

Cowlitz Transit Authority Planning Committee

Meeting Report

City Shop Break Room; 2nd Floor

March 30, 2015

11:00 AM- 1:00PM

Board Members Present: Mary Jane Melink, Todd McDaniel

Staff Present: Amy Asher, Brad Windler, Jeff Cameron, Tabitha Hayden

The purpose of this planning committee is to work with staff to establish objectives and priorities for RiverCities Transit for the next year.

1) Transit Enhancement Plan Implementation Status

Amy Asher reviewed the 2010 Transit Enhancement Plan accomplishments to date; using the summary of recommended changes from the Executive Summary as an outline (see attached). The highlighted items have been accomplished, though some need ongoing attention, while those un-highlighted are tasks yet to be completed.

The paratransit recommendations include establishing thorough ADA paratransit certification process which has been done through a new application. The mobility manager is working on how to provide travel training cost effectively. Two (2) mini-vans have been added to the paratransit fleet allowing better access to some of the hard to reach clients.

Under other recommendations:

- RiverCities has opened up communication between RiverCities and C-Tran for a cooperative Vanpool program. There is a three state rideshare registration at <http://www.rideshareonline.com/> operated by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).
- RiverCities hired their first mobility manager in 2012.
- Items that haven't been completed include a memorandum of understanding between RiverCities and the other agencies that use the transit center including Wahkiakum On the Move, Lower Columbia CAP, Sunset Empire, and Columbia County Rider. There is still a need to improve signage at the Transit Center.
- Many of marketing recommendations from the Transit Enhancement Plan have been addressed, but need to be continually refined.

- RiverCities staff is currently working with a graphics designer create a new route map with our February route changes.
- The website is another ongoing project. We will be having a conversation with the City of Longview IT department as to whether they will maintain our website or if we should contract it out.

Establishing performance goals for transit and paratransit is a priority. Staff will have a proposal outlining performance goals and standards to the board by the August CTA meeting.

2). Facility Study Status Report

Jeff Cameron provided an update on the facilities study being conducted by TCF Architecture. The draft report is completed, and we should have a NEPA provided to FTA for review by June or July. We will need a financial plan to proceed; we cannot proceed without an additional revenue source.

3). Funding Sustainability

Brad Windler shared that we have three contracts that are set to expire:

- Paratransit Services contract is up in May. They are requesting a wage increase to help with hiring and retaining staff, and they are requesting funding for two additional full time drivers. They also need to offset the increased cost of the Affordable Care Act.
- After Hours Janitorial cleans the fleet of busses as well as the administrative offices and the transit center and their contract is up at the end of this year
- The bargaining agreement with the ATU for our fixed route operators expires this year.

Brad Windler spoke on our need to implement a plan to replace engines, lifts and transmissions in our older fixed route coaches (units no. 1-6) because we need to run our vehicles longer before replacement. We also need to look at utilizing our paratransit vehicles longer. Federal funds from the 5307 grant, which is an allocation grant, currently is needed for operations and not available to replace or rebuild vehicles.

Staff is to develop a policy for a distribution of reserves into 3 categories, Operational Reserves, Fleet/Depreciation Reserves, and Facilities Capital Fund.

Brad Windler shared a spreadsheet showing a comparison of fares with like sized agencies. RiverCities fares are the lowest in the state. He also showed our previous year's fare revenue compared to the current year. Amy Asher handed out the NTD Data for 2010-2013.

Staff is to develop a proposal for multiyear fare increases by August.

4) Governance

Jeff Cameron spoke about the RiverCities Governance model and continued challenges with the Longview City Council approval process.

Mary Jane Melink said that the City of Longview City council needs a yearly reminder of how RiverCities is independently funded and that by contract the City of Longview City Council has given the governance to the Cowlitz Transit Authority. She also encouraged Amy Asher to attend Ken Botero's community forum meetings.

Todd McDaniel asked that the new transit manager have transit experience. Jeff Cameron replied that is one of the qualities he is looking for. The candidate needs to be a team player that will work well under the dual governance model that is in place.

