

CHAPTER I

Introduction

This report is the third in a series prepared for the DuPage Area Local Circulator Study. The study is a project of the DuPage Area Transit Plan, adopted jointly in 2002 by the DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference (DMMC) and the DuPage County Board to address congestion and mobility in DuPage County. DMMC contracted with LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. (LSC) to provide technical assistance for this study. The first report—Market Analysis—identified markets where circulator service was needed and wanted. The second—Service Type—identified service areas and defined general parameters for service.

This report provides a detailed set of specifications for the Downers Grove Circulator Service. Vehicle type, stop locations, hours of operation, headways, and staffing requirements are addressed. Appropriate standards are provided for the service type selected for the Downers Grove Circulator Service such as deviation service areas, scheduling procedures for deviations, and demand-response service (if necessary). A financial plan is included in this report that includes recommended fares to use the service, capital costs, operating costs, and existing and potential revenue sources. Finally, a recommended service plan is presented that includes a preferred route service and a recommended organizational structure.

Downers Grove is located in southeast DuPage County. The Village has a population of 49,094, and the Community Area (the geographic area defined by census blocks and therefore slightly larger than the municipality) has a population of 72,203. Elderly persons represent approximately 16.3 percent of the total population in the Downers Grove Community Area, and an estimated 4.2 percent of the population has some type of mobility limitation.

Based on the 2000 census, the average per-capita income for the Community Area was \$31,580. This is higher than the state's average of \$23,104. The portion of the population living below the poverty level in the Community Area is approximately

Introduction

2.9 percent with the highest densities of below-poverty populations living south of 63rd and west of Woodward. An estimated 1,742 households within the Community Area had no vehicle for use in 2004. An estimated 9,139 households have only one vehicle.

Downers Grove has a significant level of transit service with three Metra stations, several Pace routes, and four routes served by the Grove Commuter Shuttle. The Grove Commuter Shuttle is operated by the Village of Downers Grove. The planned service is designed to be integrated into the current shuttle service creating a more effective and comprehensive system. The planned service is also intended to complement existing Pace service.

The primary purpose of the proposed circulator service is to provide mobility for local residents. Although there are existing transit services, they are oriented primarily toward the needs of commuters. The local circulator will provide mobility within the community and throughout the day.

Chapter II of this report describes the public input which was used to design the circulator service for Downers Grove. Community input included a community survey which was made available on-line and distributed within the community. A focus group was held in April 2007 to obtain more detailed information and to pursue perceptions and preferences related to the community survey responses.

Chapter III presents service alternatives. The Planning Team has developed four alternatives for Downers Grove. Alternative 1 presents a detailed service plan for the service concept developed in the Service Type Report. Alternatives 2, 4, and 5 incorporate recommendations from the Downers Grove Focus Group and the community survey. Chapter III also presents several vehicle type recommendations for this service. There are many types of vehicles that have been developed for the public transit industry. The Planning Team (LSC and DMMC) used its knowledge of transit vehicles along with recommendations from the Downers Grove Focus Group to identify the best types of transit vehicles for the circulator service. The preferred vehicle type will be selected through input from the Steering

Committee and community input from Community Choice Forums scheduled for July 2007.

Chapter IV discusses potential operating entities that can be used to operate the circulator service. As Downers Grove currently operates the Shuttle, it is recommended that the circulator service be incorporated into the shuttle operations. Chapter IV also provides the Planning Team's recommendation on the amount and type of staffing needed for the Village to operate the circulator.

Chapter V presents the recommended service plan. This chapter describes the results of the Downers Grove Community Forum where citizens from the Village were given a presentation on the service specification alternatives and selected their preferred alternative, details the criteria selected from previous reports made concerning the circulator plan to evaluate each alternative and select the preferred alternative, and presents the recommended service plan. This chapter also presents and details a recommended organizational structure for operating the circulator service.