

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Technical Committee

FROM: Eric Randall
Department of Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Response to TPB Follow-up Request for Information on Local and Regional Transit Services in the National Capital Region

DATE: October 1, 2010

Background

At the March 17, 2010 Transportation Planning Board (TPB) meeting, the TPB asked for a report on transit data, focusing on ridership and costs, for all bus transit services operating within the metropolitan area. In response, a memorandum was prepared to provide an overview of transit services in the region, which included a data table of relevant information for regional and local transit operators. A presentation was made at the September 3, 2010 meeting of the Technical Committee, by Mr. Aaron Overman, Chairman of the Regional Bus Subcommittee, summarizing the memorandum and the data. Subsequently, an updated memorandum was prepared and Mr. Overman gave a transit system overview presentation to the September 15, 2010 meeting of the TPB.

Transit Data

Following the presentation to the TPB, two TPB members raised questions regarding the ridership and cost data table included in the memorandum:

- Mr. Zimmerman (Arlington County) noted that the weekday boardings figures for ART and Fairfax Connector appeared to be transposed. He also queried the numbers for weekday boardings on Metrorail. He asked that the table be revised and re-issued.
- Mr. Way (City of Manassas) requested that farebox revenue data to compare to operating costs as a measure of economic efficiency of operations be added as an addendum to the table.

The revised Table 1 corrects the transposition of the ART and Fairfax Connector daily boardings figures noted by Mr. Zimmerman. With regard to the numbers for weekday boardings, the notes to Table 1 now explain in more detail that the weekday boardings data are unlinked passenger trips:

“Weekday passenger boardings data in this document are unlinked passenger trips. An unlinked passenger trip is recorded each time a passenger boards a vehicle, no matter how many vehicles they use to travel from their origin to their destination.”

In addition, Table 2 showing fare revenue data has been prepared, using publicly available 2006 to 2008 data from the Federal Transit Administration's National Transit Database. An additional column shows the ratio of Fare Revenue to Operating Cost for FY2008 (also known as the Farebox Recovery Ratio).

Tables 1 and 2 were presented at the September 28, 2010 meeting of the Regional Bus Subcommittee and distributed to members for review.

Following review at the October 1, 2010 Technical Committee meeting, the revised data tables will be transmitted to TPB in the letters sent/received item at the October 20, 2010 TPB meeting.

Table 1: Overview of Ridership and Cost Information for Local and Regional Transit Services in the National Capital Region

Source: FTA National Transit Database, Operator Figures

Revised October 1, 2010

	Weekday		Annual								
	Bus Fleets	Passenger Boardings	Passenger Trips					Operating Cost			
	VOMS (1)	(2)	(millions)					(millions)			
	FY2009	FY2009	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY06-09 % Chg	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
WMATA											
Metro rail		971,490	274.767	276.441	288.040	296.857	8%	597.600	636.400	648.000	761.100
Metro bus	1,285	441,452	128.416	131.490	132.849	133.770	4%	398.800	437.300	453.500	501.900
<i>subtotal</i>		1,412,942	403.183	407.931	420.889	430.627	7%	996.400	1,073.700	1,101.500	1,263.000
Local Bus											
Circulator	24	13,338	2.073	2.405	2.798	4.001	93%	5.318	5.710	6.547	9.713
Ffx Connector (3)	145	30,278	9.529	9.717	9.810	9.577	0%	31.341	36.796	46.870	45.016
DASH	49	14,033	3.556	3.743	3.979	4.007	13%	8.682	9.864	10.645	10.826
CUE (4)	8	3,651	1.094	1.136	1.047	1.032	-6%	2.683	2.721	2.787	2.766
ART	23	4,936	0.927	1.060	1.225	1.429	54%	4.546	4.432	4.964	5.259
Omni Link	22	4,926	0.843	0.945	1.009	1.025	21%	6.971	7.951	8.743	9.254
Ride On	375	100,053	27.294	28.220	29.673	29.627	9%	82.602	88.842	97.579	99.778
TheBus	66	13,239	2.837	2.922	3.389	3.510	24%	13.511	15.412	17.133	18.239
TransIT	18	2,334	0.580	0.635	0.665	0.709	22%	3.057	3.445	3.718	3.944
<i>subtotal</i>	730	186,788	48.733	50.784	53.596	54.917	13%	158.711	175.174	198.987	204.795
Commuter Bus											
LC Transit	30	3,614	0.602	0.652	0.777	0.890	48%	3.820	3.834	4.875	5.963
Omni Ride	98	8,817	1.609	1.739	1.841	2.155	34%	11.201	12.408	14.116	16.328
MTA Commuter (5)	149	12,353	2.842	3.014	3.336	3.592	26%	26.704	29.295	32.777	33.807
<i>subtotal</i>	277	24,784	5.053	5.405	5.954	6.637	31%	41.725	45.538	51.768	56.098
Commuter Rail											
VRE		15,754	3.640	3.454	3.629	3.868	6%	41.039	46.192	47.656	50.793
MARC (5)		26,534	6.184	6.379	6.713	6.869	11%	28.818	29.509	35.821	41.667
<i>subtotal</i>		42,288	9.824	9.833	10.342	10.737	9%	69.857	75.701	83.476	92.460
<i>total (all transit)</i>	2,292	1,666,802	466.793	473.953	490.780	502.918	8%	1,266.692	1,370.112	1,435.731	1,616.353