Staff will schedule the next planning committee meeting in May or June.

Figure ES-2 Summary of Recommended ChangesFixed Route Service Recommendations:

1. For all routes, begin service earlier in the morning and operate later at night
2. Monitor Saturday ridership for all routes
3. Streamline route structures
4. Operate some routes every thirty minutes
5. Upgrade bus stops and eliminate flag stops
6. Provide new bus stop amenities
7. Position the system for future growth

Paratransit Recommendations

1. Establish a more thorough ADA paratransit certification process to ensure only those who are ADA eligible are certified to use CUBS paratransit
2. Provide travel training to assist those who could use fixed route, with assistance or education, to learn how to use it.
3. Contract with taxis companies for overflow, to allow for flexibility on paratransit services
4. Purchase more mini-vans to allow for better access into some hard-to-reach places

Other Recommendations

1. Partner with C-Tran for the expansion of vanpool services in Cowlitz County
2. Initiate an aggressive rideshare matching program
3. Establish a mobility manager
4. Execute a Memo of Understanding among users of the Transit Center
5. Improve signage at the Transit Center

Marketing Recommendations

1. Rebrand the system with a new name, logo and tagline for use on buses and public information
2. Enhance visibility of the system by installing new bus stop signs
3. Work with Chamber of Commerce, Lower Columbia College, employers and others to develop advertising campaign for CUBS
4. Redesign system brochure and other materials
5. Enhance and update the web site

Administration/Oversight Recommendations

1. Establish performance goals for transit and paratransit
2. Staff appropriately
3. Reserve for future capital needs
4. Seek new sources of funds
5. Consider alternative governance models

Service Plan Phasing

Not all of the elements of the preferred service and coordination plan would need to occur at the same time. The recommendations contained in this plan are comprehensive and will likely tax the resources of any small agency. Accordingly, they should be staged over a five-year implementation period.

Initially, the system will be able to operate a portion of the additional services that are ultimately planned. The highest priority strategies will provide evidence that added sales tax monies are being effectively utilized, and should therefore be implemented sooner. They will be supplemented by longer-term initiatives. A suggested implementation plan is described below.

This implementation plan is based on purchasing more expensive hybrid buses, which will have a long-term impact on the capital budget. Recently, however, the CTA Board of Directors decided to opt for diesel buses, which will result in additional resources of \$1.8 million over the next ten years that can be directed to operational improvements. Specifically, this will allow for 30 minute service to be initiated on Route 1 in 2012, rather than 2015, and for bus stops to be designed and installed sooner than anticipated. Final design and implementation issues will need to be carefully considered by CUBS staff over the ensuing months.

2011 Projects – These projects focus on the system’s highest priorities. Improvements would take place in July 2011.

- Implement Route 1, operating on a 60-minute headway, as directed by the CTA Board
- Simplify and redesign fixed route services as described in the previous chapter
- Begin earlier/later service for both fixed route and paratransit
- Begin Saturday service on routes 10 and 21 (already implemented using part-time drivers)
- Work with cities to develop bus stop placement criteria as a first step in the elimination of flag stops; eliminate flag stops while simultaneously adding more bus stop locations
- Develop an implementation plan for a revised paratransit certification process
- Begin development of travel training program
- Execute memo of understanding with Transit Center Users
- Designate a Lead Agency and form a service providers’ group meeting at least quarterly
- Formally adopt performance measures and standards for fixed route and paratransit
- Develop a performance reporting system
- Initiate CTA Board discussions regarding alternative governance models
- Begin Vanpool program in conjunction with C-Tran

2012 Projects

- Hire mobility manager
- Begin rideshare matching program
- Begin a more thorough ADA certification program
- Contract with taxi companies for overflow paratransit operations
- Begin travel training program
- At least quarterly, conduct a comprehensive Board review of route and system performance
- Expand bus stop amenities

