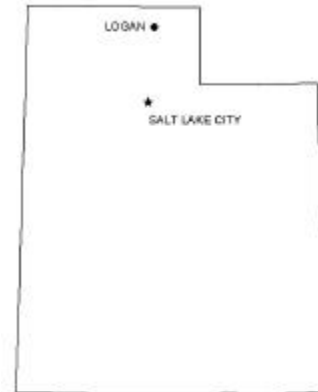


Cache Metropolitan Planning Organization Case Study

1990 Census Population	50,401
Central City	Logan, Utah
Air Quality Status (1990)	Attainment
Governor Designation Date	1992
Voting Policy Board Members	Cache County Each of eight local governments UDOT Logan Transit District
PL and 5303 Funding (Year of Designation)	\$29,000
Initial Staff Size	0
Initial Staff Location	Cache County
Modeling Responsibility	CMPO
GIS Responsibility	Cache County
AQ Conformity Responsibility	N/A
Contacts	Jay Aguilar, CMPO (435) 716-7154 Jim Gass, Smithfield City (Executive Director of CMPO) (435) 563-6226 Ron Bushman, Logan Transit District (435) 716-9686
Website	www.n1.net/~cachempo/CMPOhome.htm



The Cache Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMPO) is the MPO for the Logan, Utah urbanized area. CMPO was formed in 1992 after Logan was designated as an urbanized area following the 1990 Census. CMPO's planning area consists of the majority of the city limits of Logan, half of the city of Nibley, and the cities of Hyde Park, Millville, North Logan, Providence, River Heights and Smithfield in their entirety. Some unincorporated portions of Cache County are also included. As of the 1990 Census, Logan's urbanized population was 50,401. By 2000 the population had grown by approximately 50% to 76,187.

Steps to Designation

When the Governor of Utah received notification that Logan would be designated an urbanized area, he contacted the Bear River Association of Governments (BRAG). BRAG is a voluntary organization of local governments established in 1971 to facilitate intergovernmental cooperation in physical and economic planning across a three county region (Cache, Box Elder, and Rich Counties). The rationale behind contacting BRAG first was that all of the chief elected officials of local governments within the urbanized area sat on the association's board. According to both a CMPO employee formerly employed by BRAG and one of the mayors on the BRAG board, the chief elected officials were concerned that the state's initial contact occurred through the Association of Governments. This concern stemmed from a suspicion that BRAG was attempting to extend its mandate and exert more influence over the member cities.

This misunderstanding was not unexpected, in the opinion of one of the mayors, given that there was no real understanding of what an MPO was on the part of either the elected officials or their staffs. In retrospect, he agrees with the state's decision to approach BRAG first due to their regional mission, but he believes the state could have done more to explain the implications up front to the local governments. Once these early concerns were allayed, the process of forming the policy board and obtaining the governor's designation of CMPO took approximately one year. The mayors and county commissioner forwarded an agreement signed by all of them to demonstrate approval by 75% of the urbanized area population's elected officials, in addition to the articles of confederation, to the governor. The policy board membership consists of the chief elected officials from the eight local governments, Cache County, the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), and the Logan Transit District.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Housing and Staffing

When CMPO was founded, operations were funded out of \$29,000 provided by UDOT. This amount was not sufficient for the MPO to hire staff, so the local governments had to share the responsibility of carrying out the work of the MPO. At the time the MPO was forming, Cache County was in the process of creating a new county planning department. Since this new department would provide the county with the ability to undertake much of the MPO's work, there was agreement that Cache County would host the MPO and initially assume staffing responsibilities. When the first CMPO planner was hired a year later, he continued to work with the planning department in county offices. The CMPO staff person describes his position as being independent from the county and its planning department. He credits this independence partly to the establishment of checks and balances through the use of the City of Smithfield as the fiduciary agent for the MPO. Although GIS work is contracted out to the county's planning department, CMPO has developed its own travel demand forecasting model.

The CMPO Executive Director, (a position currently held by the city manager of Smithfield), is paid a small stipend, but in reality functions more as an appointed official. The director describes the rationale behind sharing CMPO's functions between Smithfield and Cache County as a matter of "who was willing to do what" since the cities had to chip in where they were best able to help. Another reason was initial skepticism as regarding the role of the MPO. Some of the smaller cities on the MPO board were concerned that the urbanized area's largest city, Logan, would have too much control over the body and receive more than its share of the benefits. Logan is by far the largest unit of government in the urbanized area, with a population five times the size of Smithfield, the second largest city. In an effort to allay the smaller cities' fears, CMPO was structured so that its functions were assigned to two different units of government, neither of which were the city of Logan.

