



# FIVE COUNTY NEWS FROM 'R' VIEW

VOLUME I NUMBER 6

JUNE, 2001

## Director's Dialogue:

It's that time of year of establishing budgets for programs within the Association of Governments. Many of the programs administered through our office have experienced growth over the past few years. Programs for the elderly have grown significantly, providing for the addition of several new case managers and establishment of a satellite office in Cedar City. The Volunteer Center programs have expanded and grown at a very rapid pace over the past year. New monies are anticipated for Child Care Resource and Referral, which will provide many new resources for training and outreach activities. The Dixie Area Transportation Program has been fully launched and the number of passengers is increasing each month. In addition, planning for the Metropolitan Planning Organization is continuing at a rapid pace in order to have things in place upon MPO designation. The Welfare to Work Program is reporting a number of successes and is becoming a model program in the western United States. A large number of partnerships have been developed and continue to work well to provide services to clients throughout the 11 county area. Planning and technical assistance is still a vital part of the Department of Community and Economic Development and continues to expand throughout the region. The Iron County Circuit Rider Planning Office serves Iron County and its municipalities and is providing new and innovative agricultural planning.

Overall, programs and services are expanding throughout the Five County area. A special thanks is extended to all staff for your efforts to make our programs innovative and productive, while providing the highest level of services to clients throughout the region. I am looking forward to a new year which will hopefully bring many rewarding experiences for everyone. (John S. Williams)

**A special thank you is extended to Mayor Al Stone, Cannonville Town, for hosting the May 9th Steering Committee meeting and providing a superior lunch.**

**Highlights of this Issue:** HOME Program; Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); Human Services Public Forums - Followup; Staff Spotlights; and Dixie Area Rapid Transit System Update.

## HOME Rehabilitation Program

**Is your house feeling down in the dumps these days, or like it's bulging at the seams? Does the roof leak, the drain plug up, the wind blow through the cracks, or has the family simply outgrown its size?** Let us help give your home a face lift...and make it adequate for your family's needs through our housing rehabilitation program.

The program is designed especially for low-income home owners to help them rehabilitate their homes when they are unable to obtain conventional financing. The interest rate goes up to 5%, depending on your income. The number of years the loan is extended will be determined to keep the monthly payment at or below 30% of the participant's adjusted gross income. No down payment is required. Loan closing costs are minimal and are wrapped into the loan. No origination or loan fees are charged.

Most types of dwellings qualify for the program. Mobile homes must be put on a permanent foundation, which can be done as part of the work plan. Replacements can be considered if the existing home is not repairable.

In addition, volunteer work or self-help is allowed on work items not requiring licensed professionals, i.e., plumbers and electricians. All work must be approved by the local building inspector and a building permit must be obtained. The Home Rehabilitation Program is flexible to suit the needs of the participant.

The Home Program is funded through the Division of Community Development and the Olene Walker Housing Trust Fund. For more information, to make a referral, or receive an application, please contact Danna Alvey at 435-867-4454.

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## Southwest Utah's 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Human Services Public Forums

We recently completed our 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Human Services Public Forums sponsored by the Five County Association of Governments Human Services Council. We would like to give special thanks to our local elected officials, human service council members, staff, providers, and community members who participated in this year's forums. We feel the forums were a success and were pleased with the participation of those who attended. We always hope public involvement will be higher, but felt the information discussed by those who participated provided invaluable insight into the needs and issues of their community. In addition, important connections were made among individuals, providers and elected officials that will have lasting impact on the community.

Each of the counties had similar and unique issues and concerns that were expressed during these public forums. The following is a brief synopsis of the issues discussed in each of the counties:

**Beaver County:** In addition to issues focused around lack of adequate transportation, lack of adequate child care, need for low-income housing, and higher paying jobs and benefits, a large portion of the discussion focused around issues of better program coordination. Concern was expressed regarding the lack of coordination among existing agencies, need for more information & referral services, the need for agencies to be more informed about other agencies and how to refer consumers, and a need for a resource list for consumers.