2013 Projects

- Provide transit center staffing on Saturdays
- Resign the system (It will be good to accomplish this as part of the bus stop expansion program. If not, it should be done in this timeframe.)
- Expand bus stop amenities
- Consider expansion of the PTBA to areas outside the city limits of Kelso and Longview
- At least quarterly, conduct a comprehensive Board review of route and system performance

2014 Projects

- Expand bus stop amenities
- At least quarterly, conduct a comprehensive Board review of route and system performance
- Perform a thorough review of fixed route system performance

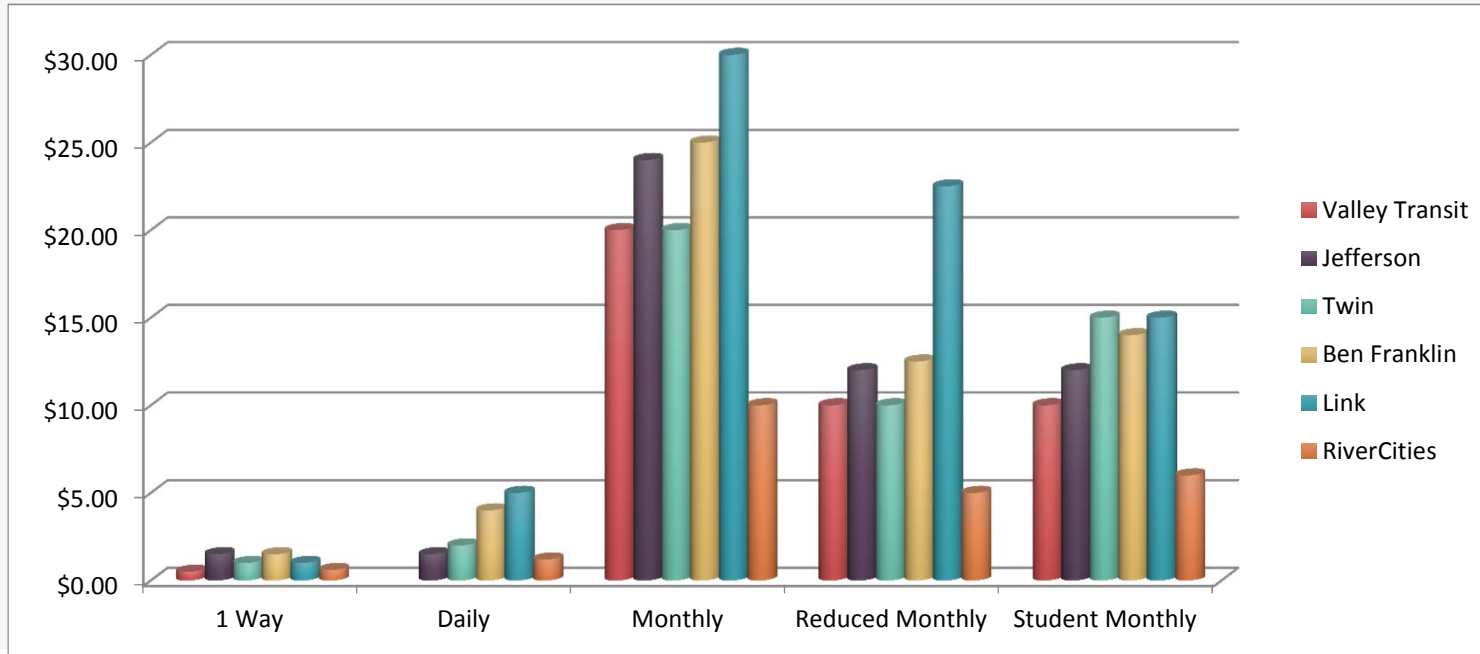
2015 Projects

- Begin 30-minute weekday operation on routes 1 and 10 – Effective July 2015
- Expand bus stop amenities
- At least quarterly, conduct a comprehensive Board review of route and system performance

Follow-up Research

Over the next five years CUBS will likely institute the most significant service changes in the system's history. At the same time, the community can be expected grow and change, along with resulting service needs and demands. It may be appropriate to reexamine the system in about three years, after the recommended service changes included in this plan have the opportunity to 'settle in.' This assessment could be conducted in-house, or by an outside consulting firm. Most importantly, CUBS staff should begin immediately to carefully review patronage trends along individual streets and route segments to determine whether each CUBS service meets expectations.