MPO Products

According to a former Logan Transit District transit manager, in the first years of the MPO, one of the biggest challenges in the development of Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) was getting all of the board members involved in the process. Most of the mayors of cities other than Logan were not getting projects programmed in their cities. As a result, they became less involved to the point where it grew increasingly difficult to get quorums at meetings needed to approve TIPs and Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWP). Another early challenge was disagreement over design of projects programmed for some of the smaller cities. The smaller cities did not want sidewalks, curbs or gutters included in projects for their jurisdictions while CMPO and UDOT were reluctant to build roads without these elements.

The development of the first Long Range Transportation Plan also proved challenging for different reasons. At the time the MPO was formed, a professor from Utah State University approached CMPO with an offer to provide faculty and student assistance in the development of the Plan. This was viewed as a benefit to the new MPO due to the lack of staff and resources at the outset. According to CMPO staff, this first Plan ended up becoming an academic exercise for the university's transportation engineering students and it did not meet federal requirements for an MPO. A private consultant was contracted to undertake a second attempt at the Plan, although this document was considered an interim Long Range Transportation Plan that would be replaced in the future by a more detailed iteration. A couple of years after these two attempts, CMPO received discretionary funding from the Utah legislature to conduct a corridor study. When the study showed that Logan would not benefit from a new bypass road, CMPO reallocated some of the remaining \$1 million to restart work on the long-range plan. CMPO's first federally approved Long Range Plan was completed in 2000.

Transit System Involvement

Prior to CMPO's formation, the city of Logan implemented the Logan Transit District, providing fare free service within the Logan city limits. According to CMPO staff and a former LTD transit manager, the transit system functions as a city department with "LTD" basically providing name recognition for the system rather than indicating any degree of autonomy. The initial CMPO agreement states that, in addition to all cities in the urbanized area, the transit operator would have a seat on the board as well. As a result, Logan essentially has two votes on the CMPO board.

Since the MPO was initially operating on a small budget, federal transit planning funds were being spent on administrative costs for CMPO's share of county office space. This meant that local funds were needed in order to conduct transit studies. With LTD serving only the city of Logan, convincing the other jurisdictions to contribute to planning studies was a difficult task. In order to prevent two years of federal transit funds from lapsing, LTD was successful in getting CMPO to use federal planning funds to develop a long-range transit element as part of the second Long Range Plan effort. The Plan recommended extension of transit service into other cities in Cache County.

