



COUNTY OF LACKAWANNA TRANSIT SYSTEM
TRANSIT AGENCY PERFORMANCE REVIEW REPORT

NOVEMBER 2011

Revised – June 2014

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After the development of the County of Lackawanna Transit Performance Review Report was completed in November 2011, information regarding reported COLTS ridership in the dotGrants system was questioned and subjected to rigorous statistical analyses. The analyses concluded that COLTS reported ridership information had been overstated at the time the report was developed.

Ridership reporting serves as the basis of two of the five-year Act 44 performance standards described in the transit system performance review report: passengers per revenue hour and operating cost per passenger. Due to the change in the reported passenger variable, the five-year performance standards in the COLTS Performance Review Report of November 2011 are erroneous. To correct this, updated standards have been established for COLTS, and the report has been updated to reflect restated ridership data.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2007 the Pennsylvania Legislature passed Act 44, establishing a framework for a transit agency performance review process. The purpose of a review is to assess performance and make transit agencies aware of improvement opportunities. The transit review process is an intense, short-duration effort intended to assess a transit system's efficiency, effectiveness, and best practices.

In May 2011, an Act 44 transit performance review was initiated for County of Lackawanna Transit System (doing business as COLTS). The performance review considered fixed-route service only. This document conveys the results of that performance review and identifies areas where improvements may be made, as well as best practices that may be shared with similar agencies throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Agency Profile

Agency Name	County of Lackawanna Transit System (dba COLTS)	
Year Founded	1972	
National Transit Database Reporting Year	2009	
Service Area (square miles)	140	
Service Area Population	~339,000	
Type of Service Provided	Fixed-Route Bus	ADA Demand Response
Vehicles Operated In Maximum Service	27	5
Annual Revenue Miles of Service	~1,111,000	~36,000
Annual Revenue Hours of Service	~89,000	~3,000
Annual Passenger Trips	~1.1 million	~8,000
Employees (full-time/part-time)	79/1	0/0
Annual Operating Budget	~\$6.9 million	~\$185,000
Annual Fare + Misc. Revenues	~1.0 million	~\$24,500
Farebox + Misc. Revenues / Total Operating Cost	14.50%	13.20%
Administrative Cost / Total Operating Cost	17%	15%
Operating Cost / Revenue Mile	~\$6.21	~\$4.44
Operating Cost / Revenue Hour*	\$73.62	\$53.33
Passengers / Revenue Hour*	12.82	2.67
Farebox + Misc. Revenues / Revenue Hour*	\$12.13	\$3.60
Operating Cost / Passenger*	\$5.74	\$20.00

**Denotes Act 44 Performance Metric for Fixed-Route Bus Service*

ACT 44 PERFORMANCE DETERMINATION

Available documentation and Act 44 metrics were reviewed to quantify COLTS' fixed-route performance with respect to itself over the period of FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09 and to a set of its peers. Peers were selected through an analytical process with interagency coordination between the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) staff and COLTS.

Act 44 stipulates that metrics fall into two categories: “In Compliance” and “At Risk.” The following criteria are used to make the determination:

- In Compliance if less than one standard deviation **above** the peer group average in –
 - Single-year and trend for Operating Cost / Revenue Vehicle Hour
 - Single-year and trend for Operating Cost / Passenger

- In Compliance if greater than one standard deviation **below** the peer group average in –
 - Single-year and trend for Passengers / Revenue Vehicle Hour
 - Single-year and trend for Operating Revenue / Revenue Vehicle Hour

If the agency falls outside of any of the boundaries, it is considered “At Risk” for that criteria and must create an action plan to bring the criteria into compliance prior to the next performance review.

An analysis of the eight key criteria mandated by Act 44 was conducted and ***it was determined that COLTS is “In Compliance” for all eight criteria.*** The peer comparison process as applied to Act 44 criteria (below, in bold typeface) revealed that:

In Compliance

- **FY 2008-09 passengers per revenue vehicle hour** ranks eighth out of the 12 transit agencies in the peer group and is worse than the peer group average.
- The **trend of passengers per revenue vehicle hour** ranks third out of 12 and is better than the peer group average.
- **FY 2008-09 operating cost per revenue vehicle hour** ranks seventh out of 12 and is better than the peer group average.
- The **trend for operating cost per revenue vehicle hour** ranks eighth of 12 and is worse than the peer group average.
- **FY 2008-09 operating revenue per revenue vehicle hour** ranks ninth out of 12 and is worse than the peer group average.
- The **trend for operating revenue per revenue vehicle hour** ranks sixth out of 12 and is better than the peer group average.
- **FY 2008-09 operating cost per passenger** ranks eighth of 12 and is worse than the peer group average.
- The **trend for operating cost per passenger** ranks third of 12 and is considered better than the peer group average.

At Risk

- None.

A summary of the specific Act 44 measures and their values are presented in the following table.

Performance Criteria		Determination	Rank (of 12)	Comparison to Peer Avg.	Value	Peer Average
Passengers / Revenue Hour	2008-09	In Compliance	8	Worse	12.82	14.20
	Trend	In Compliance	3	Better	2.06%	-0.22%
Operating Cost / Revenue Hour	2008-09	In Compliance	7	Better	\$73.62	\$76.53
	Trend	In Compliance	8	Worse	2.72%	2.18%
Operating Revenue / Revenue Hour	2008-09	In Compliance	9	Worse	\$12.13	\$14.12
	Trend	In Compliance	6	Better	2.08%	1.88%
Operating Cost / Passenger	2008-09	In Compliance	8	Worse	\$5.74	\$5.41
	Trend	In Compliance	3	Better	0.65%	2.45%

FUNCTIONAL REVIEW FINDINGS

In addition to the macro-level evaluation of COLTS with regard to the eight Act 44 measures, a functional evaluation of the system was performed to provide more insight into the system. The performance evaluation consisted of additional document reviews, on-site review, and interviews with key staff.

In accordance with Act 44, findings are additionally indicated as “opportunities for improvement” or “best practices.” Improvement opportunities identify tasks that may be undertaken to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and/or quality of service of the agency. Best practices are current practices that enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and/or quality of service of COLTS and may be shared with other agencies as techniques for improvement. Major findings are indicated below; recommendations on how these and other issues identified should be addressed are found in the body of the report.

Best Practices

- **Interagency Parts Sharing Arrangement** – COLTS and Luzerne County Transportation Department have a parts swapping arrangement whereas parts can be acquired on very short notice from the other system. This reduces the inventory requirements of both agencies, reduces the time necessary to get parts, and enables vehicles to return to revenue service more rapidly (p 25).
- **Standardized Fleet** – By standardizing its fleet of revenue vehicles, COLTS reduces training requirements, creates the opportunity for bulk parts purchases, and reduces parts inventory requirements (p 25).
- **Outreach to Colleges and Universities** – By engaging the community and being visible where people work and go to school, COLTS creates fertile ground to increase patronage and revenues (p 25).
- **Five-year Operating Budget** – A five-year operating budget allows for greater planning in service expansion, fare increases, cost containment, etc. and is uncommon in the similarly sized agencies (p 27).

Opportunities for Improvement

- **Actively monitor route-level operational information** - Monitoring route-level data gives decision makers the ability to quantify the effects of various policies, service changes, and outside phenomena. Route-level ridership and financial information should be reviewed and reported to the Board monthly (p 23).
- **Develop and implement formal service standards** – Service standards establish a level of quality that customers can regularly anticipate and assist decision-makers in adjusting routes, schedules, fares, etc (p 23).
- **Develop and monitor performance metrics for all key agency functions and operations** – Well established, documented, and implemented performance metrics would allow COLTS to have a concrete basis for decision making geared toward maximizing ridership, productivity, and value of the service as well as controlling costs and promoting good management practices (p 23).
- **Introduce a Citizens’ Advisory Committee (CAC)** – COLTS currently lacks formal, routine, and proactive ways to incorporate customer feedback into the fixed-route service delivery decision-making process. The new CAC can advise COLTS from a passenger’s perspective on a variety of topics that directly affect the rider (p 24).
- **Investigate increasing fares** – COLTS last increased their fares in 1994. A periodic review of fare policies and established fare policy goals should occur at regular intervals (i.e. annually) (p 25).
- **Develop contract management competencies** – COLTS currently relies on outside contractors to perform IT contract management, and is unaware of key provisions and dates in other contracts (i.e. LAMAR Advertising, Inc.) Being able to effectively manage and monitor contracts is key to agency sustainability (p 25).
- **Investigate addition of mandatory Board attendance provision** – One Board member regularly misses board meetings. With a Board of only 5 members, this makes meeting a quorum difficult at times. The Board by-laws may be amended by a majority vote, and current members should investigate the addition of a clause mandating minimum attendance (p 28).
- **Finalize, distribute, and train employees on the System Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan (SSEPP)** – An SSEPP has been developed, but only two employees currently have copies of the plan. COLTS should provide this plan to employees and educate them on proper procedures and protocols in the event of an emergency (p 28).

UPDATED FIVE-YEAR PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

After the development of the County of Lackawanna Transit Performance Review Report was completed in November 2011, information regarding reported COLTS ridership in the dotGrants system was questioned and subjected to rigorous statistical analyses. The analyses concluded that COLTS reported ridership information had been overstated at the time the report was developed.

Ridership reporting serves as the basis of two of the five-year Act 44 performance standards described in the transit system performance review report: passengers per revenue hour and operating cost per passenger. Due to the change in the reported passenger variable, the five-year performance standards in the COLTS Performance Review Report of November 2011 are erroneous. To correct this, updated standards have been established for COLTS, as described below.

The transit agency performance report outlines critical areas where improvements may be made to increase the overall quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transit system. As a result of the performance review, a set of “performance standards” were established in consultation with COLTS. These performance standards represent the minimum performance level that COLTS should achieve for each Act 44 criteria during the next performance review cycle, five years from the date of the initial report.

Updated performance standards, summarized in the table below, were developed using the most accurate estimates of Act 44 performance variables available at this time and supersedes the performance standards presented in the report published in November 2011.

The standards are established for Fiscal Year End (FYE) 2016 and are designed to be aggressive, yet achievable. Graphical representations of the standards, including interim year progress benchmarks, are presented in **Exhibit 12, Exhibit 13, Exhibit 14, and Exhibit 15.**

Performance Criteria	2009 Value	2010 Value	2016 Standard	Average Annual Increase
Passengers / Revenue Hour	12.82	10.14	11.42	2.0%
Operating Cost / Revenue Hour	\$73.62	\$77.08	\$92.04	3.0%
Operating Revenue / Revenue Hour	\$12.13	\$11.30	\$13.49	3.0%
Operating Cost / Passenger	\$5.74	\$7.60	\$8.07	1.0%

NEXT STEPS

Upon final transmission of the performance review report, Act 44 regulations stipulate that COLTS “...shall develop and submit to the Department within 90 days...a strategic action plan that focuses on continually improving the system to achieve the established minimum performance standards.” The action plan should outline corrective action that will be taken to address:

- “Opportunities for Improvement” – as prioritized by the COLTS Board and management.

Functional area “opportunities for improvement” are areas in which improvement may result in cost savings, improved service quality, and ridership and/or revenue increases. Improvements in these areas will assist in the achievement of the performance standards by directly addressing areas that affect Act 44 performance criteria. It should be noted that many functional areas are interrelated, and the action plan should establish a comprehensive program that focuses on actions that address the larger issues within COLTS.

COLTS will submit the action plan to the COLTS governing body for approval, and subsequently submit the final approved strategic action plan to PennDOT. COLTS must report at least quarterly to the governing body and PennDOT on the progress of the strategic action plan, actions taken, and actions soon to be implemented. Reporting may occur on a more frequent basis, to be determined jointly by PennDOT, COLTS, and the governing body.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

In July 2007 the Pennsylvania Legislature passed Act 44, establishing a framework for a performance review process for all public transportation agencies receiving state financial assistance. This report documents the findings and observations of the public transportation agency performance review for County of Lackawanna Transit System (COLTS).

Performance reviews are conducted to emphasize the importance of good management, proactive planning, and efficient service, which maximize the effectiveness of federal, state, and local funding. In addition, other important goals of the review process and this document are to:

- Find, document, and publicize best practices that contribute to efficient, high-quality public transit service delivery, encouraging other Pennsylvania transit agencies to apply them as appropriate.
- Provide guidance to transit agencies on cost-effective ways to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of service.
- Identify and document legal, institutional, or other barriers beyond the control of the transit agency that may impede efficiency in service delivery and management.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS

In March 2011, a transit agency performance review was initiated for COLTS. The performance review proceeded following the steps outlined below:

1. Initial notification of performance review selection and transmission of document request
 - Review of available data and requests for what should be “off-the-shelf” information that may not be publicly available.
2. Peer selection
 - A set of peers used for comparative analysis was jointly agreed upon by COLTS and PennDOT.
3. Act 44 performance criteria analysis
 - Performance criteria mandated by Act 44 were analyzed for the peer group.
 - Additional performance criteria were calculated for informative purposes to help guide the on-site review.
4. On-site review
 - On-site review was conducted on May 23rd and May 24, 2011.
 - An interview guide customized for COLTS’ service characteristics was used for the review.
 - Topics covered during the interview process included:

▪ Background Information	▪ Operations and Scheduling
▪ Governance	▪ Maintenance
▪ Management	▪ Information Technology
▪ Finance	▪ Customer Service
▪ Procurement	▪ Marketing and Public Relations
▪ Human/Labor Relations	▪ Planning
▪ Safety and Security	▪ Capital Programming

After the development of the COLTS report was completed in November 2011, information regarding reported ridership in the dotGrants system was questioned and subjected to rigorous statistical analyses. The analyses concluded that COLTS reported ridership information had been overstated at the time the report was developed. This report was updated to reflect restated ridership for the period of the performance review.