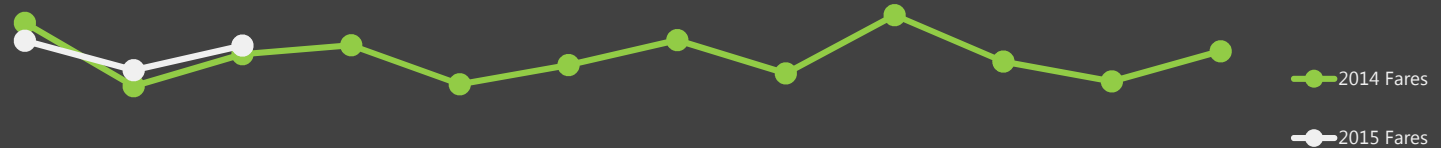
COMPARABLY SIZED AGENCY FARES



Agency	1 Way	Daily	Monthly	Reduced Monthly	Student Monthly
Valley Transit	\$0.50		\$20.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
Jefferson	\$1.50	\$1.50	\$24.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Twin	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$20.00	\$10.00	\$15.00
Ben Franklin	\$1.50	\$4.00	\$25.00	\$12.50	\$14.00
Link	\$1.00	\$5.00	\$30.00	\$22.50	\$15.00
RiverCities	\$0.60	\$1.20	\$10.00	\$5.00	\$6.00

2014/2015

RiverCities Transit Revenue Tracking



Fares / Bus Passes	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD
Daily Fares Direct	\$4,679	\$3,550	\$3,945	\$3,946	\$3,234	\$3,678	\$5,400	\$4,404	\$4,044	\$3,836	\$4,337	\$4,146	\$49,200
Bus Pass Sales	10,929	4,031	7,694	8,832	4,588	6,561	8,025	4,773	12,542	6,858	3,834	7,876	86,540
2014 Fares	\$15,609	\$7,580	\$11,638	\$12,778	\$7,822	\$10,238	\$13,425	\$9,177	\$16,586	\$10,694	\$8,171	\$12,022	\$135,740

Fares/ Bus Passes	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD
Daily Fares Direct	\$4,430	\$3,434	\$5,043										\$12,907
Bus Pass Sales	8,921	6,177	7,677										22,775
2015 Fares	\$13,351	\$9,611	\$12,720										\$35,682

September 2014 LCC Ridership Agreement \$6270

Community Urban Bus Service (CUBS)

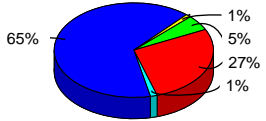
City Manager: Mr. Robert Gregory
(360) 442-5001

General Information				Financial Information				Summary Operating Expenses	
Urbanized Area (UZA) Statistics - 2000 Census				Fare Revenues Earned				Salary, Wages, Benefits	
Longview, WA-OR				Sources of Operating Funds Expended				Materials and Supplies	
Square Miles				Fare Revenues				Purchased Transportation	
Population				Local Funds				Other Operating Expenses	
Population Ranking out of 465 UZAs				State Funds				Total Operating Expenses	
Other UZAs Served				Federal Assistance					
				Other Funds					
				Total Operating Funds Expended				Reconciling Cash Expenditures	
				Sources of Capital Funds Expended					
				Local Funds					
				State Funds					
				Federal Assistance					
				Other Funds					
				Total Capital Funds Expended					

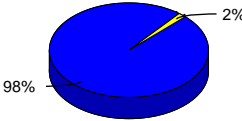
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service and Uses of Capital Funds

Mode	Directly Operated	Purchased ¹ Transportation	Revenue Vehicles	Systems and Guideways	Facilities and Stations	Other	Total
Bus	5	0	\$0	\$24,781	\$0	\$55,097	\$79,878
Demand Response	0	11	\$161,588	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$161,588
Total	5	11	\$161,588	\$24,781	\$0	\$55,097	\$241,466