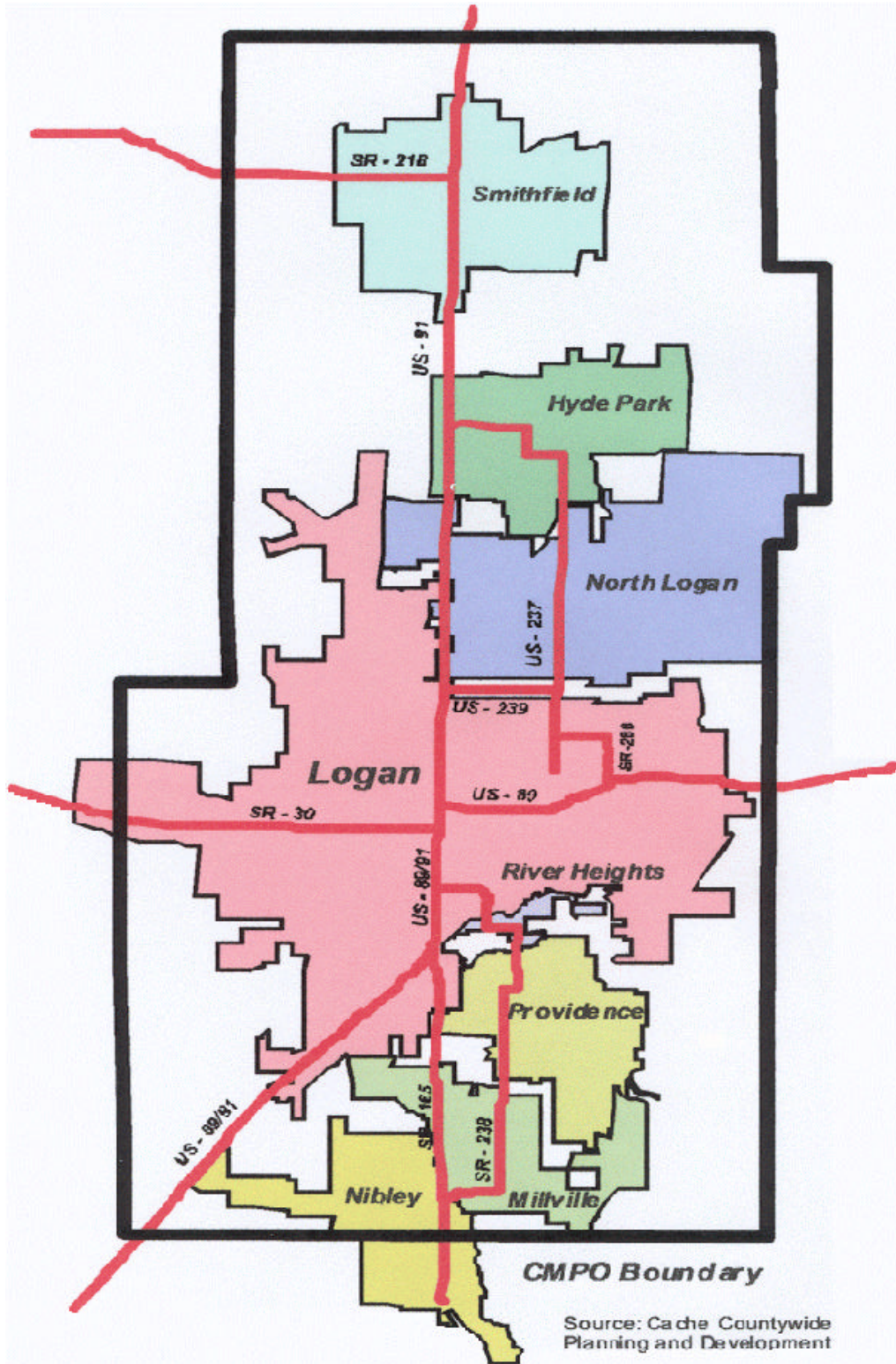
CMPO became a forum for building a coalition in support of a countywide referendum for extending transit service. The referendum passed and LTD now provides service to all eight cities in the CMPO planning area and two adjacent municipalities. This has helped CMPO with the development of TIPs and UPWPs as well. Since the small cities now have a stake in the regional transit system, there is stronger interest in getting these self-certification documents developed and approved in order to secure federal funds for the system.

Funding and State Support

When Logan was designated an urbanized area by the 1990 Census, the area became the first small MPO in Utah. The other two MPOs in the state have populations greater than 200,000, consequently they receive STP attributable funding. According to both the executive director and the former transit manager, UDOT's lack of experience in providing support to smaller MPOs created some early complications. One such problem was that UDOT set aside planning funds for non-UDOT use and dispersed it proportionally throughout the state based on population. When CMPO was formed, the region received no additional funds to carry out the added planning responsibilities of an MPO. When CMPO petitioned for increased funding, other areas in the state, including the three existing MPOs, attempted to prevent the Logan area from receiving a larger share.

This initial limited state funding support has since been addressed, and CMPO now receives approximately \$100,000 from the state annually. One important factor in educating the state on the needs of a small MPO was collaboration with another small urbanized area in Utah. The city of St. George in the southwestern part of the state recognized that it would likely be designated an urbanized area by the 2000 Census. Officials from St. George contacted CMPO board members for advice in an effort to proactively plan for the possible designation (their policy board was in place before the urbanized designation was announced). CMPO and St. George also realized that by working together they would have more clout in their dealings with UDOT, rather than working alone and competing with the larger MPOs for attention. This relationship continues to this day, and St. George was in fact designated an urbanized area by the 2000 Census and is now in the process of forming their MPO.

Note: Three individuals involved in the early years of the Cache MPO were contacted for this study. One is a planner with CMPO who was formerly employed by the regional Association of Governments. One is a city manager of one of the cities on CMPO's policy board and serves as the executive director. The third was a manager for both the Logan's contracted public transit provider and the Logan Transit District.



LOGAN URBANIZED AREA