**Garfield County:** Key issues focused around the lack of adequate transportation (especially for employment), lack of shelter services for homeless and victims of domestic violence, an array of child care issues, need for local housing authority, addressing the unique needs & issues of a growing Hispanic population, shortage of health care providers (LPN's), and the need for diversification in jobs/employment opportunities.

**Iron County:** Key issues focused around the need for public transportation; better public accessibility for people with disabilities (meet ADA); services for seniors who fall between the cracks; concerns around high cost of medical care and lack of adequate insurance coverage; issues around cost, availability and quality of childcare; need for more subsidized housing for disabled and mentally ill; jobs with higher wages and benefits; and the working poor.

**Kane County:** Key issues focused around access to and availability of services for people in outlying communities, additional space and resources for the food pantries, funding to increase meals on wheels and congregate meals,

services for at risk youth, community center, issues around barriers to obtaining childcare, respite care for children with disabilities, more public awareness, more professional staff for mental health services, medicaid worker in Kane County, low wages, and secure employment with health coverage.

**Washington County:** Key issues focused around expanding transit system; large number of homeless children & families; waiting lists for in-home services; affordable, accessible & quality childcare; more transitional and subsidized housing; need more mentors and volunteers; continue existing efforts in getting community health center; inadequate health care coverage; increasing number of working poor; and more job opportunities for people with disabilities.

So, Where do we go from here? We are still in the process of gathering additional needs assessment questionnaires and compiling the data. Due to the large number of questionnaires we have gathered, it will take us a couple of months to compile the results. We will then present the information to the Human Services Council and the Steering Committee for Five County AOG. The results will then be available to the public. If you have any questions regarding the Public Forums or the Needs Assessment, please feel free to call Carrie Dennis at 435-673-3548. (Carrie Dennis)

### Staff Spotlights:

**Marni Pahl**, Senior Companion Program Coordinator, is the newest member of the Volunteer Center staff. Marni has been a resident of St. George since January, 2000, but has been a frequent visitor to the area since she and her husband Charles purchased a home here in 1993. After Charles retired, Marni continued as the Executive Director of the Planned Parenthood of Northwest Ohio, but missed her husband and the sunshine and made the decision to relocate to Southwest Utah. In addition to her halftime employment at the Volunteer Center, Marni also enjoys her membership in the St. George Rotary Club, volunteer work with the DRMC Foundation, walking with her three pups - Simon and Emily who are Dachshunds and Ches, a Vizsla. She also gets pleasure being in the outdoors - rock climbing, cactus farming and gardening. She is a great cook (we'll put her in charge of the regular Senior Companion parties). She and Charles are proud parents of 3 grown sons and anticipate their first grandson in July. (Linda Sappington)

**Carolyn Moss** is a native of Utah and has lived here "all her life", except for 2 years when her family lived in American Samoa. Carolyn graduated from Granite High School and Stevens Henager's Business College in Salt Lake City.

Carolyn has been married to her husband, Daryl, for 25 years. They have three children: Grant (23 - Senior at the

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University of Utah); Brett (21 - Freshman at Dixie State College); and Aimee (19 - Freshman at Dixie State College).

The family moved to St. George from West Valley City in August 2000 (during the 115° heat!). Weather was a great drawing card, (no snow to shovel from driveways), less traffic, and being closer to Daryl's parents.

Carolyn enjoys tole painting, cross-stitching, quilting, reading, gardening, movies and dislikes washing windows. She has worked as an executive secretary, accounting clerk, purchasing clerk, and substitute teacher. She also has worked with and enjoyed very much Cub Scouting - 10 years as a Den Leader.

She has joined our staff as the Accounting Technician for the Case Management and Weatherization programs. She enjoys working at the Association of Governments and thanks everyone for making her feel so comfortable and at home.

#### **Metropolitan Planning Organization: "A Level Planning Field"**

The Governor's designation of Utah's newest metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is fast approaching. The Regional Transportation Committee (RTC), which began functioning several years ago to plan for transportation growth in the Dixie area, recently changed its name to Dixie Transportation Advisory Committee (DTAC), in preparation to be the technical advisory to the future Dixie MPO policy committee. The policy committee, comprised of elected officials representing the entities of Ivins, St. George, Santa Clara, Washington City and Washington County, plus an appointed Utah Department of Transportation Commissioner will steer the Dixie MPO, to be located at the Five County Association of Governments, and called the Dixie Transportation Planning Office.