Sources of Operating Funds Expended



Sources of Capital Funds Expended

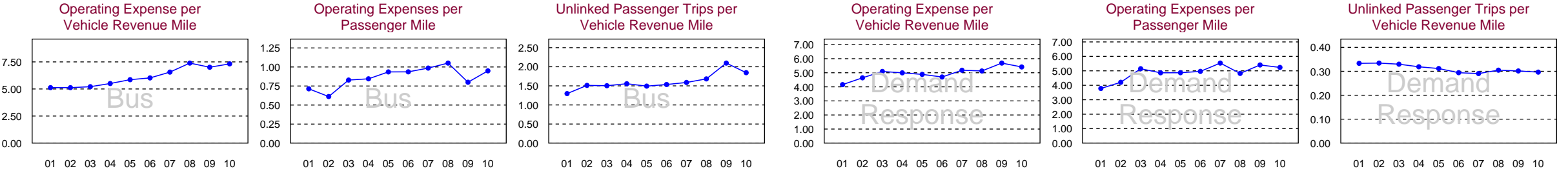


Modal Characteristics

Mode	Operating Expenses ¹	Fare Revenues ¹	Uses of Capital Funds	Annual Passenger Miles	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	Annual Unlinked Trips	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	Fixed Guideway Directional Route Miles	Vehicles Available for Maximum Service	Average Fleet Age in Years	Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	Peak to Base Ratio	Percent Spares
Bus	\$1,571,471	\$127,443	\$79,878	1,655,766	214,702	396,145	16,538	N/A	8	7.4	5	1.00	60%
Demand Response	\$1,019,513	\$13,892	\$161,588	194,742	188,355	55,858	20,169	N/A	11	3.8	11	N/A	0%

Performance Measures

		Service Efficiency		Service Effectiveness		Service Effectiveness	
Mode		Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Mile	Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Hour	Operating Expense per Passenger Mile	Operating Expense per Unlinked Passenger Trip	Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour
Bus		\$7.32	\$95.02	\$0.95	\$3.97	1.85	23.95
Demand Response		\$5.41	\$50.55	\$5.24	\$18.25	0.30	2.77



1 Excludes data for purchased transportation reported separately

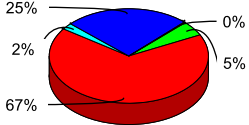
RiverCities Transit (RCT)

General Information				Financial Information				Summary Operating Expenses	
Urbanized Area (UZA) Statistics - 2000 Census				Fare Revenues Earned				Salary, Wages, Benefits	
Longview, WA-OR				Sources of Operating Funds Expended				Materials and Supplies	
Square Miles				Fare Revenues				Purchased Transportation	
Population				Local Funds				Other Operating Expenses	
Population Ranking out of 465 UZAs				State Funds				Total Operating Expenses	
Other UZAs Served				Federal Assistance				\$2,914,937	
				Other Funds					
				Total Operating Funds Expended					
Service Area Statistics				Sources of Capital Funds Expended				Reconciling Cash Expenditures	
Square Miles				Local Funds				\$0	
Population				State Funds					
				Federal Assistance					
				Other Funds					
				Total Capital Funds Expended					

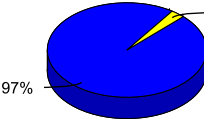
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service and Uses of Capital Funds

Mode	Directly Operated	Purchased Transportation ¹	Revenue Vehicles	Systems and Guideways	Facilities and Stations	Other	Total
Bus	5	0	\$613,267	\$6,117	\$0	\$0	\$619,384
Demand Response	0	14	\$82,366	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$82,366
Total	5	14	\$695,633	\$6,117	\$0	\$0	\$701,750

