-yr./16 five-yr.)
7. **Flood** - Storm drainage, flood control (12 one-yr./11 five-yr.)
8. **Senior/community centers** - construction, improvement, maintenance of senior or community centers (11 one-yr./8 five-yr.)
9. **Sewer** - Pump stations, lift stations, pipelines, sewer lagoons (2 one-yr./12 five-yr.)
10. **Administration** - construction, improvement of town hall, city offices (8 one-yr./5 five-yr.)
11. **Planning/Design** - (3 one-yr./8 five-yr.)

Besides documenting important community development needs, jurisdictions documented barriers to obtaining such needs. In addition, they deliberated on possible strategies to overcome those barriers. Some common barriers and strategies for the region are presented in Table 4.2.

Chapter 5. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The Five County Association of Governments was designated as an Economic Development District (EDD) by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in April, 1979.

The purpose of this designation was to promote a coordinated, region-wide approach to the economic development efforts of local governments in the Five County Region.

One method used to encourage such coordinated effort is the preparation of this District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Every functioning EDD is required to have a current CEDS in place before any jurisdiction in the District is eligible for EDA-funded assistance programs.

In 1994, the Department of Housing and Urban Development initiated the Consolidated Planning process. The Consolidated Plan is intended to focus federal, state and local funding resources to those in most need, usually defined as those with low or moderate incomes. The Consolidated Plan directs regional efforts to foster viable communities that provide decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities.

Because the CEDS and Consolidated Plan processes both employ economic development as a primary tool, the two processes are documented in this chapter. This allows the AOG staff to consolidate research and documentation efforts, thus freeing up staff resources for additional technical assistance to area jurisdictions. This consolidation also provides consistent and unified policy direction for regional economic development efforts. Chapter Five contains the Five County CEDS.

Chapter 6. Housing

The Regional Housing Plan was created to document the housing needs of the Five County Association region. Specifically it presents a long-range vision statement, addresses affordable housing issues for low-income populations by assessing their housing needs, identifies barriers for obtaining affordable housing, documents the physical condition of housing stock in the District and designs strategies to realize the vision.

Local Governments and public participation was part of the development of the Housing Element of the Consolidated Plan, with emphasis was placed on obtaining input at the local levels of government. The focus of this element is to identify where the housing stock, primarily that generally available to those of low to moderate income, is at risk due to physical deterioration. Association staff assessed the condition of the region's housing stock, which was compiled, analyzed, tabulated, and presented in this chapter.

Housing Needs Summary Analysis

Needs assessment forms submitted by local governments indicate the following general needs in relationship to affordable housing:

- rehabilitation of old housing stock
- rehabilitation of existing rental units
- availability of safe and adequate rentals
- seasonal housing to support the tourism industry
- more water and sewer capacity for housing development in high growth areas

The Five County Association of Governments identifies the following needs and impacts pertaining to affordable housing for the region:

- Local communities need to network, share information, and assist each other in addressing affordable housing issues.
- Single parents with young children bear the greatest burden of affordable housing problems.
- Local governments are over-burdened with providing adequate infrastructure to support additional development, especially if they attempt to make housing more affordable by reducing impact fees.
- The different arms of government need more coordination and cooperation with each other to more effectively address issues and help people at the local level.
- Home buyers education programs should be used to help new home owners more effectively manage their finances, learn life skills, and maintain their investments; and, such programs help reduce mortgage interest rates with most banks.

- Many poverty-level households – primarily migrant workers, seasonal and minimum wage service workers, and the elderly or physically/mentally impaired – are living in substandard, unsafe housing. Housing stock for this income level is in short supply, and what is available is frequently in substandard and unsafe condition. Many people in these categories may be living out of automobiles, camp trailers or tents, living with relatives, or remain homeless.
- While recognizing the need for following building codes, investigation into using innovative ways of building and manufacturing homes need to be made in order to lower the costs of construction.
- Legislative representatives need to be made aware of affordable housing issues for low-income residents; their support is needed for housing programs, i.e., the Olene Walker Housing Trust Fund, the Homeless Trust Fund, and the HOME program; and they need to work to open funding opportunities for the Five County district.

Chapter 7. Outcome Measures

This chapter outlines strategies, priorities, goals and outcome measures for special needs, housing, community and economic development.

A decade of employing the Consolidated Planning Process, combined with recent advisory committee discussions and public participation, has identified several priorities for housing, economic and community development and other efforts, that will be implemented over the course of the next five years.

Five County regional priorities recognize the need to promote fair housing through diversity of race, ethnicity, income level, gender, and/or disability status within area communities. These priorities and resulting goals work towards accommodating a continuum of housing types and income levels that are developed in collaboration with a full range of citizens, community organizations, businesses, and government entities. These strategies focus on enhancing the quality of life for all residents and visitors.

In allocating limited public resources, the Five County region considers many options in guiding determinations of greatest needs. Projects receiving federal funds and state matching funds should meet at least one, and preferably several, specific priorities. Those priorities are documented in Chapter Seven.

Chapter 8. One Year and Five Year Action Plans

Table 8.1 and Table 8.2 document the Capital Investment needs of the jurisdictions in southwestern Utah.

Chapter 9. Appendices

Compiled data is presented that was utilized in the development of the Consolidated Plan.