Through consensus building a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed back in February 2000 by the Mayors' of the noted cities, the Washington County Commission Chair, Five County Association of Government's Executive Director, and UDOT's Region 4 Director. This agreement was recently amended and spells out the partnership and direction for preparation of a transportation planning process and efforts leading to the designation of an MPO for Utah's Dixie.

Transportation Planner Lowell Elmer has been developing, in cooperation with the DTAC members, a long range transportation planning process, a public involvement program, and a partnership handbook for assisting staff and elected officials in preparing for MPO designation. The Dixie area will be participating in regional forecasting of

transportation needs and determining just how resources will be utilized to develop and improve transportation infrastructure, such as, bicycle paths, highways, and public transit.

So what happens next? The U.S. Bureau of the Census will publish the urbanized boundary for what the federal government will call the St. George Urbanized Area (SGUZA) sometime between April and June of 2002. That boundary determination will then trigger several events, including the designation of the Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization. At the same time as MPO designation, the Governor will also be asked to designate what is called the Designated Recipient for Federal Transit 5307 funds, a public body, able to legally function and carry out the obligations of a public transit system and its services. This public body is also in most cases, the public transit operator. Another possibility is the creation of a transit district, established under the laws of the state of Utah and local jurisdiction, and voted through public referendum. One of these three options will need to be chosen to avoid ear-marked funds being transferred by the Governor to another urbanized area in Utah.

The federal funding that will be supporting the long-term transportation development in the St. George Urbanized Area will be available to the Dixie MPO and the Transit Designated Recipient beginning October 1, 2002. It is anticipated, based on funding that has supported the Logan Urbanized Area, a similar area to Dixie in population, that annual capital improvement dollars or transit operating dollars to be about \$400,000 for transit, and \$600,000 for highway and bicycle path systems. Planning efforts are required to justify the flow of these capital/operating funds to Dixie MPO approved projects. Planning monies available to the MPO, under agreement with UDOT, will total approximately \$100,000 annually.

Federal Highway funds will take a few years of accumulating to support viable pavement projects, without special discretionary funds. It is anticipated that early planning dollars will be spent primarily in developing a regional 3-5 year transit development plan (TDP) to open the gate to funding needed improvements to the transit system before funds lapse, and then focus on near-term highway and trail pavement projects.

Public involvement is going to be a key element in the transportation planning process, so be on the lookout for announced public meetings, open houses and hearings required and desired to obtain inputs from interested citizens, stakeholders, and land management agencies in the decision making process. Partners in this planning process look forward to meeting with you and others on "the planning field". (Lowell Elmer)

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## **DARTS Continues to “Dart About Dixie”**

New bus stop signs, new schedules, new buses, and better service are all part of the program for expanding and improving service now being provided by the new Dixie Area Rapid Transit System (DARTS).

Three new 20-passengers buses were delivered, resulting in service to bus stops every half hour, instead of every hour. The result was a ten-fold expansion of the regular ridership. To keep the buses on schedule, a backup bus is being provided to respond to increased ridership.

New color-coded schedules with larger maps will be distributed at over 200 locations city-wide, including the public library and the Chamber of Commerce.

Bus stop signs have been designed and produced through a cooperative effort of DARTS and the City of St. George Streets Division. Bus stop signs have been installed at 80 locations around the city. We are looking forward to other important steps in our service to the community. (Chuck Hunter)

Please submit articles to Diane Lamoreaux via e-mail ([dlamoreaux@fcaog.state.ut.us](mailto:dlamoreaux@fcaog.state.ut.us)) or in writing to: P.O. Box 1550; St. George, Utah 84771-1550. For other information or services, please call (435) 673-3548 or visit our web site at: <http://www.fcaog.state.ut.us>

### **Steering Committee Meeting Schedule:**

**Wednesday, June 13, 2001, 1:00 p.m.**  
Kane County Courthouse, Commission Chambers  
76 North Main Street, Kanab, Utah

No meeting is scheduled during the month of July.

**FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
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