Sources of Operating Funds Expended



Sources of Capital Funds Expended

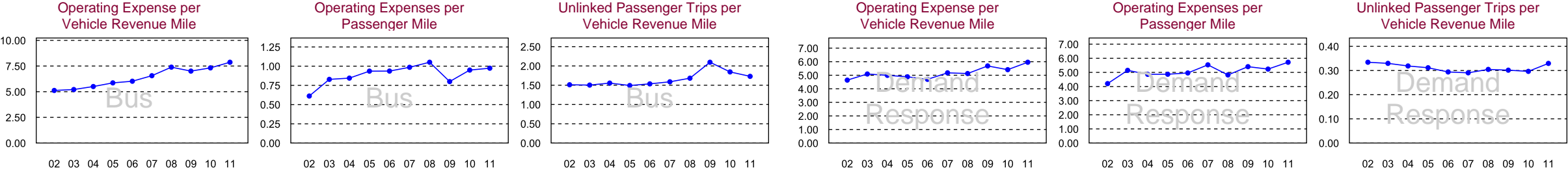


Modal Characteristics

Mode	Operating Expenses ¹	Fare Revenues ¹	Uses of Capital Funds	Annual Passenger Miles	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	Annual Unlinked Trips	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	Fixed Guideway Directional Route Miles	Vehicles Available for Maximum Service	Average Fleet Age in Years	Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	Peak to Base Ratio	Percent Spares
Bus	\$1,765,129	\$134,864	\$619,384	1,812,987	224,314	388,070	17,646	N/A	9	7.4	5	1.00	80%
Demand Response	\$1,149,808	\$14,572	\$82,366	201,021	192,912	63,562	21,490	N/A	14	4.5	14	N/A	0%

Performance Measures

Service Efficiency		Service Effectiveness		Service Effectiveness	
Mode	Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Mile	Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Hour	Operating Expense per Passenger Mile	Operating Expense per Unlinked Passenger Trip	Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile
Bus	\$7.87	\$100.03	\$0.97	\$4.55	1.73
Demand Response	\$5.96	\$53.50	\$5.72	\$18.09	0.33



1 Excludes data for purchased transportation reported separately

RiverCities Transit (RCT)

City Manager: Mr. Robert Gregory
(360) 442-5001

General Information

Urbanized Area (UZA) Statistics - 2000 Census

Longview, WA-OR	
Square Miles	33
Population	63,952
Population Ranking out of 465 UZAs	431
Other UZAs Served	

Service Area Statistics

Square Miles	31
Population	61,598

Service Consumption

Annual Passenger Miles	1,864,772
Annual Unlinked Trips	443,065
Average Weekday Unlinked Trips	1,543
Average Saturday Unlinked Trips	956
Average Sunday Unlinked Trips	0

Service Supplied

Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	408,082
Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	38,532
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	19
Vehicles Available for Maximum Service	22
Base Period Requirement	5

Financial Information

Fare Revenues Earned

	\$146,213
Sources of Operating Funds Expended	
Fare Revenues (5%)	\$146,213
Local Funds (68%)	\$2,132,494
State Funds (2%)	\$57,150
Federal Assistance (25%)	\$792,606
Other Funds (1%)	\$19,717

Total Operating Funds Expended

	\$3,148,180
Sources of Capital Funds Expended	
Local Funds (50%)	\$127,839
State Funds (0%)	\$0
Federal Assistance (50%)	\$127,218
Other Funds (0%)	\$0
Total Capital Funds Expended	\$255,057

Summary Operating Expenses

Salary, Wages, Benefits	\$1,076,380
Materials and Supplies	\$570,555
Purchased Transportation	\$799,877
Other Operating Expenses	\$701,368
Total Operating Expenses	\$3,148,180

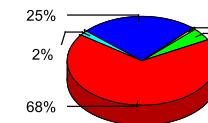
Reconciling Cash Expenditures

\$0

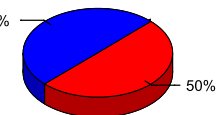
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service and Uses of Capital Funds

Mode	Directly Operated	Purchased Transportation ¹	Revenue Vehicles	Systems and Guideways	Facilities and Stations	Other	Total
Bus	5	0	\$0	\$0	\$1,256	\$174,784	\$176,040
Demand Response	0	14	\$79,017	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$79,017
Total	5	14	\$79,017	\$0	\$1,256	\$174,784	\$255,057

