



# FIVE COUNTY NEWS FROM 'R' VIEW

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## *Director's Dialogue*



The Five County Association of Governments has been the recipient of economic planning grants with the Economic Development Administration since 1980.

There have certainly been a number of changes in the economy since then and still a number of challenges to address in the region.

Every five years the Five County Association of Governments updates the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Beaver, Garfield, Kane, Washington and Iron counties. This strategy is locally driven and reflects the economic needs in southern Utah.

The most recent CEDS document, available on the Five County AOG website, was completed in 2014. General items in the document are labor, recreation, housing, natural resources, and transportation, etc.

In preparation for the updated 2019 CEDS, we would like to organize the Five County CEDS Advisory Committee this summer to contribute in preparation for this update to the economic plan.

Five County will host this economic advisory committee in August, with date to be determined. Senator Hatch's office was invited and will participate in this economic advisory committee meeting. I will have a location and date for this meeting in my next dialogue.

I look forward to your participation and valuable contributions to the 2019 document so it can have greater impact to our region. Direct questions to me at 435-673-3548. Bryan Thiriot, Executive Director

## *Carolyn Moss Retires*



Carolyn Moss, Program Specialist at the Five County Association of Governments, is retiring at the end of May after working at the Association for fifteen and a half years. Carolyn has worn many hats as an Accounting Technician and Program Specialist. She initially worked with the Weatherization Assistance Program providing intake services. She worked with the Aging Services programs

providing intake services, tracking budgets, taking care of accounts payable responsibilities, billing Medicaid and preparing monthly reports for state/federal agencies. She has also taken and typed the minutes for Aging Services Council meetings.

Carolyn has worked with the Senior Companion, Foster Grandparent and Rural Foster Grandparent programs providing information about these programs to prospective participants, conducted program intake, tracked eligibility of clients, maintained eligibility waiting lists, as well as taking care of financial reporting and funding requests. She has also served as the long-term care ombudsman for this region, acting as a go-between when reports of situations affecting the care of the elderly in long-term care are reported. Finally, Carolyn has aptly maintained an inventory database of assets at the Association for our insurance purposes. As you can see, the person replacing her will have big shoes to fill.

Carolyn lives in St. George with her husband Daryl. They have three children and eight grandchildren. Carolyn says they are looking forward to traveling and playing with their grand kids. She also says she has many quilt projects to finish. She will be missed by all of us at the Association, but we wish her well as she embarks on this next phase of her life. Gary Zabriskie, Director of Community and Economic Development

## Mobility Management



Throughout May the Five County Association of Governments held public forums in an effort to gather information regarding the needs of the public and our existing clients. Our elected officials, partner agencies, and the public participated in these forums held in all five counties. There have been several common themes we've heard repeatedly regardless of rural or urban setting and they relate to access to transportation.

There is also an affordable housing crisis that has probably existed for some time throughout the five counties in southwest Utah. This already challenging situation is being further exacerbated by the growing number of homes being converted to vacation rentals. Rural rental rates are as high as, or higher, than those being charged in St. George, likely due to a lack of supply. Based on our forums, this trend appears to be worsening, especially in the more rural areas. A lack of non-seasonal well-paying jobs appears to be the other major cause of this growing economic crisis. As we wrap up our final forum in Iron County and analyze all of the data we have collected, we will provide more quantifiable information and start to develop actionable goals.

Forum attendees in four of our five counties have been unified in their desire for better transportation options and solutions. Often affordable housing is located further away from jobs. Though we may not be able to justify all transportation options in all cases, perhaps there are some solutions that are appropriate and affordable. Transportation can't solve the important and perhaps more critical needs of housing and employment, but it can certainly bridge gaps in those critical needs and help remove obstacles.



Over the past two years SunTran, in partnership with the Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Five County Association of Governments, the City

of Ivins, and Dixie State University has been expanding fixed route and paratransit services to better serve the transportation needs of many people. There are also two studies currently underway that may provide for even more help to residents of surrounding communities. The St. George to Springdale and Brighter SunTran studies could eventually provide better service to St. George residents and serve the residents of Washington, Hurricane, LaVerkin, Virgin, Rockville, and Springdale. This could be a real boon to employers and employees that struggle to find an adequate labor force and affordable housing along the Highway 9 corridor. We encourage citizens and leadership to continue to pull together to improve access to jobs and reduce traffic congestion throughout the region. Look for future opportunities to provide input on the above on-going studies and other efforts to address our mobility and other community needs in southern Utah.

Jay Aguilar, Five County Mobility Manager, can be contacted by calling 435-673-3548 or via email at [jaguilar@fivecounty.utah.gov](mailto:jaguilar@fivecounty.utah.gov)

## Community Development Block Grant Funding Awards for FY 2016



Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding is received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and is then funneled through the state of Utah, Department of Workforce Services, Housing and Community Development Division.

The Five County Association of Governments region (Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane and Washington counties) received a total of \$776,439 in CDBG funding for allocation this year to projects within the region. CDBG funds are typically leveraged with funding from various other state and federal agencies as well as local funds committed to a project.