AGENCY DESCRIPTION

“The County of Lackawanna Transit System (COLTS) is a public authority, established in 1972 by the Lackawanna County Commissioners to provide public transportation in the Lackawanna County portion of the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Urbanized Area. COLTS directly serves 20 Lackawanna County communities and six additional rural and suburban communities. The entire urbanized area has a population of approximately 225,000. The population of its service area is approximately 220,000.

COLTS operates 21 fixed routes with its own employees and vehicles. A contractor, Northeastern Transit, operates five rural and suburban routes. Service is provided Monday through Saturday. The earliest routes begin at 5:25 a.m. and the latest service ends at 6:50 p.m. on weekdays. Saturday service operates from 8:40a.m. to 6:50 p.m. There is no service on Sundays or on six holidays.

Complementary paratransit service is available during the fixed-route hours. Administration of the service, including eligibility determinations and the reservation system, is provided by the Lackawanna County Coordinated Transit System (LCCTS), a department of Lackawanna County. LCCTS operates the service on weekdays. On Saturdays, Northeastern Transit provides service with its employees and vehicles. Reservations for Saturdays are forwarded to Northeastern Transit by LCCTS.

The basic adult fare for bus service is \$1.25. A reduced fare of \$0.60 is offered to persons with disabilities and Medicare cardholders during off-peak hours, which are defined as all but 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on weekdays. Funding from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides free fares to senior citizens. The fare for ADA paratransit service is \$2.50.

COLTS’ fixed-route fleet consists of 30- and 35-foot Gillig buses and two Optima trolley buses. There are 33 buses, and the current peak requirement is 26. COLTS also owns four federally funded vans that are used by LCCTS.

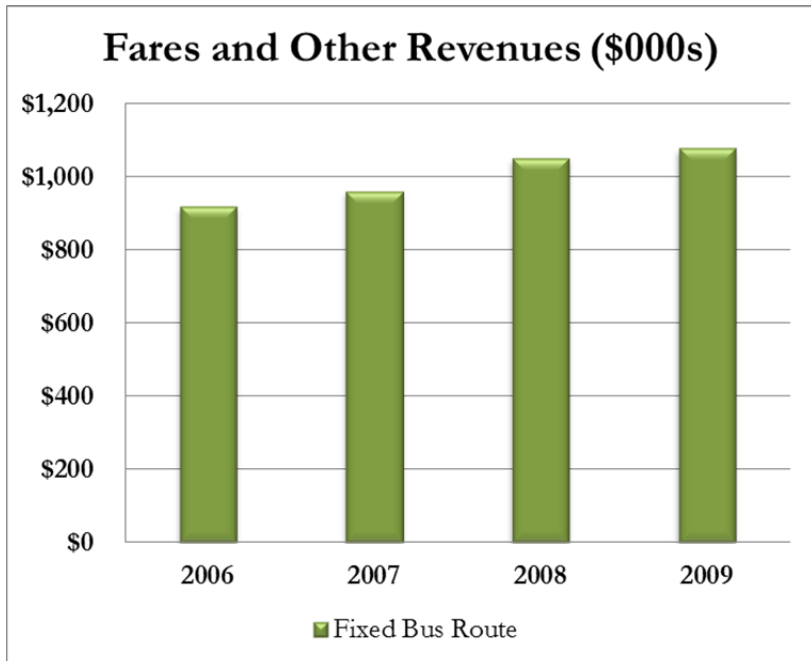
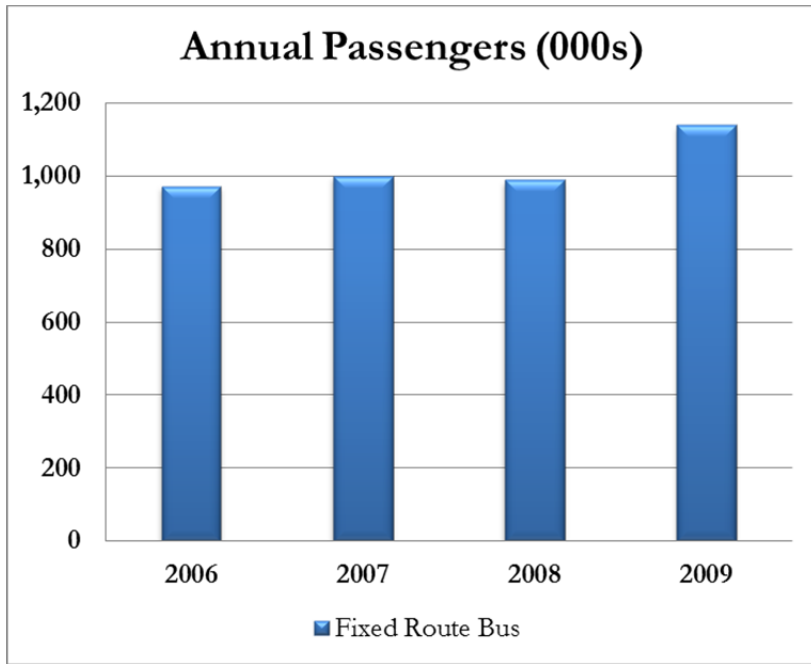
COLTS operates from a single maintenance and administration facility in Scranton. Buses are maintained and repaired at that location. LCCTS performs routine preventive maintenance and repairs on the paratransit vans.

COLTS utilizes a downtown transfer center that utilizes bus cut-outs to facilitate a pulse schedule. COLTS continues to pursue an intermodal facility.”¹

Exhibit 1 and **Exhibit 2** present fixed-route bus statistics for COLTS derived from PennDOT Legacy Reports (DotGrants) and the National Transit Database (NTD).

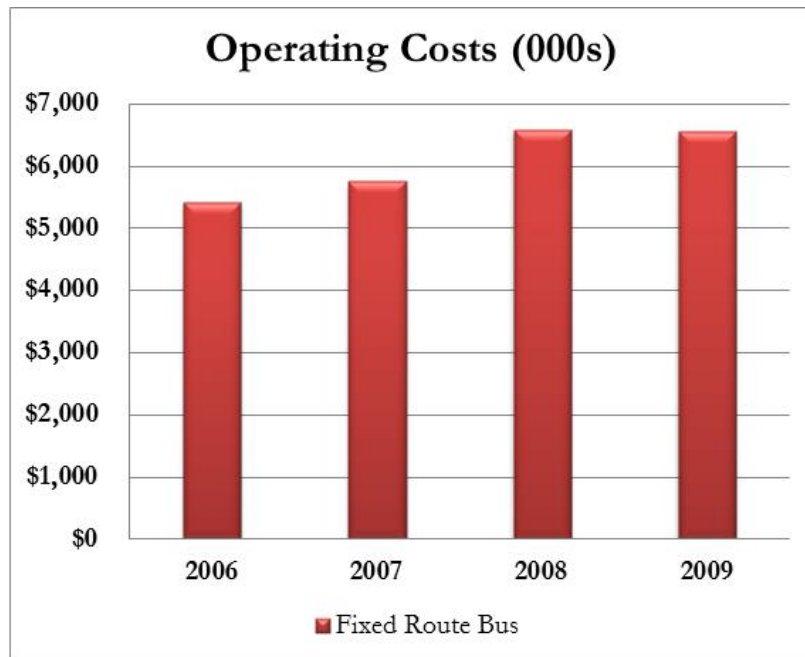
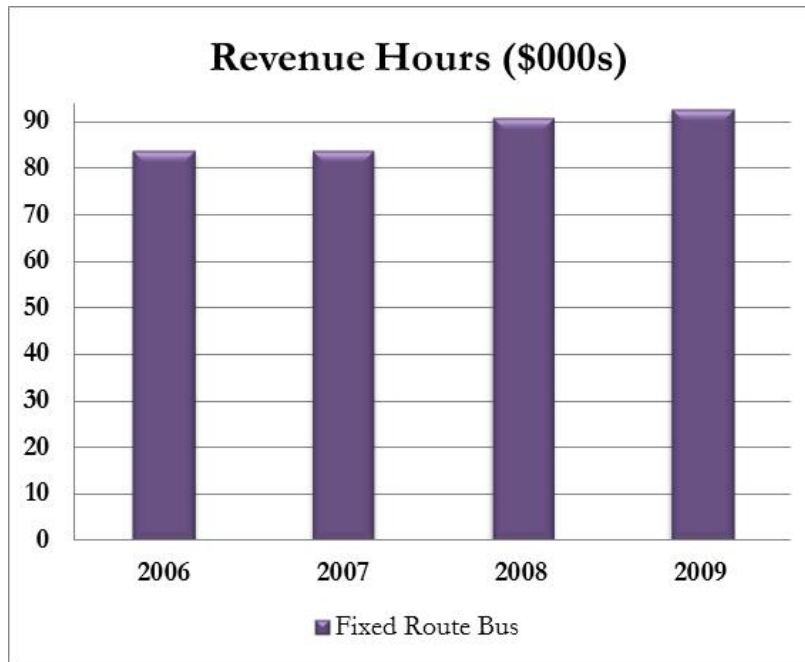
¹ The agency description was provided by Executive Director Robert Fiume.

Exhibit 1: COLTS Fixed-Route Passenger and Revenues FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09



Source: National Transit Database and Legacy Reports, FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09 as restated in January 2014 due to incorrect ridership reporting

Exhibit 2: COLTS Fixed-Route Revenue Hours of Service and Operating Costs FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09



Source: National Transit Database and Legacy Reports, FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09

ACT 44 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Act 44 establishes the framework for a performance review process as follows:

“The Department may conduct performance reviews of an award recipient under this section to determine the effectiveness of the financial assistance. Reviews shall be conducted at regular intervals as established by the Department in consultation with the management of the award recipient. After completion of a review, the Department shall issue a report that:

*Highlights exceptional performance and identifies any problems that need to be resolved;
Assesses performance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the use of the financial assistance;
Makes recommendations on follow-up actions required to remedy any problem identified; and,
Provides an action plan documenting who should perform the recommended actions and a time frame within which they should be performed.”*

The law sets forth performance criteria to be used to satisfy its objectives:

- Passengers per revenue vehicle hour,
- Operating cost per revenue vehicle hour,
- Operating revenue per revenue vehicle hour,
- Operating cost per passenger, and
- Other items as the Department may establish.

Performance criteria are to be compared for both the system being reviewed and for a group of five or more peers by mode, determined by considering:

- Revenue vehicle hours (car hours for rail and fixed guideway)
- Revenue vehicle miles (car miles for rail and fixed guideway)
- Number of peak vehicles
- Service area population

The law further instructs PennDOT to prepare a five-year trend analysis for the local transportation organization under review and the peer systems by performance criteria and by mode, and make a determination of “In Compliance” or “At Risk” status based on findings. Due to the overstatement of ridership data, revised trend analysis findings are presented for FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09.

PEER SYSTEM SELECTION

The following list was submitted to COLTS management for review and comment. All 11 peer systems, in addition to COLTS, were included in subsequent analyses for peer comparison purposes:

- Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation (Poughkeepsie, NY)
- Escambia County Area Transit (Pensacola, FL)
- Victor Valley Transit Authority (Hesperia, CA)
- Rockford Mass Transit District (Rockford, IL)
- York County Transportation Authority (York, PA)
- City of Appleton – Valley Transit (Appleton, WI)

- Southeast Area Transit (Preston, CT)
- The Wave Transit System (Mobile, AL)
- Belle Urban System – Racine (Racine, WI)
- City of Visalia – Visalia City Coach (Visalia, CA)
- Luzerne County Transportation Authority (Kingston, PA)

ACT 44 FIXED-ROUTE COMPARISONS AND FINDINGS

Comparison of COLTS with the selected peer systems was completed using NTD-reported data and statistics. NTD data was selected as the source of data to use in the calculation of the following Act 44 metrics due to consistency and availability² for comparable systems for the five-year trend analysis window:

- Passengers per revenue vehicle hour
- Operating cost per revenue vehicle hour
- Operating revenue per revenue vehicle hour
- Operating cost per passenger

The definition of the variables used in the calculations is as follows:

- Passengers: Annual unlinked passenger boardings by mode for both directly-operated and purchased transportation.
- Operating Costs: Annual operating cost of services provided (excluding capital costs) by mode for both directly-operated and purchased transportation.
- Operating Revenue: Total annual operating revenue generated from farebox and other non-state, non-federal sources by mode for both directly-operated and purchased transportation.
- Revenue Vehicle Hours: The total annual number of “in-service” hours of service provided by mode for both directly-operated and purchased transportation.
- Average: Unweighted linear average of all values being measured across all peer transit agencies, including COLTS.
- Standard Deviation: Standard deviation of all values being measured across all peer transit agencies, including COLTS.

Act 44 stipulates that metrics fall into two categories: “In Compliance” and “At Risk.” The following criteria are used to make the determination:

- In Compliance if greater than one standard deviation **above** the peer average in:
 - The single-year and trend for Operating Cost / Revenue Vehicle Hour
 - The single-year and trend for Operating Cost / Passenger
- In Compliance if **below** one standard deviation from the peer group average in:
 - The single-year and trend for Passengers / Revenue Vehicle Hour
 - The single-year and trend for Operating Revenue / Revenue Vehicle Hour

² NTD data is available for almost every urbanized area transit system in the United States. The latest data available at the time of this review was for 2009.

If the agency falls outside of any of the boundaries, it is considered “At Risk” for that criteria and must create an action plan to bring the criteria into compliance prior to the next performance review.