Sources of Operating Funds Expended



Sources of Capital Funds Expended



Modal Characteristics

Mode	Operating Expenses ¹	Fare Revenues ¹	Uses of Capital Funds	Annual Passenger Miles	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	Annual Unlinked Trips	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	Fixed Guideway Directional Route Miles	Vehicles Available for Maximum Service	Average Fleet Age in Years	Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	Peak to Base Ratio	Percent Spares
Bus	\$1,950,899	\$131,217	\$176,040	1,654,572	223,584	381,018	17,651	N/A	8	8.4	5	1.00	60%
Demand Response	\$1,197,281	\$14,996	\$79,017	210,200	184,498	62,047	20,881	N/A	14	5.1	14	N/A	0%

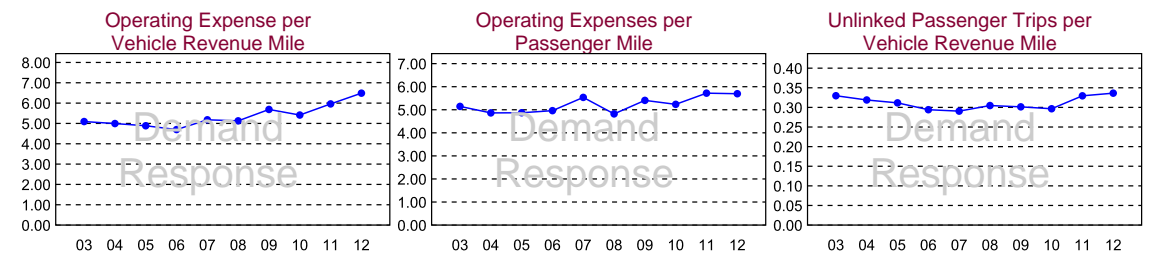
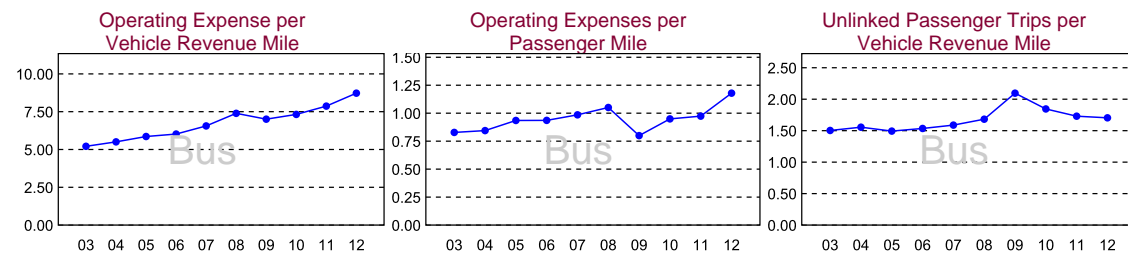
Performance Measures

Service Efficiency

Mode	Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Mile	Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Hour
Bus	\$8.73	\$110.53
Demand Response	\$6.49	\$57.34

Service Effectiveness

Operating Expense per Passenger Mile	Operating Expense per Unlinked Passenger Trip	Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile	Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Hour
\$1.18	\$5.12	1.70	21.59
\$5.70	\$19.30	0.34	2.97



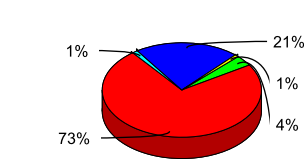
¹ Excludes data for purchased transportation reported separately