The Five County AOG utilizes a comprehensive rating and rating criteria that is approved before the program year begins by the Steering Committee of the Five County Association of Governments. That objective criteria is used to evaluate projects that have applied for funding and the projects are scored and ranked. Projects are fully funded in the order of ranking from highest scoring project to the lowest, until all funding allocated to this region for the year is exhausted.

It should be noted that projects approved for multi-year funding in the previous program year must be funded off the top of the funding for the following year.

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The Steering Committee, acting as the CDBG Regional Review Committee, approved FY 2016 funding for the following projects: **1)** \$63,599 to Milford City on behalf of the Beaver Housing Authority for the acquisition of multi-family housing units and rehabilitation of units. This is year 2 of a 2 year, multi-year, project with total CDBG funding of \$300,000; **2)** \$100,000 to LaVerkin City for the expansion and improvements to existing LaVerkin City Fire Station. This is year 2 of a 2 year, multi-year project with total CDBG funding of \$300,000; **3)** \$200,000 to Washington County on behalf of the Northwestern Special Service District for the purchase of a new Pierce 4x4 fire pumper truck for the just completed Gunlock Fire Station; **4)** \$200,000 to Enterprise City for the purchase of a new Pierce fire pumper truck for the Enterprise City fire department; and **5)** \$ 122,840 to Beaver City on behalf of the Beaver Housing Authority (BHA) for interior finishing of their new office building in Beaver, construction of a parking lot at that location for staff and clients, and to complete rehabilitation of the home that formerly served as the BHA offices back into a single family affordable rental home. In addition, \$90,000 was funded to the Five County Association of Governments to provide for program administration, updating of the region’s HUD mandated Consolidated Plan, housing and economic development program delivery, and planning assistance.

It is expected that the program will again be made available for a 36<sup>th</sup> consecutive year beginning with CDBG “How to Apply” workshops held in the fall. The September-October newsletter published in late September will have detailed information on the program and the workshops. Gary Zabriskie, Director of Community and Economic Development

### Staff Awards



Sheri Reber (L), Carrie Schonlaw (R)

On April 28th the Division of Aging & Adult Services held their annual Older American Act and Home & Community Based Alternatives Program Training in Salt Lake City. An award luncheon was held where State staff recognized a few exceptional individuals from some of the Area Agencies on Aging who they felt provided exemplary work and dedication over the past year.

We were privileged to have two employees from Five County recognized at this luncheon. Sheri Reber, case manager for Five County, was recognized by Nancy Madsen, Caregiver Program Specialist for DAAS. Sheri was commended for her efforts in working with caregivers and using her skills and expertise as a Therapeutic Recreation Technician and a Certified Dementia Care Practitioner to develop Dementia Care Toolkits for Caregivers. In addition to developing these toolkits, Sheri has provided training to Five County staff and other agencies on the use of these toolkits.

Carrie Schonlaw, Director of Aging & Human Services for Five County, was also presented with a certificate from Michael Styles, Deputy Director for the Division of Aging & Adult Services for her outstanding Service, Ingenuity and Mentorship. Michael expressed his appreciation for the dedication Carrie has provided in working with the Division of Aging & Adult Services, the Area Agencies on Aging and the community in support of and advocacy for the older population. We, too, want to express our gratitude and appreciation to both Sheri & Carrie for their excellent example and all they do for Five County and for our community. Tracy Heavyrunner, Program Director for Home & Community Based Aging Services

### American Planning Association Conference



Five County Association of Governments Community & Economic Development staff recently attended the Spring Conference of the Utah Chapter of the American

Planning Association (APA). The conference was held on May 19-20 at the Uintah County Conference Center in Vernal, Utah.

This year’s Chapter conference focused on rural issues involving public lands and their impacts on rural communities, resource management planning, planning resources for rural communities, and the current status of mineral development in Utah. Keynote speaker at the Friday luncheon was U.S. Representative Rob Bishop, from Utah’s 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District. He provided great insight into the current situation in Congress and the country as a whole and the need for planning for our Country’s future.

The APA Utah Chapter is an official Chapter of the American Planning Association. APA Utah is a 500-plus member organization of professional planners and planning officials who serve Utah’s communities in many ways, at all levels of government, the private sector and not-for-profit organizations.

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The purpose of the Utah Chapter is to encourage, promote and assist physical, economic, and human resources planning within the State of Utah and to further the purposes of the American Planning Association, including but not limited to the following:

- To provide for the exchange of ideas and to disseminate information to public officials and others engaged in or interested in planning and community development;
- To foster meetings, conferences, and educational programs relating to planning and development;
- To promote and support research and publications relating to planning and development and other pertinent subjects;
- To develop programs for the examination and continuing education of professional planners;
- To otherwise promote understanding, cooperation, coordination, and support necessary for progressive planning and development throughout the State of Utah.

Our newsletter is published 6 times each year.

Please submit event information and article suggestions to the Newsletter Editor via e-mail: [newsletter@fivecounty.utah.gov](mailto:newsletter@fivecounty.utah.gov) or in writing to: Five County AOG Newsletter Editor; 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.fivecounty.utah.gov>

Five County Association of Governments is on



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**FIVE COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
1070 WEST 1600 SOUTH, BUILDING B  
P.O. Box 1550  
ST. GEORGE, UTAH 84771-1550**