

## Chapter 5

# Key Person Attitudes Toward Transit

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As part of this study, the LSC Team conducted a survey with key persons in the community in order to solicit opinions of transit matters. The intent of this effort was to gauge the community's perception of transportation conditions and their interest in supporting transit services. The opinions expressed below are those of the individuals who completed the survey, and not of the LSC Team. The questions asked are presented in bold italics; the responses, as summarized below, are provided as a guide for transit planning.

The following ten key people were provided the opportunity to complete this survey:

Carol Glatfelter, El Dorado County Transportation Commission  
Susie Davies, Mother Load Rehabilitation Enterprises  
Connie Eaton, Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee  
Kelly Grieve, Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee  
Carol Heape, Elder Options  
Mindy Jackson, El Dorado County Transit Authority  
Mary Norton, El Dorado County Transit Authority  
Star Walker, El Dorado County Department of Community Services  
Bob McKee, Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee  
Linda Feigley, Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee

***What important issues face El Dorado County, and how does public transit relate in importance to these issues?***

The most important issues facing the region that were mentioned by respondents were concerns regarding growth, the needs of elderly and disabled persons, and employment. Some respondents stated that public transit was important to provide access to jobs, and medical appointments. Many respondents also mentioned the challenges of meeting the needs of residents in outlying areas, and the needs of an aging population.

***How do you think the need for transit service in the area will change in the future?***

There was consensus among the respondents that as the county's population increases, the need for additional Commuter service will increase. Additionally, the respondents agreed that as freeways, side roads and local roads become more congested that using transit service will become a "way of the future." A few respondents feel there is a need to expand routes and to provide new routes, especially an express route from one end of Placerville to the other. Many respondents stated that outlying areas will become more dense, increasing the need for transit service in the more rural areas of the county. With an increasing elderly and disabled population, there will be a much greater need to provide expanded Dial-A-Ride service. Lastly, respondents agree there is a need for coordination with other jurisdictions to provide transportation beyond the boundaries of each jurisdiction.

***What do you see as EDCTA's role in the community, both during the upcoming five years and beyond? Who benefits from transit service?***

There were several different responses to this question. One person stated that EDCTA's role is to better serve existing and potential passengers by modifying routes and schedules, and to continue providing safe, dependable and clean public transit. Another respondent suggested EDCTA's role is to meet the growing needs of the community through the annual unmet transit needs process. This person indicated that EDCTA and EDCTC should go "over and above" the state requirements of the unmet transit needs process by holding more than one public hearing

each year. Three respondents felt the role of EDCTA should include educating the public to make public transportation more acceptable (moving beyond the stigmatism that public transit is only for low-income persons), as well as raising public awareness on the value of using public transit and the respectability of doing so. "Thinking outside the box" was one respondent's suggestion in the process of educating the public. Providing access to inexpensive public transportation for all segments of the population, regardless of where people live in the county, was another respondent's view of the EDCTA's role in the community. Lastly, EDCTA needs to be involved in the process of reviewing new development proposals in an effort to meet the transportation needs of people in developing communities. All respondents replied that everyone in their community benefits from transit service.

***Where should EDCTA focus their energies? Is it more important to focus on new or expanded services, or to improve the quality and capacity of existing services? Is it more important to provide service within the county, or to serve commuters out of the County?***

The majority of respondents stated "both" regarding whether it is more important for EDCTA to focus on new or expanded services, or to focus on improved quality and capacity of existing services. Although some respondents expressed that it is most important to improve the quality and capacity of the existing services, many felt that the quality of service could not be improved without expanding services. As to the importance of public transit within the county versus outside the county, one-half of the respondents felt it more important to provide service within El Dorado County, by providing transit service to the entire county someday. The other half of the respondents felt it is important to continue Commuter service outside the county, as well as accommodating residents requiring medical transportation to and from locations outside EDCTA's jurisdiction.

***What improvements/changes to the transit service should be considered?***

Respondents stated several opinions regarding improvements. Some respondents expressed the importance of expanded "on-demand" service to meet the needs of elderly and disabled persons throughout the entire county. Other respondents felt expanding Commuter service is a much needed improvement. Other improvements mentioned include expansion of services, better timed-transfer connections, and reliability on the deviated fixed route service.

***Any further comments or suggestions?***

Comments included:

- ▶ EDCTA is doing an excellent job providing service, given the limited funds currently available.
- ▶ EDCTA should create a "one stop" facility where people can obtain information regarding all regional transportation services.
- ▶ EDCTA should provide bilingual marketing materials.