General Information				Financial Information				Summary Operating Expenses	
Urbanized Area (UZA) Statistics - 2010 Census				Service Consumption		Fare Revenues Earned		Salary, Wages, Benefits	
Longview, WA-OR				Annual Passenger Miles		1,870,014		\$144,230	\$1,457,526
Square Miles		33		Annual Unlinked Trips		419,123	Sources of Operating Funds Expended		Materials and Supplies
Population		63,952		Average Weekday Unlinked Trips		1,469	Fare Revenues (4%)		\$675,946
Population Ranking out of 465 UZAs		431		Average Saturday Unlinked Trips		855	Local Funds (73%)		Purchased Transportation
Other UZAs Served				Average Sunday Unlinked Trips		0	State Funds (1%)		\$855,156
							Federal Assistance (21%)		Other Operating Expenses
							Other Funds (1%)		<hr/>
							\$31,776		Total Operating Expenses
							<hr/>		\$3,968,641
Service Area Statistics				Service Supplied		Total Operating Funds Expended			
Square Miles		23		Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles		461,654	Sources of Capital Funds Expended		
Population		48,573		Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours		43,760	Local Funds (39%)		\$1,174,404
				Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service		23	State Funds (0%)		\$0
				Vehicles Available for Maximum Service		30	Federal Assistance (61%)		\$1,848,733
				Base Period Requirement		8	Other Funds (0%)		<hr/>
							\$0		
							Total Capital Funds Expended		\$3,023,137

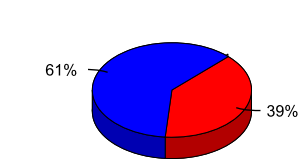
Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service and Uses of Capital Funds

Mode	Directly Operated	Purchased Transportation ¹	Revenue Vehicles	Systems and Guideways	Facilities and Stations	Other	Total
Bus	9	0	\$2,270,827	\$341,630	\$180,258	\$117,491	\$2,910,206
Demand Response	0	14	\$73,159	\$39,772	\$0	\$0	\$112,931
Total	9	14	\$2,343,986	\$381,402	\$180,258	\$117,491	\$3,023,137

Sources of Operating Funds Expended



Sources of Capital Funds Expended

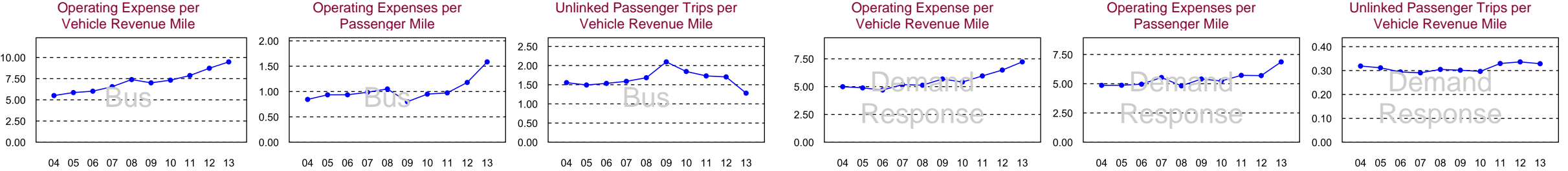


Modal Characteristics

Mode	Operating Expenses ¹	Fare Revenues ¹	Uses of Capital Funds	Annual Passenger Miles	Annual Vehicle Revenue Miles	Annual Unlinked Trips	Annual Vehicle Revenue Hours	Fixed Guideway Directional Route Miles	Vehicles Available for Maximum Service	Average Fleet Age in Years	Vehicles Operated in Maximum Service	Peak to Base Ratio	Percent Spares
Bus	\$2,663,089	\$123,942	\$2,910,206	1,679,995	280,972	359,742	22,779	N/A	14	6.1	9	1.00	56%
Demand Response	\$1,305,552	\$20,288	\$112,931	190,019	180,682	59,381	20,981	N/A	16	5.8	14	N/A	14%

Performance Measures

Service Efficiency		Service Effectiveness		Service Effectiveness	
Mode	Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Mile	Operating Expense per Vehicle Revenue Hour	Operating Expense per Passenger Mile	Operating Expense per Unlinked Passenger Trip	Unlinked Passenger Trips per Vehicle Revenue Mile
Bus	\$9.48	\$116.91	\$1.59	\$7.40	1.28
Demand Response	\$7.23	\$62.23	\$6.87	\$21.99	0.33



1 Excludes data for purchased transportation reported separately