Detailed results of the COLTS analysis and the peer analysis are presented in the **Fixed-Route Bus Performance Comparisons** section below and can be summarized as follows:

Exhibit 3: Act 44 Compliance Summary

Metric	2008-09 Single Year	Trend
Passengers / Revenue Hour	In Compliance	In Compliance
Operating Cost / Revenue Hour	In Compliance	In Compliance
Operating Revenue / Revenue Hour	In Compliance	In Compliance
Operating Cost / Passenger Boarding	In Compliance	In Compliance

FIXED-ROUTE BUS PERFORMANCE COMPARISONS

For the 11 peer systems plus COLTS, NTD data were extracted and summarized for each of the required Act 44 metrics. Measures were put into histograms and tables for visual inspection, statistical analyses, and ordinal ranking purposes. The single-year results of these analyses are presented in **Exhibit 4, Exhibit 5, Exhibit 6, Exhibit 7, Exhibit 8, Exhibit 9, Exhibit 10, and Exhibit 11.**

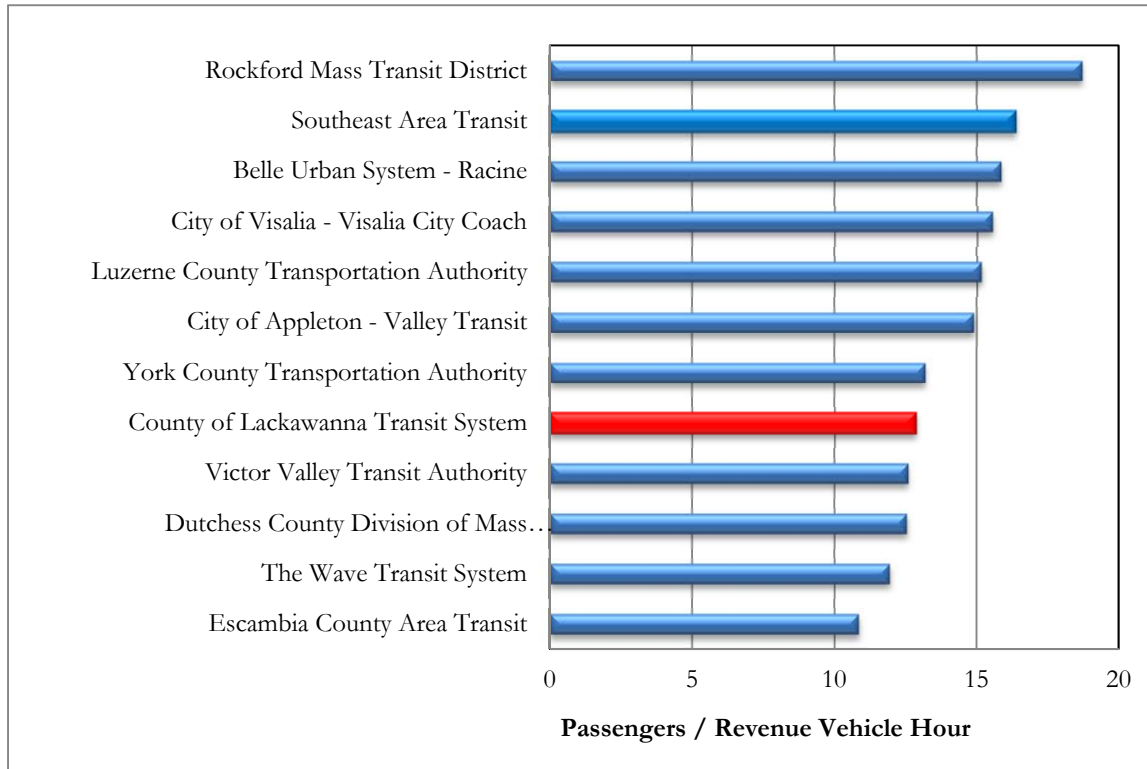
For measures relating to passengers or operating revenue, ordinal rankings are based on a highest-to-lowest system. For measures relating to operating cost, ordinal rankings are based on a lowest-to-highest system. Thus a ranking of “1st” consistently indicates that the agency scores best amongst its peers and a ranking of “12th” indicates that it performs the poorest on any given metric.

The findings presented in the exhibits can be summarized as follows:

- COLTS’ FY 2008-09 passengers per revenue hour figure ranks 8th out of the 12 transit agencies in the peer group. Passengers per revenue hour has been growing while the peer systems’ average is declining.
- COLTS’ FY 2008-09 operating cost per revenue vehicle hour is better than the peer group average, ranking 7th (the 6th most costly of the 12 peers), and is climbing at a rate slightly greater than the peers (with the 7th lowest rate of cost increase of 12 peers).
- COLTS’ FY 2008-09 operating revenue per revenue vehicle hour ranks 9th out of 12 and is worse than the peer group average. The trend between FY 2005-06 and FY 2008-09 indicates that revenue per revenue vehicle hour increased at a faster (better) rate than the peer group.
- COLTS’ FY 2008-09 operating cost per passenger is worse than the peer group average, ranking 8th of the 12 peers. Operating cost per passenger has been growing at a slower (better) rate than the peer group average.

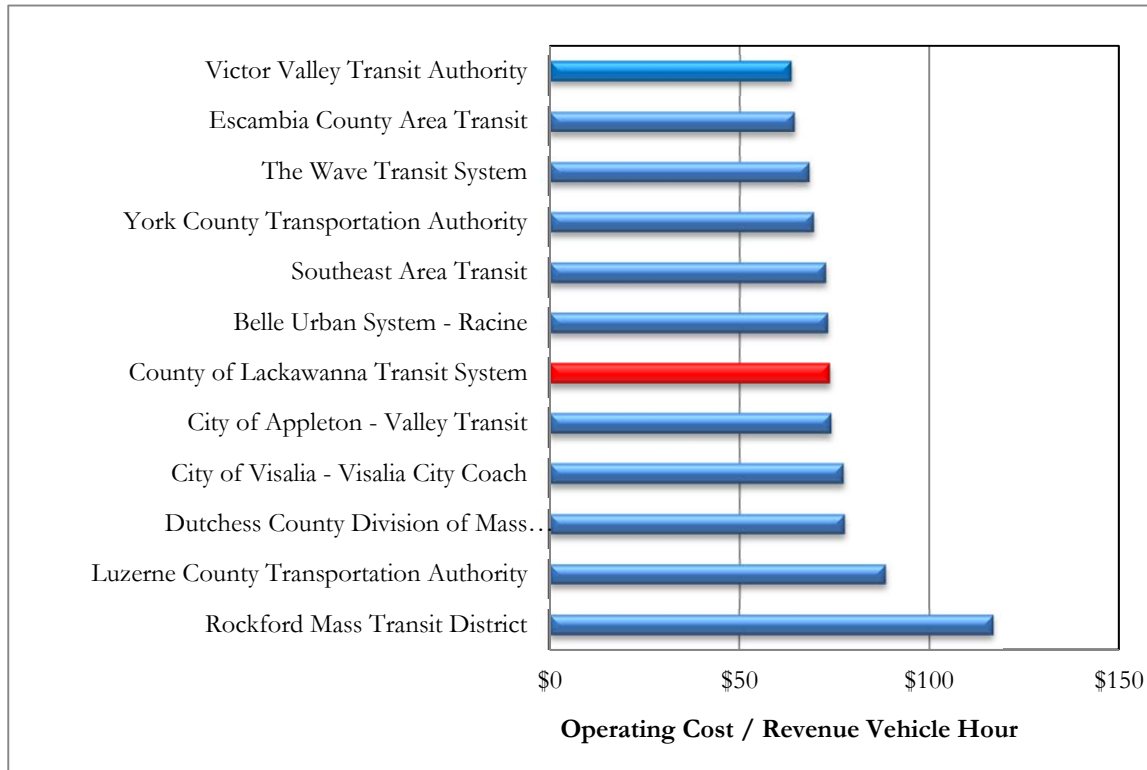
These findings provided a basis for further investigation during the on-site interviews and functional area reviews. Those findings are presented in the next section of the report.

Exhibit 4: Fixed-Route Passengers per Revenue Vehicle Hour FY 2008-09



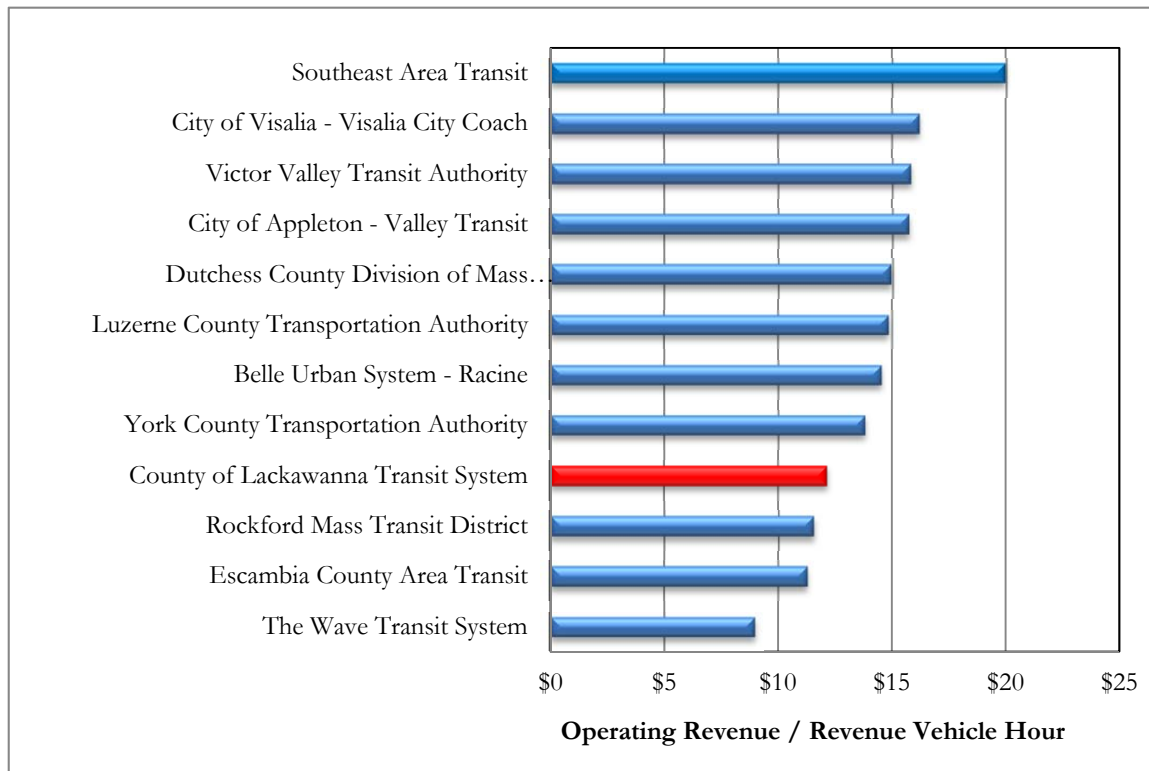
Passengers / RVH		
FY 2008-09 Data		
System	Value	Rank
Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation	12.53	10
Escambia County Area Transit	10.84	12
Victor Valley Transit Authority	12.59	9
Rockford Mass Transit District	18.70	1
York County Transportation Authority	13.19	7
City of Appleton - Valley Transit	14.90	6
Southeast Area Transit	16.33	2
The Wave Transit System	11.93	11
Belle Urban System - Racine	15.85	3
City of Visalia - Visalia City Coach	15.53	4
Luzerne County Transportation Authority	15.15	5
County of Lackawanna Transit System	12.82	8
<i>Average</i>	14.20	
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	2.25	
<i>Average - 1 Standard Deviation</i>	11.95	
<i>Average + 1 Standard Deviation</i>	16.44	
Act 44 Compliance Determination	In Compliance	
Better or Worse Than Peer Group Average	Worse	

Exhibit 5: Fixed-Route Operating Cost per Revenue Vehicle Hour FY 2008-09



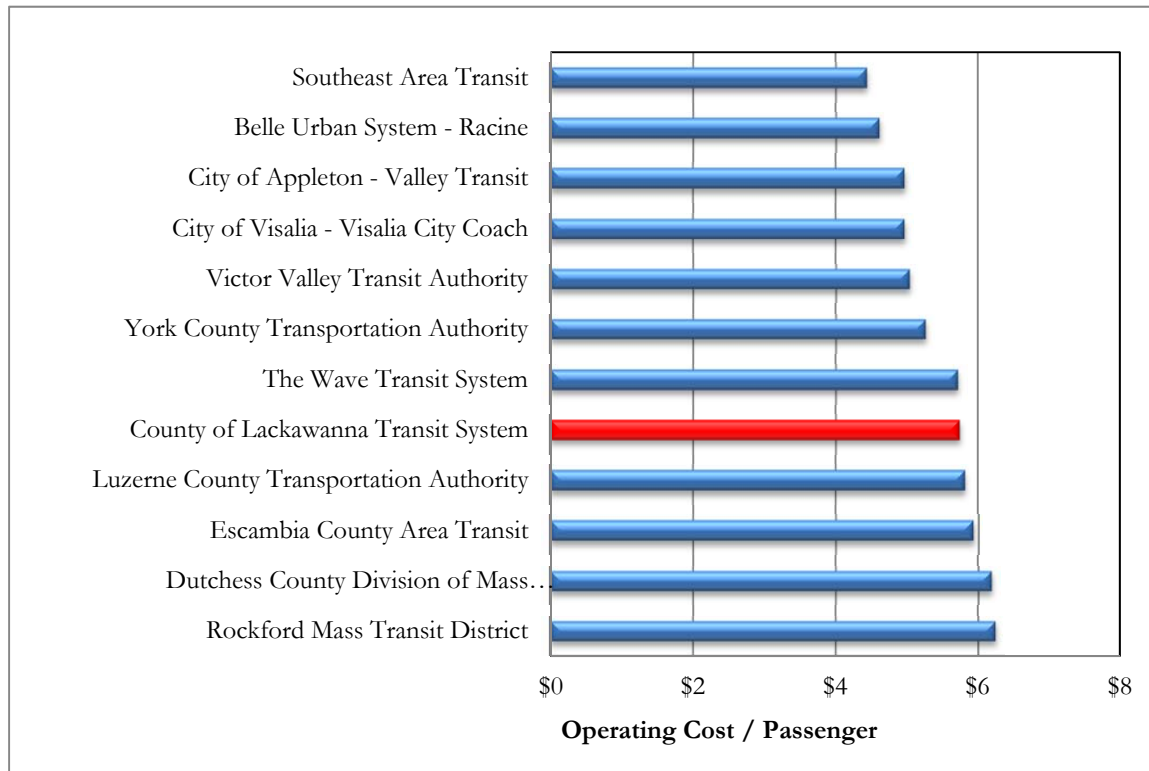
Operating Cost / RVH		
FY 2008-09 Data		
System	Value	Rank
Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation	77.53	10
Escambia County Area Transit	64.30	2
Victor Valley Transit Authority	63.41	1
Rockford Mass Transit District	116.80	12
York County Transportation Authority	69.40	4
City of Appleton - Valley Transit	74.03	8
Southeast Area Transit	72.51	5
The Wave Transit System	68.16	3
Belle Urban System - Racine	73.10	6
City of Visalia - Visalia City Coach	77.19	9
Luzerne County Transportation Authority	88.23	11
County of Lackawanna Transit System	73.62	7
<i>Average</i>	76.53	
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	14.29	
<i>Average - 1 Standard Deviation</i>	62.24	
<i>Average + 1 Standard Deviation</i>	90.81	
Act 44 Compliance Determination	In Compliance	
Better or Worse Than Peer Group Average	Better	

