CEDAR AREA TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 23, 2026

A special meeting of the Cedar Area Transportation Advisory Board was held on Monday, February 23, 2026, at 3:30 PM in the Cedar City Council Chambers room located at 10 North Main, Cedar City, Utah.

PRESENT:
Carmen Alldredge, Chairperson
Kol Gibson, Member
James Jetton, Member
Kathy Heer, Member
Robert Cox, Council
Jill Smuda, CATS Manager/Dispatcher
Ryan Marshall, PW Director
Anna Hernandez, PW Executive Assistant

Duane Heer, Visitor

EXCUSED/ABSENT
Kathy Long, Member

1. NEW BUSINESS
   a. Review of the Transit Study & Meeting Goals

      A special meeting was called by chairperson Carmen Alldredge to review the new transit study commissioned and paid for by UDOT.

      Marshall will present the study's recommendations and personal impressions to the council, incorporating the board's feedback. A rough budget based on board's preferred direction needs to be submitted for the upcoming budget season.

      The study's goal was to optimize transit in Cedar City and surrounding areas like Enoch, Parawon, and Brian Head. By better connecting communities, enhancing service frequency, and improving long-term system liability.

      The current transit system conditions & service hours are Monday-Friday from 7 AM to 6 PM and Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM.

      The route and frequency system covers 19 miles with two buses, 41 stops and a 75-minute route frequency, which is considered a significant barrier to ridership.

      The cost is $1.50 for the fixed route and $2.00 for paratransit (curb-to-curb) services.

      The ridership dipped to 14,000 in 2023 but recovered to 18,462 by December, approaching pre-pandemic levels of around 21,000 (2019 data). Peak demand is at 8:00 AM and 3:30 PM.

      The Operational costs are 50% federally subsidized, and capital costs are 80% federally subsidized, with the city's share cost of additional funds covering the rest.

A comprehensive analysis was conducted, interviewing specialty services (Iron County Aging services, TURN, Senior Companion program, Southwest Behavior services), and evaluating population trends, employment centers (Port-15), job density, land use, major destinations (Walmart, University), and affordable housing locations.

Public feedback and rider demographics identified key transit user groups, minority populations, low-income households, seniors, zero-car households, and a large potential user base in university students who find the current 75-minute loop impractical.

Walmart is the highest usage stop, followed by Smiths and the Library. The city tracks boardings at each stop.

Technical and Stakeholders workgroups were identified, public workshops, and two public surveys were conducted to gather input.

Top reasons for using transit are shopping, recreation and work.

A survey showed preference, 54% prioritized shorter times (higher frequency), while 46% wanted more geographical coverage.

Proposed Fixed route options and recommendations, Coverage Route, Frequency Route, North/South Combination, and Port-15 Route.

Short-Term Plan (Coverage Route): reduces route times from 75 to 60 minutes; Marshall believes this is not a significant improvement, and it reduces some current coverage.

The Frequency Route reduces time to 30 minutes but significantly cuts coverage area including removing the university campus service.

Mid-Term Plan (North/South Hybrid Combination): Combines a North Route (Library to Nichols Canyon) including the airport and a South Route (Campus to Walmart). Maintains full coverage while reducing route times to 30 minutes with bi-directional service. (5-year plan).

Long-Term Plan involves adding more routes to cover areas like Port-15 and Cove Drive (Temple), eventually creating a five-route system. Providing full coverage throughout the whole city (10–15-year plan).

Funding opportunities, current grant funds are competitive and managed through UDOT.

If the area's continuous population reaches 50,000 (projected in 5-8 years), it would be designed an Urbanized Zoning Area (UZA) and receive more substantial, direct funding from FTA.

Technology and infrastructure, purchasing scheduling/dispatching software, to optimize dial-a-ride services. Also improve bus stops to increase visibility and advertise the system.

Funding and future planning: the proposed Mid-term plan would cost an additional \$280,000-\$300,000 annually for operational costs. Currently it is around \$140,000-\$150,000, 50% is covered by grant and 50% by the city. The plan's visibility is contingent on securing grant funding.

Other potential funding opportunity sources 5305, TIF funds from the state (for capital purchases) and local funding opportunities if SUU decided to charge a CERT charge on their student fees or international funds used for their buses. That would be an alternative to provide the students where they want to go.

5311 is what CATS currently participates in. 5310 is for the senior center, that does not apply. 5307 (UZA) that would be the funding that would qualify once reaching the 50,000-population status.

The 5339 is for bus replacement, it is used whenever a current bus is replaced. It is a competitive process that is applied for.

Question pertaining to the transfer location, estimated wait times at transfer point and covered shelters.

The proposed transfer point is the library that has a covered shelter, with an estimated wait time of 10-15 minutes and plans for other covered shelters will be determined. Routes would be staggered to ensure close connections.

Seen as the most critical factors are reliability and flexibility, reducing wait times from 75 to 30 minutes or less can triple or quadruple ridership. The creative strategies are encouraging day center clients to use the bus for short trips to get comfortable with the system boosting ridership numbers.

Question pertaining to hours of operation, would they be extended.

The proposal recommends extending weekday hours from 7 AM to 8 PM and weekend hours from 8 AM to 6 PM.

With Marketing and bus visibility, the current marketing budget is minimal. Plans include using social media and wrapping all buses and vans with local imagery (Zion, Brian Head, Shakespear photos) to distinguish them from other local bus services.

For the inter-local cooperation, Enoch, SUU, and Brian Head have expressed interest in a regional transit system. No interest has come from the County and Parowan.

Many Utah transit agencies are moving to a fare-free model, finding it attracts more riders than the revenue collected. Funding sources include TIF funds, hotel/visitor taxes, and gas taxes.

Potential financial opportunity partnerships with SUU and businesses, and specialized transportation funding available through the Paiute tribe. Look at different avenues to cover the costs.
Most of the increase and resource implications with the new plan would require hiring full-time drivers and fuel. Potentially ordering approximately three new buses (80% grant-covered), which have a one-year lead time.

Decision and Next Steps: The committee agreed to have a preliminary budget prepared for the proposed combined north and south route.

Alldredge moved motion, Gibson seconded and all I's were in favor to present this combined north and south route to the city council.

2. ADJOURNMENT

As there was nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 4:41 PM.