Notes: (1) Vehicle Operated in Maximum Service (VOMS) is the maximum number of vehicles in regular scheduled operation daily and is reported for buses only.

(2) Weekday passenger boardings in this document shows unlinked passenger trips. An unlinked passenger trip is recorded each time a passenger boards a vehicle, no matter how many vehicles they use to travel from their origin to their destination. **Bolded** weekday boardings for ART and Fairfax Connector correct the transposition of these figures in the September 15, 2010 memorandum.

(3) Fairfax Connector experienced a strike in 2009 that reduced ridership.

(4) CUE ridership decreased in 2009 when George Mason University started its own shuttle service.

(5) Data for MARC and MTA Commuter Bus are estimated to show Washington DC area ridership and costs only.

Table 2: Overview of Fare Revenue Information for Local and Regional Transit Services in the National Capital Region

Source: FTA National Transit Database

October 1, 2010

	Annual Passenger Fare Revenue (2)				Fare Revenue to Operating Cost Ratio
	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY06-08 % Chg	FY2008
WMATA					
Metrorail	\$398,547,775	\$404,837,785	\$458,304,931	15%	71%
Metrobus	\$104,846,639	\$105,727,177	\$106,588,703	2%	24%
<i>subtotal</i>	\$ 503,394,414	\$ 510,564,962	\$ 564,893,634	17%	45%
Local Bus					
Circulator	\$823,431	\$1,106,094	\$1,339,485	63%	20%
Ffx Connector	\$5,306,628	\$5,129,383	\$5,719,074	8%	12%
DASH	\$2,095,620	\$2,172,607	\$2,283,101	9%	21%
CUE	\$549,298	\$581,435	\$681,260	24%	24%
ART	\$510,793	\$553,733	\$764,401	50%	15%
OmniLink	\$602,755	\$739,606	\$797,285	32%	9%
Ride On	\$13,406,988	\$13,856,117	\$13,794,238	3%	14%
TheBus	\$960,020	\$959,273	\$1,113,985	16%	7%
TransIT	\$832,460	\$1,132,936	\$916,271	10%	25%
<i>subtotal</i>	\$ 25,087,993	\$ 26,231,184	\$ 27,409,100	9%	14%
Commuter Bus					
LC Transit	\$2,273,040	\$2,631,451	\$3,732,615	64%	77%
OmniRide	\$5,230,928	\$5,641,332	\$5,636,772	8%	40%
MTA Commuter (1)	\$10,215,256	\$10,415,678	\$10,920,648	7%	33%
<i>subtotal</i>	\$ 17,719,224	\$ 18,688,461	\$ 20,290,035	15%	39%
Commuter Rail					
VRE	\$19,453,438	\$19,685,561	\$21,688,092	11%	46%
MARC (1)	\$25,624,164	\$26,194,394	\$27,719,610	8%	77%
<i>subtotal</i>	\$ 45,077,602	\$ 45,879,955	\$ 49,407,702	10%	59%
<i>total (all transit)</i>	\$ 591,279,233	\$ 601,364,562	\$ 662,000,471	12%	41%

Notes:

- (1) Data for MARC and MTA Commuter Bus is estimated to show Washington DC area ridership and costs only.
- (2) Other sources of revenue (e.g., advertizing fees, charter service, developer contributions) are not included. Also not included for local bus services is any fare revenue from sales of regional fare products accepted by the service, such as the regional bus pass.