Exhibit 6: Fixed-Route Operating Revenue per Revenue Vehicle Hour FY 2008-09



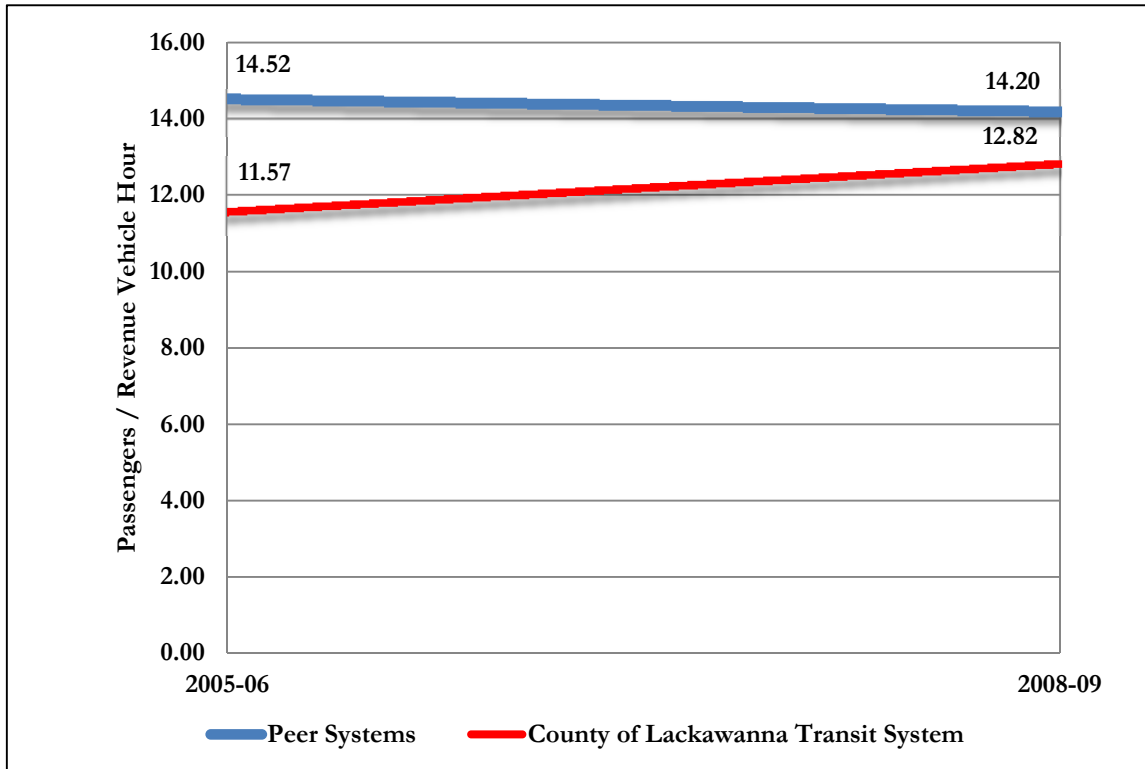
Operating Revenue / RVH		
FY 2008-09 Data		
System	Value	Rank
Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation	14.91	5
Escambia County Area Transit	11.26	11
Victor Valley Transit Authority	15.79	3
Rockford Mass Transit District	11.51	10
York County Transportation Authority	13.78	8
City of Appleton - Valley Transit	15.70	4
Southeast Area Transit	19.94	1
The Wave Transit System	8.94	12
Belle Urban System - Racine	14.50	7
City of Visalia - Visalia City Coach	16.19	2
Luzerne County Transportation Authority	14.83	6
County of Lackawanna Transit System	12.13	9
<i>Average</i>	14.12	
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	2.87	
<i>Average - 1 Standard Deviation</i>	11.25	
<i>Average + 1 Standard Deviation</i>	16.99	
Act 44 Compliance Determination	In Compliance	
Better or Worse Than Peer Group Average	Worse	

Exhibit 7: Fixed-Route Operating Cost per Passenger FY 2008-09



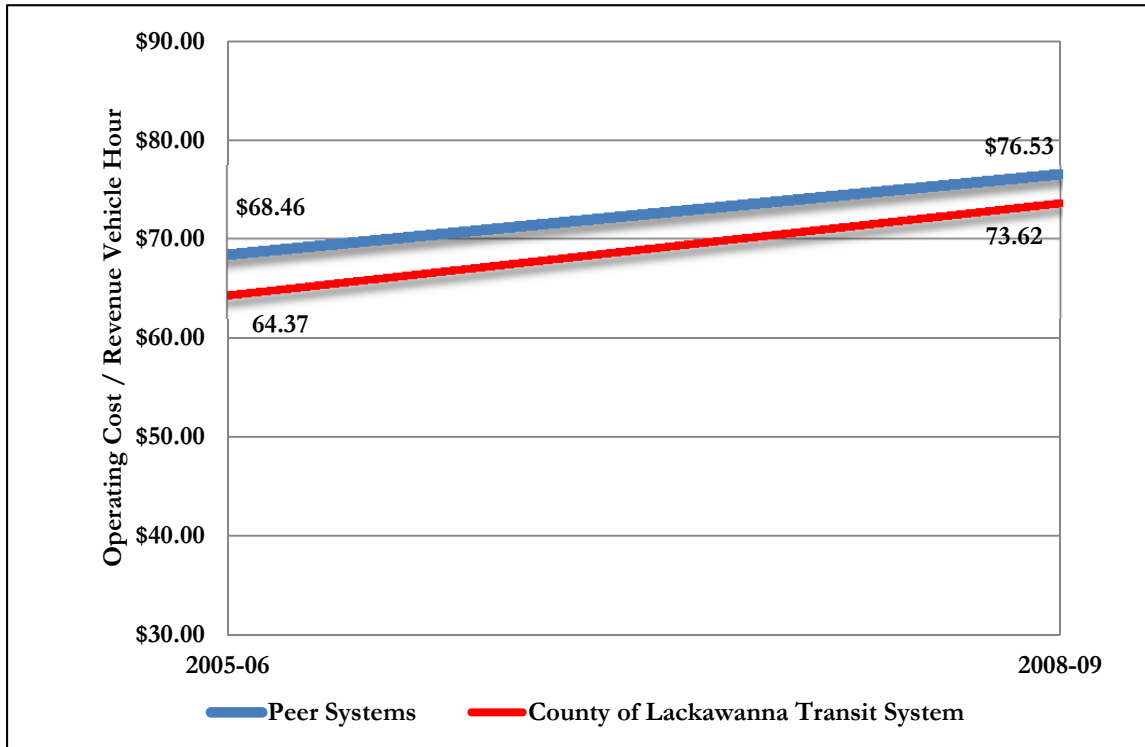
Operating Cost / Passenger		
FY 2008-09 Data		
System	Value	Rank
Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation	6.19	11
Escambia County Area Transit	5.93	10
Victor Valley Transit Authority	5.04	5
Rockford Mass Transit District	6.24	12
York County Transportation Authority	5.26	6
City of Appleton - Valley Transit	4.97	3
Southeast Area Transit	4.44	1
The Wave Transit System	5.72	7
Belle Urban System - Racine	4.61	2
City of Visalia - Visalia City Coach	4.97	4
Luzerne County Transportation Authority	5.82	9
County of Lackawanna Transit System	5.74	8
<i>Average</i>	5.41	
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	0.61	
<i>Average - 1 Standard Deviation</i>	4.80	
<i>Average + 1 Standard Deviation</i>	6.02	
Act 44 Compliance Determination	In Compliance	
Better or Worse Than Peer Group Average	Worse	

Exhibit 8: Fixed-Route Passengers per Revenue Vehicle Hour Trend FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09



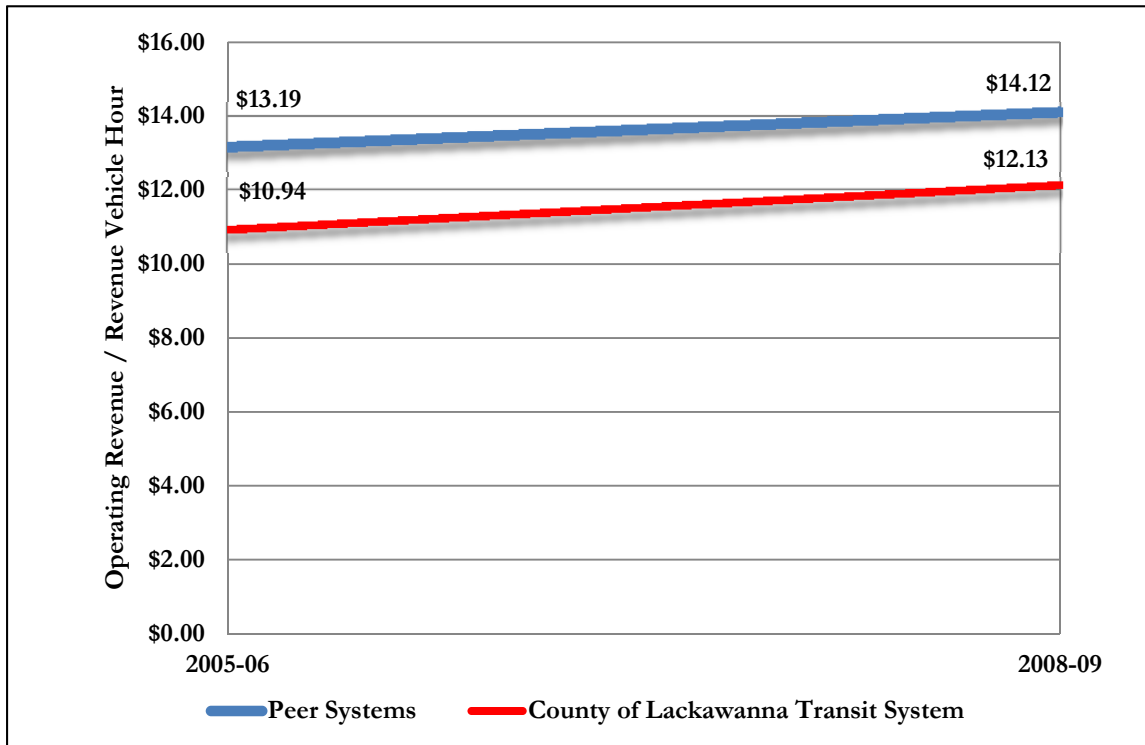
Passengers / RVH		
Trend Analysis FY 2005-06 to FY 2008-09		
System	Value	Rank
Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation	-1.17%	6
Escambia County Area Transit	-0.77%	5
Victor Valley Transit Authority	-0.59%	4
Rockford Mass Transit District	4.25%	2
York County Transportation Authority	-3.39%	12
City of Appleton - Valley Transit	-1.30%	8
Southeast Area Transit	-1.85%	9
The Wave Transit System	6.18%	1
Belle Urban System - Racine	-2.24%	10
City of Visalia - Visalia City Coach	-2.58%	11
Luzerne County Transportation Authority	-1.27%	7
County of Lackawanna Transit System	2.06%	3
<i>Average</i>	-0.22%	
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	2.89%	
<i>Average – 1 Standard Deviation</i>	-3.12%	
<i>Average + 1 Standard Deviation</i>	2.67%	
Act 44 Compliance Determination	In Compliance	
Better or Worse Than Peer Group Average	Better	

Exhibit 9: Fixed-Route Operating Cost per Revenue Vehicle Hour Trend FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09



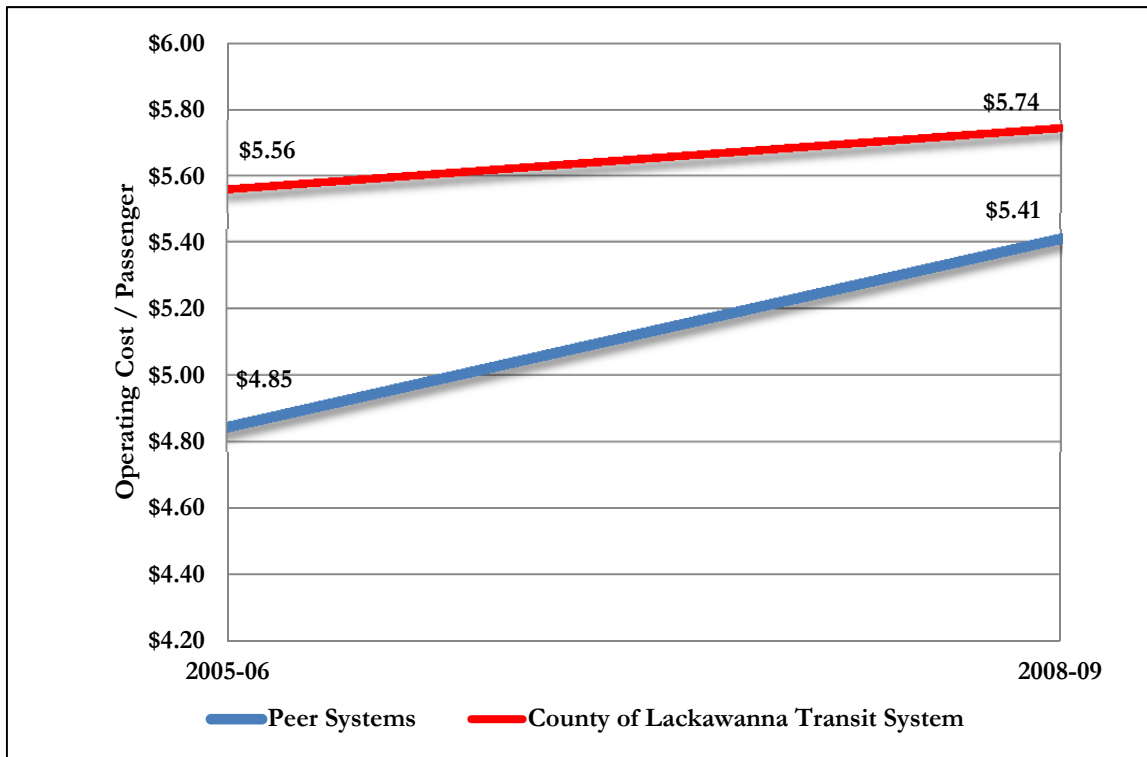
Operating Cost / RVH		
Trend Analysis FY 2005-06 to FY 2008-09		
System	Value	Rank
Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation	4.98%	11
Escambia County Area Transit	-0.83%	1
Victor Valley Transit Authority	0.40%	4
Rockford Mass Transit District	7.35%	12
York County Transportation Authority	4.41%	10
City of Appleton - Valley Transit	0.44%	5
Southeast Area Transit	-0.12%	3
The Wave Transit System	3.88%	9
Belle Urban System - Racine	-0.38%	2
City of Visalia - Visalia City Coach	2.66%	7
Luzerne County Transportation Authority	0.66%	6
County of Lackawanna Transit System	2.72%	8
<i>Average</i>	2.18%	
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	2.57%	
<i>Average – 1 Standard Deviation</i>	-0.38%	
<i>Average + 1 Standard Deviation</i>	4.75%	
Act 44 Compliance Determination	In Compliance	
Better or Worse Than Peer Group Average	Worse	

Exhibit 10: Fixed-Route Operating Revenue per Revenue Vehicle Hour Trend FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09



Operating Revenue / RVH		
Trend Analysis FY 2005-06 to FY 2008-09		
System	Value	Rank
Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation	6.14%	3
Escambia County Area Transit	-4.90%	11
Victor Valley Transit Authority	9.27%	1
Rockford Mass Transit District	1.51%	7
York County Transportation Authority	-5.94%	12
City of Appleton - Valley Transit	4.80%	4
Southeast Area Transit	-3.48%	10
The Wave Transit System	1.27%	9
Belle Urban System - Racine	1.35%	8
City of Visalia - Visalia City Coach	7.21%	2
Luzerne County Transportation Authority	3.29%	5
County of Lackawanna Transit System	2.08%	6
<i>Average</i>	1.88%	
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	4.75%	
<i>Average - 1 Standard Deviation</i>	-2.87%	
<i>Average + 1 Standard Deviation</i>	6.64%	
Act 44 Compliance Determination	In Compliance	
Better or Worse Than Peer Group Average	Better	

Exhibit 11: Fixed-Route Operating Costs per Passenger Trend FY 2005-06 – FY 2008-09



Operating Cost / Passenger		
Trend Analysis FY 2005-06 to FY 2008-09		
System	Value	Rank
Dutchess County Division of Mass Transportation	6.23%	11
Escambia County Area Transit	-0.06%	2
Victor Valley Transit Authority	1.00%	4
Rockford Mass Transit District	2.97%	9
York County Transportation Authority	8.08%	12
City of Appleton - Valley Transit	1.76%	5
Southeast Area Transit	1.76%	6
The Wave Transit System	-2.16%	1
Belle Urban System - Racine	1.90%	7
City of Visalia - Visalia City Coach	5.37%	10
Luzerne County Transportation Authority	1.96%	8
County of Lackawanna Transit System	0.65%	3
<i>Average</i>	2.45%	
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	2.85%	
<i>Average – 1 Standard Deviation</i>	-0.39%	
<i>Average + 1 Standard Deviation</i>	5.30%	
Act 44 Compliance Determination	In Compliance	
Better or Worse Than Peer Group Average	Better	

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UPDATED FIVE-YEAR FIXED-ROUTE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

After the development of the County of Lackawanna Transit Performance Review Report was completed in November 2011, information regarding reported COLTS ridership in the dotGrants system was questioned and subjected to rigorous statistical analyses. The analyses concluded that COLTS reported ridership information had been overstated at the time the report was developed.

Ridership reporting serves as the basis of two of the five-year Act 44 performance standards described in the transit system performance review report: passengers per revenue hour and operating cost per passenger. Due to the change in the reported passenger variable, the five-year performance standards in the COLTS Performance Review Report of November 2011 are erroneous. To correct this, updated standards have been established for COLTS, as described below.

The transit agency performance report outlines critical areas where improvements may be made to increase the overall quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transit system. As a result of the performance review, a set of “performance standards” were established in consultation with COLTS. These performance standards represent the minimum performance level that COLTS should achieve for each Act 44 criteria during the next performance review cycle, five years from the date of the initial report.

Updated performance standards, summarized in the table below, were developed using the most accurate estimates of Act 44 performance variables available at this time and supersedes the performance standards presented in the original report published in November 2011.

The standards are established for Fiscal Year End (FYE) 2016 and are designed to be aggressive, yet achievable. Graphical representations of the standards, including interim year progress benchmarks, are presented in **Exhibit 12, Exhibit 13, Exhibit 14, and Exhibit 15.**

Exhibit 12: Fixed-Route Passengers per Revenue Hour Performance Targets

Year 2016 Target..... **11.42**
 Interim Year Targets **Annual increase of at least 2.0%**

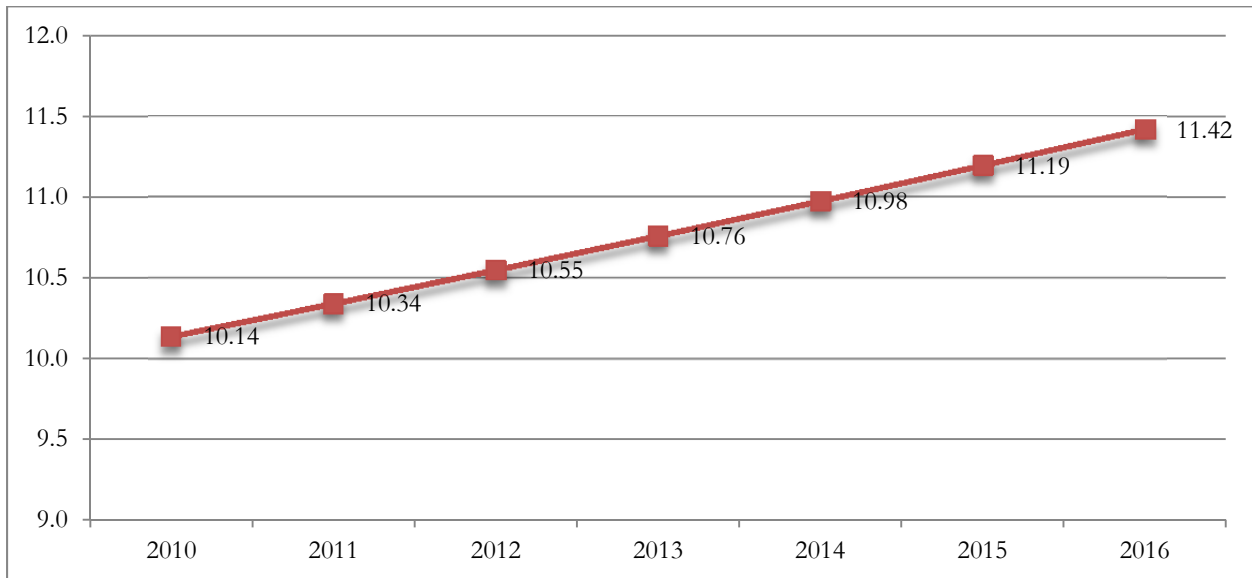


Exhibit 13: Fixed-Route Operating Cost per Revenue Vehicle Hour Performance Targets

Year 2016 Target..... **\$92.04**
 Interim Year Targets **Annual increase of no more than 3.0%**

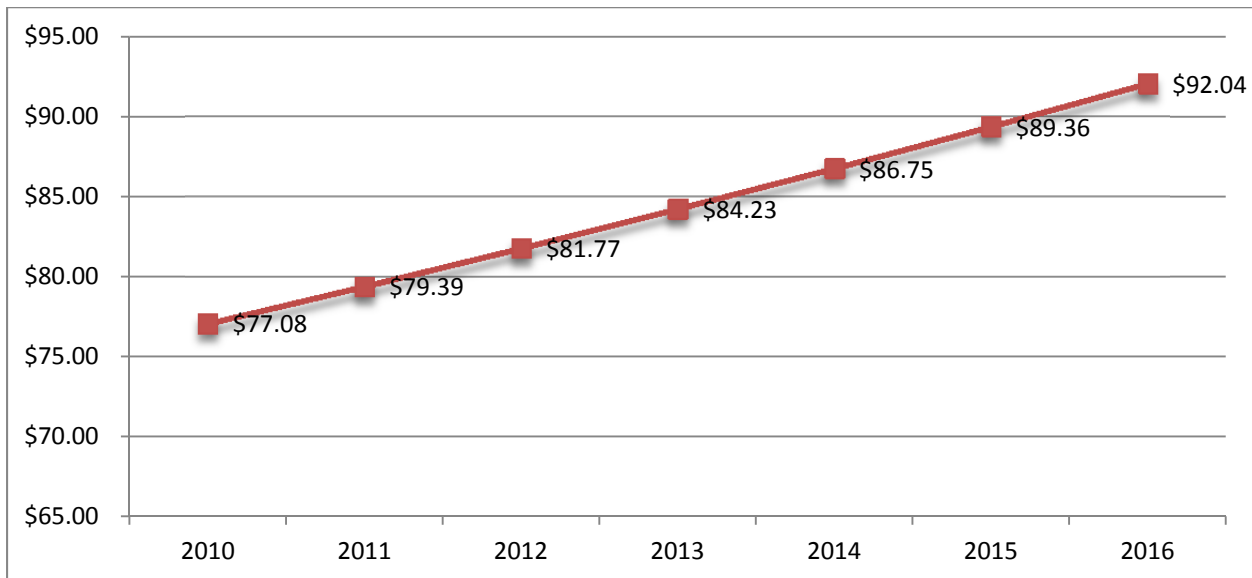


Exhibit 14: Fixed-Route Operating Revenue per Revenue Vehicle Hour Performance Targets

Year 2016 Target.....**\$13.49**
 Interim Year Targets**Annual increase of at least 3.0%**

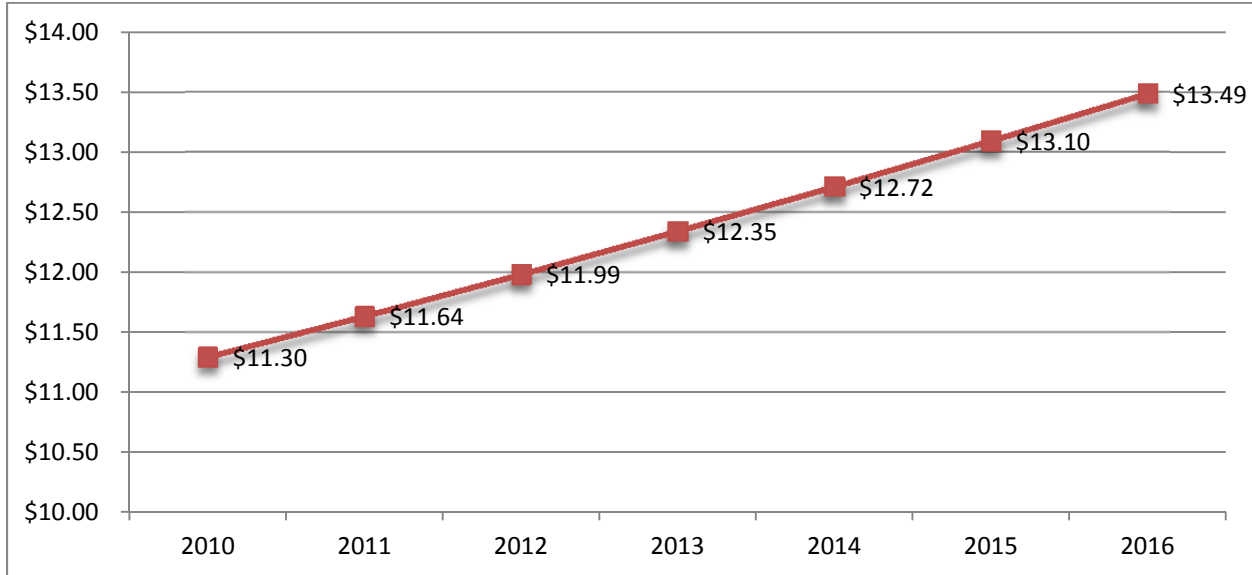
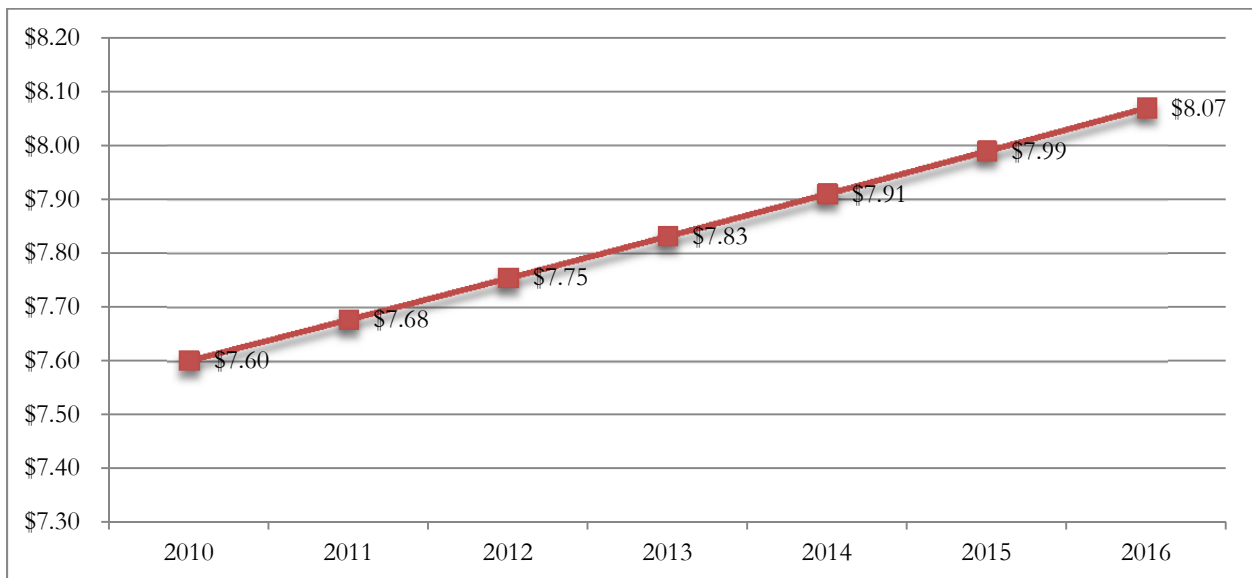


Exhibit 15: Fixed-Route Operating Cost per Passenger Performance Targets

Year 2016 Target.....**\$8.07**
 Interim Year Targets**Annual increase of no more than 1.0%**



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FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

Functional reviews are used to determine the reasons behind performance results found in the Act 44 comparisons, to find “best practices” to share with other transit agencies, and to identify opportunities for improvement. A total of 15 functional areas were reviewed through documents received from the agency (see **Appendix A: Documentation Request to Executive Director**) and interviews conducted on-site. The functional areas are:

- **Governing Body** – Responsibilities include setting vision, mission, goals, and objectives; management oversight; recruiting and retaining top management personnel; and advocacy for the agency’s needs and positions.
- **Advisory Committees** – Typically provide review and input to the Governing Body and agency staff in specific topic areas ranging from a public perspective to technical reviews.
- **General Management** – Responsible for the day-to-day operations of the agency. Manage, monitor, analyze, direct, and plan for the future with regard to all functional areas. Inform and report to the Governing Body, and implement governing body direction.
- **Human Resources** – Responsible for employee retention, recruitment, training, performance reviews, grievance procedures, employee benefits, and labor relations.
- **Finance** – Functional area includes budgeting, accounting, cash flow management, revenue handling, and insurance.
- **Procurement** – Includes acquisition of rolling stock, vehicle parts, non-revenue capital items (i.e., office equipment) and other operations-related items.
- **Operations** – Includes management of daily service operations, on-street supervision and control, dispatching, and general route management.
- **Maintenance** – Includes vehicle and non-vehicle maintenance management, procedures, and performance.
- **Scheduling** – Includes route and driver scheduling and decision-making, pay premium considerations, general management, procedures, and performance.
- **Safety and Security** – Functional area includes vehicle and passenger safety, facility security, and emergency preparedness.
- **Customer Service** – Includes management, procedures, and performance related to current and future customers of the fixed-route system and other topics such as service information and complaint handling processes.
- **Information Technology** – Functional area includes automated mechanisms for in-house and customer service communication including future plans for new technology.
- **Capital Programming** – Includes assessing and programming current and future capital needs reflecting both funded and unfunded projects. Includes the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), 12-Year Plan, and Long-Range Transit Plan.
- **Marketing and Public Relations** – Includes maximizing current markets and expanding into new markets. Includes managing the perception of the agency by the public at-large to encourage current and future ridership.
- **Planning** – Includes analysis of information to effectively plan for changes to the system in the short-, medium-, and long-term horizons, to help ensure the continued viability and success of the agency.

The functional review findings are organized by a brief description of the Act 44 variables guiding the performance review: passengers, fare and other non-subsidy revenues, and operating costs. A complete list of specific items reviewed—organized by functional area, topic reviewed, an assessment of its current state, observed trends or planned changes, and suggested actions if any—is summarized in **Appendix B: Summary of Functional Findings, Trends, and Suggested Actions**. These 15 areas work together to effectively meet the needs of passengers, to deliver high-quality service in a cost-effective manner, and to provide the resources that will adapt to changing needs and values.

The following sections summarize the ways which service can be delivered more efficiently and effectively in ways that are sensitive and responsive to the community’s needs, maximize productivity, direct service hours effectively, control operating costs, and achieve optimum revenue hours. The observations garnered during the review process are categorized as *Best Practices* or *Items to Address in the Action Plan*. Best Practices are those exceptional current practices that are beneficial and should be continued or expanded. Items to Address in the Action Plan are recommendations which have the potential to maximize productivity, to direct service hours effectively, to control operating costs, and to achieve optimum revenue levels which will enhance the system’s future performance overall for one or more of the Act 44 fixed-route performance factors.

OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE FIXED-ROUTE RIDERSHIP

“Passengers,” as defined by Act 44, are unlinked passenger trips or passenger boardings across all routes in the fixed-route transit system. Increases in ridership directly represent how effectively management has matched service levels to current demand for service.

BEST PRACTICES

- COLTS **coordinates service delivery** with Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA) and Monroe County Transportation Authority (MCTA). This **expands market potential and gives customers additional travel opportunities**, which should result in higher ridership on COLTS buses.
- **The Board and management recognize the need to increase ridership through outreach and cooperation** with universities. Advocating for such markets will increase ridership over time.
- COLTS has printed schedules and web site material **translated for non-English speakers**. By providing system information materials that are accessible to non-English speaking populations, COLTS is actively expanding its ridership in historically transit dependent populations.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT (ITEMS TO ADDRESS IN THE ACTION PLAN)

- COLTS recently **completed a route performance analysis** and plans to advance recommendations from that effort by the end of 2011. Adapting service to the changing needs and characteristics of the community helps to increase passenger demand, productivity, and cost recovery. **Regular review and adjustment of service delivery improves schedule adherence, operational efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. COLTS should ensure that route changes are implemented in a timely fashion and establish regularly scheduled route reviews.**
- COLTS demonstrates no clear approach or plan for setting and regularly monitoring empirically measurable goals and objectives relating to service delivery. Service standards and performance metrics establish a level of quality service customers can regularly expect. High quality, predictable service is attractive to riders. **COLTS should develop a formal service standards policy to gauge service quality and assist decision-makers in adjusting routes, schedules, fares, etc.** The service standard policy may include (but is not limited to):
 - On-time performance
 - Missed pull-outs
 - Fare recovery
 - Passengers per revenue hour / revenue mile

In addition to a formal service standards policy, the Board and Management should work together to develop and monitor performance metrics for all key agency functions and operations.³ Other metrics may include (but are not limited to):

- Number of complaints per passenger
 - Percent of complaints responded to within 24 hours
 - Improved customer satisfaction survey scores
 - X number of marketing campaigns per year
- COLTS Management and Board **do not monitor route-level operational information.** Monitoring route-level data gives decision-makers the ability to quantify the effects of various policies, service changes, and outside phenomena, as well as provide the information needed to determine when and how service should be altered to meet the community's needs. **COLTS should actively monitor route-level ridership and financial reporting in addition to the current aggregate ridership and revenue information and report this information monthly to the Board.**
 - Through interviews conducted with COLTS staff and Board members, it is clear that there is general consensus on a direction for the agency. However, there is no documented strategic plan that outlines agency goals and objectives and addresses actionable steps to meet the established vision. **The Board and Management should work together to develop and periodically update a COLTS strategic plan.** A strategic plan should establish broad goals and objectives for all agency functions, focusing particularly on increasing ridership and revenue while controlling costs.

³ Refer to http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_report_88/Guidebook.pdf Chapter 6 for examples of performance metrics typically used to assess and monitor transit agency functions and outcomes.

- COLTS currently lacks formal, routine, and proactive ways to incorporate customer feedback into the fixed-route service delivery decision-making process. Such feedback can better inform both the community and COLTS on passenger wants and needs in the service. **COLTS Management and Board should introduce a formal mechanism that provides regular feedback on topics that are of concern to customers through the creation of a Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC).**

The new CAC can advise COLTS from a passenger's perspective on a variety of topics including service changes, fare changes, branding, community outreach, outreach to employers, and customer satisfaction. **The committee should also serve as a means of outreach to the disability community. In addition, COLTS should routinely schedule customer satisfaction and non-rider surveys to compliment the efforts of the CAC.**

- The current approach to addressing customer complaints is informal and likely confusing for the casual customer. The phone system is antiquated, and directs callers to the county directory if the call is not answered in a timely fashion. Interviews with management suggest that a new phone system will be implemented soon, however at the date of this report these improvements had not occurred. **COLTS should immediately implement a new phone system to instantly improve customer service.**
- Many COLTS vehicles have factory installed security cameras. COLTS management indicated that these cameras are not used to investigate complaints. **COLTS should use in-vehicle cameras as a primary tool for investigating customer complaints and implement formal procedures that follow a specific timeline and chain of responsibility to ensure that all complaints are addressed promptly and objectively.** This should be one element of a **broader customer service quality improvement plan.**
- **COLTS should increase marketing efforts to major employers and evaluate the utilization of park-n-ride lots. In addition, marketing to the disability community should be increased.**
- While COLTS coordinates with neighboring transit providers (LCTA and MCTA), its Web site lacks a system map that could show passengers where transfer opportunities exist both within the COLTS service area and with other systems in the region where coordination points exist. **COLTS should put an easy-to-read system map on its Web site that highlights where transfer opportunities exist.**

OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE FIXED-ROUTE REVENUES

“Revenues,” as defined by Act 44, encompasses all non-subsidy revenues generated to help fund the operation of a transit system. The largest contributors to this are farebox revenues, interest on accounts, and advertising revenues.

BEST PRACTICES

- **COLTS actively pursues advertising and other revenue sources.**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT (ITEMS TO ADDRESS IN THE ACTION PLAN)

- Passenger Fares were last increased in 1994. COLTS management appears to understand the need for periodic fare increases, and is contemplating increasing fares when the new service schedule is rolled out by the end of 2011. **COLTS management and Board should perform a periodic review of fare policies on a regularly-scheduled basis (i.e. annually) and establish farebox recovery goals** that are at least consistent with observed cost increases. Defining minimum farebox recovery ratios for individual routes and the system as a whole will facilitate a periodic review of fare policies and help management justify fare or service changes to the Board and the public.
- COLTS actively pursues university service and views this as a prime market for transit. There is no formal plan developed on how COLTS will address revenues from university service. **Management should investigate university revenue agreements at similar systems and develop a plan for recovering the cost of service provided to the greatest extent possible.**
- An advertising contract for fixed-route bus shelters is currently in place between COLTS and LAMAR Advertising, Inc. Interviews suggest that management does not fully understand the provisions of the contract, including when and if renewal will occur. **COLTS management should immediately initiate discussions with LAMAR Advertising to renew/re-negotiate and assign a manager to the current/future advertising contract to ensure all revenue is being collected.**

OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTROL OPERATING COSTS

“Operating costs” capture the non-capital costs incurred in the day-to-day operations of a transit system. Labor, maintenance, and operating costs such as fuel and tires and lube contribute to this measure in significant ways. Many transit agencies have noted cost increases much higher than the general rate of inflation. Compounding this is the reality that operating subsidies are not likely to increase at a comparable rate. Controlling operating cost increases is a key to maintaining current service levels.

BEST PRACTICES

- **COLTS is moving to a standardized fleet.** This approach will impact future costs by: reducing parts inventory requirements, reducing training needs for both drivers and mechanics, and providing additional opportunities for bulk parts purchases.
- **COLTS and LCTA have a parts swapping arrangement** whereby parts can be acquired on very short notice from the other system. This **reduces the inventory requirements of both agencies**, reduces the time necessary to get parts that are difficult to find, and enables vehicles to return to revenue service more rapidly.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT (ITEMS TO ADDRESS IN THE ACTION PLAN)

- COLTS' collective bargaining agreement (CBA) contains a **provision that requires overtime to be offered to full-time drivers before part-time drivers**. In future labor negotiations, this provision should be reconsidered to allow for greater scheduling flexibility.

In addition, the current CBA appears to allow for greater use of part-time drivers than COLTS currently utilizes. **Management should investigate making greater use of part-time drivers to minimize overtime pay.**

- The extraboard at COLTS is currently sized at +/- 5 drivers. The extraboard is appropriate given the size of the agency; however a provision in the CBA permits drivers to call off work up to 1-hour before pull-out time. **COLTS should work with union representatives to increase the required call-in time to allow for greater scheduling flexibility to reduce overtime payment.**
- COLTS has a unique parts arrangement due to geographic location. A bus parts store is located nearby the COLTS facility, and as such COLTS keeps a very low parts inventory. As a result, **COLTS lacks a fully-automated inventory tracking system**. While this is an acceptable practice while the parts store remains at its current location, **management should evaluate the current parts arrangement and provide for contingency plans should the parts store relocate, close, or not have the required part in stock.**
- COLTS does not identify and analyze trends and performance in the maintenance function. COLTS makes good use of Dossier® fleet management system, **but investigation should occur to determine if more automated reports can be developed to better identify trends and issues.**
- COLTS does not formally track preventative maintenance (PM) trends. **Management should track PM trends as on-time maintenance reduces the likelihood of mechanical failures and the cost of repairs.**

Through interviews with staff, it was indicated that COLTS performs PM activities on transmissions long before the manufacturer recommends. This practice may result in additional overtime pay and unnecessary material costs. **Management should perform a cost-benefit analysis on early PM cycles and determine if this practice should be altered.**

- Staff indicate a higher than expected number of farebox “card reader” jams for vehicles in service resulting in minor road calls. **Maintenance management should work with the respective manufacturers (cards and readers) to find an acceptable solution to the issue.**
- **COLTS lacks a formal prioritized technology or IT plan** that can help prioritize expenditures and ensure that IT investments yield a return on investment and work seamlessly with other IT systems already in place. **Any subsequent investments in technology should be driven by a prioritized technology investment program.**

- **COLTS fleet replacement needs are not regular** in the sense that many vehicles (7-10) need to be replaced at the same time. Given constraints on capital funding, this means that some vehicles are in use beyond their design life, thereby resulting in higher operating and maintenance costs. **Management should continue to explore ways to distribute fleet replacement more evenly.**
- Several members of COLTS management staff are set to retire in the near future. **When retirement occurs, COLTS should evaluate these positions to determine if their duties could be reassigned to other staff resulting in cost savings.**
- Currently, COLTS does not track key cost drivers such as unscheduled overtime pay and other premium pay categories. **Management should develop a target for key cost drivers and develop a tracking methodology** to assist in identifying areas where costs may be controlled.
- Scheduling is completed manually, with runs cut semi-annually. **No active efforts to automate/test the impact of various scenarios and CBA terms on the amount of scheduled overtime pay were documented.** This likely causes unnecessary overtime expenditures. COLTS should evaluate appropriate automation of scheduling through contracts or software acquisition.

OTHER FINDINGS THAT IMPACT OVERALL AGENCY PERFORMANCE

“Other Findings” is a collection of findings from the functional review that may, if addressed, improve the current or future operations of COLTS. While not directly tied to Act 44 measures, actions to address these findings will result in a more seamless operation and greater operational efficiencies.

BEST PRACTICES

- **COLTS conducts employee exit interviews** and uses the information to refine operations and the workplace environment.
- **COLTS has extensive involvement in the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** through membership on various committees. This involvement in local planning agencies will assist in all levels of future capital and service planning.
- **COLTS uses PennTRAIN and SEPTA staff to assist in providing training to employees.** This approach saves on the cost of private trainers and helps keep the staff well trained from industry experts.
- **COLTS operates with a 5-year operating budget.** This practice is uncommon in the industry and allows for greater planning for service expansion, fare increases, cost containment, etc.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT (ITEMS TO ADDRESS IN THE ACTION PLAN)

- During interviews, it was indicated that **one board member regularly misses board meetings**. With a Board of only 5 members, this makes meeting a quorum difficult at times. **Board members should investigate amending the by-laws to include a minimum attendance requirement.**
- Board members interviewed reported that not all members had received formal Board training due to schedule constraints. **COLTS management should work with the PennTRAIN to organize a Board training session when all members can be in attendance.**
- Public transportation funding requires match from a local entity which, in the case of COLTS, is the County of Lackawanna. Recently, there have been difficulties in receiving the local match prior to the end of the fiscal year as required by law. **COLTS management and Board should work with local officials to expedite local match payments.**
- Management lacks formally-documented protocols, performance standards, and plans for many key agency issues including quality control for NTD reporting and succession planning. **Management should establish formally-documented quality control procedures and robust short-term succession plans for key agency positions, including cross-training** to ensure continuously smooth service in the event of staffing changes.
- COLTS is in the process of making several IT improvements, including the upgrade of AVL and installation of APC and a new phone system. COLTS has chosen to contract with a consulting firm, ClearView Strategies, to organize and manage these activities, and has appeared to develop little internal IT management competencies. **COLTS should develop an internal plan regarding how the management of IT projects will be completed when current contracts with ClearView Strategies end.**
- Revenue vehicles lack incident forms and other materials that typically make up an “accident kit”. **COLTS should place incident forms and other materials on all revenue vehicles to accurately document relevant information necessary for incident investigation.**
- Current practice requires drivers to use their personal vehicles for road-relief. This practice is unacceptable for insurance and liability concerns. **COLTS management should provide non-revenue vehicles or change relief practices to occur at the main facility.**
- Dispatchers at COLTS are part of the Collective Bargaining Unit, and are responsible for road checks. This practice may be a conflict of interest. **COLTS should dedicate a non-union road supervisor position.**
- COLTS has recently developed a System Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan (SSEPP). However, only two employees have a copy of the current plan. **COLTS should finalize the document and provide all employees with copies and training pertaining to the SSEPP.**

- COLTS lacks a service planning document to guide the development of the system in the medium and long term. One such document is a Transit Development Plan (TDP). TDPs establish detailed plans for service improvement in the medium to long term, usually 5-years. **COLTS should develop and regularly update a service planning document such as a TDP.**
- **COLTS lacks a prioritized capital needs plan.** A capital needs plan is critical in identifying all projects needed to achieve a state-of-good-repair and support justified service expansion as identified through a service planning document. Prioritizing these needs allows the agency to fund the most important projects with limited resources available via 12-year or 5-year capital budgets. A complete prioritized capital needs plan will allow COLTS to be ready when unanticipated funding (i.e. ARRA) becomes available. **The Executive Director should involve the Board and all senior staff in the development of a formally-documented prioritized capital needs plan.**
- Interviews with COLTS Board and management indicate that there are plans to build the intermodal center once again. **COLTS management should develop and regularly update a funding plan for the new intermodal center and submit to appropriate funding agencies for acknowledgement of funding needs** to ensure that there are no issues in future implementation activities.
- COLTS does not currently have an established method to receive input for current employees. **Management should develop a formal employee satisfaction survey and continue current efforts to implement an employee performance review process for both represented and non-represented employees.**
- At the time of review, COLTS' computer data was backed-up in-house on a USB Flash drive. This is not acceptable given the nature of the agency and the information. **COLTS should immediately implement off-site back-up of data.**
- Computer disasters occasionally occur, and can be detrimental to an organization if not properly planned for. COLTS does not have a computer disaster recovery plan. **Management should work with appropriate IT staff to develop and implement a computer disaster recovery plan.**
- COLTS is currently in the process of procuring AVL and APC technology. While this information will be useful in many agency functions, a voluminous amount of information will be produced. **COLTS should develop a data management plan that outlines where data will be stored and how it will be used to support analysis and decision-making.**
- Cash receipts from each vehicle's vault are mixed prior to counting; prohibiting the possibility of identifying the source of discrepancies between what is reported by GFI farebox probe expected totals and actual receipts. For example, some passengers do not have exact change (for example, the base fare is \$1.25 but the passenger may only have two

one-dollar bills). Since the farebox does not make change, fares collected should be equal to or greater than what is registered at the farebox. However, a farebox might have an “issue” where it does not register correctly or perhaps the driver pushes the wrong key (he accidentally hit the full-fare key where he should have hit the student fare key). In that event, the farebox would be short compared to what was registered. Such issues occur occasionally and should appear as “random” small amounts. However, a driver may, for example, always push the “full fare” key no matter the actual amount paid. In that event, COLTS would show a shortage when in fact there is no money missing. Discrepancy may simply mean that the driver needs to be retrained. If the contents of all fareboxes are mixed before counting, management cannot determine the causes of discrepancies. **To provide more robust oversight, management should track farebox cash discrepancy on a regular basis and set thresholds for the system as a whole. If cash receipts are found to outside of an acceptable range on a regular basis, management should count cash receipts by individual vehicle vault to isolate the cause(s) of those discrepancies.**

- The COLTS governing board currently has two committees, personnel and pension. Given the size of the board, it is unlikely that additional committees could be supported. However, **COLTS should investigate conducting working groups that serve as a “committee of the whole” to accomplish items that don’t need a formal Board vote.** Conducting these working groups would allow the Board to focus on larger issues at board meetings and have more productive policy conversations outside of regular meetings when a formal action isn’t needed.

APPENDIX A: DOCUMENTATION REQUEST TO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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DOCUMENT REQUEST

Please provide the following documents and label as shown for **fixed route service only**. Information is strongly preferred in electronic format. Please indicate on the below checklist as to the status and availability of the information.

**Denotes information requested from contractors in addition to Agency.

Requested Item	Mark Form in which Data to Be Provided			
	Electronic	Paper Mail	Not Available	Not Applicable
BACKGROUND				
1. Enabling legislation, ordinances, compacts or charter.	X			
2. Brief history of the agency, including its current and any prior official names, any present nicknames or monikers, and identify any predecessor entities, service days/hours and any other general agency information.	X			
3. Business or Strategic Plans, including adopted Mission and Vision statements.	X			
4. Describe any unique circumstances that have adversely or positively affected the agency (ridership, finances, other).				X
GOVERNANCE/GENERAL MANAGEMENT				
5. List of current governing body members, with terms and tenure of each member and contact information for each.	X			
6. Governing body minutes and agenda from the last 12 months.	X			
7. Biography, contract terms, and tenure of General Manager / Executive Director.	X			
8. **Organization chart delineating decision authority by roles.	X			
9. Succession plan or equivalent.	X			
10. Any documentation not provided above which delineates the respective roles and responsibilities of management and governing body members.	X			
OVERSIGHT AND REVIEWS				
11. Two most recent annual reports from chief executive officer to governing board.				X
12. Financial Management Oversight (FMO) reviews, Triennial Reviews, and any other recent outside audits or evaluations in any administrative areas such as: Executive Management, Human Resources, Finance, Legal, Information Management, Resource Management, Internal Audit, Marketing, etc. Include all correspondence between the agency, PennDOT, FTA, auditors, etc.	X			

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Requested Item	Mark Form in which Data to Be Provided			
	Electronic	Paper Mail	Not Available	Not Applicable
HUMAN RESOURCES				
13. All collective bargaining agreements as well as any related documents(e.g., letters or memoranda of understanding, letter agreements, side letters that clarify or modify the collective bargaining agreements, etc.)	X			
14. Any strikes or work stoppages over the past 6 years.				X
15. Any reports filed with the state or federal government regarding union operations, funds management, etc.				X
16. Cost of benefits (health care, pension/retirement, etc.) broken down by major category for the last year and projected for the next 5 years.	X			
17. Turnover rate by position for each of the last 5 years.	X			
18. **Operator hiring and performance review procedures.	X			
FINANCE				
19. Operating and Capital Budgets for the current fiscal year (provide separately if not in the Annual Report).	X			
20. Official Bond Statements for the most recent issuances.				X
21. Audited Financial Statement for the most recent fiscal year and Single Audit Statement.	X			
22. Profit/Loss/Cash Flow statements for each of the past 12 months.				X
23. Year-end cash position for each of the last 2 fiscal years.	X			
24. Operating revenues and expense detail by account for each of the last 2 years. Please provide in as frequent intervals as possible (i.e. monthly, quarterly)	X			
PROCUREMENT				
25. Procurement policy and procedures.	X			
CONTRACTING				
26. Contracts involving purchased transportation.	X			
27. Contracts for the provision of services or special operations agreements to specific agencies, localities, colleges, universities, or other entities.	X			
28. **Contracts for tire services, management services, and professional services over \$25,000 in value.	X			
29. Contract management plan.	X			
OPERATIONS				
30. **Operations Manual	X			
31. **Operators Manual.	X			
32. **Emergency and inclement weather (snow, flood, etc.) operational plans and procedures.	X			
33. **Dispatch procedures	X			
34. **On-street supervision procedures (incl. AVL, if equipped).	X			
35. **Service standards for existing and new or newly restructured services. Provide description or example of how used in periodic service evaluations and service planning.	X			

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Requested Item	Mark Form in which Data to Be Provided			
	Electronic	Paper Mail	Not Available	Not Applicable
36. Significant seasonal variations in service supplied (including school alterations, special routes, etc.).	X			
37. Identify and provide relevant documents regarding any present & future operational challenges.	X			
FARES AND FARE SECURITY				
38. Listing of fares by type and media (pass, token, cash, etc.)	X			
39. Plans for changes in fare media (e.g. electronic).	X			
40. **Monthly fare revenue by category, and by patron type.	X			
41. **Fare handling policy & procedures (from on-board vehicle to deposit at bank).	X			
42. Commuter choice program description, synopsis of participants, marketing activities, and total revenues derived from program (if applicable).				X
MAINTENANCE				
43. **Maintenance plan, programs and procedures manual.	X			
44. **Fleet roster for fixed route revenue and non-revenue vehicles	X			
45. End of year parts inventory value (\$) for each of past 5 years.	X			
46. Building condition appraisals.			X	
47. Ongoing asset maintenance programs.	X			
OPERATIONAL SCHEDULING/PLANNING				
48. **Scheduling Manual.			X	
49. Maps and schedules (system wide and route specific).	X			
50. Revenue miles, revenue hours & fares from any charter services provided in each of the last 6 years.	X			
51. Short range transit operational plan (i.e., TDP - transit development plan).	X			
52. Long range transit plan.	X			
SAFETY AND SECURITY				
53. Summary of Worker Compensation Claims, by year, for each of last 5 years.	X			
54. **Description of accident/incident policy and definitions, including how they are recorded and monitored (separated by employee and patron).	X			
55. **Property collisions and other reportable incidents for each of the past 6 years.	X			
56. **Personal injuries and fatalities for each of the past 6 years.	X			
57. **On-board criminal activities for each of the past 6 years				X
58. **Property criminal activities for each of the past 6 years				X
59. **Safety training and Collision reduction plan(s).				X
60. **Emergency Preparedness / Operations Continuity Plan.	X			
61. **List of any safety or security issues and/or concerns.				X
62. **Number of vehicles and sites with security monitoring (i.e., camera, patrols).	X			
63. Records of safety meetings for past 2 years.	X			

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Requested Item	Mark Form in which Data to Be Provided			
	Electronic	Paper Mail	Not Available	Not Applicable
64. **Fixed route ADA compliance reports for the most recent year.	X			
65. Two most recent customer service surveys reports and any actions taken to address known issues.	X			
66. **Complaint procedures manual/policy and 2 most recent reports.	X			
67. Other customer service metrics maintained by the agency.	X			
68. **Computer disaster recovery plan.	X			
69. Computer security procedures now in use.	X			
70. **Data collection technology/programs (i.e., APCs, AVL, scheduling software, financial management software, maintenance software).				X
CAPITAL PROGRAMMING				
71. Short and Long-term capital programs or plans including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit TIP • Agency Specific Plans (additional to TIP): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fleet expansion needs/plans for revenue and non-revenue vehicles (if in addition to TIP) ○ State-of-good-repair facility projects for next 5 years (new roof, vehicle overhaul, etc.) ○ New/Expanded facilities projects for next 5 years ○ Replacement/expansion needs/plans for all other capital assets for next 5 years 	X			
72. Contact information for any assets owned, operated, or maintained by others.	X			
73. Listing of real estate fixed assets (i.e., facilities, transfer locations, etc.) identifying any asset currently not directly used in transit operations and plans for same.	X			
74. Listing of Real estate plans (purchases, sales, or lease changes) including current or planned construction projects, documenting cost to complete and projected completion date planned for next 5 years	X			
MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS				
75. Service area demographics, customer profiles, and market research documents (as available).			X	
76. Local news clippings from past 5 years.	X			
77. Copy of current year marketing program and policies.	X			
78. Public involvement plan, and notices and attendance rosters from events from most recent 2 years.	X			

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Requested Item	Mark Form in which Data to Be Provided			
	Electronic	Paper Mail	Not Available	Not Applicable
79. Reports, input, recommendations, etc. from ridership committees and/or advocacy groups for the past 2 years.				X

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APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF FUNCTIONAL FINDINGS, TRENDS, AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS

The following notations are used to summarize findings on areas evaluated during the performance review.

+	Above Average	Actions/conditions are notably more/better than those observed in similar agencies.
✓	Average	Actions/conditions are comparable to those observed in similar agencies.
-	Below Average	Actions/conditions are notably less/worse than those observed in similar agencies.

In an effort to recognize where commitments or actions are already under way to change the current state of a particular metric, a column labeled *Trend* has been added to the *Summary* sections. *Trends* are categorized as follows:

↗	Improving	A commitment or actionable plan is under way to improve upon the current practice/conditions.
⇒	Little net change	No commitment or actionable plan has been noted that improves upon the current practice/conditions.
↘	Worsening	No commitment or plan has been made to improve upon the current practice/conditions <i>and</i> conditions are expected to degrade unless the topic is addressed.

Taken together, the *Findings* and *Trends* are intended to identify best practices and help prioritize the areas where addressing a finding can help improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and/or quality of service provided:

Finding	Trend	Action/Interpretation
+	↗	Continue current actions and policies – Potential Best Practice
+	⇒	Continue current actions and policies
+	↘	Corrective action may be desirable
✓	↗	Continue current actions and policies
✓	⇒	Continue current actions and policies
✓	↘	Corrective action desirable
-	↗	Continue current actions but closely monitor progress
-	⇒	Corrective action desirable
-	↘	Corrective action necessary

Governance Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Full Governing Body membership	✓	➡	None.
Governance and structure meet changing needs and equitably represent agency's customers	✓	➡	None.
Sets and achieves strategic goals	-	➡	Work with management to develop and implement a strategic plan for future agency growth.
Meets community public transit needs	✓	➡	None.
Public opinion of Board and transit system	✓	➡	None.
Working relationship among Board members	-	➡	Explore adding minimum attendance requirements in Board by-laws.
Advisory Committee Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Advisory committees provide opportunity for citizen input	-	➡	Investigate creation of a Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) or similar organization.
Advisory committees provide opportunity for technical input	-	➡	Investigate creation of a Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) or similar organization.
The number and types of advisory boards are appropriate for an agency of this size	-	➡	Investigate creation of a Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) or similar organization.
General Management Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Relationship with Governing Body	✓	➡	None.
Organizational structure appropriate for size of agency	✓	➡	None.
Provides regular performance reporting to oversight Board	-	➡	Expand current board reports to include route-level ridership and financial information along with performance measures.
All key management positions currently filled	✓	➡	None.
Employs strategic policies, goals, and objectives	-	➡	Work with Board to develop and implement a strategic plan for future agency growth.

Employs, monitors, and uses written performance standards for all major agency functions	-	⇒	Develop and implement performance standards for all agency functions. Examples are identified above.
Actively promotes and achieves interagency coordination	+	⇒	None.
Timely satisfaction of all federal and state reporting requirements	-	⇒	Concern over collecting all local match prior to the end of the fiscal year. Work with local officials to expedite local match payments.
Has and follows a written quality control plan for key functions	-	⇒	Develop written quality control procedures, particularly in the area of data management and reporting.
Has a succession plan in place for all key positions	-	⇒	Formally document robust succession plan for all key agency positions.
Percent of Total Operating Costs Attributable to General & Administrative	✓	⇒	None.
Properly manages all contracts.	-	⇒	Investigate the LAMAR Advertising contract and assign an internal contract manager.
Human Resource Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Retain stable work force	✓	⇒	None.
Recruit qualified employees promptly as vacancies occur	✓	⇒	None.
Provide training focused on job performance	+	⇒	None.
Manage the cost of employee benefits	-	⇒	Currently, COLTS management does not contribute to health care, while union employees do. COLTS has found other ways to control the costs of employee benefits by implementing a high-deductible plan. COLTS should continue to explore ways to control benefits, especially in the form of health care, and investigate the addition of a management health-care benefit contribution to help control costs.
Manage labor relations effectively	✓	⇒	None.

Has established practices to receive input from employees and evaluate their performance	-	↗	Develop and implement employee satisfaction surveys and continue implementation of employee performance reviews.
Finance Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Provides realistic annual budgets	+	↗	Five year operating budget is a best practice.
Accurately records and reports financial transactions	✓	→	None.
Manages state/federal grants efficiently to meet government requirements	-	→	Open grant due to litigation.
Analyzes and manages cash flow	✓	→	None.
Uses reasonable approach for handling passenger revenues	-	→	Develop and document written standards for audits of farebox revenue. Investigate increasing fares to increase revenue.
Appropriate use and level of debt	+	→	None.
Procurement Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Use of computerized parts management system	✓	→	None.
Automated analysis and identification of procurement needs	✓	→	None.
Established procedures for verifying inventory figures	✓	→	None.
Record and measure inventory function performance	✓	→	None.
Has and achieves Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)/Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE)/Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE) goals	+	↘	High DBE level achieved due to contracts with Clear-view strategies, develop plan for DBE requirement once contracts come to an end.
Appropriate use of technology in parts inventory control	✓	→	None.
Operations Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Service is operated in accordance with published schedules	✓	→	None.
Track key cost drivers such as unscheduled overtime pay and other premium pay categories	-	→	Develop and implement tracking methodology. Maximize use of part-time drivers.

Track and report on-time performance	-	⇒	Develop and implement service standards policy, including on-time performance.
Track and analyze service-related customer feedback by category	-	⇒	Develop and implement customer feedback tracking system to assist in service improvement.
Appropriate operations policies and practices	-	⇒	Remedy use of personal vehicles for road relief. Designate non-union road supervisor function.
Maintenance Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Use of computerized fleet maintenance recordkeeping	✓	⇒	None.
Automated analysis and identification of trends, performance, and maintenance issues	-	⇒	Dossier® fleet management system is used extensively, but investigation should occur to determine if more automated reports can be developed.
Adopted vehicle maintenance plan and preventive maintenance schedules/checklists	✓	⇒	None.
Maintenance performance in terms of miles per major road call	✓	⇒	None.
Preventive maintenance on-time performance	-	⇒	Formally document (currently informal) PM on-time performance criteria.
Adequacy of maintenance facilities	✓	⇒	None.
Scheduling Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Understanding of scheduling process	✓	⇒	None.
Production of vehicle and driver assignments in a timely manner	✓	⇒	None.
Input from operating personnel	✓	⇒	None.
Appropriate use of technology	-	⇒	Investigate options to use technology for scheduling process. This may include software, outsourcing, or using a computer based office program.

Existing service standard policy	-	⇒	Develop and implement a service standard policy to gauge effectiveness of the service.
Performance measures to gauge output of schedule process	-	⇒	Develop and implement performance measures (such as Act 44 measures) to determine success and adjust the schedule as necessary. Investigate proper technology to facilitate data analysis.
Safety & Security Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Provide comprehensive new operator and refresher training	✓	⇒	None.
Operators have access to/use comprehensive procedures for reporting accidents/incidents	-	⇒	Investigate the addition of accident kits to busses (including incident report forms, disposable cameras, etc.)
Track and report accidents by type	✓	⇒	None.
Develop and maintain System Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan	-	⇒	SSEPP is developed but only two employees have access to it. Finish and fully implement SSEPP.
Customer Service Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Number of staff responsible for customer service	✓	⇒	None.
Understanding of staff roles in customer service	✓	⇒	None.
Clear customer service protocols (tracking, response, timeliness, satisfaction)	-	⇒	None.
Plan in place to continually improve customer service	✓	⇒	Formally document for future years.
Regular monitoring of customer service satisfaction	-	⇒	None.
Personal follow-up protocols for complaints and compliments	✓	⇒	None.
Information Technology Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Number of staff responsible for Information Technology	✓	⇒	None.
Appropriate use of outsourcing for IT needs	✓	⇒	Develop plan for how to manage IT once current contracts expire.

Adequacy of in-house network and computer technology	-	⇒	At time of report, no off-site backup of data was completed (although interview suggested it would be soon).
Adequacy of radio and communications systems	✓	⇒	None.
Full use of registering fareboxes	✓	⇒	None.
AVL technology	✓	⇒	None.
Disaster Recovery Plan	-	⇒	Develop and implement computer disaster recovery plan.
Strategic IT Plan	-	⇒	COLTS currently uses contractors for their IT needs. COLTS should formally document a Strategic IT Plan.
Data Management Plan	-	⇒	Develop and implement data management plan, particularly with new AVL and APC data.
Capital Programming Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Relationships with other agencies in the region	+	↗	None.
Adequate staff to lead capital programming	✓	⇒	None.
TIP as initial list of all capital needs (fiscally constrained)	✓	⇒	None.
Prioritized capital needs plan	-	⇒	Develop and implement a prioritized capital needs plan to meet state-of-good-repair and justified service expansion as identified through a service planning document.
Marketing and Public Relations Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Actions
Thorough understanding of current customer base	✓	⇒	None.
Effective use of targeted marketing and educational materials for special populations such as the disability community, non-English-speaking populations, etc.	+	↗	None.
Effective use of marketing approaches to expand market share with current clientele	✓	⇒	None.

Clear procedures to identify and assess potential (new) markets	-	⇒	Explore park-and-ride market. Increase marketing efforts to major employers and explore park-n-ride opportunities. Increase marketing to the disability community and develop and implement non-rider survey.
Visibility in the community	-	⇒	Develop and publish full system map and place on website. Investigate the installation of new bus stop signs to replace old signs as they become unusable.
Positive image with local community and elected officials	✓	⇒	None.
Positive image with state and federal review agencies	✓	⇒	None.
Planning Observations	Finding	Trend	Suggested Action
Proactive approach to short-range planning	✓	⇒	None.
Mid to long term service planning document	-	⇒	Develop and implement transit development plan (TDP) or similar service planning document.
Possesses adequate staff capabilities in planning	✓	⇒	None.
Uses empirical data used to support planning functions	-	⇒	Use route-level statistics to make service planning decision. Develop data management plan for new AVL and APC.
Provides opportunities for planning input from operating personnel	✓	⇒	None.
Relationships and coordination with other local planning agencies	+	⇒	None.
Uses performance measures to assess route performance	-	⇒	Develop and monitor performance measures to assess route performance (i.e. Act 44 performance measures).